

1. CBQ REVIEW ESSAY:

The Media and Religion: A Decade of Print and Electronic Publications

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Despite its great significance throughout much of the world, religion has often been removed from day-to-day media coverage. This has been particularly true in the United States where media coverage of religion has for the most part been relegated to special sections of newspapers and popular magazines and to isolated viewing hours on television, the largely Sunday morning religious "ghetto." Indeed, for decades religion's significance in the lives of many Americans has been virtually ignored by the media and often left to the specialized religious papers, newsletters, and periodicals. In recent years, however, there has been a growing and noticeable change in media coverage of religion. This is most evident in the increasing numbers of newspapers and television stations and networks (although the latter is still small) that have hired reporters to cover specifically religious beats. Readers can now find new or greatly expanded religion or faith and values sections in their local newspaper. These new several-page sections replace or supplement what was once almost exclusively church-type bulletins and announcements and they often include thoughtful columns and analyses covering many religions along with serious commentary. Entire cable television networks are devoted solely or in part to religion. Another significant change is broadening coverage that now includes religions beyond mainstream Christianity. In addition to Judaism and Islam, media coverage is now likely to include non-Western and alternative religions.

This selective annotated bibliography includes printed and electronic materials that are devoted exclusively to some aspect of religion and media and is arranged somewhat arbitrarily in sections on reference, religious journalism, radio and television broadcasting, serials, and electronic resources. All works reviewed are in English and most concern the United States and to a lesser degree Great Britain or are of international interest. Each has been published and/or copyrighted since 1990 in order to concentrate on those reflecting more contemporary views and issues. "Media" refers to mass media, including newspapers, the periodical press, television, and radio. Film was reluctantly omitted because of the sheer number of books on that aspect of the subject. Likewise, materials of a more theoretical framework that emphasize communication theory and/or a cultural framework rather than mass media are purposely excluded. Finally, it is worth noting that almost every reviewed book and electronic resource seems to equate religion entirely with some form of Christianity—the few exceptions are indicated.

A. Reference

31:1

HISTORY AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN RELIGIOUS PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS ESTABLISHED FROM 1730 THROUGH 1830 by Gaylord P. Albaugh (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1994—\$125.00, ISBN 0-9444026-53-2 [2 vol. set], 1,456 pp., appendices, bibliographies, index) is an exemplary scholarly work of great historical value. Editor Albaugh actually began working on this publication in 1937 and completed his work in the 1970s although it took decades to see publication. The work appears in two major divisions: The first is a chronologically arranged chart reporting the circulation figures of individual American religious periodicals and newspapers 1730 - 1830, while the bulk of the remaining text is an alphabetically arranged, annotated bibliography that locates print or microfilm copies in the United States and Canada. Entries also contain bibliographic data, detailed publication histories, some analytics, and content descriptions. Four appendices include a supplemental bibliography of new publications and chronologically, geographically, and religiously arranged lists of publications. The latter divides the publications into such categories as Baptist, Bible Society, Freemasonry, Moravian, and Roman Catholic. The first volume contains an excellent history of religious newspapers and periodicals from 1730 to 1830 by Albaugh. The detailed index cites editors, publishers, printers, illustrators, and engravers. Researchers will need both the main entries and the appendices to get the most complete and up-to-date information about a particular title due to the considerable time lag between writing and actual publication.

31:2

POPULAR RELIGIOUS MAGAZINES OF THE UNITED STATES edited by P. Mark Fackler and Charles H. Lippy (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press "Historical Guides to the World's Periodicals and Newspapers," 1995—\$125.00, ISBN 0-313-28533-0, 595 pp., bibliography, appendices, index) was published a decade after Lippy's **RELIGIOUS PERIODICALS OF THE UNITED STATES: ACADEMIC AND SCHOLARLY JOURNALS** (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986). Now co-editors Fackler and Lippy have produced a useful guide to a specific segment of the American periodical press, this time concentrating on popular materials. "Popular" in this context refers to religious magazines that reach a more general readership. Following the same format and style of Lippy's earlier book and other publications in Greenwood's series, the guide features profiles (of about three-to-ten pages each) that include detailed publication histories, content descriptions, readership, circulation figures, notes, and information sources. The approximately 100 magazines are a "representative sampling that reflects the range of religious groups that have found a niche in American life." Some are no longer published. The appendix arranges the titles by religious direction or affiliation and includes such categories as Baptist, Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, Pentecostal, Bahai, New Age, Hare Krishna, Lutheran, Jewish, and the like. With the original volume, these two combine to augment the broad sweep of information on the American religious periodical press. Both Fackler and Lippy are academics.

31:3

PRIME-TIME RELIGION: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING by J. Gordon Melton, Phillip Charles Lucas, and Jon R. Stone (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx, 1997—\$64.95, ISBN 0-89774-902-2, 413 pp., appendices, photographs, index) contains 396 entries for preachers,

evangelists, producers, programs, and ministries that have appeared on television or radio since the earliest recorded religious radio program in the United States in 1921. Although emphasizing the United States, some international personalities are included, mostly from English-speaking countries. The signed entries vary in length from one paragraph to many pages and most contain black-and-white photographs and reference lists of books and articles. Following the encyclopedic entries, appendices include lists of National Religious Broadcasters founders, NRB presiding chairs, and Christian colleges that produce religious programs; a chronology, "Selected Historic Highlights of Religious Broadcasting"; and a three-page bibliography. Coverage ranging from The Christophers, Eternal Word Television Network, Islamic States Broadcasting Association, Father Charles Coughlin, Hindustan Bible Institute, and Benny Hinn makes this encyclopedia a useful source for information on religious broadcasters and programs.

B. Religious Journalism

31:4

REPORTING NEWS ABOUT RELIGION: AN INTRODUCTION FOR JOURNALISTS

by Judith M. Buddenbaum (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1998—\$29.95, ISBN 0-8138-2977-1 paper, 230 pp., bibliography, glossary, charts, index) is divided into three parts, each of which is further subdivided into three to five chapters. In Part I, understanding religion, Buddenbaum provides a historical review of the development of religion in the United States from the days of the Puritans to date. Unlike most of the other books in this review, she treats religion in a very broad sense, that is, not just the Judeo-Christian religions, but also Hinduism, Buddhism, and alternative religions. She outlines the major religious beliefs of many religions found in the United States as well as their behaviors, leadership, and organization. Part II on understanding religion news is devoted to an analysis of trends, audiences, and responsibilities inherent in grasping the background of religious journalism. Finally, Part III on reporting religion news focuses on various aspects of writing and reporting religious news, such as sources and organizing stories. Chapters conclude with annotated lists of further readings and many have notes. Appendices offer an 8-page annotated list of reference materials, important meetings, professional support groups, contests, and educational opportunities. Buddenbaum, a member of the Department of Journalism at Colorado State University, mixes practical advice with a nonjudgmental look at religion in American mass media. This is recommended as a good basic guide for the budding religion reporter.

31:5

DEITIES AND DEADLINES: A PRIMER ON RELIGION NEWS COVERAGE

by John Dart (Nashville, TN: Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University, 1995 — free [available at <http://www.fac.org> and may also be available by contacting the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at report@fac.org], OCLC 33839410, 30 pp.) also focuses on the subject of the relationship of media and religion. Dart offers practical, useful, and often humorous advice on how to write religious news for the new or as yet inexperienced religion writer. Covered are such issues as important reference materials, relevant magazines and newsletters, reading materials, news releases, dealing with religious holidays, and national meetings. An "oops" section covers common mistakes made by those new to the religion beat. The humor can be a bit heavy-handed: One chapter is titled "Religion Writers Are Sects Experts." While absolutely

nonscholarly in tone and content, this slim publication will interest its intended audience of print and broadcast journalists. A second edition is available electronically at the Freedom Forum website (<http://freedomforum/newstand/welcotne.asp>).

31:6

BRIDGING THE GAP: RELIGION AND THE NEWS MEDIA by John Dart and Jimmy Allen (Nashville, TN: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, Vanderbilt University, 1993 — free [available at <http://www.fac.org> and may be available from the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at report@fac.org], OCLC 29947594, 86 pp., charts, bibliography, illustrations, photographs) is a pamphlet-like publication precisely and wholly devoted to the theme of its title. Jimmy Allen is the former head of the Southern Baptist Convention and has been associated with religious television and newspapers. John Dart has been president of the Religion Newswriters' Association and a religion columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*. Together they have co-authored this publication in part to address and refute the argument made in the much-cited Lichter-Rothman study (1980) which found that the national news media are irreligious and that there was a bias against religion by most media professionals. The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center conducted a nine-month study in 1992-1993 designed to assess the issues of discontent between religion and the news media. The survey was sent to 988 clergy (all various Christian denominations), 550 Associated Press managing editors, and 151 members of the Religion Newswriters' Association. They also conducted over 50 interviews. Dart and Allen analyze the results in seven chapters that include illustrations, a bibliography, photographs, and charts. Their conclusion is that the finding of the earlier study was "widely misquoted and presumably flawed."

31:7

RELIGION AND THE NEWS: A CONFERENCE REPORT by Martha FitzSimon (New York: Freedom Forum Media Studies Center's "Conference Paper," 1994 — out of print, OCLC 30434525, 28 pp., photographs) is a report on a national conference called "Religion and the News" held in the fall of 1993 at Columbia University and sponsored by the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center. Represented were about 150 journalists, religious leaders, university religious departments, and schools of theology and the conference resulted in the publication of **BRIDGING THE GAP** (31:6 above). Written in the form of a news story, the report is arranged in several chapters concerning specific panel discussions, such as "When Religion Makes Headlines" and "Faith, Politics and the Press," accompanied by several black-and-white photographs of panel participants and selective very brief statements from the panelists set off in bold graphics. Included were participants from Christian, Jewish, and Islamic groups. The mainstream press was represented by the Washington Post, CBS News, and many other media institutions. The list of participants is found at end of the text. This publication provides a good overview of an important conference.

31:8

RELIGION IN THE NEWS: FAITH AND JOURNALISM IN AMERICAN PUBLIC DISCOURSE by Stewart M. Hoover (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998—\$48.00/22.95, ISBN 0-7619-1677-6 hard, 0-7619-16784-4 paper, bibliography, charts, index) focuses on how the media uses religion. A frequently cited authority on religion and the media, Hoover is director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University

of Colorado, Boulder. His work recently has concentrated on the relationship of religion and mass media. Each of the 11 chapters in his book are narrative in nature with the exception of chapter 7, concerning the audience for religion, which contains 21 statistical charts on various aspects of newspaper readership, religious coverage, comparative religious characteristics, and media use. Other chapters discuss religion and the media in conflict, religion and broadcasting, and looking at religion. Hoover's data are based on national surveys and interviews. Of particular interest is the chapter on reading and watching religion in which representatives of various religious groups, such as Catholics, Assemblies of God, mainline Protestants, and African-American Baptists, provide comments about their perception of religious news and programming. The book lacks a cumulative bibliography, although each chapter concludes with extensive notes.

31:9

REPORTING RELIGION: FACTS AND FAITH edited by Benjamin J. Hubbard (Sonoma, CA: Poleridge Press "Eagle Books," 1990—\$17.95, paper, ISBN 0-944344-10-0, 196 pp., bibliography, index) explores the role that religion has played in our society, culture, and history. Hubbard has edited a fine collection of essays about religious reporting in the nonreligious press and the use of media by Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish presses. In addition to the editor, the contributors include clergy, reporters and broadcasters, and academics, all experienced religion writers and/or journalists. The essays are arranged in three major parts further subdivided into twelve chapters. All of the essays are very readable and all of the contributors are Americans, with the exception of Church of England cleric Peter Elvy whose essay on what makes televangelists tick provides an amusing commentary of some famous and now some rather infamous American televangelists. Other chapters consider religious reporting of current events, why important religious stories are not covered, journalistic ethics, and religious bigotry. Each of the chapters is followed by an unannotated bibliography and a list of suggestions for further reading. Hubbard is a member of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California in Fullerton and a former religion editor.

31:10

MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH by S. Robert Lichter, Daniel Amundson, and Linda S. Lichter (New Haven, CT: The Knights of Columbus / Bala Cynwyd, PA: The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, 1991— \$15.00 [available from the Center for Media and Public Affairs, 2100 L Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037], OCLC 24581602, 93 pp., charts) is the result of a study commissioned by the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. The study began with a negative proposition, that is, the media do not portray American Catholics in a fair and balanced manner and thus evidences an anti-Catholic bias. Undertaken by the Center for Media and Public Affairs, a nonpartisan organization conducts studies of news and entertainment, the report was intended to be fair and accurate in its findings. Four major media outlets (*The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, and CBS Evening News) were analyzed for both news and editorial content during three different five-year time periods: 1964-1968, 1974-1978, and 1984-1988. The text includes an overview of the study's purpose and research methods as well as specific examples from these four sources. The volume concludes with 38 comparative tables. It was also the basis for **ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN THE MEDIA** (see 31:12).

31:11

TELLING THE TRUTH: HOW TO REVITALIZE CHRISTIAN JOURNALISM by Marvin N. Olasky (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996—\$20.00, paper, ISBN 0-89107-885-1, 303 pp., bibliography, figures, charts, index) addresses an audience of Christian journalists and advocates with opinions and beliefs that espouse an archly conservative political and religious worldview. This is significant since most of the works cited in this review essay espouse either a neutral and mostly centrist stance on the issue of media and religion, or a view that is slightly left-of-center — at least to those of the hard right, like Olasky. Much of what he covers is practical and useful advice. He provides specific examples on how to sharpen one's general journalistic skills in writing, interviewing, and reporting. However, he notes (in what can be described as a generally negative, critical, and dismissive manner) that most prominent Christian publications offer "lukewarm evangelical substance and style." His critical analysis of both Christian and other publications such as *Christianity Today*, *Time*, and *New Republic*, are depicted in charts arranged in such categories as concern for others, Biblical, objectivity, logical, and Christian. There are a total of eight of these comparative charts and the magazine *World*, with which Olasky is associated, represents to perhaps no one's great surprise the high point of goodness or correctness. The book is divided into 14 chapters among which are Biblically directed reviewing and a great cloud of journalistic witnesses, and Biblical objectivity. Olasky's comments regarding good writing and editing are appropriate to a general audience, but his viewpoints and nonobjective writing will put many off. Nevertheless, the book fills a need and is relevant and appropriate for some Christian journalists.

31.12

ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN THE MEDIA: AN EXAMINATION OF WHETHER ELITE NEWS ORGANIZATIONS ARE BIASED AGAINST THE CHURCH edited by Patrick Riley and Russell Shaw (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 1993—\$16.95, ISBN 0-87973-551-1, 254 pp., charts, graphs, bibliography) establishes its tone in this introductory statement: "The major media tend to present the (Catholic) Church as, for the most part oppressive rather than liberating, irrelevant rather than relevant." This contention is for the most part supported by the contributors, and by the major portion of the text, which is devoted to a content analysis of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, and CBS News and sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic League on Religious and Civil Rights during three five-year time periods: 1964-1968, 1974-1978 and 1984-1988. The full study, entitled **MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** (also reviewed here — see 31:10), is an analysis of the treatment of Catholics, Catholicism, and the Catholic Church by these media elite. Also included are proceedings of a conference held in 1991 at the National Press Club. Among the participants were Brent Bozell of the Media Research Center; Frank Shakespeare formerly with CBS; Reed Irvine of Accuracy in Media; and syndicated columnist Michael McManus; as well as other representatives of the major media, the sponsoring organizations, the Catholic press, clergy, ethicists, and others. The third and briefest section offers two chapters on the history of the sponsoring bodies. This volume is widely cited in many of the books in this essay review, making this a title that should be in media collections.

31:11

AMERICAN EVANGELICALS AND THE MASS MEDIA: PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AMERICAN EVANGELICALS AND THE MASS MEDIA

edited by Quentin J. Schultze (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books/Zondervan, 1990 — out of print, ISBN 0-310-27261-0, 382 pp., bibliography, notes, index) describes the important and somewhat distinct relationship that has been established between evangelicals and the mass media in the United States. In fact, according to Schultze, "Evangelism has shaped the American system of mass communication," and he adds that "early American evangelicals largely established the tone and style" of our mass communication system. Schultze deals with this relationship by presenting 16 chapters on various aspects of mass media, such as the press, broadcasting, book publishing, Christian music, the evangelical periodical press, and transnational broadcasting. Chapters include the historical context, contemporary evangelical media and televangelism, evangelicals and the news, the international context, and assessing the evangelical media legacy. Of particular interest is a chapter on the state of evangelical broadcasting in Central America, where the phenomenal growth rate of "evangelicos" represents a serious challenge to the formerly monolithic Catholic Church. Its author includes both a review of the religious movement and a critical analysis of broadcasting's problems and effects. Mark Fackler provides a bibliographic essay on evangelical broadcasting scholarship. Most of the contributors, such as Stewart Hoover, Marvin Olasky, and Clifford Christians, are professors of communication or sociology, although several others are journalists and missionaries. Each chapter concludes with detailed notes.

31:14

UNSECLAR MEDIA: MAKING NEWS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA by Mark Silk (Urbana: University of Illinois Press "Public Expressions of Religion in America," 1995—\$19.95/14.95, ISBN 0-252-01904-0 hard, 0-252-06742-8 paper, 181 pp., appendix, index) argues that the American news media, including daily newspapers and newsweeklies, "present religion from a religious rather than a secular point of view." Silk also believes that the coverage of religion in America can only be understood if one accepts that the coverage derives from religious traditions and values. Formerly a religion reporter for the *Atlanta journal*. Silk stresses "topoi" or moral formulas in the varied examples he chooses to defend his proposition. While somewhat difficult to read and comprehend, he selects excellent and interesting examples. The text is divided into an overview and spiritual topics. The latter offers nine chapters including discussions of good works, tolerance, and hypocrisy. Silk is now the editor of a new journal *Religion in the News* and the founder of the Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College, Hartford, CT. His work is a thoughtful analysis of a differing viewpoint.

31:15

RELIGION AND MASS MEDIA: AUDIENCES AND ADAPTATIONS edited by Daniel A. Stout and Judith M. Buddenbaum (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996—\$52.00, ISBN 0-8039-7173-7, 294 pp., bibliography, notes) uses the expertise of its editors in mass communication research and theology. They propose that their book responds to the "growing sentiment" that research in religion and the media is in need of an interdisciplinary synthesis of ideas. In response, they present a number of essays written by either the editors or other contributors. The first of the book's five parts is devoted to an explanation of this synthesis. Part II offers separate chapters on how such diverse groups as Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Mormons, and mainline Protestants react to and use the media. Other chapters in Part II expand on such principles as tolerance, newspaper trust, attitude toward religious news, and a good discussion on the controversial movie, *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Case studies concern such groups as the Mennonites, Quakers, and Mormons, and the use of gospel rap in the Black community. All 18

essays feature significant lists of references and most include notes. For the most part the editors forego arcane terms and prattle and present a logical argument for the editors' view of this interdisciplinary blend of media and religion. It should be noted that here, too, the word Christianity can be substituted for religion since all of the essays concern only various branches of Christianity.

C. Radio and Television Broadcasting

31:16

RELIGIOUS TELEVISION: CONTROVERSIES AND CONCLUSIONS edited by Robert Abelman and Stewart M. Hoover (Norwood, NJ: Ablex "Communication and Information Science," 1990—\$78.50/39.50, ISBN 0-89391-643-9 hard, 0-89391-044-7 paper, 366 pp., bibliography, charts, indexes) like Sumen's **RELIGION AND PRIMETIME TELEVISION** (31:22) and Elvy's **OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS IN RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING** (31:18), offers a number of essays that give voice to a number of contributors who "have been chosen because they represent the best and most profound current thoughts and research on the electronic church." Authors include editors Abelman and Hoover as well as Judith Buddenbaum, Donald Wildmon, Quentin Schultze, Larry Gross and other academics in journalism/communication, religious studies, philosophy, or sociology, as well as clergy (including one rabbi), theologians, religious broadcasters, and media association executives. All are involved in contemporary religious broadcasting. The text is arranged in nine major themes: myths and misperceptions, history, viewers, and such important issues as church-state relations, fund raising, the portrayal of religion on secular television, the portrayal of the family on religious television, and international religious broadcasting. Each of the nine parts is divided into two to four chapters, each followed by a list of references. The general theme of the book is the electronic church (Christian) after the controversies surrounding Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker, the death threat by Oral Roberts, and the presidential run of Pat Robertson. Excellent contributors and interesting essays on a wide variety of issues make this a thought-provoking book.

31:17

AIRWAVES OF ZION: RADIO AND RELIGION IN APPALACHIA by Howard Dorgan (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993 - \$34.00/18.95, ISBN 0-87049-796-0 hard, 0-87049-797-9 paper, 226 pp., biography, photographs, index) is without a doubt the most unique and "human" of the books in this review essay. A professor of communication at Appalachian State University, Dorgan became acquainted with a specific type of religious broadcasting — the blend of music, announcements, and preaching that is peculiar to the AM band of radio carried throughout the various states that make up Appalachia — when he first visited the area years ago. The radio programs are locally produced and performed by self-taught musicians and conveyors of the Gospel. In addition to the hymns and exhortations, the programs feature news about listeners, messages, bits of gossip, personal information, and remarks and advice of a markedly private nature to their far-flung listeners. The style of this scholarly sociological study is unusual. For example, Dorgan uses the first person singular throughout and he calls the people he addresses by the title *of* brother or sister, as is typical in this region. Dorgan focuses on four specific programs and performers from Tennessee, West Virginia, and Kentucky. This distinctive type of home-grown program is fast disappearing, but Dorgan's account reveals a religious fervor and

devotion missing from many other impersonal scholarly books. Distributed throughout the four ethno-biographical chapters are 40 black-and-white photographs of programs and performers. While not for everyone, this book nevertheless provides an insight into the use of radio to convey religion while also revealing a somewhat alien culture truly right at much of America's geographic back door.

31:18

OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS IN RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING edited by Peter Elvy (Edinburgh, Scotland: Centre for Theology and Public Issues, 1991—\$39.00, paper, ISBN 1-87012-615-7, 176 pp., bibliography) emphasizes religion and media in eastern and western Europe. Originally prepared as a resource to be used for the Second Cranfield Conference of the Jerusalem Trust, the book has 25 contributors who include religious television broadcasters, academics, clergy, and journalists from 14 European countries (three contributors are American). All are experts on various aspects of Christian broadcasting and programming, particularly involving public broadcasting. While most chapters provide an analysis, overview, and forecast, all in some way address the "opportunities, dangers and limitations facing religious broadcasting today." Chapters deal with such issues as the French and German churches and religion broadcasting in Sweden, Protestant Italy, Catholic Europe, and Britain, while others deal with eastern and western Europe in a more general way. Although published almost a decade ago, the book provides a fine analysis of the state of Christian broadcasting and the present situation of religion in Europe.

31:19

SEEING IS BELIEVING: RELIGION AND TELEVISION IN THE 1990's by Barrie Gunter and Rachel Viney (London: J. Libbey "Television Research Monograph," 1994 — out of print, ISBN 0-86196-442-x, 134 pp., bibliography, appendices, tables) is primarily constructed around 57 different statistical tables, all concerned with the state of religious television in England. The statistics were compiled under the auspices of the Independent Television Commission and published as a research monograph. In order to gather the statistics, "minority" focus groups such as Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, Blacks, Muslims, Orthodox Christian, and mainstream Christian groups were convened at separate times in Cardiff, Wales, and London. These groups were queried about the role of religious television in their lives and the role that religion plays in their lives. Another group surveyed was individuals who were primarily identified as the "majority," consisting of British, White, and Christian people of varying denominations. In addition, persons involved in religious broadcasting regardless of religious affiliation and those working for specific denominations working with the media were also consulted. The text is divided into seven chapters, which are, as stated, composed primarily of the tables with associated text and anecdotal statements. Included are charts on such topics as audience perceptions, viewing behavior, belief in the existence of God, amount of coverage of religion on television, the appeal of religious programs, and treatment of religion on television as perceived by varied religious groups. The two appendices focus on some technical notes about the research and additional tales. An unannotated bibliography of American and British books and journal articles concludes the volume. The research is thorough and detailed and it is refreshing to see the sheer variety of differing religions consulted instead of the usual Christian or Judeo-Christian groups that are the main topic of concern of most of the other publications in this review.

31:20

SELLING CATHOLICISM: BISHOP SHEEN AND THE POWER OF TELEVISION by Christopher Owen Lynch (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998—\$24.95, ISBN 0-8131-2067-5, 200 pp., photographs, bibliography, notes, index) provides a textual analysis of the words of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen from his debut on television in 1952 through the end of his program, *Life Is Worth Living*, in 1957. It is no doubt unbelievable to many who were not around at the time that this scholarly and austere-looking Catholic cleric was for a long time successful competing with "Mr. Television," Milton Berle, on the old DuMont television network, and even more so that he had a commercial sponsor, Admiral. Bishop Sheen even won an Emmy. An assistant professor in the Department of Communication of Kean University in New Jersey and a holder of a Master of Divinity degree, Lynch analyzes 42 of the total of 125 episodes, all of which featured the bishop. While partially a biography, the text is devoted mostly to Sheen's role as a religious communicator via early television when the United States was a primarily Protestant America. In fact, for many this was their first look at a Catholic religious figure. The text is accompanied by extensive notes, an 18-page bibliography, black-and-white photographs, and an index. While Sheen's motivation may have been to "sell" Catholicism, this book is more about the power of television and how one man used it so effectively in a now long-ago time.

31:21

VATICAN RADIO: PROPAGATION BY THE AIRWAVES by Marilyn J. Matelski (Westport, CT: Praeger "Media and Society Series," 1995—\$57.95, ISBN 0-275-94760-2, 199 pp., bibliography, appendices, glossary, tables, charts, index) tells the story of the world's oldest transnational radio service, the Vatican Radio. It is the broadcasting arm of the Roman Catholic church and opened on 12 February 1931. It is designated officially as Radio HVJ (H=Holy See, V=Vatican, J=Jesus). Matelski, of Boston College's Department of Communication, offers eight chapters on the history and development of Vatican Radio. She includes a glossary, a selective bibliography, notes, and an index. Six appendices feature a chronology; the texts of several Papal addresses from 1931, 1956, and 1961; and the text of Pope Paul's first visit to the Middle East in 1964. Most of the books and journal and newspaper articles are in English. In fact, most newspaper articles were culled from New York newspapers. It is truly unfortunate that while attempting to write a truly scholarly study of Vatican Radio, Matelski was denied access to the primary documents belonging to the Vatican. Nevertheless, this is a good introduction to one of the world's busiest radio transmitters.

31:22

RELIGION AND PRIME TIME TELEVISION edited by Michael Suman (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997 — \$55.00, ISBN 0-275-96034-x, 174 pp., bibliography, index) is composed of essays contributed by a select group of participants relevant to the broad issue of religion and how it is handled on prime-time television. The publication is an outgrowth of a conference on religion and prime time held in 1996 and hosted by the UCLA Center for Communication Policy, the American Cinema Foundation, and the Center for the Study of Popular Culture. The book is arranged in six parts, the first of which includes speeches delivered at the conference. The other five parts are arranged by the primary role of the contributors: religious figures, religious leaders, academics, media critics/journalists, and industry representatives, as well as an addendum. The 19 contributors offer a wide range of diverse opinion and religious/professional background. Included are Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association, priests, a rabbi, a representative of the

American Buddhist Congress, film critic Michael Medved, a record company executive, Jack Shaheen (who writes frequently on stereotyping of racial and ethnic groups in the mass media), and other clerics, media executives, journalists, and academics. Among the essays are Shaheen's "reel Arabs and Muslims," "religion, revenue and ratings: Some thoughts on faith in prime time television," and "God: Taboo in prime time?" It is interesting to note that this is the only book in this review essay that clearly features the viewpoint of a declared atheist.

D. Serials

31:23

RELIGION IN THE NEWS (Hartford, CT: Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life, Trinity College [300 Summit Street, Hartford, CT 06106], 1998-date, 3 issues per year — free [subscription available by contacting csrpl@trincoll.edu], ISSN 1525-7207) is supported by a grant by the Pew Charitable Trust. The journal is devoted to how religion is covered in our media. Editor Mark Silk, most recently affiliated with the *Atlanta Constitution* as their religion correspondent and other editors are all professors of religion at Trinity College. Articles cover such topics as the media coverage of Black church arson incidents, the Southern Baptist convention in Salt Lake City, how sportswriters handle religion, the falsification of church attendance records, and how media handle the charges of pedophilia against priests. Almost all of the stories concern the United States. The articles are reflective and critical and in general maintain a centrist-to-liberal slant on this news.

E. Electronic Resources

31:24

RELIGION NEWS SERVICE [website] (<http://www.religionnews.com>) Reviewed 1 Sept. 1999. Offering news about religion from around the world, the service has been one of "the nation's leading news outlets with intelligent, objective coverage of all religions — Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Asian religions, private spirituality, New Age and tribal beliefs." The service is used by newspapers, newsweeklies, and television outlets.

31:25

RELIGION NEWS TODAY: DAILY RELIGION NEWS REPORT [website] (<http://religiontoday.com>). Reviewed 1 Sept. 1999. The heavily illustrated site provides religion news from around the world with an emphasis on the "top story." The emphasis is on Christianity. The site also provides links to religious media and news archives.

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RELIGION: WELCOME [website] (<http://www.freedomforum.org/religion/welcome.asp>) Reviewed 1 Sept. 1999. Sponsored by the Freedom Forum, this site provides full-text news about religion throughout the United States in stories written either by a Freedom Forum First Amendment writer or the Associated Press. A recent update provided almost 40 different stories.