

critical study

Consent as a Commodity

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A Critical Study of **Manufacturing Consent, The Political Economy of the Mass Media**, by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988. xvi + 412 pp. ISBN 0-394-54926-0, ISBN 0-679-72034-0 (pbk.) CDN\$ 20.95 pbk, US\$ 14.95 pbk.

There is no need of a law to check the license of the press. It is law enough, and more than enough, to itself. Virtually the community have come together and agreed what things shall be uttered, have agreed on a platform and to excommunicate him who departs from it, and not one in a thousand dares utter anything else.—*Henry David Thoreau*

Instead of monopolizing the seat of judgment, journalism should be apologizing in the dock.—*Oscar Wilde*

In the spring of 1986, after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, a joke made the rounds in Hungary:

Question: What are the most powerful absorbers of radiation on earth?
Answer: *Izvestia* and *Pravda*.

Clearly, the Hungarians who enjoyed this joke were under no illusions concerning the accounts of the Chernobyl accident appearing in the Soviet press. Those people and countless citizens of the Soviet Union itself (where the joke may have originated) were well aware that *Izvestia* and *Pravda* are state newspapers, operated under the direction of state officials, and

committed to the protection and promulgation of a particular view of the world. Even now, more than three years later, with various changes of glasnost and perestroika a bit further along, it is still clear to us (and, no doubt, to the easterners who laughed at the joke about the absorptive powers of *Pravda* and *Izvestia*) that the Soviet Union has a captive press.

Here in the west, many of us derive double pleasure from such jokes, since apart from amusing us, they remind us of the contrast between our press and the Soviet Union's. In *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Edward S. Herman, an economist on the faculty of the Wharton School, and Noam Chomsky, the noted linguist and philosopher, undertake a critical examination which could have the effect of diminishing the pleasure some U.S. readers take in jokes about the Soviet press. The investigation carried out by the two authors reaches conclusions that call into question the very notion that the United States has a free press.

A study whose results collide so violently with conventional opinion is likely to be dismissed on its face by most western readers. There are also, undoubtedly, some readers ready to deny the book a hearing simply because they deem its authors radicals. There may even be readers who will dismiss the book's conclusions as the products of academic prejudice. For such readers, if any exist, the credentials of one of the authors, Chomsky, may reek of too much philosophy. (Although known

primarily as a linguist, Chomsky is also an eminent philosopher whose work within philosophy has had an enormous impact on such fields as philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and epistemology.¹⁾

Philosophers are not by inclination avid admirers of journalism. It is difficult to imagine two enterprises more unlike each other than philosophy and journalism. Their procedures, their underlying assumptions, their aspirations, and their daily undertakings all stand in violent contrast.

The philosopher, attempting to study the universe “under the aspect of eternity,” locates the “modern era” of his field about three centuries ago, and, asked to name “contemporary philosophers,” is likely to name more dead writers than living ones. The journalist measures recentness not in centuries, but in days or hours even. Figures and places prominent in the most spectacular news stories of a year or two ago are utterly vanished—lost in the mists of history—for the world of journalism. How many newspaper readers can now produce the name of the man whose nomination for a supreme court seat was rejected because he allegedly smoked marijuana when he taught at Harvard? Or the name of the young woman who travelled to Bimini with Gary Hart? Or the name of the town in Texas where the little girl was rescued from a well? The journalist finds it a luxury to have an entire working day to write a report. The philosopher usually thinks that a manuscript embodying several months of hard labor is a rough preliminary draft and finds it reasonable to work for years (sometimes decades even) on a single monograph. The journalist strives to make an ordinary routine of what is novel, setting up “beats” and regular daily procedures for tracking and “covering” what is new, whereas, the philosopher uncovers an inexhaustible store of novelty in the most ordinary material of our daily lives. The journalist develops a cuticle blocking what is ordinary and universal the better to be struck by what is novel or “news.” The

philosopher undertakes to recover and protect and preserve the innocence and sense of wonder of the child, in the course of a long training whose point is to render the familiar strange so that it can be seen and understood.

But, if these obvious contrasts by themselves make it clear that we should expect dramatic divergences between the accounts of the journalist and those of the philosopher, they do not constitute the grounds adduced by Herman and Chomsky for their principal theses. Their book devotes almost no space to the haste with which journalists write or the lack of reflection or study revealed in their work or their ignorance of relevant background information; Herman and Chomsky focus instead on structural features of the news media and draw their principal thesis from an analysis of those features.

That analysis is presented in the first chapter of *Manufacturing Consent*, the one titled “A Propaganda Model.” On the basis of this analysis, the authors put forward the central thesis of their book: the proposition that the operation of the U.S. press is most profitably viewed as the functioning of a vast propaganda system. The analysis of the first chapter is followed by a series of chapters in which the authors carry out detailed analyses of particular cases, such as the press’s handling of the alleged Bulgarian plot to kill the Pope, and such “paired examples” as the media’s handling of human rights violations in client regimes versus their handling of such violations in states viewed as official enemies, the coverage of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan versus coverage of the U.S. invasion of Vietnam, and coverage of elections in such U.S. client states as Guatemala and El Salvador versus coverage of elections in a state such as Nicaragua which is designated an “enemy” by the U.S. government.

I propose here to consider three questions concerning Herman and Chomsky’s book: 1) What exactly are they claiming about the U.S. mass media? 2) How good

is the reasoning and evidence with which they support their claims? And 3) What questions and lines of further investigation does their work suggest?

I: What are Herman and Chomsky Claiming?

Almost everyone agrees that the U.S. news media are biased: right-wingers complain bitterly of leftist biases in the press; left-wingers complain with equal bitterness of rightist biases; a few persons point to the complaints from left and right and conclude that the press must be doing its job objectively. The criticisms of Herman and Chomsky differ from the usual complaints in two crucial respects. First, their criticism is distinguished by the radical character of its content:² they are maintaining that there exist in the U.S. news media biases so pervasive and systematic that those media are most accurately described as a vast system of indoctrination and propaganda. Second, they back their criticism with massive scholarship and original research concerning the performance of the press. Before examining the radical content of their claim, it may be useful to recall one conventional stereotype of the U.S. press. A widespread image of the U.S. press (cherished by most of its members) is that it is somewhat radical and anti-establishment in its orientation, biased against business and government in its day-to-day reporting, perhaps a bit too quick to believe negative charges concerning leaders of government or business, and somewhat overzealous in its hunt for wrongdoing by people in positions of authority. In this common stereotype, the archetypical figures are Woodward and Bernstein doggedly tracking down the Watergate story and finally toppling a president. Did they play a little too rough in their fierce quest for the truth? Did they sometimes deceive their informants? Did they sometimes compromise the safety of informants? Well, they were taking on the most powerful official

in the known universe. They had to play rough. They had to fudge the truth, to pretend to more knowledge than they actually had at various stages of the search. They had to run risks themselves and impose risks on some of the people from whom they were hoping to obtain information. Honest journalism is a difficult and dangerous game. (It even calls for some lying.) Newspapers have a sacred obligation to the citizenry. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Or so the conventional story goes.³

In a series of volumes, of which *Manufacturing Consent* is the latest (and also the most systematic in its media analysis), Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky have mounted an extended and massively documented attack on this stereotype.⁴ They derive their title from a phrase, "the manufacture of consent," coined by Walter Lippmann.⁵ The manufacturing process in question is one of shaping public opinion, and, in particular, producing consent to the actions and policies of "dominant elites." Lippmann did not introduce the expression with ironic intention or contempt, but, rather, with the conviction that the manufacturing process in question is one sorely needed in a democracy. Locke and other theorists of democracy hold that government derives its just authority from the consent of the governed, but if the consent of the governed is a commodity whose production can be planned just as one plans the production of wheat or highways or fighter jets, then it is unclear whether one can properly characterize as "democratic" an exercise of authority that derives its alleged legitimacy from manufactured consent.

On the analysis developed by Herman and Chomsky, the conventional view of hard-hitting, somewhat over-aggressive investigative reporters working for an anti-establishment and radical press is a myth. Herman and Chomsky assert that the U.S. news media are themselves large corporations whose product is the relatively elite audiences which they sell to other large cor-

porations. (The conventional formulation has media corporations selling space or air time to other corporations, but the way our authors phrase it is more accurate: what the customer corporations are buying are audiences.) They claim that this fact and other structural considerations all have the consequence that the news media are highly protective of corporate interests. Since the news media are themselves large corporations, it is plausible to expect that their selection, framing, and interpretation of news, will reflect their own corporate interests. But this is not the only ideological restriction or “filter” as Herman and Chomsky view the matter: since the news media must attract advertising from other large corporations (the purchasers of their audiences), they must take care that nothing in their content or editorial stands offends those potential corporate advertisers. Still, further, the procedures they follow (the “beat system” with its reliance on pre-approved official news sources and institutionally affiliated “authorities”) constitute yet another “filter” which builds in additional bias in favor of the status quo and against radical criticism. Careful examination of these structural features (and others) and close analysis of the U.S. news media’s coverage of various episodes persuade Herman and Chomsky that, so far from displaying anti-business or anti-government biases, our news media are more accurately viewed as highly effective propaganda system which faithfully and uncritically purveys the doctrines of an elite consensus shared by business and government. This conclusion they dub their “propaganda model.”

What, exactly, do Herman and Chomsky have in mind when they say that our news media and scholarship constitute “a propaganda system”? To begin with they do *not* mean a system of governmental censorship and coercion of the sort familiar in totalitarian states. They invite the reader to imagine the possibility that restrictions on publication very nearly as severe as those imposed in totalitarian regimes might be un-

consciously and voluntarily adhered to in a democracy whose citizens were sufficiently indoctrinated. To illustrate how such voluntary restrictions can work in practice, they examine the media’s disparate treatment of victims of enemy regimes (“worthy victims,” such as Andrei Sakharov) and victims of friendly states or client states (“unworthy victims,” such as Latin American death squad victims, who are rarely identified by name). The authors write:

The mass media never explain *why* Andrei Sakharov is a worthy victim and Jose Luis Massera of Uruguay is unworthy—the attention and general dichotomization occur “naturally” as a result of the working of the filters, but the result is the same as if a commissar had instructed the media: “Concentrate on the victims of enemy powers and forget about the victims of friends.” (p. 32)

Treating victims of human rights violations in this way is just one example of what Herman and Chomsky characterize as:

...a systematic and highly political dichotomization in news coverage based on serviceability to important domestic power interests... observable in dichotomized choices of story and in the volume and quality of coverage. (p. 35)

The result is:

a disinformation system disguising a reality that can perhaps be discovered with sufficient energy and dedication (p. 209)

In their final chapter, Herman and Chomsky remind the reader that they are not talking about agit prop systems.

As we have stressed throughout this book, the U.S. media do not function in the manner of the propaganda system of a totalitarian state. Rather, they permit—indeed, encourage—spirited debate, criticism, and dissent, as long as these remain faithfully within the system of presuppositions and principles that constitute an elite consensus, a system so powerful as to be internalized largely without awareness. (p. 302)

The authors quote with approval media analyst Ben Bagdikian’s observation that the

institutional bias of the private mass media “does not merely protect the corporate system. It robs the public of a chance to understand the real world.”⁶ What the system permits the public to assume and discuss are:

conventional thoughts (p. 305)

conventional doctrine about our own society and its behavior (p. 305).

All of this discussion taking place, on Herman and Chomsky’s view, within

the presuppositional framework of the doctrinal consensus (p. 305).

Some readers may be slightly puzzled by what appears to be a certain amount of shifting in the notion of “propaganda system” with which the authors operate. For example, on page 164, discussing the *New York Times*’ refusal to mention the existence of reports and court decisions providing strong evidence against the alleged Bulgarian Connection in the assassination attempt on the Pope in 1981, the authors write: “A propaganda system exploiting the alleged Bulgarian Connection will naturally avoid such documents.” This passage and countless others make it clear that the *Times* itself counts as part of the propaganda system. Elsewhere, for example, on page 213, they speak of press behavior as providing “yet another striking illustration of the subservience of the media to the state propaganda system.” And here it appears that the propaganda system is a “state propaganda system” and that what the newspapers are doing is subordinating themselves to that system.

This dual use does not cause difficulty. The government of the United States, like any other, has a propaganda apparatus directly under its control (official press representatives, government presses, official press releases, official publications, and so). If the mass media of the United States uncritically accept the formulations of that propaganda apparatus, or if they restrict and distort the news for purposes of their own, then those media themselves

perform as an ancillary propaganda system, which is part of a larger one that also includes the state’s system.

Some inkling of the size of the system directly under the control of the state can be gained from figures Herman and Chomsky reproduce in their first chapter.⁷ These figures concern “public-information outreach” of one branch of the military, the Air Force, in one year (1979-1980). That “outreach” included:

140 newspapers, 690,000 copies per week
Airman magazine, monthly circulation 125,000
 34 radio and 17 TV stations, primarily overseas
 45,000 headquarters and unit news releases
 615,000 hometown news releases
 6,600 interviews with news media
 3,200 news conferences
 500 news media orientation flights
 50 meetings with editorial boards
 11,000 speeches

Drawing on data available for 1968, Herman and Chomsky point out that the list just given “excludes vast areas of the air force’s public-information effort,” and note that beyond the 1,305 employees known to be assigned full-time to public relations in 1968, additional thousands had “public functions collateral to other duties.” They record, further, that the “air force at that time offered a weekly film-clip service for TV and a taped features program for use three times a week, sent to 1,139 radio stations,” and that it “also produced 148 motion pictures, of which 24 were released for public consumption.” Bear in mind: these are the figures for just one branch of the military, which is itself just one branch of the government.

One of the characterizations of a “propaganda system” cited above is drawn from Herman and Chomsky’s discussion of the performance of our press concerning the alleged Gulf of Tonkin incidents which provided a pretext for the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution (the United States’ *de facto* declaration of war on Vietnam). In the

course of that discussion, the authors speak of the “appropriate skepticism which would have been aroused in the mind of the reader of the foreign or the ‘alternative’ media, or the reader with the sophistication to treat the media as a disinformation system disguising a reality that can perhaps be discovered with sufficient energy and dedication.”⁸ When one begins to reflect on the vastness of the forces that could be sustaining a “disinformation system” (if our authors’ claims are correct), one realizes that energy and dedication would indeed be required to combat it. And working through the extensive case studies of the book and through the documentation with which they bristle, one begins to form some estimation of just how much “energy” and “dedication” are required.

Before we examine any of the evidence presented in the book, there are some technical shortcomings of the volume which should be noted, shortcomings which place real obstacles in the path of a reader who wants to make serious use of the book’s scholarship. The flaws arise from three editorial blunders. First, there is no list of works cited. Second, there is a sadly inadequate index. Third, there is no key explaining the abbreviations employed in the end notes. The lack of a list of works cited would be tolerable if the index were complete, but the index is quite poor. Walter Lippmann is cited in the preface and end notes and yet given no entry in the index. The names of hundreds of other authors appear in the copious end notes but are accorded no entries in the index if they do not also appear in the main body of the text. Thus, if you wish to discover whether or not a particular author is cited and that author happens to be one whose name does not appear in the main body of the text, you are reduced to poring through the fine print of sixty-three pages of end notes. Further, while you are engaged in working on those end notes, the lack of a key to the abbreviations can be infuriating. Even a reader who has some acquaintance with the enormous

range of literature cited is likely to be puzzled by such abbreviations as “AWWA” and “FEER” and unhappy to find that it is necessary to pore backwards over a number of pages of fine print to discover buried in earlier notes such explanations as “*At War With Asia*, (New York: Pantheon, 1970; hereafter AWWA)” or “*Far Eastern Economic Review*... (hereafter FEER).” The editorial decisions to omit both a key and a list of works cited and also to omit index entries for authors whose names appear only in the end notes were regrettable blunders. No doubt these omissions saved editorial time and printing costs, but they decrease the value of the book for the serious reader and partially cancel the painstaking scholarly work of the authors. Our concern in the next section is that scholarly work itself, not the obstacles placed between it and us by the publisher.

II: How Good is the Reasoning and Evidence with which Herman and Chomsky Support their Claims?

The bulk of the chapters in *Manufacturing Consent* undertake a particularly arduous task, namely, the project of formulating dispassionate and objective evidence to establish the existence of powerful and systematic biases in the U.S. news media. If one supposes, just for the sake of argument, that there are biases in the mass media as pervasive as those the authors say are at work, then it follows that, if those biases are largely invisible to us, it is because we are personally saturated with them. Thus, on the hypothesis that their central thesis is correct, Herman and Chomsky have a triply difficult task. They must first overcome the effects of the system of indoctrination and propaganda on themselves. They must next undertake the task of carrying out investigations that gather objective evidence for the existence of the biases operating in the media.⁹ And, they must then discover a method of get-

ting an audience thoroughly saturated with those biases to examine that evidence and to take seriously the proposition that the biases exist. We are concerned here with the second of the three tasks: the project of developing objective evidence for the existence of profound biases in the news media. (Bear in mind, the mere existence of some bias or other is not enough to support the strong claim our authors make about the existence of a propaganda system.)

In the first chapter, "A Propaganda Model," the authors call attention to what they term "filters" which govern the functioning of the mass media. The first of these filters is the size, cost, concentration of ownership, and profit orientation of mass media firms. Major newspapers, radio stations, and television stations are large and very expensive assets. An enormous sum of money is needed to purchase one. Each is run with the aim of generating commercial profit. Ownership is concentrated in a surprisingly small number of extremely wealthy families and parent corporations with vast holdings elsewhere in the economy. Given these facts alone, it would hardly be surprising to discover that these mass media firms handle the selection and presentation of "news" in a manner that is preternaturally respectful of corporate interests.

But the complex of facts just noted are only part of the picture. Each of the mass media corporations is in the business of selling fairly prosperous audiences to other corporations (the advertisers who purchase space or air time). Therefore, quite apart from the mass media firm's own corporate interests, it must be very careful to pay attention to the interests and requirements (ideological and otherwise) of those other corporations, its potential customers. This circumstance is the second "filter" identified by our authors.

Nor is this all. For the very process of institutionalizing the "covering" of the news leads to the establishment of "beats"

and networks of "experts" who acquire the status of "expert" in virtue of occupying particular offices. Elected officials, inhabitants of think tanks funded by corporations, government spokesmen, and corporate officers abound in the "experts" networks established by the mass media. This has an obvious effect of building in a powerful additional bias favoring conventional opinion and the status quo and placing radical critics at a huge disadvantage. This is the third "filter" identified by Herman and Chomsky.

The fourth "filter" identified by our authors consists of organizations formed by the corporate community for the purpose of generating "flak" or negative responses to media statements which fail to meet the ideological requirements of that community. The American Legal Foundation, the Capital Legal Foundation, the Media Institute, the Center for Media and Public Affairs, and Accuracy in Media are all examples of flak machines which play an important role in controlling what appears in the mass media.

Finally, the authors identify "anticommunism as a control mechanism" as their fifth "filter." Concerning this filter, they write:¹⁰ "In normal times as well as in periods of Red scares, issues tend to be framed in terms of a dichotomized world of Communist and anti-Communist powers, with gains and losses allocated to contesting sides, and rooting for 'our side' considered an entirely legitimate news practice. It is the mass media that identify, create, and push into the limelight a Joe McCarthy, Arkady Shevchenko, and Claire Sterling and Robert Leiken, or an Annie Kriegel and Pierre Daix. The ideology and religion of anticommunism is a potent filter."

The analysis of the first chapter is both interesting and illuminating. It seems to me, however, that it leaves something important out of account. What it omits is, in fact, a sixth filter, namely, the extent to which prosperous audiences which are the "products" offered for sale by mass media firms are

themselves inclined to impose ideological constraints on the fare presented in the media. The media firms must attract these people in order to be able to sell them to other corporations. And that feat requires, among other things, paying fairly careful attention to their ideological requirements. Herman and Chomsky could reply that the ideological demands of prosperous audiences simply result from the operation of the propaganda system, but causal interconnections clearly obtain among the first five filters, and that circumstance did not disqualify any of them. In any case, the fact remains that the ideological constraints imposed by potential audiences are often stringent and constitute an important part of the overall picture.

Before turning to the material the authors assemble in their second chapter, it is worth our while to notice something pertinent to its principal exhibit. Consider a striking fact. The names "Maura Clarke," "Ida Ford," "Jean Donovan," and "Dorothy Kazel" are not household words. This is a remarkable circumstance. The dramatic and quite horrible fates of these women did receive some notice in the U.S. press, but not enough to fix their names in our memories, and certainly not enough to invest even one of them with a recognizable personal identity. If you are drawing a blank on the names, it is not a mark of some serious deficiency in your knowledge; it is, rather, a piece of evidence that offers slight partial confirmation of the conclusions advanced by Herman and Chomsky. These women were U.S. citizens and religious workers, three of them Maryknoll nuns, the fourth a lay religious worker. On the 2nd of December in 1980, the four women were raped and murdered by the security forces of a foreign government. The soldiers who raped and murdered the women knew that they were U.S. citizens. They also knew that three of them were nuns. Had the rapes and murders occurred in Cuba or Nicaragua, it is almost impossible to imagine the oceans of ink that would have

flowed in the course of chronicling the lives and aspirations of the women and the savage injuries done to them. Members of their families would have become familiar faces on *Nightline* and the *CBS National Evening News*. Had the atrocity taken place in Libya, we might have expected all this and a bombing raid to boot. But the murders took place in a "friendly" state, El Salvador, the home of death squads and routine assaults on the civilian population, so the *New York Times* did not waste ink on a single editorial concerning the case, and *Nightline* and the *CBS National Evening News* found more important matters to address.

Now the media's treatment of the rape and murder of these four women constitutes part of the evidence presented in a spectacular application of the method of paired examples in Chapter Two, "Worthy and Unworthy Victims." The general idea of the method of paired examples is to identify two episodes of the same type, one of which takes place in an "enemy" country, the other in a "friendly" country, and then carefully to trace the dichotomous treatment accorded those episodes by the news media. The most stunning exhibit of the second chapter is in effect 100 paired examples. The authors compare media coverage of the murder of an obscure Polish priest, Jerzy Popieluszko, who was killed by Polish secret police on 19 October 1984, with the media coverage of the murder of 100 priests, nuns, and religious workers who were murdered in Latin America in recent years. The authors contrast the considerable attention accorded Popieluszko with the meager attention given to the 100 religious Latin America murder victims. Part of a table they give for their multiple paired example case is in Table 1.

What Table 1 tells us is that the *Times* printed 78 stories concerning the Popieluszko case and only 57 about all 100 of the Latin American religious victims. The *Times* printed three editorials concerning Popieluszko and none concerning any of

Table 1: *New York Times* Coverage

Victims	Articles		Column Inches		Front Page Articles		Editorials	
	No.	% of row 1	No.	% of row 1	No.	% of row 1	No.	% of row 1
1. Jerzy Popieluszko murdered 10/19/84	78	(100)	1183	(100)	10	(100)	3	(100)
2. 72 religious victims in Latin America 1964-78	8	(10.3)	117.5	(9.9)	1	(10)	0	0
3. 23 religious victims in Guatemala 1980-85	7	(9.0)	66.5	(5.6)	0	0	0	0
4. Oscar Romero murdered 3/18/80	16	(20.5)	219	(18.5)	4	(40)	0	0
5. 4 U.S. religious women, murdered in El Salvador 12/2/80	26	(33.3)	202	(17)	3	(30)	0	0
6. total of lines 2-5	57	(73.1)	605	(51.1)	8	(80)	0	0

the Latin American victims. The *Times* placed 10 of its stories concerning Popieluszko on the front page. All 100 of the Latin American victims received only 8 stories that found their way to the front page. Altogether, the *Times* published a total of 1,183 column inches concerning Popieluszko. All 100 of the Latin American victims received a total of only 605 column inches (or about half of the space accorded the Polish priest). The murdered Maryknoll nuns and layworker, all four of whom were U.S. citizens, received only 202 column inches. (The figures cited here are only part of those given in Chapter Two, which also gives statistical summaries of coverage for the news magazines *Time* and *Newsweek*, and for the *CBS National Evening News*.)

How good is the method of paired examples employed by the authors? The concrete results it yields in the Popieluszko case versus the hundred religious victims in Latin America are impressive, but is it possible that there are potential flaws or pitfalls in the method? One might argue that for the

method of paired example to yield meaningful results it is not enough to have two acts of the same type taking place in two countries, say, two murders of clergymen, one in country A, the other in country B. A plausible case can be made that there must also be some rough similarity in the background institutions and practices of country A and country B, since, radical differences in those background conditions could influence the possibility of coverage in a manner independent of any biases operating in the media, thus giving rise to misleading contrasts in the measures that Herman and Chomsky take into account (number of column inches devoted to event, number of front page stories, number of editorials, and so on). If, for example, officials in country B routinely refuse to take action when clergymen are murdered except, when need arises, to intimidate or murder journalists who accord attention to such murders, then it follows that there will be no statements from investigators to report, no denials from suspects, no arrests.

no press conferences held by prosecutors, no press conferences by persons representing the victim, no arraignments, no trials, no human interest stories concerning the victim and the victim's family and colleagues, no sentencing proceedings, no appeal processes to report, and so on.

Thus, one might argue that a relevant difference between Poland and the various Latin American countries in which the other murders took place is that Poland has a more developed system of law. Once a murder has been committed there are procedures that will ordinarily¹¹ be followed: arrest, arraignment, and so on. At each stage, there is a natural occasion to report on the proceedings. In contrast, in the Latin American countries, there is much less in the way of authentic established legal systems and the sort of practices mentioned in the last paragraph (murder of journalists and potential witnesses) are not unknown. Therefore, in those countries, one cannot expect as a matter of course the carrying out of procedures which are more or less routine in Poland.

There is truth in this line of thought, but the criticism must be tempered by taking into account the extent to which the U.S. press is not tied to the step-by-step unfolding of events in another country, but can develop a story in a variety of ways and is even, to a certain degree, free to make its own occasions. Has no official investigation been launched in the state where the murder took place? That circumstance is surely going to be denounced by someone. That denunciation could itself become a front page story. Is there an investigation but no arrests? Again, someone will be denouncing "foot dragging." Again, the press has something to report, if it chooses to report it.

Still, there are limits to the press's capacity to keep a story alive and interesting. So, sharp contrasts in the background practices and institutional arrangements of two countries could yield distorted measures of media bias, if one

counted editorials, column inches, and front page stories but neglected to take into account the possible effects of those background contrasts.

Is it reasonable to suppose that the dramatic disparity in the coverage of Popieluszko's murder and those of the one hundred clergy in Latin America can be dismissed as a result of underlying cultural and institutional contrasts between Poland and Latin America? No. Because we have only to engage in the mental exercise of shifting the locations of the various Latin American murders to another location *within* Latin America to recognize that much more is involved than possible contrasts between Poland and Latin America. Ask yourself this question: If four American women, three nuns and a lay religious worker, had been raped and murdered by the security forces of Nicaragua, how probable is it that the *New York Times* would have failed to write a single editorial about the episode? How probable that the *Times* would have devoted less space to the episode than to the murder of an unknown Polish priest? How probable that Alexander Haig and Jean Kirkpatrick would have made statements suggesting that the victims were to some degree responsible for their own rape and murder?¹² Since the answer to these questions is clear, we can conclude that the evidence presented in Herman and Chomsky's second chapter is very strong indeed.

The full power of Herman and Chomsky's results is brought out by translating their figures concerning the *New York Times* into equivalent but somewhat more dramatic numbers. (Bear in mind that the figures for the *Times* are only part of those they present: their table also gives figures for *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *CBS National Evening News*.) Let us now consider what the *Times* would have published had it accorded each of the Latin American victims the attention it gave to Popieluszko. How many articles would it have published about them? It would have

published 7,800. In fact, it published only 57. How many column inches would it have devoted to them? It would have given them 118,300 column inches. In fact, it gave them only 605. How many front page stories would it have run about them? It would have run 1,000 front page stories. In fact, it ran only 8. And how many editorials would it have published about them? It would have raised urgent questions about them in 300 editorials. In fact, it published *none*.

Herman and Chomsky also assert that the very formats employed by the mass media have important ideological consequences:

The technical structure of the media virtually compels adherence to conventional thoughts; nothing else can be expressed between two commercials or in seven hundred words, without the appearance of absurdity which is so difficult to avoid when one is challenging familiar doctrine with no opportunity to develop facts or argument. (p. 305)

This passage prompts two considerations. First, observe that there is an intrinsic asymmetry in the demands placed on those who hold conventional views and those who challenge such views in any society. That is, there is an asymmetry that would exist even if we had a completely honest press entirely free of the propagandistic features to which Herman and Chomsky call attention. Wherever there is a community of speakers, there will be shared background assumptions. And it will always be true that the writer who wishes to challenge one of those assumptions will have a harder time, be faced with stricter standards of evidence and argument, than a writer who simply reiterates the assumptions or spells out some of their straightforward consequences. Herman and Chomsky do not suggest that this circumstance in itself makes our press a propaganda system. Their point is that, given the extraordinarily short attention span presupposed by the press and the radically compressed space made available for the ex-

pression of ideas, the writer who wishes to challenge conventional notions is placed in an impossible position.

Second, notice that the asymmetry in question answers a question that is likely to occur to the reader working through the book's bristling documentation: Is all this detailed and massive documentation really necessary? Was Henry David Thoreau's judgment of the Mexican War any the less sound or accurate for his never having read transcripts of congressional discussion of the topic or War Department planning documents? Would his assessment of the moral status of slavery have benefited from careful analysis of slave ship bills of lading or slave-auction records from Southern ports? Is the obsessive documentation of *Manufacturing Consent*, its thoroughness, its relentless, never-resting attention to the unloving details really needed?

The elaborate documentation provided by Herman and Chomsky is not superfluous. A writer who merely repeats conventional views, one whose arguments and claims proceed within the range of respectable political opinion, has no need to supply footnotes. However wild his assertions, such a writer has no fear of dismissal. Thus, for example, such a writer can assert that the U.S. was attempting to bring about democracy in Vietnam or is now trying to bring democracy to Central America, and be completely confident that most readers will neither require nor expect any evidence for these (intrinsically implausible but generally accepted) points of state propaganda. Matters are otherwise for the writer who challenges any of the items in our presuppositional system. Suppose a writer suggests that U.S. support of such dictators as Batista, Diem, Thieu, Ky, the Shah, Somoza, Rios Montt, Marcos, *et al.* doesn't arise from a series of honest blunders but is instead convincing evidence that we have some aim other than supporting democracy. Suppose this writer suggests that in fact we are not consistently

mistaking brutal dictators for real democrats but are, rather, reaching decisions that make perfect sense if the aim of our policy is not promoting democracy, but rather some other end. Quite apart from bracing for personal vilification, this writer had better be prepared, as Chomsky and Herman are, to offer bristling documentation that stands up to tough scrutiny.

At this point it might not be amiss to record some chance remarks concerning ideological biases I have heard from journalists. In July of 1984, in the course of a conversation about biases in the news media, I asked an editor of a major metropolitan newspaper why his paper had not yet seen fit to publish any information about the Indonesian invasion of East Timor (then in its ninth year) and the subsequent destruction of about one-third of the population of that nation (200,000 out of 600,000). The silence of the U.S. press on this matter is something Herman and Chomsky discuss in the present volume (on pp. 284-85, for example.) The editor's reply: "Bus plunge phenomenon." He proceeded to explain that if one man dies shoveling snow in the newspaper's home city, that's front page news. But, if eighty-seven people die when a bus plunges off a cliff in Mexico, that's not news.¹³ I pointed out that Cambodia is as distant as East Timor and that, nonetheless, his paper had carried extensive coverage of Pol Pot's atrocities, but he did not tell me what feature of the Cambodian atrocities made them more interesting or newsworthy than the atrocities the U.S. helped to finance in East Timor.

In June of 1988, in discussion with another editor of a major metropolitan newspaper, I quoted some of the statistics from the second chapter of *Manufacturing Consent* (which I had been fortunate enough to have access to in a manuscript version). How did the editor account for the gross disparity in coverage accorded the murder of Jerzy Popieluszko and the coverage accorded the 100 clerical victims in Central America? The editor's reply was unex-

pected and emphatic: "The press is interested in human rights violations in eastern Europe." This editor did not raise some obvious questions. *Why* is the press so keenly interested in human rights violations in eastern Europe? More important, *why* is the press *not* interested in human rights violations in Latin America? After all, as Herman and Chomsky emphasize, if intense press scrutiny of human rights violations can have some beneficial effect even across the Iron Curtain (there is reason to believe that the speed with which Polish authorities arrested, tried, and convicted the police officers who murdered Popieluszko was, in part, a result of the glare of publicity accorded the murder by such major papers as the *New York Times*), there is good reason to expect that intense press scrutiny of the operations of death squads and the routine murders of civilians and clergymen in Latin America could have a dramatic effect on those activities.

More recently, a professor at one of the leading schools of journalism discussed with me lectures he and I had heard Chomsky give on the topic of media bias. The professor complained that Chomsky often alleges that the press is biased but never puts forward any quantitative data to support his charge. I quoted various figures of column inches, number of stories, number of front page stories, and number of editorials from the second chapter of *Manufacturing Consent*. The journalism professor's response: "The murder of a priest in Central America isn't news."

It is not an easy matter to converse with a man whose level of indoctrination is that thorough-going. This journalism professor probably realizes that a murder of a priest by the Sandinista regime (something that has not happened) would elicit screaming headlines. So his reply amounts to the response: "The murder of a priest by one of our client regimes in Central America isn't news." Here is indoctrination so complete and perfect that one can only marvel at it.

Even more revealing than these replies

is an exchange between Chomsky and a group of broadcast journalists that took place in February of 1984. The journalists had just heard Chomsky deliver a trenchant critique (“1984: Orwell’s and Ours”) of the U.S. news media. The transcription of their bewildered and angry responses is fascinating reading.¹⁴ If one can forget for a moment the human cost (in Central America and elsewhere) of the attitudes and misunderstandings revealed in the journalists’ questions and comments, the transcription is a source of hilarity. In a typical exchange, one finds a journalist stating that the very fact that Chomsky could stand before them and refer to events and episodes which are allegedly ignored by our press demonstrates that Chomsky must be wrong. For, the journalist reasoned, since Chomsky hadn’t personally visited every country he referred to and hadn’t witnessed every event he mentioned, it followed that our press must be doing a good job, since otherwise Chomsky could never have found out about the episodes. This journalist appeared to be unaware that other nations also publish newspapers and magazines and that people who are not monolingual (Chomsky, for example) can read them. He seemed also to be oblivious of the fact that it is possible for a reader of our press to engage in an uncommon activity, namely, critical reflection, and to realize, in particular cases, even without the benefit of access to foreign papers, that the treatment of an issue or episode is badly distorted or biased. Quite apart from access to foreign publications or the exercise of critical intelligence, there is also the obvious circumstance that there exist various small, non-mainstream sources of information (such as *The Nation*, *Z Magazine*, and *Covert Action Bulletin*).

Finally, before concluding this section, I want to relate an episode that took place in 1973, the year Chomsky and Herman completed what was, so far as I know, their first collaborative work, a monograph in which they studied connections between

United States foreign policy and news media propaganda in the context of the Vietnam war. That early monograph was titled “Counter-Revolutionary Violence: Bloodbaths in Fact and in Propaganda,” and was scheduled for publication in 1973. Its fate provides a fascinating glimpse of the U.S. propaganda system and the obstacles confronting authors who take seriously “the responsibilities of the intellectual.”

After the authors signed a contract with Warner Modular Publications, Inc., the monograph was copy-edited and typeset and 10,000 copies were run off. William Sarnoff, then Vice President of Warner Communications, Inc., (the conglomerate that owned Warner Modular), happened to see an advance copy of an advertisement scheduled to appear in several periodicals. Displeased because the single sentence quoted in the ad led him to believe that the work by Chomsky and Herman was “unpatriotic,” Sarnoff demanded that he be shown a copy of their text. After one had been hand-delivered from the headquarters of Warner Modular in Boston to his desk in the Rockefeller Building in Manhattan, Sarnoff concluded that the work was indeed “unpatriotic” and ordered that the ads be cancelled, that publication of the monograph be halted, and that the plates of the monograph be destroyed. Claude McCaleb, the president of Warner Modular, and other officers on Warner Modular’s staff argued against this order. Touchingly, part of McCaleb’s argument against what he viewed as “censorship” was the objection that “the academic community would be horrified and our relationships severely damaged,” if Sarnoff’s orders were carried out.¹⁵ In fact, only a scattered handful of academics ever learned the fate of Chomsky and Herman’s monograph. But, nonetheless, Warner Modular sustained damages far worse than injured relationships before Sarnoff was through dealing with the monograph. For, in a short space of time, not only did Sarnoff destroy the plates of the monograph,

but he also fired McCaleb, and the other officers of Warner Modular, and even destroyed Warner Modular Publications Inc. itself, by simply dissolving the offending corporation. So much for the “unpatriotic” monograph and the deluded publishers who thought they should honor a contract with two scholarly critics of U.S. foreign policy.

It is worth considering two assumptions that lay behind McCaleb’s objection concerning “damaged relationships.” McCaleb assumed as a matter of course that the press would report Warner’s destruction of the monograph’s plates and abrogation of the contract with Chomsky and Herman. He assumed, further, that the academic community would be “horrified,” when it learned what had been done. Both of these assumptions deserve comment. The first, the assumption that the press would report the destruction of the plates of the monograph, presupposed a vigilant press, quick to call attention to efforts to block public expression of serious criticism of government policy. This presupposition may have been consistent with the analysis of the U.S. news media contained in the monograph Sarnoff so effectively destroyed, but it is not consistent with the more sustained and systematic analysis of those media in the book here under review. In any event, it turned out to be a false assumption. The academic world could be “horrified” only if it actually learned what Sarnoff had done, but Sarnoff’s actions were never reported in our press. Thus, the further assumption that the academic world *would* be horrified if it learned about those actions was not put to the test; but, to judge from the mixed reactions of the small chance sample of scholars to whom I have reported the episode, McCaleb’s second assumption may have been as overly optimistic as his first one.

The ultimate fate of Claude McCaleb himself provides a grim commentary on the rewards of courage in professional life. McCaleb, who, until his run-in with

Sarnoff, had enjoyed a distinguished career in publishing, died during the early years of the present decade. His occupation during the last several years of his life: taxi-driver.

If the arguments of *Manufacturing Consent* are correct, then it is no surprise that the U.S. press never mentioned the 1973 episode. The actual destruction of texts is not an everyday event in the United States. In this respect, Sarnoff’s course of action was nonstandard, but the silence of the press, its lack of interest in the matter is exactly what one should expect if Herman and Chomsky have correctly analyzed the mass media. (This lack of interest in William Sarnoff’s actions was not exhibited by the European press which, especially in France, paid active, if not always well-informed, attention to the affair.) Herman and Chomsky’s arguments have this interesting feature, namely, that, if they are sound, then one should not have an opportunity to read them or serious criticism of them in the mass media.

III: What Questions and Lines of Further Investigation does the Work of Herman and Chomsky Suggest?

Of the many questions suggested by the book under review, perhaps the most pressing is: How is one to protect one’s intelligence against the relentless media onslaught documented by the authors? If one is engaged in reading the book, one has made a good start at doing just that, but what else can one do?

It is easy to be overwhelmed by the bleak picture of the mass media that emerges from the pages of *Manufacturing Consent*. The question “Can we do anything to change this situation?” may begin to haunt the reader working through the book’s analyses and arguments and documentation. A reader so affected may be cheered to discover in the book’s last chapter¹⁶ a passage that holds out hope:

...while there have been important structural changes centralizing and strengthening the propaganda system, there have been counterforces at work with a potential for broader access. The rise of cable and satellite communications, while initially captured by and dominated by commercial interests, has weakened the power of the network oligopoly and retains a potential for enhanced local-group access. There are already some 3,000 public-access channels in use in the United States, offering 20,000 hours of locally produced programs per week, and there are seven national producers and distributors of programs for access channels through satellites... as well as hundreds of local suppliers ...Grass-roots and public-interest organizations need to recognize and try to avail themselves of these media (and organizational) opportunities.

One reads the analyses and documentation of Herman and Chomsky with growing respect and wonder. More than one commentator has asked about Chomsky how he can find the motivation to keep at his arduous labor. One wonders also whether the price of such absorption in the filth of the empire might be something like the price of staring too long into the abyss. Nietzsche: "If one stares into the abyss too long, the abyss stares back."

Students of democratic theory may wish to explore the question whether the investigations of Herman and Chomsky put the consent doctrine of Locke and other theorists in a new light. If a government derives its just authority from the consent of the governed as those theorists hold, what difference does it make if it turns out that consent can be "manufactured"? If the consent of the governed is, as we expressed it earlier, a commodity whose production can be planned just as one plans the production of wheat or highways or fighter jets, can one still properly characterize as "democratic" an exercise of authority that derives its alleged legitimacy from manufactured consent?

Readers interested in the effects of ideological biases in areas other than

coverage of foreign affairs might direct their attention to a range of questions that arise naturally enough. To what other topics can one apply the various methods and procedures employed by Herman and Chomsky? Are there other methods overlooked by the authors that one can apply fruitfully? If the authors have correctly identified institutional mechanisms that give rise to bias in the coverage of foreign affairs, what are the effects of those mechanisms in the coverage of purely domestic issues? How useful are the methods and procedures of Herman and Chomsky in the context of domestic policy? Consider, for example, various topics from the field of biomedical ethics that are very much in the news currently, such topics as abortion, transplantation, living wills, containment of medical costs, and euthanasia. Can one objectively document ideological bias at work in the media's treatment of these topics? How could the method of dichotomous treatment or paired example be adapted for this context? Might one, for example, contrast coverage devoted to disruptive demonstrations and bombings of abortion clinics, on the one hand, with coverage (more accurately, non-coverage) of the routine of daily destruction that is the normal business of those clinics?

An important aspect of any book is what it does not say. So it is interesting to ask what is not in *Manufacturing Consent*. Authors tackling a theme as vast as the one Herman and Chomsky address must necessarily make selections. Much of what is omitted is omitted because there simply isn't space for it. Still, one omission is striking: There is no discussion of the U.S. press's treatment of Israel. There isn't even a single index entry for "Israel." Chomsky's views on this topic are developed at length in this *Fateful Triangle* and other writings (such as recent articles in *Z Magazine*). Since the book here under review abounds with controversial views, the absence of any mention of Israel cannot be attributed to timidity on the part of

the authors (or the publisher, for that matter, though there is room for some slight doubt here). Is the absence of any reference to the U.S. press's handling of Israel evidence of disagreement between the authors on the topic?

For scholars entrusted with the task of teaching "critical thinking" or "informal logic" courses, the book provides a rich store of material. Students can be invited to study the evidence assembled in the chapters that present paired examples and to form their own critical evaluations of the extent to which that evidence supports the conclusions drawn by the authors. They can be invited to think hard about the difficulty of providing objective evidence of bias. They can be invited to exercise their wits on such questions as this: even if a particular method of argument can provide objective evidence of bias in a given case, is it possible that the method can be used in a biased fashion? If they are outraged by particular claims in the book, they can be urged to present the best argument against those claims they can devise, and then to produce the best reply to that argument they can invent on Herman and Chomsky's behalf. If they are outraged by the book's contentions, they can be invited to investigate the abstract question whether it would be possible for citizens of a society whose news media and scholarship were saturated with ideological bias ever to discover this fact about their society. If they are convinced that their own society is not saturated with ideological bias, they can be challenged to defend that conviction. If they are persuaded that their own society is permeated with biases of the sort described by Herman and Chomsky, they can be invited to devise their own paired examples to illustrate and support their belief. Even an instructor convinced that the central conclusions of the book are false or badly exaggerated is likely to profit from working carefully through its evidence and analyses; the task of refuting the book's analyses will require paying considerably closer attention to what is actually published

in the news media than most philosophers normally do and it will require becoming better informed about modern history and current events than most educated persons are.

The enterprise students (and instructors) will be embarked on if they take this work seriously is not some amusing enrichment exercise or sidepath but rather an enterprise that lies at the heart of a liberal education. For, whatever they finally make of the principal conclusions of the book, students who work in a sustained fashion on its arguments and analyses will have to achieve a particular form of intellectual growth. They will also nourish their capacity to assess the institutions and practices of their own society.

Philosophers concerned with theoretical questions of "objectivity" might find it instructive to engage in careful study of the fascinating evidence which Herman and Chomsky have assembled in the book under review and the arguments they have constructed.

Some readers of the book will be asking whether the authors exaggerate the systematic biases it deals with, but one can also ask whether the authors have radically *understated* the degree to which the U.S. news media are saturated with bias. Given the vast strength and pervasiveness of the system Herman and Chomsky describe, how can they have any confidence that they have themselves entirely escaped its powerful gravitational field? If they haven't, then it is possible that the biases noted by them are less significant than other more fundamental ones so thoroughly absorbed by all of us that even Herman and Chomsky are in their grip.

In any case, the claim that our news media operate with a very high degree of systematic bias is put beyond reasonable doubt by the careful documentation and analysis of Herman and Chomsky. That the biases in question also permeate much of our scholarship and daily discourse makes the task of identifying and overcoming them

all the more crucial.

In the United States, we describe our country as the land of the free, but we cannot yet boast of many free men and women. Free to wear and think and speak whatever we wish and free to conduct our lives however we see fit, for the most part we dress alike, think alike, speak alike, and act alike. Blessed with constitutional protection of a free press, we have as our resources newspapers, magazines and television broadcasts which give expression to the full gamut of political thought from M to N. This barren sameness is not a fertile breeding ground for authentic liberty and autonomy, though it is ideal for manufacturing the consent needed by the policy planners who engineered the destruction of several Asian societies in recent decades and who now wage war with a proxy force in Central America. A disciple of Plato once remarked that "To wrestle with the sophist is at the same time to defend the city from tyranny." Herman and Chomsky teach us that if we are to defend the city from tyranny we must learn to wrestle with the propandist, particularly the propagandist who looks back at each one of us from his or her own mirror.

Notes

¹ See, for example, Chomsky's *Cartesian Linguistics* (Harper & Row, 1966), *Language and Mind* (Harcourt Brace & World, 1972), *The Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory* (Plenum, 1975), *Reflections on Language* (Pantheon, 1975), and *Knowledge of Language* (Praeger, 1986).

² A handful of other media analysts draw similar conclusions, Ben Bagdikian, Alexander Cockburn, and Michael Parenti are three writers whose views of the media are akin to those of Herman and Chomsky in several respects, and there are a few others. Media analysts whose views resemble Herman and

Chomsky's are rare. [See also, "The Unspeakable: Understanding the System of Fallacy in the Media," by John McMurtry. This issue pp. 133-50.—Eds.]

³ Notice that those who take such pleasure in recounting the tireless anti-establishment efforts of Woodward and Bernstein overlook a point Chomsky stresses, namely, that Nixon's error did not consist in the "secret" bombing of Cambodia or the saturation bombing of Vietnam: his mistake consisted in picking on the wrong guys at home, e.g., employing operatives to break into the National Headquarters of the Democratic Party and placing on his official "Enemies List" the names of James Watson (President of IBM) and other powerful corporate and governmental figures.

⁴ See, for example, their two-volume study, *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (South End Press, 1979), whose component volumes are *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* and *After the Cataclysm, Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology*. See also Herman's *The Real Terror Network* (South End Press, 1982), Herman and Brodhead's *Demonstration Elections* (South End Press, 1984), and Herman and Brodhead's *The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection* (Sheridan Square, 1986). The interested reader should also consult Chomsky's *Steps Towards a New Cold War* (Pantheon, 1982), *Fateful Triangle: the United States, Israel, and the Palestinians* (South End Press, 1983), *Turning the Tide*, (South End Press, 1985), *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World* (Claremont Research, 1986), *Ideology and Power: The Managua Lectures* (South End Press, 1988), *The Culture of Terrorism* (South End Press, 1988), and, most recently (too recently to be taken into account in this review), *Necessary*

Illusions (South End Press, 1989).

⁵ Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (1922; reprint: Allen & Unwin, 1932).

⁶ Ben Bagdikian, *The Media Monopoly* (Beacon Press, 1980), p.x. Cited in *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 303.

⁷ *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 20.

⁸ *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 209.

⁹ A task whose difficulty is increased by the circumstance that one manifestation of media bias is silence concerning certain events. Analysts attempting to document media bias must, therefore, manage somehow to develop independent sources of information.

¹⁰ *Manufacturing Consent*, pp. 30-31.

¹¹ But not typically in the case of murders carried out by the police themselves. Special circumstances obtained in the case of Popieluszko.

¹² See *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 60.

¹³ An anonymous referee (to whom I am indebted at several places in this review) calls my attention to Carlin Romano's report of a message hung in the newsroom of a British daily: "One

Englishman is a story. Ten Frenchmen is a story. One hundred Germans is a story. And nothing ever happens in Chile." (Carlin Romano, "The Grisly Truth About Bare Facts," in *Reading the News*, Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson, eds., Pantheon, 1986, p. 47.)

¹⁴ The transcription and Chomsky's critique were published in the *Thoreau Quarterly*, Vol. 16, Nos. 3&4 (1984).

¹⁵ Here and elsewhere in this paragraph and next, I am quoting a document written by Claude McCaleb describing Sarnoff's remarkable handling of Chomsky and Herman's monograph. I am indebted to Jay Hullett of Hackett Publishing, the only scholar I have ever encountered other than Chomsky and Herman themselves who had independent knowledge of the treatment accorded their 1973 monograph. Hullett kindly gave me a copy of McCaleb's unpublished account of the episode.

¹⁶ *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 307.

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