

February 3, 1986

Professor Helene Keyssar  
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Dear Professor Keyssar:

Graham Murdock well deserves his international reputation as one of the most important and productive scholars engaged in the study of mass communications. He would have achieved this stature simply on the basis of the range, intellectual vigor and significance of his own research. But in addition, as researchers in this country and around the world have increasingly come to regard communications research in Britain as groundbreaking and fundamental to the development of new and necessary conceptual framework for the study of the media, Murdock's role as a leader of the field in Britain has placed him at the forefront of the discipline.

Murdock's work is unique in its successful integration of empirical and theoretical methods drawn from both the social sciences and the "humane" sciences. Grounded in a political-economic perspective, his studies of the production processes and policies of mass media institutions has been enriched and complicated by his analytic attention to the structures of content as well as the structures of institutions. An exemplary researcher, his skills at gathering and analyzing evidence are highly regarded by academics and non-academics alike; governments seek his counsel, students from around the world have been attracted to Leicester in order to work with him, colleagues are eager to join him in collaborative projects.

His contributions to the field have been marked, however, not just by the quality of his empirical research but by the subtlety and sophistication of the questions he asks, the conceptual frameworks he develops and the striking absence of reductionism in the conclusions he reaches. No one else to my knowledge has as fruitfully brought together such disparate approaches to communications as deconstruction, critical theory, feminism and political economy. In so doing, Murdock

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has been able to illuminate such central contemporary issues as the representation of terrorism and the significance of privatization in media production. He has also been able to define the terrain and agenda for study of new and emerging information technologies.

I can think of no one in this country or elsewhere who would contribute nearly as much to either the reputation of your department or the serious theoretical work in which you are engaged.

Sincerely yours,

George Gerbner  
Professor of Communications  
and Dean

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