University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

Department of Journalism
119 Gregory Hall
810 South Wright Street
Urbana, IL 61801

College of ~~Communications~~
217 333-0709

LANDAY
mailed 8/2/93

23 July, 1993

Dear Prof. Gerbner:

First, I send you warm regards from my friend Eleanor Blum. She befriended me when I arrived here in 1988, an orphan and exile from ABC- and CBS-News, deeply steeped in the wayward ways of commercial television, but a naif in Academe.

Among other things, I established a sequence here in the journalistic documentary, a semester appreciating the reality-based story form on television, and a second semester producing one. WILL and PBS stations have carried two of the three, and we've won some awards.

Last year I was invited to create a course in "Issues In Television" for Chancellor's Honor students, which was oversubscribed and went very well. I learned much more than they did, of course, looking deeply into the essential causes which made myself and others refugees in the first place.

I deeply respect and admire your work, and "opened up a file on you," as it were when I read your paper on "story" which you wrote for the festschrift marking the 40th anniversary of ICR. I have been stuffing the file since. Your article in Jennings Bryant's Perspectives on Media Effects was most helpful. I also appreciate the eloquence of your piece "Society's Storyteller" in Media and Values. I am deeply sorry I missed you here.

My experience of 40 years or so as a professsional, together the with research for the Issues course, has started me on a book for the "user" of television. I entered you in the file again when I heard your very good hour on WILL-Radio, and ordered a tape. In that connection, I'd be pleased if you could send me a) a copy of the report on women and minorities in commercial television drama, and b) material on the cultural environment movement.

Finally, you use the figure of 7 hours 41 minutes as the average time the set is on daily. Is the set necessarily being watched during all these hours? I have been operating on Nielson's figure of 30 hours per week. Also, you place the hidden tax on "free" broadcasting at $250 per annum per household. I'd be grateful if you could source both of these items these for me.

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I'll be away for the next two weeks (conducting a seminar with Unitarians on television issues, among other things), but intend to say hello on the phone at some point soon after my return. Meantime, if I could hear from you by mail on the above, I'd be appeciative.

Sincerely,

Jerry M. Landay
Associate Professor

Dean Emeritus George Gerbner
The Annenberg School for Communication
The University of Pennsylvania'
3650 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa., 19104
Encs

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18 August, 1993

Dear George:

I appreciate your quick response, and your taking the time from preparation for Los Angeles to mail it. I also find your C-E-M material powerful, timely, and relevant, and will make a few comments below. I enclose a completed form and a modest check, wanting very much to participate as time permits.

As we were driving north to Unistar, a Unitarian family camp and seminar center in Cass Lake, Minnesota, I found your name "fronted" in a Chicago Tribune I bought en route, and enclose the cutting for your files.

You might be interested in knowing that the weeklong seminar I led for thirty adults at Unistar was entitled: Media Literacy: Bringing Your Mind to Television. It was a microcosmic spin-off from a highly successful course I created here for Chancellor's Honors students in the Spring semester. I enclose that syllabus, along with a piece I wrote in Current about it. I resonate much to your prospectus' inclusion of media literacy as a major plank in the C-E-M platform.

Both the course and Unitarian seminar were over-subscribed - a point I'm trying to make to a presumptive literary agent in New York who, reviewing my proposal for a book about television for "users", replayed the conventional New York "wisdom" that no one is interested in reading a general trade book about television (can anything be done about the cultural environment if nothing is done about Cultural Ground Zero in New York?).

Let me share just three points made by the Unitarians in our discussions - a highly literate, spiritually attuned middle-class crowd which could safely be called a good random sample (including two professors):-

One is the insular sense that American commercial television is all TV can be; and that, in any event, there's no way to impact on the system and make a difference. We need to raise the American consciousness to healthier models abroad. I feel it important that C-E-M provide an agenda of specific, achievable goals to its citizen-activist members if they are to be empowered to begin making a difference.

Second, aroused and involved as they were throughout the session, my crowd reserved its greatest moral outrage for Whittle's invasion of public space, on two counts, both correct:- aren't schools essentially lending their moral

imprimatur to the commercial messages on Channel One, in the eyes of a truly captive audience (one teen-ager sitting in told me one of her fellow students was ordered by a teacher to raise her head from her desk during a showing, because it was a contractual obligation!)?

And how is it that prayer can be off limits in the schools while Whittle isn't? Public authority evidently accords free enterprise greater standing than religious tradition. I added a third point, however: how outraged can we be while we leave it to Whittle to wire schools?

I want to make several more points here about your very well written organizational prospectus:- I would suggest that your text could point out that free enterprise has become more than the major story-teller of our society; they have become our central authority, on matters ranging from cultural content to informational content.

This leads to my ~~second~~ third point. "Excessive commercialism" to me is less the issue than "commercial dominance of the spectrum" as the engine of consumerism, at the total expense of PICON. The first round was lost in the '20s, but I'm wondering whether a new one shouldn't be contemplated, in some form, today.

Finally, for now, as an old journalistic warhorse, I would argue that more prominence be given by C-E-M to a return to high journalistic standards, credibility and competence on the air, as well as to what I call the "pay to play" system of conducting our national politics on television. One measure of the need is that most of what Americans knew about the Gulf War and the Presidential race came from television! If that doesn't darken the prospects of this representative democracy, nothing will.

On a personal note, I'll phone to chat shortly. I continue to be interested in the slowly emerging early history of the College of Communications, and to what we can expect from our new chancellor. Is he enlightened about our area? Can he dispel the Ludditism that shrouds the academic interests of Greg Hall? I pray that he can.

Congratulations on the potency, centrality and dogged thoroughness of your work.

Cordially,

Jerry M. Landay
Assoc. Prof.

Dean Emeritus George Gerbner
The Annenberg School for Communication
The University of Pennsylvania'
3650 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa., 19104
Encs

[37] From: "landay jerry m." <j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu> at SMTP-po 12/20/93 7:53PM (1407 bytes: 34 ln)
To: fgg at POST1
Subject: MacNeil/Lehrer
---------- Message Contents ----------

Text item 1: Text Item

Received: by ccmail from ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
From j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
X-Envelope-From: j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
Received: by ux1.cso.uiuc.edu id AA19874
(5.67a8/IDA-1.5 for fgg@asc.upenn.edu); Mon, 20 Dec 1993 18:51:34 -0600
Date: Mon, 20 Dec 1993 18:51:34 -0600
From: "landay jerry m." <j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu>
Message-Id: <199312210051.AA19874@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu>
To: fgg@asc.upenn.edu
Subject: MacNeil/Lehrer

George:

You were superb tonight.

The issue you confront Sikes, Auletta and the others with really is this: is free enterprise, American-style, the best judge of what we and the world need and ought to see? Is the system that works when the issue is commodifying soy beans, soap, cars and beer fit to dispense the mindfood that binds societies? Sikes will never get it.

The nexus is: how to define and identify the issue for the society at large - and at this time in history?

Especially when "trade" is the cornerstone of the new foreign policy.

There ought to be a forum where it is both safe and fruitful to talk about this.

Meantime, you opened the minds and hearts of those who were prepared to be opened tonight. Grand job. - Jerry Landay -

[39] From: "landay jerry m." <j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu> at SMTP-po 3/24/94 10:24AM (2408 bytes: 48 ln)
To: fgg at POST1
Subject: The Future
---------- Message Contents ----------

Text item 1: Text Item

Received: by ccmail from ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
From j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
X-Envelope-From: j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
Received: by ux1.cso.uiuc.edu id AA02880
(5.67b8/IDA-1.5 for fgg@asc.upenn.edu); Thu, 24 Mar 1994 09:23:49 -0600
Date: Thu, 24 Mar 1994 09:23:49 -0600
From: "landay jerry m." <j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu>
Message-Id: <199403241523.AA02880@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu>
To: fgg@asc.upenn.edu
Subject: The Future

George:

I waited until the Freedom Forum spoke before beginning to respond to your "proposition." It has, rather, belched.

So, without a patron for my book research, confidentally, here's my place on the sea chart: I confront a summer of some conservative travel, getting to know my new grandson David Winston Landay in Washington, probably attending the media literacy session in Boston, revising my book outline, and indulging in some quiet reflection on what I shall do when I grow up.

The College is being by-passed by a bevy of those aware of th sea change in telecomm, aware that we have fled from it, who very much want it. We are being bypassed in an operation I call the survival of the fattest. And it would appear, based on substantial evidence, that the College will either be absorbed or liquidated on some basis over the next few years.

Sandy wants to remain here at Parkland for three more years as its brilliant choral conductor. I have no intention of playing a major role in a liquidation or fire sale, and must find a way to bring my energies to a useful and creative role in the emerging Teleculture, as a youthful member. That seems to call for some intensive maneuvering here or elsewhere, either investing serious and focused attention to the book, or abandoning it. I lean to the former.

I would like to come to Philadelphia from the Annenberg policy conference in Washington in June and chat with you about all this. But -- how I can commit to a dedicated, intensive investment of the kind you propose perplexes me. That's where I am, George, at the moment. I hereby appoint you a senior (unpaid) member of my personal braintrust, and await your reaction to the above. Trust all is well. Thanx for all. - jml -

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REPLY TO:
JERRY M. LANDAY
303 W. VERMONT ST.
URBANA, IL 61801
217-344-8482
j-landay@uiuc.edu

FYI
You will have received my email by now.
Many thanks & congratulations

2 September 1997

Dear George:

I have been invited to submit a proposal and application for an Individual Project Fellowship/1997 to George Soros' Open Society Institute of New York City. Were I to win a fellowship in the competition, it would provide me with research funding and supplementary support to complete a book about the power and nature of the American system of commercial television.

I am calling the book *The Mediarchy*. Despite the widespread publicity and citizen concern about the subject, there is no book available for the general public of which I'm aware that discusses the issue broadly and incisively from relevant historical background to policy matters to citizen-literacy in telemedia.

It would be extremely helpful were you to allow me to include a letter of recommendation from you in my application package. There is no requirement that you support my views (though I feel confident that you will); only that you favor any and all informed contribution to a public discussion, and endorse my *bona fides* as a contributor. I seek your support because of your intelligent and consistent efforts in leadership and scholarship for quality television worthy of the culture of a leading society.

The late Dean Kenneth Bartlett of Syracuse University, a pioneer scholar, teacher and practicioner of broadcasting in service to the public interest taught us that it was at least as vital for broadcasting to tell things as to sell things. I tried to bring Bartlett's public-interest model to the job, to the classroom, and onto paper. I intend this project as a public service to my nation, at the end of a professional, teaching, and writing career of more than 50 years. The book's dedication will be inscribed to my four grandchildren.

I enclose an updated CV. You may be interested to note that I am now doing regular commentaries from the Midwest for the Voice of America. If you are willing to provide the letter, it would be helpful to receive it at the residential address above,

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so that I can include it in my application package in enough time to satisfy a Sept. 30 deadline.

My profound thanks in advance. I trust all goes well for you in Philadelphia.

Most cordially,

Jerry M. Landay,
Honors Prof. emeritus
College of Communications/Journalism
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign

Dean emeritus George Gerbner
234 Golf View Road
Ardmore, Pa., 19003-1002
Enc.

To: "landay jerry m." <j-landay@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu>
From: George Gerbner <GGerbner@pobox.asc.upenn.edu>
Subject: Re: Help!
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Jerry-

Yes, I am on a panel at MDC on Friday 2:00-3:30. In and out same day. Have a lunch meeting and another immediately after the panel (with Pete Wirth, CEM publicist) but you are welcome to join us or we can meet afterward. What's your schedule:

This is what a will send Arava. Let me know ASAP if you can propose improvement;

Douglas Abrams Arava
Sponsoring Editor
Univ. of California Press
2120 Berkeley Way
Berkeley CA 94720

Dear Mr. Arava:

I am pleased to comment on Jerry M. Landay's book proposal, "The Mediarchy."

This promises to be timely and seminal work of great interest. The market for it is the publics I am addressing in my own work and lectures. I know that it is a large market of media workers, activists and many others concerned about media monopoly and its domination of the public airways.

Jerry Landay is the authority best qualified to write such a work, and, as the substantial outline demonstrates, make it readable, lively, and provocative, as well as relevant to the key issues of our time.

I know that I speak for many when I say that I can hardly wait to read the book itself. I hope it will go to press soon.

Sincerely:

George Gerbner
Bell Atlantic Professor of Telecommunication
Temple University, Philadelphia;
Dean Emeritus, The Annenberg School for Communication
University of Pennsylvania