

The Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMMUNICATIONS

Report of the Feasibility Study

July 1982 - May 1983

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RECOMMENDATION

The Annenberg Encyclopedia of Communications. An idea as bold and ambitious as it is appropriate for the leading graduate school of communications. It is a fitting capstone to the first 25 years of contributions to the field, the discipline, the industry. The School's conferences, other publications, and worldwide network of scholarly and professional contacts (including alumni) make it the natural center for such a venture.

The overwhelmingly enthusiastic response of the academic, professional, and publishing communities to the idea of an Encyclopedia of Communications confirms the conclusions of this feasibility study: the publication of the Encyclopedia of Communications under The Annenberg School's primary imprimatur is a timely and desirable activity of historic significance.

Toward that end, we respectfully request the authority to conclude final negotiations for the most effective publishing agreement.

George Gerbner, Dean

Tobia L. Worth, Director of
Feasibility Study

REPORT OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The feasibility study began in July 1982. The thrust was threefold: (1) building a viable intellectual framework for an Encyclopedia of Communications; (2) exploring publishers' interest in this project; and (3) preparing alternative budgets to illuminate possible financial arrangements.

Editorial Planning

The editorial planning involved leading academic and other specialists in all aspects of a prospective editorial process and conceptual structure for the Encyclopedia. Throughout the planning process, a sense of excitement and enthusiasm for this historic project mounted and appeared to spread through the field of communications. One major accomplishment of the editorial planning was to stimulate and mobilize the interest and broad international cooperation that will be needed for the project itself.

Tobia L. Worth was appointed Director of the feasibility study, Michele Belluomini, Assistant to the Director. Kathleen Byrne, M.A. Candidate in Communications at the Annenberg School, served as assistant and observer (while working on a thesis about the development of specialized encyclopedias). For the final four months of the study, Erik Barnouw was appointed special consultant for editorial planning.

The study began with the development by George Gerbner of a conceptual scheme for circulation to scholars who would be invited to form a Steering Committee and Board of Advisors. (The statement is attached as Appendix 1.)

The Steering Committee met on July 29, 1982. Its task was to review the draft scheme and formulate a course of action that would lead to a rigorous exploration of the readiness of the field of communications for a definitive encyclopedia; of its optimum scope and possible effect on the field; of the areas and disciplines it should comprise; of the scholars and professionals who might serve on an International Advisory Board and act as area editors and contributors; of its intended users; and of its intellectual structure. The members of this committee (Dean George Gerbner, Dr. Larry Gross, of The Annenberg School; Dean James Carey, of the University of Illinois; Dr. William McGuire, of Yale University; and Tobia L. Worth, Director) met on July 29.

Three of the participants undertook to prepare "structures" of the three divisions of the field--Modes and Codes (Gross), Communications Behavior (McGuire), and Systems and Institutions (Carey)--to be presented to a larger group thought of as the nucleus of a Board of Advisors. Names were proposed for this second meeting, and it was decided to circulate the structures beforehand.

That general meeting of the Board of Advisors took place on October 29, 1982. (The list of participants is attached as Appendix 2.) The group engaged for several hours in a general

discussion of the idea of an Encyclopedia of Communications, its value to the field, what might or might not be in it, its intended users, its form (alphabetical or thematic), and other people who might be useful in thinking through the complex problems of producing such an ambitious work.

Subdivision into the three area groups then took place; in this smaller, more homogeneous setting, the participants began the work of developing their own lists. The response was enthusiastic: everyone present expressed great interest in contributing, in one way or another, to the encyclopedia.

The next step was to hold more specialized all-day meetings focusing on each of the three subdivisions. The first of these, on "Systems and Institutions," was held on December 3, 1982. (The list of participants is attached as Appendix 3.) Having used Dean Carey's structure of this area as a springboard, many members of this group brought to the meeting outlines of their own subareas. All structures were discussed, and participants elaborated on this work by (1) suggesting additional people to serve as area editors and/or contributors; (2) generating article titles; and (3) synthesizing notions of what this section should cover.

The second meeting, on "Modes and Codes," was held on December 17, 1982. (The list of participants is attached as Appendix 4.) This group took Dr. Gross's model and from it developed secondary and tertiary layers of the hierarchical structure necessary to ensure complete coverage of an area. Many of the proposed entries

were coded for length and annotated for cross-referencing.

Supplementary "clusters" of articles were suggested, and several of the participants undertook to outline them.

The third all-day meeting, on "Communications Behavior," took place on January 21, 1983. (The list of participants is attached as Appendix 5.) Dr. McGuire provided a revised, expanded version of his first structure. Participants in this group annotated his work in great detail, once again working to fill in "missing links" and to flesh out the area so that the widest possible view of it be presented.

All these meetings were characterized by the participants' great interest in the idea of an Encyclopedia of Communications and their enthusiasm and willingness to play some role in realizing the project. They addressed themselves to and formulated the overriding aims of a first, specialized encyclopedia in the field: (1) to build a work of enduring value; (2) to make this work international in scope by virtue of both its contributors and its coverage; (3) to draw on the work of leading scholars and practitioners in their special areas of knowledge; (4) to draw from the arts and the social sciences those interests that could best be seen, or reinterpreted, in the framework of communications; and (5) to use the dimension of history, through both direct narrative and biography, to convey the solidity of the field at a time when technology is soaring and reintegration of knowledge seems vital.

After each meeting, the participants further responded by sending in lists of proposed members for a Board of Advisors, areas and area editors, article titles and contributors. They also put forth general comments and suggestions in letters and in the form of supplementary outlines.

The editorial planning process concluded with a series of weekly meetings between Erik Barnouw, George Gerbner, and Tobia Worth.

Consultations

Meetings were held with consultants in two categories:

(1) specialized experts in various aspects of encyclopedia editing and publishing and (2) publishing executives who were in a position to make direct offers to produce and market the encyclopedia.

Talks with the specialized experts focused on manuscript preparation; the merits of various publishing arrangements; and recommendations for publishers capable of producing a high-quality, advantageously priced work, marketed to a wide range of users. Meetings were held with the following consultants:

Dr. Elinor G. Barber
Director
Institute for International Education
(Biography Editor, International Encyclopedia
of the Social Sciences, Free Press/Macmillan)

Barbara A. Chernow
Encyclopedia Consultant
Free Press/Macmillan and free-lance
(Managing Editor, Biographical Supplement to
the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences)

David L. Eggenberger
Director of Publications
National Archives, Washington, D.C.
(former Editor in Chief, Encyclopedia Division,
McGraw-Hill Book Co.)

Edward J. Fox
Director of Production
Encyclopedia Section
Professional and Reference Book Division
McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Dr. David L. Sills
Executive Director
Social Science Research Council
(Editor of the 17-vol. International
Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Free Press/Macmillan)

Publishing executives came to visit us to express their interest in the project and to discuss such aspects of it as size and format, length of articles, and quantity and quality of art. Meetings were held with the following executives:

Gordon T.R. Anderson
Executive Editor
College and Professional Book Division
Longman, Inc.

Edward W. Barry
President
Sheldon Meyer
Senior Vice-President, Trade Department
Oxford University Press

Marshall De Bruhl
Vice-President and Director, Reference Books
Charles Scribner's Sons

Gary Facente
Associate Executive Director for Publishing
American Library Association

Sybil P. Parker
Editor in Chief, Encyclopedias and Science
McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Charles E. Smith
Vice-President
Professional Books Division
Macmillan Publishing Co.

These consultations and subsequent proposals made by Oxford University Press, Charles Scribner's Sons, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., and Longman, Inc. (in collaboration with the American Library Association) assisted us in developing an estimate of the cost of the project to The Annenberg School and to a publisher, and of the projected income. The consultations also established the bases for competitive negotiations with these publishers to obtain the most advantageous final agreement to publish the Encyclopedia of Communications under the primary imprimatur of The Annenberg School of Communications.

The encyclopedia would be addressed to college students, scholars, professionals, and educated laypersons. Physically, it would be a four-volume set in two colors, of about 1.5 million words, with approximately 1200 illustrations. The schedule is based on a five-year timetable resulting in a 1988-89 publication date.

APPENDICES

1. Proposal for a Feasibility Study.
2. Participants in the October 28-29 Meeting of the Advisory Board, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study.
3. Participants in the December 3 Meeting, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study: "Systems and Institutions."
4. Participants in the December 17 Meeting, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study: "Modes and Codes."
5. Participants in the January 21 Meeting, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study: "Behavior."

Appendix 1

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMMUNICATIONS

A Feasibility Study

Communications is an area of knowledge or a discipline taught in many organized degree programs in universities and colleges around the world. A significant number of graduate programs train professional contributors to knowledge in communications. This term is also frequently applied to acts, events, arts, systems, institutions, industries, and other biological, physical, social, and cultural processes that play central and pervasive roles in human affairs. Yet no English language encyclopedia of communications has yet been produced.

An encyclopedias is an attempt to reflect and shape some body of knowledge in a field. It defines, summarizes and explains knowledge in an accessible, comprehensive, and authoritative way.

Is an encyclopedia of communications a needed, feasible, and appropriate publishing activity for The Annenberg School of Communications? The goal of this project is to create a basis for answering these questions. We propose to do that by producing a detailed prospectus. The decision about publishing an encyclopedia of communications will be made only after the prospectus has been completed.

Tobia Worth, Director of the feasibility study, and her staff will be responsible for coordinating the project and preparing the prospectus. The work will be based on the recommendations of an advisory committee and the contributions of a group of experts and specialists acting as consultants.

George Gerbner

TASKS OF THE PROJECT

1. SCHOLARLY RESPONSIBILITY

- (a) Development of a representative advisory committee
- (b) Designation of associate editors

2. EDITORIAL CONCEPTS

- (a) Users: general, practitioners, students, and scholars
- (b) Aims: to teach, explain, organize information, summarize, "contextualize."
- (c) Writing: accessible to non-specialist but acceptable to specialist; by-lined essays and staff-written shorter articles; scholarly.

3. ORGANIZATION

- (a) Communication Modes, Media, and Codes. General theories of communication content, structures, semiotics, information, signs, symbols and the strategies we use in the articulation and interpretation of meaning across modes, media and codes. Modes can be thought of as such systems as the visual-pictorial, the verbal-lexical, the musical and the socio-gestural. Media can be thought of as specific means of articulating within modes--such as films and television, painting and drawing, speaking and writing, as well as piano and violin. Codes describe specific rules or conventions by which messages are framed in specific media: for example, documentary in television, abstract or representational painting; conversations or lectures and monologues; novels or letters; jazz or a Bach sonata played on the same piano. These modes, media and codes can be studied within and across aesthetic, social, cultural, political and ideological contexts.
- (b) Communication Behavior. The processes and effects of communications. How people learn and develop the ability to articulate and interpret symbolic behavior; how beliefs, attitudes and public opinions are formed and maintained or changed by a variety of symbolic means ranging from interpersonal interaction to enculturation and socialization through the mass media.
- (c) Communication Systems, Organizations and Institutions. The history of communications; public policy and technology related to communications and culture; the structure, organization, regulation, management, and social functions of communication mass media; general theories of social communication systems.

4. EDITORIAL PROCESS

- (a) Choice of section editors, authors
- (b) Editorial and peer review
- (c) Staff organization

5. FORMAT AND STYLE

- (a) Number of words: division into pages
- (b) Central art concept
- (c) Bibliography, reference style, glossaries, index

6. MARKET INFORMATION

- (a) Potential users, buyers: students, scholars, libraries practitioners, educated general reader, general public?
- (b) Competing and complementary publications
- (c) International markets; translations?
- (d) Approaches to promotion; lists

7. PRODUCTION AND PUBLISHING

- (a) Editorial costs
- (b) Production costs, including artwork
- (c) Spinoffs: Updating, yearbooks, computer archives & services
- (d) Publishing arrangements

Appendix 2

PARTICIPANTS IN THE OCTOBER 28-29 MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD,
ENCYCLOPEDIA FEASIBILITY STUDY.

Erik Barnouw (Communications History), Columbia University (Emeritus)

James Carey (Communications), University of Illinois-Urbana

John Carey (Communications), New York University

Steven Chaffee (Communications), Stanford University

Peter Clark (Communication), University of Southern California

George Comstock (Communications), Syracuse University

Elizabeth Eisenstein (History), University of Michigan

Phoebe Ellsworth (Psychology), Stanford University

George Gerbner (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Larry Gross (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Robert Hornik (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Elihu Katz (Communications), University of Southern California

William McGuire (Psychology), Yale University

Carolyn Marvin (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Ithiel de Sola Pool (Political Science, Communications Policy),
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Michael Silverstein (Anthropology and Linguistics), University of
Chicago

Barbara Herrnstein Smith (Comparative Literature and Literary Theory,
Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Charles Wright (Communications, Sociology), University of Pennsylvania

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Michele Belluomini (Assistant to the Director, Encyclopedia Feasibility
Study)

Kathleen Byrne (M.A. Candidate)

Anne Evans (Editorial Secretary)

Elvira Fitzgerald (Assistant Dean)

Marsha Siefert (Director of Publications)

Tobia L. Worth (Director, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study)

Appendix 3

PARTICIPANTS IN THE DECEMBER 3 MEETING, ENCYCLOPEDIA FEASIBILITY
STUDY: "SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS."

Erik Barnouw (Communications History), Columbia University (Emeritus)

Leo Bogart (Executive Vice-President and General Manager), Newspaper
Advertising Bureau

Peter Clarke (Communications), University of Southern California

George Gerbner (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Larry Gross (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Elihu Katz (Communications), University of Southern California

Carolyn Marvin (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Maurice B. Mitchell (Center for Democratic Institutions), Santa Barbara

Vincent Mosco (Communications), Temple University

Alex Reid (Chief Executive, British Telecom Spectrum), London

Dan Schiller (Communications), Temple University

Anthony Smith (British Film Institute), London

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Appendix 4

PARTICIPANTS IN THE DECEMBER 17 MEETING, ENCYCLOPEDIA FEASIBILITY
STUDY: "MODES AND CODES."

Steven Feld (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

George Gerbner (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Larry Gross (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Paul Messaris (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Michael Silverstein (Anthropology and Linguistics), University of Chicago

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Tobia L. Worth (Director, Encyclopedia Feasibility Study)

Michele Belluomini (Assistant to the Director, Encyclopedia Feasibility
Study)

Kathleen Byrne (M.A. Candidate)

Appendix 5

PARTICIPANTS IN THE JANUARY 21 MEETING, ENCYCLOPEDIA FEASIBILITY
STUDY: "BEHAVIOR."

Erik Barnouw (Communications History), Columbia University (Emeritus)

George Comstock (Communications), Syracuse University

Steven Feld (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

George Gerbner (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Larry Gross (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Robert Hornik (Communications), University of Pennsylvania

Dell Hymes (Linguistics, Folklore and Folklife, Education), Dean,
Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania

William McGuire (Psychology), Yale University

Ralph Rosnow (Psychology), Temple University

Charles Wright (Communications, Sociology) University of Pennsylvania

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Michele Belluomini (Assistant to the Director, Encyclopedia Feasibility
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Kathleen Byrne (M.A. Candidate)