

McAnany E. G. Wilbur Schramm and International Connections in Communication Research

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WILBUR SCHRAMM AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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Abstract:

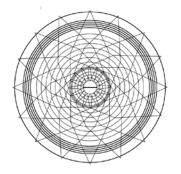
This article was meant to fill in a lacuna in the biography the author is completing about his mentor, Wilbur Schramm (1907-1987). Schramm was an early and important contributor to the creation of a university discipline of communication study. There has been no full-length biography about Schramm, but a number of shorter accounts about his career do not mention his long involvement with scholars from other countries. His influence on communication study outside the U.S. is examined in this article.

Keywords: communication research, history of communication studies, United States, Wilbur Schramm, international connections

Beginning of Communication Study

The beginning of communication studies as a separate university discipline in the United States can be dated with the hiring of Wilbur Schramm by the University of Illinois in August, 1947. Until that time, there had not been a doctoral / PhD program with the title of communication or mass communication. All the research on communication that had been published in the previous two decades had been conducted by researchers from sociology, psychology and other social sciences. That was to change with Schramm's appointment as director of a new research institute and PhD program in mass communication. The president of the university was a friend and former mentor of Schramm at the University of Iowa, and he gave Schramm carte blanche to begin the new doctoral program and to create the Institute of Communication Research, an important centre to promote research by faculty and future doctoral students. The research institute was critical to the new field as Schramm conceived it. If Schramm's new PhD program was to succeed as a social science at the university, he had to justify it as a respectable discipline with serious research. By 1947, there were two other kinds of communication courses being taught

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in U.S. universities, journalism and rhetoric/ public speaking, but these were mainly practical courses for undergraduate students where the faculty did not conduct research. Furthermore, these courses did not use the term communication for their courses. Schramm, thus, saw his new program as a path to train doctoral students to conduct original research on mass communication (including journalism, radio, television and film) and after obtaining their degrees to be hired by other universities that were beginning MA programs in mass communication and to teach both theory and research methods. Schramm was an innovator but also a master in building university institutions.

In his prior university position at the University of Iowa, Schramm had received his PhD in American literature in 1932. He joined the faculty in 1934 and advanced to full professor by 1940. He had also begun to teach a creative writing course, and in 1939 became the head of the creative writing program. With the help of the dean of the School of Literature and Language, Schramm proposed that the MA degree in creative writing become a separate program for students aspiring to become professional creative writers whether in poetry, novels or short stories. This program became known as the Iowa Writers Workshop, the first such program in the U.S. Today, it remains one of the outstanding programs in helping writers to achieve professional success. In addition to this, as the new dean of the Journalism School, Schramm also renovated the graduate curriculum at Iowa in 1943, preparing it to have a PhD program in journalism and guiding many of its courses toward the new field of communication (although the program remained a journalism, not a communication program, while Schramm was there until 1947 when he left). Thus we see that Schramm came to the University of Illinois as an institution builder and an innovator from his two previous positions.

By 1948, Schramm had officially begun the Mass Communication program in doctoral training and had started the Institute of Communication Research. He had inaugurated the new research centre with a symposium with a number of who had been conducting mass communication research over the past several decades, long before it became a separate university discipline. The symposium papers by these well-known researchers were quickly published by Schramm through the university with the title, Communication in Modern Society (1948). This was the first publication in the United States from a mass communication program, and it would have an influence on other U.S. communication graduate programs that were beginning to form at that time. Although Europe was many years from beginning formal communication programs, UNESCO's Division of Mass Communication placed a notice of the book in its first publication in 1950 titled World Communications: Press, Radio and Film. UNESCO was early in identifying mass communications as one of its priority programs long before European universities began to create similar postgraduate programs (one of the first such programs was under James Halloran at the University of Leister in the UK in 1966). How, then, did UNESCO learn so quickly about

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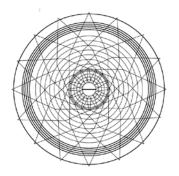
this new program at the University of Illinois? There was a connection with Illinois President Stoddard who hired Schramm.

Early International Contacts

George Stoddard became the president of the University of Illinois in 1946 and hired Schramm the next year to begin the mass communication program. Stoddard was an early supporter of the United Nations and had become an official advisor to UNESCO based on his expertise in university administration. European universities were beginning to rebuild after WWII and were looking for advice about their return to a more normal period in 1946. In that capacity, he had frequently gone to Paris to work with UNESCO, and in 1949 he had requested Schramm to accompany him as a consultant for several months to visit some European universities. There is no record of his work there but he no doubt spoke with administrators and professors that had journalism and literature and language faculties who might have been interested in his new program in mass communication at Illinois and his work in journalism and creative writing at Iowa. Schramm spoke and read German and could read French so he could communicate reasonably well with the university administration and faculty members at least in France and Germany. He would also have spent time at the UNESCO headquarters and consulted with the newly created Division of Mass Communication. This was the reason that his first communication publications would have been referenced in their annotated bibliographies beginning in 1950. The UNESCO connection made Schramm and his program known in Europe before European universities transitioned from journalism to communication studies beginning in the late 1950s and 1960s (Nordenstreng 2008, Pietila 2008). Since almost all European countries as well as a number of countries from Asia and Latin America had become members of UNESCO from its creation in 1946, they too would have been informed of research in mass communication. Those universities and other organisations with an interest in mass communication, including the media of newspapers, radio and film, were exposed through UNESCO to communication publications and descriptions of early mass communication university departments in the U.S. beginning with Illinois in 1947 and other universities that followed in the next ten years (Ely 1960).

UNESCO's mandate was to promote the use of mass communications for cultural and educational purposes from its beginning. It had an interest in the applications of communication technologies for solving social and economic problems. Thus, its orientation was more for applied rather than theoretical research. Nevertheless, in 1956 UNESCO began a program to promote an international network of researchers called IAMCR (International Association of Communication Research) which was a kind of clearing house for publications in journals about journalism and mass communication. It also helped to provide training for journalists and other media workers. By 1958 it had begun to create specialised divisions where members could follow their professional interests within the general field of journalism and mass communication. There were four divisions: the legal, the historical, the sociological/

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psychological and the economic/ technical. Each division had a director who had expertise in a given area. The division of sociology and psychology, representing the majority of research being carried out in the United States, was headed by Wilbur Schramm. Thus, Schramm took his place as the representative in the first global communication organisation. The first official meeting of IAMCR with a functioning set of divisions had also elected as their first regular term president, Raymond Nixon, an American journalism professor who was an acquaintance of Schramm's. It was an indication that Schramm was recognised as a specialist in the use of social science to study mass communication and was identified as someone who could also be consulted as to how to begin an independent department for communication science. It was also a time in Schramm's career that he began to be identified with international communication. In 1958 he was awarded an endowed professorship at Stanford in "international communication," and in the same year he also announced his first graduate course in international communication. International communication was not a popular topic for most of the first generation of journalism and communication professors. There were few who were interested in programs and scholars beyond U.S. borders, and this is still the case. This kind of insularity may partly be due to the limited knowledge of other languages, but it is also due to the time before globalisation with increased trade and rapid international communications, which made all communication professors somewhat more interested in researchers beyond our borders. This was not true of Schramm who took on a more international perspective from his early contact with UNESCO. What kind of consequence did this contact have on his publications?

Research on International Topics

The first interest in international communication resulted from the Cold War beginning in 1947 when the USSR and the U.S. were vying for political influence through propaganda or as it was termed in the U.S. psychological warfare. Schramm participated in some of this research as he had done in World War II in Washington D.C. (McAnany 2013, Park and Pooley 2008). Schramm would distance himself from this work after the mid-1950s when the Red Scare, promoted by Senator Joseph McCarthy and others, began to lessen. Schramm never mentioned the psychological warfare research after that time. His own attitudes might have changed as he became more involved with UNESCO and IAMCR.

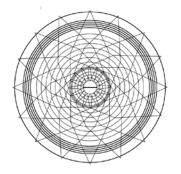
The first publication with a non-Cold War international theme did not appear until after Schramm's contact with IAMCR. It was a collaboration between Schramm and Fernand Terrou, first president of the organisation and head of the Institut Francais de Press in Paris. In 1959, these two published a study of how a number of newspapers in different countries covered an important political event in 1956 when Egypt's Suez Canal was blockaded by European powers. One Day in the World's Press: Fourteen Great Newspapers on a Day of Crisis (1959) examined how different newspapers

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framed the story depending on their national interests and political ideologies. The study was early to question the objectivity of the press. This study would also anticipate by almost two decades the studies of a similar nature that were prompted by the UNESCO publication of the MacBride Report in 1979 about the distortion and domination of the flow of news and information among nations within the context of the New World information and Communication Order. By the time that the book was published, Schramm had been asked by UNESCO to help in reporting on three meetings of developing countries to ask how communication technologies might help in national development.

How these meeting came about is not relevant to the present topic, but it was an important turning point for UNESCO and many national planning organisations to include in their goals for social and economic development the mass media as an important element for social change (McAnany 2012, ch.2). The three meetings were held over three years to bring together governments, local media experts and planners to discuss the role of communication in development. The first meeting was held in Asia in 1960 (Bangkok), the second for Latin America was in 1961 (Santiago) and the third for Africa was in 1962 (Paris). Thus, Schramm spent three years in attending the meetings and becoming acquainted with the problems that each regional country had with implementing a communication plan for development, but more importantly, personal contact with representatives from each region and country that attended. This meant that by 1962, Schramm had met most of the government representatives and other people interested in national planning and mass communication in a wide variety of developing countries. He would spend two years in writing his report for UNESCO, but it became much more than a typical report to be placed on a shelf. Mass Media and National Development: The Role of Information in Developing Countries (1964) was a book that did not report directly on what the participants of the three meetings said or the resolutions made. Rather Schramm took the problems that were raised and tried to write a comprehensive book that made an analysis of the larger international problems of an unbalanced distribution of information channels (mostly in European, U.S. and Soviet hands), the lack of media in many countries, a summary of what mass media can do in development and how information campaigns might operate for national development. Finally, Schramm suggests that research in communication and development is an important part in this effort along with the development of the mass media themselves. Because the book was co-published by UNESCO it was widely distributed in developing countries, all of whom had UNESCO stores where the book was available in three languages. The book experienced wide distribution and often became a guide to development planners, and mass media people introduced communication applications in many areas like agriculture, education and health. Thus, in subsequent years at Stanford, Schramm was frequently visited by people from developing countries; he was asked by many to travel to and consult with the media specialists; and a significant number of

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graduate students from developing countries began to come to Stanford for study. By 1964, then, Wilbur Schramm was on a path of development communication that would occupy him for much of the remainder of his life.

Stanford and International Students and Visitors

One role that is significant in Schramm's international work was the visitors that it attracted to Stanford. There was the increasing number of international graduate students who came to Stanford to study for the MA and some even for the PhD after 1964. I came to Stanford in the fall of 1965 as a PhD student after I had found a copy of Schramm's Mass Media and National Development in a bookstore in Belgium while I was studying there. There were a number of students in the MA program from Latin America, Asia and Europe, although I was the only PhD student at the time. But that was to change rapidly over the next four years as more students from developing countries or people with experience from the U.S. Peace Corps in developing areas came to study communication's role in development. In addition to students within the Communication Department, there were students (often international students) from other graduate programs like Education, Engineering, Business and the social sciences who enrolled for Schramm's class in Communication and Development because it related to their view that media technologies were important in some way to their own professional interests. But students were not the only ones who came to Stanford during Schramm's last decade there (he came in 1955 and did his international work from about 1963 to 1973, the year he retired).

Why did professors from other countries come to Stanford to visit Schramm's program of teaching and research? First, Schramm had contact with European researchers in the IAMCR many of whom were transitioning to mass communication research from different university faculties such as journalism, education, sociology, psychology, economics and engineering. The following are a few examples of visitors to Stanford from about 1960 to 1973. For example, James Halloran, a sociologist from the University of Leicester spent a sabbatical during the 1964-1965 academic year to study a variety of PhD programs in mass communication in the U.S. When I met him in the UK in the spring of 1965, we talked about his experience in the U.S. where I was about to enroll for doctoral studies in communication. He urged me to go to Stanford because he considered it an outstanding program. Halloran founded one of the first communication programs in Europe in 1966 (Leeds University in the UK was close behind) (Redal 2008 for Leicester and Birmingham). There were other visitors to Stanford who came from different backgrounds. For example, Kaarle Nordenstreng came to visit Stanford in 1967 on a long trip that included twenty different journalism and communication departments and research institutes. Nordenstreng was a journalist and researcher for Finnish Broadcasting at the time and in addition to visiting institutions, he conducted a number of interviews with important researchers and administrators. He wrote an article a year later (1968) that reflected on his sometimes negative impressions of American communication research, but he had positive reviews of Schramm's work and that of his Stanford colleagues. Also, even though

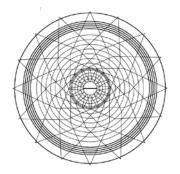
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there was a Cold War continuing during the 1960s, the Soviet Union sent people to visit and even for study periods to Stanford. I was a PhD student in the spring of 1967 when two people were sent from Moscow to study in the Department of Communication. One was from Radio/TV Moscow, the other, who shared an office with me was from the government propaganda division but who was studying marketing at Moscow State University and was interested in learning more about American marketing communication theory at Stanford. This person later became a famous psychologist, Yuri Sherkovin. A final example of visitors was Raymond Williams from Cambridge who spent a sabbatical at Stanford to prepare the manuscript for his book Television Technology and Cultural Form (1974). Although Schramm had left by the time Williams came, he probably came to the Institute for Communication Research because of its research reputation in media study, especially television.

From today's perspective, it seems odd to have these people visiting at Schramm's university because of his writing on psychological warfare during the 1950s (Simpson 1994, Glander 2000). Although all of these authors were seen as critical researchers, by the time of their visits, Schramm had turned his interest away from Cold War issues to education, social changes projects and international topics. Moreover, the discipline of mass communication that Schramm helped to initiate in the 1950s was of interest to Europeans who were moving from journalism research to communication research and who were not considering the field from an ideological position as would happen after the early 1970s. Even Raymond Williams probably saw the opportunity at Stanford to study television as it had developed over more than two decades in the U.S. to better make his case for the new medium as a cultural form. Schramm was someone who was interested in how media were changing societies beyond U.S. borders. He benefitted from his interest in and connections with Europeans, and they came not for ideology but for communication research. Europeans came to visit and benefitted from the experience, but they did not imitate what they saw but adapted it to their own circumstances and ideology.

The research that Schramm conducted after the mid-1960s was largely devoted to applied work of communication technologies to education and social change, most of it outside the U.S. After his Mass Media and National Development book in 1964, Schramm became well known in developing countries, and visitors from governments and students came to Stanford to consult and to study. Part of the attraction in the 1960s was the development of communication satellites in which the Stanford School of Engineering was heavily involved. Schramm began to do research on social applications for this new technology in education and development. He also continued his work in educational television that he had begun in a project in the American Samoa islands in 1962; another in Columbia in 1965; and a third one in El Salvador in Central America in 1968 (Schramm 1977, 1981). He also consulted widely on the applications of media for education; on the creation of a television-based open university in Israel (Schramm, Howe and Hawkridge 1972); the plan for the Indian

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Institute for Mass Communication in 1965; won the Japan Prize in 1970 for research on educational radio and television (1970). Late in his career, he went to Hong Kong (still a British colony) to teach for a year in the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1978 where he helped transition journalism studies into a program that included communication. In May 1982, Schramm was invited to give several talks in Mainland China about communication, and his appearance made a lasting impression because the Chinese universities which were just emerging from the effects of the Cultural Revolution were looking for ways to introduce communication studies into their faculties (Sun 2002).

Schramm's Legacy in International Communication Research

Looking back on Schramm's career, it is clear that almost twenty-five years from 1964 to 1987 (the year he died in Hawaii) were mostly devoted to international work. He had a very large set of contacts in many countries, from Mexico and Canada, close to the U.S., to other distant countries such as China, India, Japan, and whole continents such as Africa, Latin America and Europe. His European contacts went back to the 1950s and formed a continuous chain of connections with later work in developing societies. What kind of influence did Schramm have on university communication programs and in communication research? To take the case of Europe, in 1950 Schramm was proposing a quantitative, social scientific approach with methodology borrowed from the other social sciences in the U.S. universities of that decade. He promoted theory but did not make significant contributions to either theory or methodology. Nevertheless, he built doctoral programs at Illinois and Stanford that became the standard ones that international experts would come to visit. He was an advocate for a teaching program that promoted the study of both theory and methodology with the goal for graduates to go to other university programs and to publish research to push the field forward. This model was what many visitors saw when they came to visit. All of them carried back ideas that they could use in their own circumstances, but these were modified according to each national situation.

Although Schramm was not a theorist nor a methodologist, he conducted research on communication from his earliest work in the late 1940s to his death in December, 1987 at the age of eighty. His contributions were mostly in applied research, i.e. most often about the consequences of communication media on people. This included television's impact on children (1961), different media use in education (1967, 1977, 1981), mass media in national development (1964, 1967, 1976) etc. His interests were often broad, touching on other fields such as psychology, sociology, economics, anthropology and political science, but he always continued his focus on both human communication as well mediated communication.

The impact that Schramm had on the field of studies called communication was through his institutional building at Illinois and Stanford, making them into important programs. But his influence was also because he was one of the first in building this

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new field. That was also true of his international influence because, unlike most of his American colleagues during the first several generations of communication researchers, he reached out to international colleagues and took an interest in their communication programs. Another factor in Schramm's success was his wide set of interests that made him less identified with one narrow focus. A third factor in this international outreach was his personal charm and warmth in interactions with international colleagues. He also brought a genuine enthusiasm for the field of communication and an interest in new ideas that made him a successful advocate for his vision of the field. The history of the field as a unique university program began with Schramm and, in a way, he was a living history of the field until the end of his life. When he died, his family found an almost completed manuscript on a history of the field as Schramm saw it (Schramm, Chaffee, Rogers 1997). It was an account of how four major people in the field had set the standard before Schramm had begun his program at Illinois, but it was four people who were from other social sciences. Schramm had written about this history a number of times before, and it is clear that he was trying to define the field in accord with his programs at Illinois and Stanford. It was in that sense a self-serving history because it represented a specific time and place (U.S. social science in mid-twentieth century), but it was accurate from that perspective. Like any other social science, communication study has changed since Wilbur Schramm first began his communication program at Illinois in 1947. But the field as a university discipline had been largely defined by Wilbur Schramm who placed his imprint on the early history of communication and media studies.

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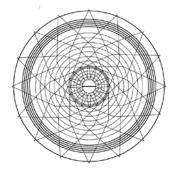
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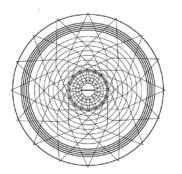
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УИЛБУР ШРАММ И МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ СВЯЗИ В ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯХ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

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Аннотация:

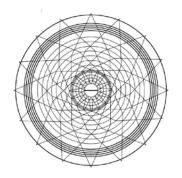
Данная статья написана прямым учеником одного из отцов основателей науки о коммуникации Уилбура Шрамма к двойному юбилею американского исследователя – 110 лет со дня рождения и 30 лет со дня смерти. Являясь прямым учеником Шрамма, автор статьи заполняет тем самым пустое место в биографии своего наставника, анализируя и рассказывая о влиянии Уилбура Шрамма на исследования коммуникации по всему миру - в том числе в СССР. Поскольку автор статьи в данный момент занимается подготовкой полной биографии Уилбура Шрамма, статья также обрисовывает основные эпизоды в становлении науки о коммуникации в США, происходившие при непосредственном участии Шрамма.

Кроме того, в статье приведены некоторые факты об исследовательских связях Уилбура Шрамма с исследователями разных стран, в их числе Карл Норденстренг, посещавший Стэнфордский университет в 1967 году в рамках большой поездки по образовательным учреждениям США и позже отразивший это в одной из своих статей. Упоминается и российский исследователь, один из основателей социальной психологии в России, Юрий Шерковин, который также был студентом Уилбура Шрамма в 1967 году.

Статья призвана дополнить деталями перевод автора для журнала «Коммуникации. Медиа. Дизайн», опубликованный в $N^{\circ}1$ за 2017 год. Больше комментариев о состоянии науки о коммуникации в период деятельности Шрамма читатель может получить из интервью с доктором Джефферсоном Пули, опубликованном в текущем выпуске.

Ключевые слова: история науки о коммуникации, Уилбур Шрамм, Соединенные Штаты Америки, международное научное взаимодействие

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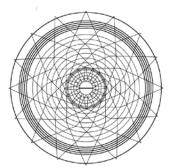
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