

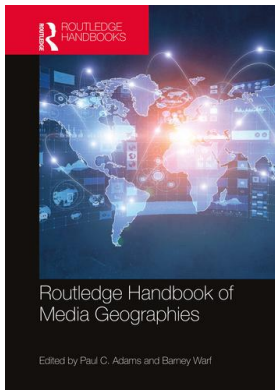
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10

APPROACHES TO THE GEOGRAPHIES OF TELEVISION

James Craine

The importance of developing a better understanding of the television-geography relationship can perhaps be uniquely understood by revisiting the events of the 1952 election year. Rosser Reeves was an advertising executive with the famous Ted Bates Agency in the 1950s, when the industry of television was in its infant stages. He was most known at that time for creating the USP, or the “unique selling proposition,” where one point is pounded home unrelentingly—it was annoying but effective as his Anacin (“fast *fast fast* relief”) and his M&M (“melts in your mouth, not in your hand”) commercials demonstrated. Always pushing the boundaries of advertising, Reeves uncovered the *value* of television’s political landscape during the months ahead of the 1952 Eisenhower/Stevenson presidential election. Reeves was so good at selling M&Ms and Anacin that in late 1951 he was hired by the Republican party to see what he could do with their lackluster candidate, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Eisenhower may have been the hero of D-Day and the war in Europe, but when it came to public speaking, the General was hopeless and completely uninspiring. And he was up against a great public speaker, Adlai Stevenson. (Stevenson’s best line, among many, was “I think the country is ready for more of the specific, and less of the General”). Eisenhower was at sea and so were Republican hopes for the White House unless Reeves could figure out a way to “package” the General... like M&Ms.

Reeves’ great concept was “electorate penetration,” his code for short, low-cost political spot ads—for television, not radio—that had an exposure potential into the many thousands as opposed to the hundreds garnered by in-person speech attendance. These ads could be focused on critical districts in critical states. They were too short to be tuned out unlike the long-winded speeches that were a Stevenson trademark. The ads were difficult to avoid—families only had one television set that was now the center of attention in a postwar homespace created and built throughout the United States to accommodate just such viewing engagements. The ads Reeves created were specifically designed to take advantage of this televisual landscape. They were *new*—no one had done this before—and people remembered them. Reeves estimated a content recall of nearly 90 percent for the Eisenhower ads while Stevenson’s speeches registered at around a 10 percent retention rate.

By all accounts Reeves worked completely on the fly in a New York City studio on Broadway. He wrote a series of issue-based “answers” that were then transferred to large cue cards (Eisenhower needed glasses but refused to wear them in public). He put Eisenhower in

a studio, shot him from a low angle and had him repeat the series of “answers.” When Reeves was satisfied with the “answers,” passersby—“average people”—were literally grabbed off the streets of New York City. Reeves pulled them into the studio and asked a series of “questions,” looking upward. He edited the two different parts, Eisenhower answering each question, first looking down in the direction of the speaker and then turning to talk directly into the camera and thus the television audience. Reeves thus created the first televised political commercials in America. Eisenhower handily won the election. Reeves understood the new medium of television better than anyone else at the time—no more criss-crossing the country in a train, the way Harry Truman had in 1948. Reeves understood what made people buy a product. And Eisenhower was a product to be sold just like M&Ms. And, thanks to Reeves, the image became more important than the issues (many of Reeves’ commercials and all of the Eisenhower ads are easily available on YouTube).

With Reeves’ ability to foresee the future of television, the landscape of American politics was instantly changed. The spatial aspect of how we, as a country, elected our political officials was now radically different from just a few months earlier. Television became an important geographical technology: homes were designed with an entertainment *space* and we became “viewers,” consumers held in place by an instrument that now determined our very culture (my use of the term viewer/consumer is informed by Fiske (1987) who argues that the term suggests an *active* agent who contributes meaning to a media text). Americans moved from the interactions of the front porch to the “den.” The industry of television rapidly took over American lives—it was how we learned of the world, how we consumed geography. It is this intersection that informs this chapter: the geography of television.

By way of an *entre* to this discussion of the geography of television we should first understand that one thing television does, in terms of *place*, is help foster a collective memory: television has made massive quantities of memory accessible to anyone with the means to own a receiver or simply have any type of viewing options anywhere. The way in which we experience memory of place has undergone a qualitative change—television and the ancillary products it can distribute (i.e. DVDs, Blu Rays, streaming in all its forms) allow the viewer to relive whatever parts of the past the viewer chooses to experience. The past assumes a sensory presence, creating the illusion that the viewer is in the presence of a past reality. Televisual products, because of their narrative structure and temporal immersion in *place*, allow the viewer the opportunity of “being there”—of inhabiting that place. Thus, the geography of television can be very much phenomenological in the manner of Heidegger’s conceptualization of *being-in-the-world*.

A problematic aspect of the geographical research related to television is, quite simply, the lack of such research. Much of the research related to the *geographical* and *spatial* aspects of television are found in communications studies and media studies and, therefore, geographers who do study television often utilize theory that is common to these fields and to geography. Media geographers have found Deleuzian theory quite useful, just as communications studies has, especially in the theories related to “new media” and beyond. A theme common across the disciplines is the concept that television operates as spatial form—it represents space, place and landscape within a series of electronic images and these spatial contexts have also shaped the practices of production and the meanings contained within televisual environments. Television also plays a central role in making social imagery concrete as part of the “real”—televisual content (in whatever format) has a material effect for those individuals and social groupings that construct and view them. Therefore, any analysis of the role of television in the discipline of geography involves blurring the distinction between the real and the imagined. Geographers too often only consider space as the size of the geographical places and

their associated processes. In other words, space is a macro-environment that exists in space-time, having complex processes and meaning. But space can also be form or structure, or pure space, or even space as geometry, or, importantly, in today's world, it can be a digital virtual space composed of information. Current research involves a theoretical and methodological approach that engages television as a specific material object existing in space and worth studying as a distinct geographical record within a broader set of practices and discourses.

As previously mentioned, and to put theory into a common context, one current engagement of media geography and the visual is grounded in the work of Gilles Deleuze and his concept of the movement-image—an actualization of the virtual in which images become embodied through an affective process. But the digital representation was unknown to Deleuze. Communication studies and some in geography therefore move beyond Deleuze to a geographic articulation of the concept of virtual *affectivity*. As one example in this movement, the work of Pierre Levy privileges the computational power that lies behind digital and virtual technologies, thereby promising an opportunity to more fully comprehend the geographic data coded as an array of iconic images and representations positioned within digital and virtual space.

As geographers interested in the role of television in space, we are beginning to explore these immersive virtual environments. The technologies have moved from basic telematics (the synthesis of telephony and digital imagery) to virtual technologies that are digitized environments that rely upon a naturalized picture language that is more conducive to collapsing experiential differences between the virtual and the real than those previously available in the earlier analog applications of Reeves' time. Today's geographers can examine the intersection of geographic information conceived as a technology with the spatial relationships set up between the digital environments of the television and the body of the viewer/consumer in the hope that this new form of engagement can bridge the gap between geography and our understanding of the role of television in the creation and maintenance of space and place. To be relevant, geographical research must engage the representational spaces of the televisual medium and its effect (and *affect*) on modern spaces and identities, a methodology that incorporates new *geographic thought*. Media geographers have, therefore, created a critical geography of television to uncover patterns and relationships within the spaces of television.

One of the first articles to explore the relationship between humans and modern technologies was Horvath's 1974 "Machine space" piece in *The Geographical Review*. Horvath states:

Now that the impact of humankind on the surface of the earth is appreciated in geographical thought, it is not premature to investigate the idea that the habitable area of the world itself may be in the process of being reduced quantitatively and qualitatively through the impact of modern technology... Until now, technology has been viewed largely as an a spatial phenomenon, and one of the major tasks here will be to translate technology into explicitly spatial terms... Machine space, or territory devoted primarily to the use of machines, shall be so designated when machines have priority over people in the use of territory.

(pp. 167–168)

Horvath used the automobile as his illustration of a "machine space"—an example of how a technology was now not only capable of interacting with humans within space and time but

could also supplant humans as the controlling force within that space. Horvath viewed this as a “problem” where “mounting evidence suggests more emphasis should be placed on seeking nontechnological solutions to problems of a technical origin” (1974, 185). His non-technological solution was to create “auto-free zones” and he offered a path for future research:

The concept of machine space is offered as one way for geographers to participate in the wider questioning of human purpose and of the consequences of further technological growth. Analyses of other types of machine space... need to be undertaken.

(1974, 188)

Geographers did indeed study “technological growth” although it would be nearly 20 years before televisual technology was directly addressed.

In 1992, Paul Adams’ “Television as gathering place” article was published in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, marking the first true engagement of the “uniquely place-like” qualities of television in the discipline of geography. Adams was more interested in television as “center of meaning” as opposed to the “machine space” of Horvath, viewing television as an “environment” that allowed “people to gather and/or share experiences” (1992, 117). Adams discusses the prevailing theory at the time, one that looked at the “supposed psychological and social effects of television on society” and one that drew on “cultural materialism, linguistics, and semiotics to attempt to understand how television emerged from and works to reinforce existing structures and practices in society” (1992, 119). There is a reference to Raymond Williams’ *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (1974) and how class differences can determine cultural messaging from various forms of art. Williams, a cultural theorist, working during the birth of critical geography, explored how art is perceived by different social-class groups and, as Adams indicates, this book, along with Williams’s later work, *Culture* (1981), is very relevant to media geographers, especially in making the connection between culture and class identity. But Adams’ review of the current geographical literature demonstrates that while there was interest in television as part of the larger cultural practices of the communication landscape and industry, there was no exploration of televisual spatialities unto themselves. While Adams’ main interest is his elaboration of television as “place” in the context of, say, Tuan and others of that school of place theory, Adams does, however, make the first linkages between television and affect, and by proxy, to the media theories discussed in more detail below.

Beyond the early work of Horvath and Adams, theories related to televisual processes, specifically those related to television spatialities, were more the domain of communication studies. Geographers began to bring into focus the subfield of *media geography* but the research was primarily devoted to cinema (a topic discussed in depth elsewhere in this book). While in principal one could indeed find some overlap in theories applied to cinema, televisual spaces found more purpose in research elsewhere, particularly in television’s qualities of virtuality and affect, theories that became the foundation of “new media” research. Televisual spaces have become much more than simply a viewer consuming images imparted by a receiver—with the advent of immersive technologies such as DVDs, BDs and streaming, consumers now interact with the “real” spaces constructed around their home entertainment spaces *and* the virtual spaces created by these new televisual formats. Thus, beginning in the 1990s, new media-related theories were advanced, theories that attempted to incorporate the phenomenological aspects of both the concrete and the virtual, specifically how place, space

and meaning are constructed in and through these new technologies. This research was multi-disciplinary, yet even those outside of geography addressed, directly or tangentially, the spatial aspects embodied within televisual technologies in their various formats.

Out of this research, the relationship between television and the body of the viewer in space became an important aspect of media theory. How do the visual electronic images produce affect? How does television create place via that affect? According to Weber:

what distinguished television from other media is its power to combine such separation with the presentness associated with sense perception. What television transmits is not so much *images*, as is almost argued. It does not transmit representations but rather the *semblance of presentation as such*, understood as the power not just to see and to hear but *to place before us*. Television thus serves as a surrogate for the body in that it allows for a certain sense-perception to take place; but it does this in a way that no body can, for its perception takes place in more than one place at a time.

(1996, 166–167)

Following Weber's work, Johnston (1999), drawing on Horvath's neologism, coined the term "machinic vision" that "presupposes not only an environment of interacting machines and human-machine systems but a field of decoded perceptions that, whether or not produced by or issuing from these machines, assume their full intelligibility only in relation to them" (Johnston 1999, 27). Integrated into geography, Johnston provides geographers with a discussion of the concerns of qualitative methodology and how the world is viewed, experienced and constructed by social actors. In Johnston's view, television becomes one of these "social actors" that codes and decodes space and place thus becoming invested in Deleuzian spatialities. This methodology provides the access to the motives, aspirations and power relationships that account for how places, people and events are made and represented, an interpretation of texts that can include landscapes, archival materials, maps, literature or visual images. A more recent example of how Deleuzian theory has found its way into the televisual discourse is how Salvado-Corretger and Benavente (2019) use the HBO series *Westworld* to explore questions of time and identity. They bring into the discussion the theories of Deleuze and Bergson and their process of "metaphysical reflection" to uncover the confusion between landscapes of reality of dreams and the role of memory in determining who exactly is "human" in the *Westworld* realm.

With the advent of interactive televisual media, new post-Deleuzian theories were needed to explore in more depth the relationship between the viewer and the body, the television, and the virtual interaction between those two entities. Media theorist Pierre Lévy (1998) moved visual theory into a modern neuroscience—there is now much more than a passive correlate of linkages between images—the body now has a creative capacity. Lévy was primarily interested in the affective qualities of the televised image, be it a series of images directed to the viewer (as from a television production) or via a computer monitor (for geographers, this would of course be geographic information systems (GIS) technology). By becoming *virtual*, as Lévy proposes, the viewer/consumer makes the connection between movement and sensation to the point that the slightest, most literal displacement invokes a qualitative difference—motion thus triggers affection as an active modality of bodily action. This began to find root in geographical research as media geographers have begun to privilege the power that lies behind digital and virtual technologies, thereby promising an opportunity to more fully comprehend geographic data coded as an array of iconic images and representations positioned within digital and virtual space.

More recent engagements with digital media, including the digital realms of television, such as Hansen (2003; 2006), facilitate the move into the realm of virtual affectivity. Whether virtual space is real or not, our experience of these spaces is a “real” experience. For Hansen, the viewer/consumer becomes the *virtual* subject. Thus, the virtual digital environment becomes a fundamental part of human experience. With this in mind, media geographers have now moved into discussions of specific modalities of the virtual (e.g. GIS, gaming, social media), utilizing a wide array of theory to more concretely place the virtual into the discipline. As an example of this research, Schneider (2018) uses Hansen’s example of the CBS television show *Person of Interest* to discuss the role of television in new media theorizing. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty, Schneider uses Hansen’s work to comment on the connective interactivity between digital devices, the virtual environment and the user of these technologies. Via television, both authors delve into how subjectivity is the capacity or power to sense and be sensed in today’s media environment, a viewpoint certainly relevant to geography’s technological turn. Hansen (2003; 2006; 2016) goes much further down this road with more extreme in-depth discussions of the development of media theory and its application to new forms of media, all of which is applicable to geography’s theorization of virtual, televisual and cinematic space. Beyond Hansen’s work in communication studies, Adams places television under the overarching umbrella of geographies of media and communication, stating: “the space of flows created by signals moving through the infrastructure are complementary parts of a spatial perspective we capture throughout this book with the term *media in space*” (Adams 2009, 1). Like Hansen and Lévy, Adams (109) recognizes the virtual qualities of television in his discussion of virtual centrality and how that concept applies to the manner in which television gratifies various desires. Further, Adams (p. 201) also explores “expressive being-in-place” via the phenomenological approach commonly found in qualitative geographical research, along with others discussions on the utilization of nonrepresentational geography and affect in the study of media and communications—theories that can be applied to specific research on television. Coleman and Oakley Brown (2017) conflate the concepts addressed in “new media” research such as how television is a virtual space/place, in this case a “surface” that visualizes and is also a surface in itself: television becomes one element in a “network imagination” of “teletechnology” that places television into contemporary network imaginations that are then thoroughly embedded in the flow of social life. In the end, the authors find that the linguistic model of understanding contemporary social life has been displaced by one of images, and how those images are produced, viewed and engaged (Coleman & Oakley-Brown 2017, 23).

The semiotic aspects of televisual space, first discussed by Adams in 1992, also advanced in conjunction with the development of new media theory. Dery (1999) postulated that a critical analysis of the content of popular media, like television, is necessary to understand modern culture because these representations map the material landscape by engaging audiences in the construction of new geographies that display the social and material world. Written pre-9/11, Dery nonetheless was able to foresee the dramatic impact the export of American culture would have on its creators. Media geographers will find this insightful for its discussion on the production of culture through media, and how that, invariably according to Dery, all goes wrong in the end.

Dery is also very aware of the role of television and its product-creating spaces of resistance and paranoia:

The antigovernment sentiment that hangs menacingly over *The X-Files* first appeared on our mental horizons during Watergate (though it took Ronald

Reagan's covert policy of benign neglect toward a government he openly regarded as "not the solution to the problem" to whip the free-floating contempt into the angry thunderhead it is today). *The X-Files* is haunted by the restless ghosts of Watergate and Vietnam, with Richard Nixon, the patron saint of conspiratorial realpolitik and bunker paranoia, at their head.

(1999, 17)

Crang (2003a) makes the connection between semiotics and geography and visual media. This becomes important to geographers because it links visibility to the goal of obtaining geographical knowledge and discusses the views of most semioticians that meanings are relational rather than fixed, in that signs derive their meaning from other signs and from the wider system of signs, and not just from their actual form or content. Taken a step further, current theories of visualization surmise that the mental maps that compose the themes located within geographic space are mediated internally by the systems of signs, symbols and signals people have previously internalized through the experiential negotiation of constructed landscapes. Using Lévy to bring out the television/internet nexus, Craine (2009) explores how signifying elements work between actual places, television, and the internet by referencing the real landscapes of Los Angeles, the visualized landscapes of the Fox Network television show *The Shield*, and the virtual landscapes of <http://theshieldrap.proboards45.com>. Eva Kingsepp (2016) uses a form of semiotic analysis in her discussion of the portrayal of Egypt in World War II television documentary films, indicating how places are intimately connected to narratives, particularly how narratives transform place into space and space into place. Liz Roberts (2016) is among those who see the geography of visibility, and by extension, television, in terms of the idea of "image as text," thereby centering the study of televisual texts with the language of signs that are decoded by the consumer of the visual product. This approach echoes the work of Raymond Williams who believed that this "decoding" would vary from person to person depending on their specific social position.

Putting all of the above together, an example of how the research of a media theorist has a decidedly spatial context can be found in the work of Brian Massumi. Incorporating the phenomenological, virtual and semiotic aspects of televisual space, Massumi (writing about the Super Bowl) looks at how the interruption of home space by sports has an extreme affective quality:

The televised game enters the home as a domestic player... The home entry of the game, at its crest of intensity, upsets the fragile equilibrium of the household. The patter of relations between house-held bodies is reproblematicized. The game even momentarily interrupts the pattern of extrinsic relations generally obtaining between domestic bodies, as typed by gender. A struggle ensues: a gender struggle over clashing codes, rights of access to portions of the home and its contents, and rituals of servitude. The sociohistorical home place coverts into an event-space.

(2002, 80)

The television then, for Massumi, "is more about delivery into a more-or-less open milieu than it is about the perspective of one closed space onto another, or of a closed space onto an open space" (Massumi 2002, 85). Television binds digital technologies to the "analog" process of consumption, thus cementing the relationship among a digital data source, actualized experience, embodied sensation and the virtual. Here, Massumi is one of the first to connect television's virtual space to movement and sensation through affectivity. His theories can be

perceived as important to future discussions of GIS and other forms of virtual cartographies, a topic very underdeveloped (perhaps even misunderstood) in geography at this time.

There are numerous examples of how specific television productions *work* to create space, often referred to as “convergence.” This can be the phenomenological sense related to the body’s interaction with the show, the economic sense as a continuation of capitalist practices related to the production of value, or the production of cultural value. Jenkins explains “convergence” thusly: “the flow of content across multiple media platforms. The cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want” (Jenkins 2006, 2). Crothers (2010, 108) offers a similar definition of convergence, defining it as “the process by which synergy in the entertainment industry has been created... the term describes how the many companies and individuals who used to make popular culture have been reduced in number to the few corporations that control the trade today.” As an example, Crothers noted the role of televisual familial relationships in decoding the space of the American home in his discussion of *The Cosby Show*:

White Americans tolerated and even celebrated this vision of an employed, educated, and successful African-American family. The Huxtables reflected the broad patterns of American public culture in ways that reinforced the values and ideals Americans claim to value—such as hard work, tolerance, capitalist success, and so on... Put another way, it is hard to imagine a television show being as popular as *The Cosby Show* was if the family were dysfunctional and headed by a single woman working several jobs or receiving welfare who decried her fate as a black female in a racist America.

(2010, 35)

Crothers also uses the original *Star Trek* and *The West Wing* to make the case for television as an expression of American political culture and ideals. He states (2010, 46–47) that:

much of the continuing popularity of this science fiction program lies in its vision of a globalized, ethically driven, rights-respecting, democratic future—American culture manifest on a galactic scale... In many ways, then, the Federation manifests the ideals of American democracy in actual practice. The world of *Star Trek* expresses the ideals that are at the core of American public culture.

The West Wing “is the story of the best parts of American civic culture played out with sufficiently realistic touches to make the politics seem real” (Crothers 2010, 49). Jenkins uses two examples of American TV reality shows (*Survivor* and *American Idol*) to explain the convergence process—how those two shows “demonstrated the power that lies at the intersection between old and new media” (Jenkins 2006, 59). The growth of “reality tv,” that intersection of old and new media, is shaped by what Jenkins terms “affective economics,” a new configuration of marketing theory that “seeks to understand the emotional underpinnings of consumers’ decision-making as a driving force behind viewing and purchasing decisions” (Jenkins 2006, 62). In terms of geography, understanding the consumption of media from the fan’s point of view was now replaced by the need to understand how consumer desires shaped purchasing decisions. The spatialities of the simple consumption of the televisual product in the confines of the home, usually the domain of the “commercial,” was replaced by a network product actively soliciting the viewer to make a purchase *outside* of the home. Jenkins recognizes the paradigm shift of “convergence”—what he sees as:

a move from medium-specific content toward content that flows across multiple media channels, toward increased interdependence of communications systems, toward multiple ways of accessing media content, and toward ever more complex relations between top-down corporate media and bottom-up participatory culture.
(Jenkins 2006, 243)

Applying the convergence theory globally, Zimmerman (2007) places the importance of televisual technology into the geographical discourse via his belief that “Film and television emotionalize space, place, movement, and identity thereby affecting the viewer’s perception. Visual media have also become active agents in globalization in that they spread Western cultural beliefs and attitudes” (p. 60).

Researchers have looked at how gendered and LGBTQ spaces are created via television. Marcia England, in her chapter on “Visions of gender: Codings of televisual space,” looks at the *Roseanne*, *The Cosby Show*, and *Murphy Brown* sitcoms to uncover the role of television in the formation of gendered social relations of (re)production by reinforcing traditional patriarchal frameworks. England explains how television gender roles are reinforced by the activities characters perform within their televisual spaces. Drawing on the feminist visual theories of Gillian Rose, England goes on to state that:

Feminist geography needs to address the medium of television more directly due to the powerful force of reproduction and the spaces in which these processes take place... [and] the role of television in the formation of socio-spatial identity is important to analyze.

(2018, 106)

Similarly, Pinedo compares the Nordic crime drama *Forbrydelsen* to its American remake *The Killing* in an effort to draw out the significance of “postfeminism and neoliberalism as interpretive grids” (2019, 1) that limit feminist progress in the United States. The author also discusses the processes of transnational television distribution and how this affords the opportunity to experience cultural differences such as gender differences.

Herold looks at how the New York City LGBTQ community used public access television in the late 1970s and into the 1980s to provide a forum for their experiences, concerns, community and businesses. A special 1983 episode on the show *Our Time* looked specifically at the emerging AIDS crisis creating what the author termed a “televisual emotional pedagogy about AIDS” (2020, 25). The article explores the history of *Our Time* and its importance to the LGBTQ community, and how the affective qualities of urgency, fear, and anger reached communities underserved by broadcast networks and helped mobilize activists to begin producing more AIDS-related content for public access channels. Cavalcante (2018) studies affect and emotion via LGBTQ audience research, or what the author terms “resilient reception.” How media representations “do things” to the cognitive and emotional life of audiences and how affect and emotion accumulate in individual bodies and in larger communities provide insight into the role of television in shaping LGBTQ identities. Interestingly, *Person of Interest* is referred to in the context of audience perception here, perhaps illustrating how productions that feature digital interactivity are important to shaping identity, a tenet advanced years earlier by Lévy.

There has also been interesting research uncovering television’s role in creating political and economic spaces. Virino and Ortega discuss how the HBO show *Game of Thrones* paralleled the rise of the *Podemos* political party in Spain by way of forming a bond between the party and the participatory culture associated with the television show. The authors state:

The Podemos-*Game of Thrones* case allows us to point out the key importance of TV fiction within the contemporary public sphere. Specifically, it allows us to establish the role of televisual fiction as a tool for political parties to communicate with their voters and sympathizers.

(2018, 4)

Brunn et al. (2004) in their *Geography and Technology* volume understand television as a form of geographic technology and a form of geographical communication, with Wilbanks (2004, 10) exploring the role of television news in promoting public interest in geographic information and Rain and Brooker-Gross (2004, 315) exploring how the 24-hour global news media is seemingly placeless, just a stream of images and commentary “flowing *somewhere* into your living room.” Rain and Brooker-Gross present the idea that geographers can move past traditional field and survey-type research by creating new methodologies that provide a better understanding of the geographical qualities of televisual news, especially the power of place depictions (p. 317). Within the broader discussion of global news, Rain and Brooker also discuss the landscape of news production and consumption and how that is a function of a geography of media ownership that is concentrated in just a few global cities (p. 319). Parmett and Rodgers look at the relocation of media production in the post-Fordist landscape. Instead of “flattening” as geographers have found with other capitalist economic processes, media production has become more local. We see the influence of “convergence” here as well in the way on-location filming practices have brought about rebranding and entrepreneurial competition in on-location urban spaces.

A more recent example of television’s role in the creation of economic space is Mehta’s (2020) discussion of the role of television in changes related to how Indians engage the screen. The over-reliance on soap operas that were often identity-based restricted viewers’ ability to engage with the content. Corporate management stifled creativity and insisted on grueling production schedules thus creating an exodus of key production personnel who then began to create internet content. Based on interviews with actors from all aspects of the Indian television structure, the author found that the continuing reliance on the same content, coupled with low internet access prices in India, drove audiences away from television to internet streaming services in search of more diverse and varied programming, dramatically remaking the Indian media landscape.

Of particular note is Brett Christophers’ 2010 book, *Envisioning Media Power: On Capital and Geographies of Television*. Christophers (2010a) devotes his book, the first book specific to television geographies, to uncovering the capitalist power relations that drive the television economy, including the “circuits of capital” that exist at every space and place within the local-global nexus. The work is important, even with its narrow focus, because it is a geography text that firmly connects television to space and place, predominantly in Australia/New Zealand, but also ranging to the major production centers of the television world. Christophers draws on the work of many prominent geographers, including David Harvey, Allen Scott, Neil Smith, among others, and presents his own analysis of how television is geographically located within capitalist place and space and how television can transform and maintain social and power relations within those spaces and places. While television-specific (and Australian television at that), the book is still a very insightful case study of how power is produced and maintained through televisual communication. Discussions of television are somewhat lacking in media geography, and the book does not ignore the place of television in the production of culture but instead concentrates on the results of that production. Christophers (2010b) later acknowledged that the study of television by geographers could be

grouped into three “useful” categories: geographies *on* television, the way geography is represented on television; geographies *of* television, the organization of television as an industry and a technology; and “the myriad ways in which television shapes and reshapes the fundamental *experience* of space and place and of spatially mediated identities” (2010b, 2791).

While many of the above works are specific in their discussions related the application of visual theory, one should not overlook the contributions of Gillian Rose. Rose’s (2007) *Visual Methodologies*, while perhaps more general in its approach, is often considered to be the key introductory text to visual methodologies. As a source for the ongoing development of the methodologies found in the study of media geography, it is useful for the different forms these methodologies can take. One of the keystone texts of media geography, it can be used particularly as a critical visual methodology. Rose explains how film manipulates the visual, the spatial and the temporal, in an attempt to structure “looking” and how that affects the gaze of the spectator, an insight that is applicable to the study of television geographies. Rose also maintains that there are important visual components to geography that should be further explored, and she proposes a variety of methodological approaches. One other text of interest is Steve Kosareff’s *Window to the Future: The Golden Age of Television Marketing and Advertising*. The “window” is television, and the book follows two parallel paths: the history of the development of television as a technology and how television was advertised in various forms of American media (particularly printed media). The textual component is small because the bulk of the book consists of reproductions of the advertisements, but it nonetheless provides more insight into the growth of the televisual space in the American home. One last peripheral aspect of televisual space is that of sound. Coulthard uses affective theory to discuss how the music in three international televisual crime series is scored to “align with cinematic and international aesthetics” and reinforce the prominence of the female characters portrayed in these series (2018, 553).

Michele White makes an interesting observation regarding the value of cross-disciplinary studies of television:

A number of academic disciplines, which include but are not limited to television studies, offer methods to consider systems of power and knowledge that have produced this economy. Feminist theories of spectatorship... present critical strategies to oppose the representations of the “other”... Postcolonial and critical race studies and a variety of other critical strategies can indicate how populations are made to seem dispensable because of their age, class, gender, global position, race, or sexuality. Engaging with the varied aspects of [electronic media] requires the adoption of critical strategies from different disciplines.

(2006, 196–197)

Further, Warf and Arias (2009) have discussed how the “spatial turn” in geography has brought about collaborations between the disparate disciplines, especially in research that might be considered “nontraditional.” Along that same thought, Hallam and Roberts (2014) reach the same conclusion after researching how the advent of television in Melbourne, Australia led to the closure of the city’s cinemas—that there is geographical significance and benefit to be found in cross-disciplinary approaches. Advocating for geographers to undertake the study of video, Garrett (2016) refers to Crang (2003b) and the issues that stem “from the processual approach researchers have taken toward these methods as forms of “data collection,” rather than making the opportunity to generate intellectually robust aesthetic materials” (2016, 685). Garrett further states that within geography there “remains a small minority

of research in the discipline. There is a reluctance to undertake research with video that may stem from technological anxieties” (2016, 687). While Garrett is specifically referring to the use of video technologies to record “data,” the inference still remains that those within geography who undertake research in video-related topics are a small minority.

The need for geography to successfully incorporate theories from other disciplines is perhaps the underlying theme of this chapter, especially in television-related discourse. While media geographers have done a masterful job interjecting cinematic space into the realm of geographic research, I would argue then that an ontology of television may be derived through an ontology of its geographical space. We can subscribe to the Heideggerian notion of technology as a mode of revealing: viewers/consumers coming in contact with televisual worlds in whatever format can now see something previously hidden. Televisual technology reveals something: viewers/consumers can now enjoy the capacity to control the presentation and performance of self in these contexts along with an increased ability to control the conditions of interaction. As White states above, engaging the “varied aspects” of television and its adjacent research offers the opportunity to better engage digitelevisual space and thus gain a deeper appreciation and wider comprehension of spatial information.

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