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> (Seymour-Ure 1996: 163)

Television and politics before 1959

The historical relationship between television and politics typifies that which has existed between television and most institutions of public life. Television begins as a loftily patronized messenger boy or barely tolerated guest, and ends up largely dictating how these institutions should present and even conduct their business.

For the genesis of its relationship with politics we have to go back to the days of sound broadcasting. In the early years of radio the BBC's political coverage was fairly limited. Reith himself was largely uninterested in politics, thinking it less significant than other cultural matters such as religion, drama, education and the arts. Moreover, it was an inherently controversial field in which the controversy could involve not just the political parties but the BBC itself. Hence political discussions were seldom broadcast, gingerly handled, and often contentious in their effects, especially during the 1930s. And until the end of the 1950s it was mainly the politicians who determined what issues radio and television would cover and the way in which they should cover them.

The broadcasting of politics was shaped by two notable principles. The first was that the coverage of the views of the different political parties should be 'balanced'. This principle was in any case implicit in the BBC's public service tenet that it should be independent of pressure groups and sectional interests and was made part of its statutory duties in 1927. It was later applied to ITV too, and is still sometimes invoked. When, as often happens, one or other institution is accused of bias by *all* of the main parties it will take this as a comforting sign that it is managing a fair measure of balance. In practice, balance has always been an impossible concept and therefore a constant bone of contention. How can balance be defined or quantified? Is two minutes of soaring eloquence by the politician of one party 'balanced' by two minutes of stumbling prevarication by the politician of another? Should the party spokespersons be chosen by the programme producers or by the parties themselves? – an important question since it is often wayward politicians who make the best or most interesting broadcasters. Does balance mean affording equal coverage to all shades of political opinion or coverage which is proportionate to the numbers of seats which the parties occupy in Parliament?

In the day-to-day coverage of politics balance has generally meant an even-handedness between the three main parties, but it has not extended to views which do not have significant parliamentary representation – views which would be, almost by definition, eccentric or 'extreme'. Moreover, there have certainly been times when even this degree of even-handedness has been sacrificed to a practical need (usually the BBC's) to appease the party in power. However, with reference to party political and party election broadcasts, 'balance' has meant coverage proportionate to the parliamentary strength of the main parties. The principle might equally be used to justify coverage which was *inversely* proportionate to it: that is, one could argue that if a party has few seats, it should be entitled to more coverage in order to bring its views before a wider public – but this notion of balance has only logic, not realpolitik, in its favour.

Ministerial broadcasts have always been especially contentious. Ministers could not demand airtime since this would make a nonsense of the BBC's independence. They might therefore seek an invitation. But if they did, could the BBC withhold it? And if not, should it extend a similar invitation to the opposition? In 1947 an agreement between the government and the BBC established four categories of political broadcast. The first was the straight ministerial broadcast to be given usually at times of emergency and always 'in the national interest'. Since there could be no dispute about the national interest this category was uncontroversial and allowed the opposition no right of reply. The second was the controversial ministerial broadcast, to which the opposition was entitled to reply. The third was the party political broadcast, produced by the political parties themselves, with the government and opposition allocated equal numbers of broadcasts and the smaller parties – the Liberals and nationalists – fewer, proportionate to their parliamentary strength. The fourth category was the controversial discussion.

Apart from placing the BBC in an invidious position between government and opposition the 1947 agreement achieved little. The opposition claimed, quite reasonably, that the definition of an 'uncontroversial' ministerial broadcast was itself controversial, and so the distinction between the first two categories all but collapsed. Moreover, there were constant squabbles between the parties about the number of broadcasts to which each was entitled under the third category, with the corporation used as a common whipping-boy. However acrimonious, these squabbles were usually settled informally and away from the public view, but a judicial element was introduced as recently as 1995 when opposition MPs sought an injunction against the BBC to prevent it from showing in Scotland an interview with the Prime Minister just before that country's local elections. Their action was successful because the opposition was to be denied equal coverage.

Before the arrival of ITV political television mostly consisted of party election broadcasts. In the broader field of politics the BBC and ITV have seldom been so naive as to believe that the principle of balance or even-handedness has applied to conflicts between Britain and her external enemies, though during the Falklands and Gulf wars there were complaints among certain sections of the public that the Argentinian and Iraqi cases had been insufficiently explained. However, the question of balance between the unionist and republican positions on Northern Ireland, both of which have sometimes been expressed through acts of terrorism, has always been a peculiarly thorny one and tackled by the broadcasters with varying temerity. The BBC's attempt to reflect the republican point of view in *Real Lives: At the Edge of the Union* (1985) caused predictable outrage, while a *This Week* documentary called *Death on the Rock* (1988), which investigated the

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killing of certain IRA activists by the SAS in Gibraltar, was shown by ITV despite government pressure.

Balance and neutrality are not just matters of apportioning equal coverage to all shades of political opinion but of refraining from endorsing any of those opinions or expressing opinions of one's own. Under its charter the BBC was forbidden to editorialize and this prohibition has extended to all the other major broadcasting institutions. Unlike the newspapers, they may not express an opinion on political issues or urge their audiences to vote for a particular party. When radio and TV differed from newspapers in being limited by the shortage of frequencies it seemed proper that each broadcasting institution should reflect the widest range of opinion rather than one point of view. But now that digital technology is able to provide an almost limitless number of channels it could be argued that the only broadcaster whom we should henceforth expect to be balanced and neutral is the BBC, since it is directly funded by a public which reflects the whole range of political opinion.

The second principle which shaped the early broadcasting of politics was that a broadcasting institution should not pre-empt or prejudice discussions which were due to be conducted in Parliament by the country's elected representatives. This was somewhat analogous to the *sub judice* rule in courts of law, which forbids public pronouncements about innocence or guilt before the conclusion of a trial so that the verdict shall not be improperly influenced. The principle was enshrined in an informal understanding reached in 1944 between the BBC and the political parties and became known as the 'fourteen-day rule': there could be no broadcast coverage of any issue which was due to be debated in Parliament within the following fortnight. Though it was the BBC, not the parties, which had proposed the rule, it soon formed the view that parliamentary discussion was likely to be informed and stimulated rather than prejudiced by any preceding broadcast coverage. In 1955 it therefore asked the government to revoke the rule, but the government's response was to make it formal and binding on the BBC and ITV alike.

Nevertheless, by this time the tide was beginning to turn in the relationship between broadcasters and politicians. The latter could deal confidently with radio, having been used to it since the early 1930s, but the new medium of television was less easy to handle. It could show politicians in pitiless close-up, exposing not only physical blemishes but idiosyncrasies of character. Broadcasters, too, were growing more aware of their power, particularly with the arrival of ITV, whose commercial source of income meant that it was not beholden to politicians in the way that the BBC was. Its new generation of interviewers such as Robin Day were more journalistic, less deferential. But in this respect competition strengthened the BBC too, because if its political broadcasting grew more incisive so as to match ITV's, the politicians could complain only by admitting that in the old days the BBC had been partly under their thumb.

It was the Suez crisis of 1956 which marked the beginning of the end of the old relationship between politicians and broadcasters. In July of that year President Nasser of Egypt nationalized the Anglo-French-controlled Suez Canal Company, as a consequence of which British, French and Israeli forces bombed and occupied the Canal zone. This colonialist adventure split the country from top to bottom as well as incurring the displeasure not only of the Soviet Union but of Britain's main ally, the United States. Paddy Scannell (1979: 100) points out that before 1956 the BBC's political broadcasts focused on foreign affairs because it was here, in the twilight of empire and with the Soviet Union as everybody's *bête noire*, that controversy could be avoided and party consensus lay. But consensus collapsed with Suez, and as Asa Briggs (1995: 76) observes, Suez threatened the BBC because for the first time in the history of broadcasting the corporation was obliged to reflect a deep rift over foreign policy and report a large body of domestic opinion which was strongly critical of the government on a matter of great national importance. One consequence was that the BBC incurred the deep hostility of the Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden. When Eden or one of his ministers broadcast, the opposition demanded a right of reply. But Eden's view was that this was a national crisis which transcended party politics, and therefore that the BBC was obliged not to be even-handed between government and opposition but to support the government. This was in accordance with the 1947 agreement between the government and the corporation, but, as the Labour politician Clement Attlee had remarked in 1934,

> The control of the BBC by the State in an emergency is obviously necessary, but there is a point where it is difficult to decide whether the emergency is really that of the State or of the Government as representing the political party in power.
> (quoted in McDonnell 1991: 17)

Was Suez a crisis for the nation – or merely for the government? The BBC certainly saw it as the government's and its relations with the latter sank to a new depth.

Nevertheless, broadcasting in general, and the BBC in particular, ended the year 1956 with its power enhanced rather than diminished. First, under the pressure of events in the Middle East and elsewhere, the government indefinitely suspended the fourteen-day rule in return for assurances from the broadcasters which were as insincerely given as they were unrealistically demanded. The rule could hardly survive because ITV was much less vulnerable to government threats and pressures than was the BBC, and if the independence of its editorial line on Suez could be praised, as it was by many people, to criticize the BBC's would involve the admission, unthinkable in a democracy, that the latter was a creature of the government. The BBC was also able to maintain its independence precisely because there was no general agreement, even within the ruling Conservative Party, as to

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where 'the national interest' lay. Finally, and only a few months after the Suez crisis began, a mass uprising broke out in Hungary against the Soviet Union. In Britain (as elsewhere in the West) there was almost unanimous support for Hungary and a general agreement, endorsed by many Hungarians themselves, that the BBC's coverage of the uprising was excellent. The corporation was thus able to restore its fair standing with the government.

Thenceforward both ITV and the BBC took steps to raise the quality of their political broadcasting, though as was noted in Chapter 5 the former had already taken the lead with the launch of ITN. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that an ITV contractor, Granada, was the first to offer in-depth TV coverage of a by-election campaign. This took place at Rochdale in February and March of 1958, and programmes included a live discussion of the election issues between all the candidates and interviews of the latter by three experienced journalists.

Television and politics since 1959

The general election of 1959 was the first in which television could be said to have played a major role in the electoral process and the point at which the broadcasters seized the initiative from the politicians. Sir Hugh Greene, the overall head of BBC news and soon to be Director General, announced that the corporation would cover the election on 'news values' rather than according to literalistic notions of balance: in effect that broadcasters rather than politicians would set the agenda. The sheer scale of the BBC's coverage was unprecedented, with fifty-seven cameras in the field, some of them moving on election night from one constituency to another.

Since 1959 television has increasingly dictated the terms on which election campaigns have been conducted – and, indeed, on which politics in general can be publicized. From 1985 it was allowed into the House of Lords (radio had been relaying the proceedings of both Houses since 1976) and from 1989 into the Commons. It is for the individual to decide whether TV has altered the behaviour of politicians for better or for worse, or had no discernible effect.

But of equal interest is the way in which, thanks largely to the medium itself, the general understanding of what 'politics' consists of has broadened beyond the traditional and well-defined realms of cabinet, Parliament and party warfare. The year 1958 marked television's importance in terms of the conventional political processes: it covered the Rochdale by-election and for the first time the State Opening of Parliament, but it also covered politics of an unconventional but no less significant kind: the first of the Aldermaston marches organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and an example *par excellence* of pressure-group publicity. On the nation's screens appeared an astonishing, motley procession of people: bearded students in duffel coats; young couples with placard-bearing infants in pushchairs; leading public figures – radical clergymen, aquiline intellectuals like

Bertrand Russell, and personalities from the arts; and accompanying the spectacle the sounds of skiffle groups, jazz bands and oratory. This was a new kind of 'visual politics' which television had largely brought into being and which would reach its apotheosis in the great anti-Vietnam and civil rights marches of the 1960s and 1970s. It is still with us in the publicity coups of Greenpeace and anti-road protesters.

As Ralph Negrine (1994: 139–40) points out and as was noted in the last chapter, such campaigners and protesters have always made an emotive and moralistic appeal on single issues, which are represented as straightforward clashes between good and evil. And they have always attracted TV coverage not only because of their deliberate theatricality, but because in cutting across the lines of conventional party politics they can be seen as in a sense non-political. The broadcasting institutions can therefore televise them without having to worry about 'balance' or accusations of being politically partisan. But television has had a theatrical effect on politics *in general* (indeed, we saw earlier that it is liable to theatricalize almost every sphere of activity). It often replaces thoughtful discussions of abstract issues with 'personalities' and confrontations, and concocts phoney news items like photo-opportunities and walkabouts. Yet, thanks to TV, some news items have managed the sinister feat of being both 'concocted' and genuine: the IRA set its bombs to explode in the late afternoon so that the effects could appear on the early evening bulletins.

Just as television has made us see politics as a broader matter of social issues and problems that are often expressed through campaigns, direct action and demonstrations, so since the 1960s it has added to the arenas in which even traditional politics is conducted: Downing Street, the Houses of Parliament and the election hustings. As the tribune of the people TV felt more and more justified in setting its own political agenda – not only in *Panorama* and *News at Ten* but *Question Time* and *World in Action* – for which it often succeeded in luring the politicians away from their habitat and into its own: the studio. One could even argue that the TV studio has replaced the House of Commons as the main arena of political debate. And where TV leads, even the broadsheets will follow. Newspaper coverage of Commons speeches has decreased sharply in recent years, one arguable effect of which is that Parliament has seemed less important in relation to other sources of power: the judiciary, utility regulators, European institutions and even market forces (Riddell 1998: 8–14).

Whether they wish to or not, politicians are obliged to adjust their demeanour to the needs of the small screen. Harold Macmillan, who was Prime Minister from 1957 to 1963, was quite adept at this, combining a reassuring patrician image with a hint of self-parody. Before he submitted to a television interview with the American Ed Murrow, only 37 per cent of the electorate thought that Macmillan was doing a good job; afterwards the number rose to 50 per cent. But Harold Wilson, who was Prime Minister from 1964 to 1970 and from 1974 to 1976, was the first to

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make a careful study of television, and with his pipe and mackintosh projected the image of a canny man of the people. Nevertheless he was discomfited by the BBC in much the same way as Sir Anthony Eden had been many years before. In 1966 he used television to explain his 'National Plan' for Britain's economic recovery. In spite of the rhetoric the BBC declined to regard it as any more than a matter of party politics and allowed the opposition a right of reply. It thus incurred Wilson's undying hostility, the episode proving that dealing with the media, and with television especially, is like riding a tiger. Woe betide those who think it will serve only the purposes they want it to serve!

But the adjustment of politics to television has been much more fundamental than this. It is not just appearances but political events and whole election campaigns which have had to be tailored to the medium and its news schedules. Indeed, television is itself a part of politics in the sense that almost every political decision will include some calculation as to the effect it will have on the viewing electorate. Moreover, the medium is even more pervasive than has so far been suggested. We mentioned that it has enticed politicians out of their traditional habitats and into its own. But the world, not just the studio, is television's oyster and politicians may find themselves being accosted on airport runways, answering questions in a shopping precinct, giving in-flight or on-train interviews. For many years there have been permanent TV studios at Heathrow as well as at Westminster. In sum it could be said that the relationship between television and politics, though punctuated by rows and crises over Suez, the Falklands, Northern Ireland and so on, is so close that they can scarcely be disentangled from each other.

Colin Seymour-Ure (1996: 202) has discerned three main effects that the media, with television pre-eminent among them, have had upon the role of the premiership. First, the Prime Minister must give more time and thought to dealing with the media. Second, she or he is more often drawn away from the power bases of the office: Downing Street and the House of Commons. Third, and predictably in view of television's requirements, the Prime Minister must be more of a 'personality', an 'opinion leader' or mobilizer: in a word, more like an American President. Since the concerns of politics themselves have broadened it is hardly surprising that the Prime Minister and even his senior colleagues are now expected to have a view on almost everything. In 2000, for instance, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, was happy to pontificate on the 'élitist' nature of Oxford University's admissions policy.

But the fact that television and the other media encourage politicians to be opinion leaders serves to remind us that power does not lie wholly with the former. Politicians need television for exposure, but television needs politicians for views and information. And if politicians dislike the way they are treated, they can always, in a world of competing networks, threaten to take their business elsewhere (Gaber 1998: 266). As they rediscovered their value to television the political parties and individual politicians strove to bend it to their own purposes by employing image consultants and publicists – 'spin-doctors' who feed news to the media in which achievements are emphasized and failures disguised. These people also help to stage slick, telegenic party conferences which deal in short, memorable quotes ('sound-bites') rather than the genuine debates which might reflect internal divisions (McNair 1998: 152). Moreover, it is largely due to their influence that election campaigns are now 'managed events more akin to advertising, public relations and marketing than traditional politics' (McQuail 2000: 472).

We must conclude with some brief remarks about the government's formal policy on broadcasting. In the paradoxical impression it gives of not being subject to special legislation yet being closely monitored by a number of public agencies, television (and radio) reflects the ambivalence which society feels towards it. We believe that as guardians of democracy, arenas of public debate and the guarantors of freedom of information, the media should be as free from political interference as possible – especially from the government, whose deeds (and misdeeds) they report to us. It is also noticeable that when the government seeks to regulate the media it is usually those media which deal with news and politics – newspapers, radio and television – rather than those which do not, such as films, books and compact discs (Seymour-Ure 1996: 236). Hence, to allay public fears of state control, governments have traditionally professed a 'non-policy' towards broadcasting. There is no 'Department of Communication' (the Postmaster-General's regulatory responsibility for the electronic media disappeared in 1969), and such statutory provisions as exist are piecemeal and of makeshift origins – intended, as Seymour-Ure (1996: 228) points out, to serve broad objectives like 'freedom of speech', 'freedom of information', 'public service' and 'balance'. Legislation affects aspects of broadcasting and its audiences (for example, the TV licence), but in other respects television and radio are regarded as 'nothing special' – subject to those ordinary laws of obscenity, blasphemy, copyright, defamation and official secrets which affect many other spheres in addition to broadcasting.

On the other hand, we dislike the idea that the media can exert too much influence over people or become 'a law unto themselves', and for this reason both the BBC and the commercial sector are carefully if discreetly policed by publicly appointed boards. Moreover, certain government departments such as the Treasury and the Foreign Office take an oblique interest in broadcasting (by fixing the TV licence, financing the World Service and so on); and media legislation has established various self-regulatory bodies such as the Broadcasting Complaints Commission and the Advertising Standards Authority. It has been calculated that by the end of the 1970s some thirty organizations were involved in controlling or in some way shaping British television and radio output.

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Television and the royal family

The history of television's dealings with royalty is very similar to the history of its dealings with politics and sport. At the 1937 coronation it was a mere spectator in the crowd. At the 1953 coronation it was a humble supplicant, knocking at the door of Westminster Abbey and being allowed in to watch discreetly from the loft, though there was a part of the ceremony from which it was excluded. By the 1990s it was a monstrous potentate before whom a prince and princess would come to justify their private lives.

Until the 1970s the royal family retained a fair degree of mystique and was held in some reverence. It is true that there had been a scandal and a constitutional crisis back in 1936, when after the death of George V it gradually emerged that his son and successor, Edward VIII, intended to marry the twice-divorced Mrs Wallis Simpson. But the crisis was well managed. Television scarcely existed, and the BBC and the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, with their instinctive respect for rank and authority, joined in a conspiracy to keep the news from the wider public. When the King decided that he would rather renounce the throne than Mrs Simpson he explained the decision in a radio broadcast which ensured both sympathy for himself and support for his successor and younger brother, George VI.

It was not until 1969 that royalty decided to make some concession to the democratizing effects of the new medium of television by allowing itself to be seen in a more intimate and less formal light. The result was Richard Cawston's documentary *The Royal Family* (both BBC and ITV), in which the Queen appeared in a happy domestic setting and thus inaugurated a honeymoon period in royalty's relations with television. The royal family still maintained much of its dignity and detachment through televised events like the investiture of Charles as Prince of Wales in the same year, and his marriage to Lady Diana Spencer in 1981; but the images of family picnics and bustling corgis lingered in the nation's mind. The royals were likeably human – at bottom, 'just like the rest of us'.

However, the three decades since the screening of Cawston's programme have shown that television is always a dangerous guest to admit because it ends up hosting the party. As members of the royal family were seen more and more often on TV, their magic began to wane and popular reverence to diminish. They came to seem unremarkable, even a little dull. An attempt by its younger members to show that they could laugh at themselves by taking part in a game-show, *It's a Royal Knockout* (BBC 1, 1987), seriously dented their dignity: the nation was not amused. And finally, with the revelations of matrimonial breakdowns and sexual adventures, notably those of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, royalty began to acquire a negative, more tawdry kind of glamour.

It has to be said that television was not the only, perhaps not even the primary, cause of this change. Its news programmes simply echoed stories which had invariably begun in the tabloids – and even then only when they had become so sensational that they could no longer be ignored. But television clearly gave them a wider currency, and its pictures fleshed out and made us all too familiar with those about whom they were written. Yet instead of shunning TV on the reasonable assumption that a measure of retirement, an interval of oblivion, might restore their standing, first Charles and then Diana seemed to solicit the medium to put his or her case, vainly seeking yet another, this time favourable, dose of publicity to counter the damaging effects of the last. The interviews of Charles and Diana – the former on ITV in the summer of 1995, the latter on BBC 1 in November of the same year – were extraordinary instances of the power of television. Each broadcast was a curious mixture of intimacy and exhibitionism, a series of confidences which implied the acceptance of millions of prurient viewers as confessors and even judges. But while Prince and Princess were seeking to justify themselves and restore their reputations, what television revealed above all was their ordinariness, their merely average weaknesses – that at close quarters, royals, like everybody else, are anything but royal. Even the Queen, to whom no wisp of scandal attaches, has been damaged. In 1984 her Christmas message was heard by 28 million; by the mid-1990s the number had dropped to 14.5 million.

It is of course true that as well as destroying mystique and exposing the ordinariness of those in power and authority, television is able to take people who are already 'ordinary' and elevate or idealize them. These tend to be pop or film stars, who are generally allowed to use the medium on *their* terms precisely because they deal in fantasy and entertainment rather than in 'real world' matters. The bulk of their TV appearances consists of soft-focus movies and videos, and the few close interviews they give are carefully stage-managed. But provided the medium is subsequently given the sort of spectacle around which fantasy might be woven, that destruction of mystique which it can also cause is by no means irreversible – a fact which was illustrated by the later history of Princess Diana, even if it took a tragic finale to complete her apotheosis. Although Diana was frequently vexed by intrusions into her privacy, as when photographed while exercising at the gym or dallying with her boyfriends, she also became adept at turning the media to her advantage. As the intrusions imply, she had attractions that the other royals lacked: youth and beauty. But through press and TV interviews she was able to represent herself as a royal outcast – rejected by a family who had already sunk in the public's esteem. Since she could now never be the Queen of England, she coyly expressed a shrewd ambition to become another and more egalitarian kind of monarch – 'the queen of people's hearts' – and did so by making highly publicized visits to the sick, the starving and the poor in various parts of the globe. Hence this young and beautiful woman was not simply a princess (with some famous showbiz friends), but one who was both victim and comforter – a blend of glamour, vulnerability and kindness whose potency would only later become clear.

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It must again be stressed that the popular press gave much more prominence to Diana than television did. But without TV's pictures of her cuddling maimed and starving infants or holding the hands of emaciated AIDS victims it is inconceivable that she could have attracted such world-wide interest. Her charitable activities were neither full time nor of a long overall duration. But when in August 1997 she was killed with her latest boyfriend in a car crash in Paris, apparently fleeing some photographers whose attentions were on this occasion unwelcome, the international reaction was astonishing. An outpouring of grief – as theatrical as the events that had caused it – came not only from the famous but the general public, above all from those who knew her only from press and TV coverage, and she was instantly elevated from mere celebrity to near sainthood. The royal family came under attack for not showing enough grief, even though she had criticized them and her marriage to Charles had ended. Nor would any of the media, including the broadsheet newspapers, allow space to those who might wish to call into question either the character of Diana herself or the appropriateness of the reaction to her death. The orgy of emotional kitsch culminated in a funeral service in Westminster Abbey which was televised to a world audience of 2.5 billion.

However, these events were attended by a hint of irony. Shortly after Diana's death, but before her funeral, there died another famous champion of the downtrodden: Mother Teresa, a small, wizened nun who conceivably had a better claim on the world's grief since she had devoted most of her life to the care of Calcutta's poor. But for the TV-dominated media Mother Teresa suffered from a fatal flaw: she was elderly, unworldly – in a word, not telegenic – and her death was reported as if a slightly irritating distraction from the main event.

The Diana episode is chiefly of interest in showing how television encourages people to regard mere appearances as a reliable guide to the truth, perhaps because they are also in some sense 'entertaining', and to react to them in emotionally disproportionate ways.

Television and audiences

As the number of TV channels has increased, and with it the kinds of content they offer, the television audience has divided along class lines just as it did with the proliferation of radio networks after the war. Since ITV was launched with a need to deliver the biggest possible audience to its advertisers, we noticed that it attracted a large number of working-class viewers, while most of the middle class stayed with the BBC. With the arrival of BBC 2 in 1964 and the first move towards narrowcasting, further divisions became apparent: the working class stayed with ITV and BBC 1; the middle class divided its viewing between BBC 1 and BBC 2 and later extended its interest to Channel 4. With similar motivation to ITV, satellite and cable television are seeking and capturing a strong working-class audience.

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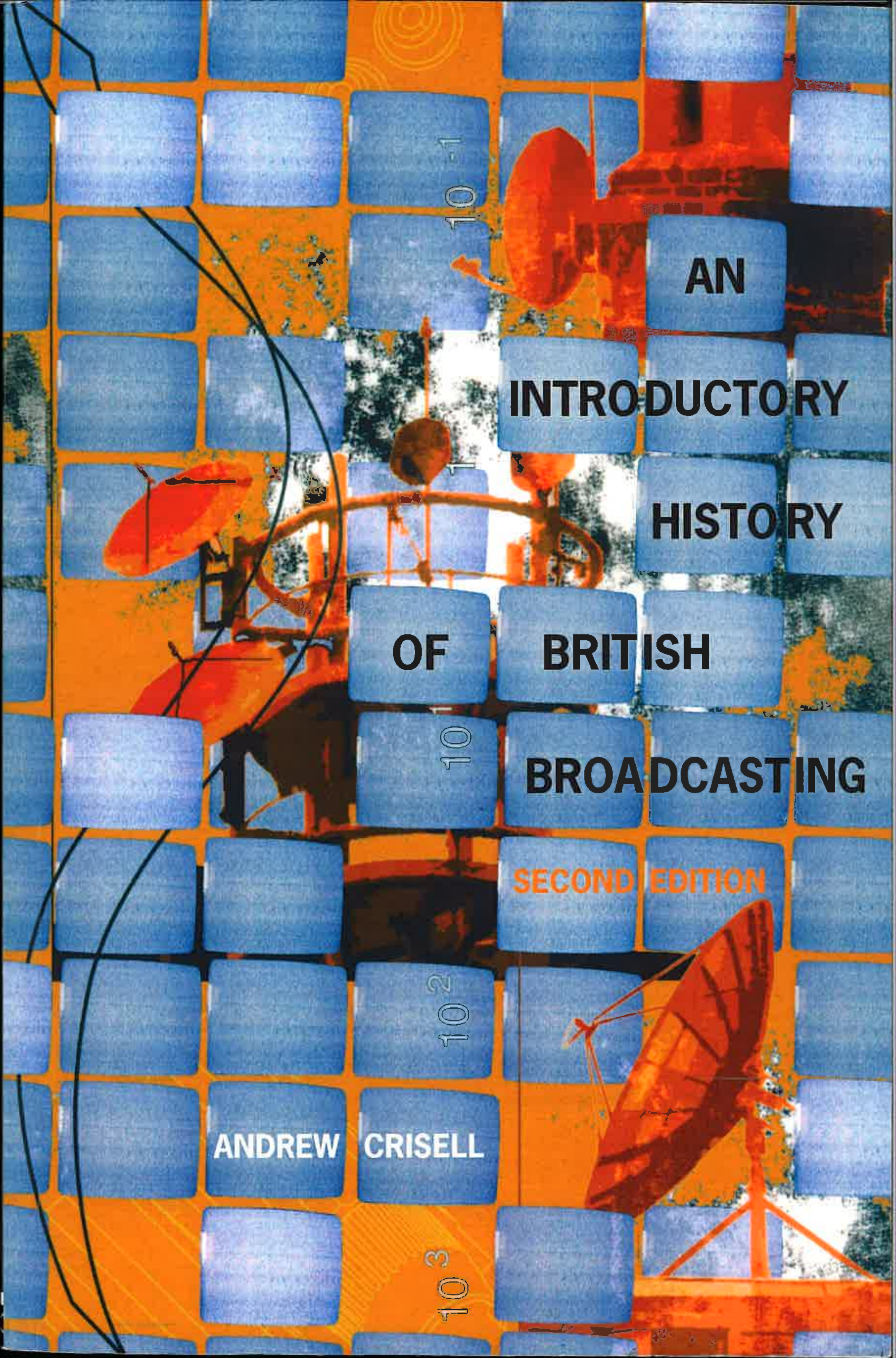
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