provide much needed insights for policy-makers. In Canada, and internationally, choices are made which shape the evolution of global telecommunication systems and services. These choices have political, economic, social and cultural consequences. Babe's analysis must force the reader to recognise the mythical character of the technological determinism cover story and to see that it does not aid in assessment of these consequences.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. R. Barthes, *Mythologies,* Hill and Wang, New York, 1972, p. 151.

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Making Science Our Own: Public Images of Science 1910-1955 *by Marcel C. LaFollette*
(University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1990), pp. ix + 260, $US17.95, ISBN 0-226-46779-1 (pbk).

Exhortations to improve the scientific literacy of the Australian public are often made in a science-centred context. That is, scientists are called upon to explain their findings clearly to the public, and the public is urged to listen and learn in the interests of a fully participatory democracy. (This is what Bryan Wynne has termed the 'cognitive deficit' model of the public understanding of science).

In this welcome new contribution to the literature of science and its publics Marcel LaFollette argues persuasively that science communication is much more than a one-way process in which science is packaged by scientists for the passive consumer. She takes as the object of her study the public images of science in the US mass market magazines published between 1910-1955, magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post, The Atlantic Monthly,* and *Cosmopolitan.* In the era before television, she argues, these magazines provided images of science which both helped shape the role of science in American life and in turn influenced political support for research. Initially, images of a benign and benificent science might have encouraged an approving public response, but later, events such as the creation and use of chemical and nuclear weapons meant that writers and readers could no longer accept uncritical adulation. LaFollette traces the shifts in the images of science and the changing stereotypes of scientists both male and female. Her chapter on "Women in the Laboratories" is particularly revealing of the kind of crazy double standards rampant in this kind of writing about science. If a male scientist was absent-minded, that was only to be expected, and his family made allowances for him, and forgave him his eccentricities; the woman scientist not only had to prove herself as a scientist, she was also asked to provide an image of herself as a 'real' woman, a good mother, and a superwoman homemaker. An article on Margaret Mead described how she could make "corn fritters with crocodile eggs"; male anthropologists were not expected to have domestic virtues in addition to their scientific credentials.

LaFollette argues that what Americans believed about science determined what they expected of it. The messages conveyed in the American popular magazines had to fit with the reader's beliefs about science, even if the beliefs were inaccurate. The messages did not simply assert what science was, but predicted

what it could do. These conclusions are reached through detailed analysis of content (where content was analysed apart from the decision-making processes of people who produced it). The appendix provides additional information on magazine circulation, sampling data, number of science articles published by each magazine, number of articles on individual sciences including social sciences, and changes in styles of popular magazine science from 1910-1955.

In the period between 1910-1955 what emerges most clearly is the ultimate failure of many of the predictions, and the emergence of a sceptical attitude towards science alongside the general admiration. LaFollette charts the growth of ambiguity in public attitudes and explores some of the reasons for it. She places the public images in their political context, for example, some of the changes coincided with deteriorating relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the consequent demands of the Cold War. Following World War II, science writers for the mass magazine market voiced strong concerns about the unpredictability of science, and the scientist was sometimes portrayed as the failed magician. The ambiguity apparent in magazine discussion of nuclear power has persisted through the 1950s to today.

LaFollette's study goes part of the way towards bridging the gap between studies of science in the mass media and the concerns of public policy. This book complements the work of Dorothy Nelkin in her book *Selling Science*[9] and the research of Bryan Wynne on the 'cognitive deficit' model of scientific communication. Wynne's ideas may be found in an article 'Knowledge in context' in the winter 1991 issue of *Science, Technology, and Human Values* (a journal LaFollette previously edited). Wynne argues that scientific communication, if it is uncritically science-centred, can be unaware of the institutional interests it serves. Yet at the same time it may tacitly convey its unexamined interests to the audience for science and elicit a variety of unintended responses, of the "Look who's talking", and "They would say that, wouldn't they?" variety. Hostility to science may be a by-product of the best communication intentions. LaFollette's study reaches somewhat similar concusions.

The moral of this story is, keep it honest. Public relations for science may fool some of the people some of the time, but if there is no substance behind the promotion, the communication exercise will ultimately fail scientists, writers, and readers.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Dorothy Nelkin, *Selling Science: How the Press Covers Science and Technology,* W.H. Freeman, New York, 1987.

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