Production for the market is a defining aspect of capitalist relations in the production of culture... Understanding the nature of the process of commoditization is central to our perspective on the changing importance of race and race relations to the supply of media materials with racial content. Commodification represents a shift in the locus of power over production decisions. Prior to commodification, goods were produced on the basis of their potential for meeting individual and social needs. As commodities, the decision about whether or not to produce a particular good is based upon whether or not it can produce a profit in the marketplace.

(Gandy, 1998, pp. 99–100)

Introduction

Oscar H. Gandy, the Herbert I. Schiller Term Professor in the Annenberg School for Communication at University of Pennsylvania, is a leading communication scholar in the United States. Gandy specializes in the intersections of race, media responsibility, information technology, political economy, and surveillance. In the mid-1970s, when computing technology was in its infancy stage of development in the United States, Gandy was
completing a dissertation on the confluence of technology-driven instructional/informational systems as governmental commodities and the pervasive impact of public and industrial economic capital. His primary concern, as implied by the opening quote, was with how government subsidies used for the promotion of online instruction were actually part of a political strategy to enhance big business and produce a capitalist-driven instructional economy. After Sputnik, the development of information technology for educational purposes was seen by the United States as an advantage that would strategically position the United States favorably with respect to its competitor, the Soviet Union.

By examining the use of power in this way Gandy could situate his critical-theoretic writings very early in his career, critiquing structured systems of information technology and public policy. Although post-structuralism has come to carry many meanings, it can be argued that Gandy's work falls on the cusp of the domains of Marxist critique and very early communication-related poststructuralist studies as it pertains to the way in which politically fragmented institutionalized structures such as media industries seek to govern and constrain societies. Although Marxists believe that the state monitors and controls the people via structured practices, poststructuralists do not agree that surveillance is the sole province of the state. In fact, they would argue that everyone participates in surveillance—and that it is a principal influence on the social construction of identities. Gandy applied a Marxist perspective in his early writings, and much of that perspective continued later, but he has developed a broader perspective on who constitutes a media audience and how media privacy is maintained. Applying his background in sociology, economics, and communication behavior, Gandy published his first two books: Government and Media: An Annotated Bibliography (1975) and Beyond Agenda Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy (1982), which has become one of his most frequently cited and foundational works. As his career has progressed, many of his writings remain nuanced and well-received.

While in college at University of New Mexico for two years, Gandy's interest in critically assessing institutional structures was being shaped by his participation in and association with a number of left-wing organizations as well as his exposure to the ideas of radical scholars such as Howard Meier. Meier, a unionist and mine organizer-turned-sociologist, was one of Gandy's professors and for whom Gandy worked as a research assistant. While at University of New Mexico, Gandy protested and demonstrated against governmental structures that disenfranchised or discriminated against marginalized groups. After having studied or taken classes with a slew of radical scholars—from Emile McAnany to Martin Carnoy and Hank Levin—Gandy was armed with a radical consciousness and a will to fight for peace and justice. Over the years, these internal driving forces have carried over into much of his work concerning topics from racial segmentation and discrimination in information technology studies to studies of conflicts between corporate and consumer interests with respect to media privacy and surveillance.

Gandy has been a writer, producer, and director of public access television programs as well as a prolific scholar and active leader in the field of communication. Given his many contributions, it is easy to speak effusively about his research. In this chapter, we will broaden our discussion to include his personal background, academic experiences, contributions to the field of communication, and a list of selected references from his body of writings.

**Biographical Information**

On August 24, 1944, Oscar H. Gandy was born in Amityville, New York to Rita and Oscar Gandy, Sr. Unfortunately, he did not get to know his parents well because his mother was
hospitalized for much of his life, and his father chose not to support his wife and children. Gandy lamented, “He escaped to Canada shortly after finding out that his wife was ill” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004). As Gandy's mother's health declined and eventually led to her dying of cancer, his father was absent without leave. A Korean War veteran, Oscar Gandy, Sr. worked for awhile in the aerospace industry—on the assembly line at Grumman Aircraft in Long Island, in particular—so he had enough experience to become an inspector in a manufacturing plant at Canadian Airlines. He took the job in Canada and left his family. Gandy's aunt, Clifford Fitz, reared him and his sister, Sheila. Gandy described her as “a marvelous woman, an intellectual without a whole lot of book learning, but she made sure we had everything we ever needed and quite a bit of what we wanted as well” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004).

Gandy's aunt Clifford was educated at Tuskegee Institute, an historically Black college in Tuskegee, Alabama, which was founded by Booker T. Washington and developed to enhance the condition of Blacks by training them in industrial education. With that paradigmatic model, she was trained in interior decorating and upholstery refurbishment. Although it is unclear whether Clifford ever finished college, with her training she worked as a freelance interior designer, usually for White people who needed her services in their homes. When she was not doing that, Clifford worked as a domestic, cooking and cleaning in White people's homes. Although she “never really had too many pennies to rub together” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004), she knew she had to work very hard to financially support Gandy and Sheila. Yet she was never heard to complain and she clearly wanted to ensure that the two children had the best education and exposure to the arts that she could afford—by paying tuition to send them to private Catholic schools for their entire elementary and secondary education.

Gandy's aunt Clifford died while he was still in high school, and she was unable to see Gandy graduate with his associate of arts degree from Nassau Community College. After she passed, Gandy's grandmother, Maggie Williams, became a parental figure for Gandy and his sister. Because Gandy was 23 years old, Maggie was not necessarily a legal guardian for both of them, but still provided a place to call home. Maggie (who worked at Sperry Gyroscope Corporation as a line cook) was very proud that upon his graduation from Nassau Community College, Gandy was hired by Sperry as an engineering clerk. He recalled recognizing that this was clearly part of the company's sympathetic program of diversity hiring, but he noticed that when his grandmother would be working on the steam tables and “look up to see me getting lunch in the cafeteria where she worked, she was very proud” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004).

**Academic Background and Experience**

Gandy's aunt Clifford insisted that he and his sister go to Catholic schools, so they attended parochial schools for 12 years. Gandy and Sheila went to grade school at Our Lady of Loretto, a three-mile walk from their home. Gandy received his secondary education at Chaminade High School (both schools are in the Nassau County, New York area). Gandy remarked in a personal interview with the first author of this book:

> When I was at Chaminade, I was not a good student. I was just a bad kid, always misbehaving. It eventually got me kicked out, but after my aunt straightened me out, she begged them to accept me back. I had already had these plans that I would go to Canada to live with my father, but then I was accepted back into the school so that never happened. (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004)
Gandy graduated from Chaminade High School, but not without a personal struggle. He gained weight and ballooned to 260 pounds. Without much guidance, Gandy then decided to enroll at Nassau Community College. It was a tumultuous time for the nation during his first year because President John Fitzgerald Kennedy had just been assassinated. The national tone was intense, and the civil rights movement was well under way. For Gandy, however, this tumult did not necessarily affect his consciousness in any noticeable way until some time later. In 1964, Gandy graduated with an associate of arts degree and began working at Sperry Gyroscope Corporation as an engineering clerk. He cynically described himself as “the spook who sat by the door” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004) because that was actually where his desk was located—at the front door to the engineering section. Because it seemed to Gandy that he was the only African American working in that area, Sperry was an isolated place for him, and he worked there for only a year before leaving New York.

Gandy decided that he wanted to be more independent, so he applied to two schools: the University of California at Berkeley and the University of New Mexico (UNM). He chose to attend the University of New Mexico and enrolled as a sociology major. Of course, he already had a two-year degree, so he needed only two more years to receive a bachelor's degree. The two years at the University of New Mexico, from 1965 to 1967, represented a crucial time in Gandy's life. He noted, “During those two years, much of my formative development took place—politically, socially, culturally, and intellectually” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004). Gandy elected to commute rather than live in the dormitory, so he moved to an adobe apartment, which had a muddy exterior and a dusty interior. Although the apartment was a bit messy at times, its rent was only $28 per month, and it was seen as a unique place to live—not to mention that Gandy appreciated his landlord and the neighbors. As Gandy remembered, “The multicultural mix of people in New Mexico at that time was tremendous. It was an awesome place to be. We would go out to the Pueblos’ reservation and would be allowed to watch ceremonial dances and rituals with Kachinas, which were ceremonial figures on stilts that were like shadow figures. It was truly fascinating” (Oscar H. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004).

Gandy's ideological transformation occurred during this period as well. He was associated with both the Du Bois Club and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The Du Bois club was a far left-wing group that was rooted in activist community involvement, and the SDS was a New Left group that was part of the peace movement. Gandy was most involved with the SDS, although had close ties to the Du Bois Club. He developed a very strong identification with the radical left and the antiwar movement, and he became a sponge for ideas related to radical revolution. During Gandy's matriculation at UNM, he became a research assistant for Harold Meier, who was a unionist who became an organizer for mine workers before transitioning careers to become a professor. Meier was very interested in examining whether people were able to move across class lines through education. Gandy's job as research assistant was to do cross-tabulations on Meier's data. Gandy used a cumbersome, noisy, and error-ridden research apparatus known as a Frieden calculator to do data entry processing. Fortunately, remote data entry processing was also becoming more available, so Gandy learned how to use that instead. He also used punch cards, which needed to be taken to a lab for processing. Gandy's work was a valuable resource for Professor Meier, and Gandy was treated as a core-searcher. It was especially exciting to be working with a noted sociologist doing survey-based research, manipulating data, and helping to interpret results about social mobility among generations. Besides working with Meier, Gandy also expanded his knowledge about learning psychology and social movement research. This was a also a time of personal experimentation for Gandy. He demonstrated and
protested against the establishment and developed a sense of who he was. Gandy also
developed an interest in motorcycle riding during this time, so he owned two motorcycles and
joined a group of cyclists who called themselves the “Motorcycle Timing Association.” They
would time balloons to be released during speeches as a way to protest, and involve
themselves in other protest and demonstration activities. As he explains, “it was a coming-of-
age time of my life” (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004).

After graduating with a sociology degree from UNM, Gandy applied to University of
Pennsylvania and was admitted into its Social Work program. He and Nikki Giovanni were in
the Social Work master’s degree program at the same time and they both left the program
before completing their degrees. Gandy briefly had a subspecialty in community organization
before realizing that the program was not what he needed. He realized it while doing his
practicum at a West Philadelphia community organization with a White supervisor who
seemed incompetent. Gandy decided that the situation, coupled with his discomfort in the
program, was enough to make the experience not worthwhile for him. So he left Philadelphia
to go to Oakland, California, where a gay friend of his from UNM's Du Bois Club was involved
in the Black Panther Party. He stayed in the basement of his friend’s house, selling
cyclopedias to pay his way. Briefly after he arrived in Oakland, a female friend of his named
Judith invited him to return home and offered her apartment as a place to stay for a while, but
Gandy noted, “As the story goes, I came back and never left” (O. Gandy, personal
communication, May 15, 2004). The two of them met at an antiwar mobilization dance
organized to raise money to charter a bus to go to a series of demonstrations against the war.
He accepted her invitation and moved back to Philadelphia in 1968. Within a year, Gandy and
Judith found themselves at Woodstock in upstate New York to enjoy the music, the mud, and
the madness of the time. Although they were initially were just friends, they found themselves
very attracted to one another and were married within two years after Gandy’s return to the
area.

Other events were also taking place in Gandy's life. As fate would have it, noted
communication scholar and progenitor of cultivation theory, George Gerbner, discovered
Gandy and invited him to reapply to the University of Pennsylvania, this time in the Walter H.
Annenberg School for Communication’s master’s degree program. Gandy was honored,
immediately accepted the invitation to apply, and was admitted in 1968. A year later, in 1969,
Gandy became a writer and producer for a community affairs program, targeted at the African
American community, which he named Right On!. The program was sponsored by WCAU-TV,
a CBS affiliate. The title and content of the program was perhaps more incendiary Gandy
initially imagined. He knew it would spark some attention because “right on!” was the phrase
the Black Panther Party coined. Despite the good things the Panthers did for communities—
such as food and clothing drives—the media attempted to destroy their credibility by referring
to them as civilly disobedient troublemakers and violent organizers. Although no network
television affiliates depend on corporate advertising dollars wanted to be associated with
that kind of organization, Right On! survived for two years, mainly because Gandy had a very
supportive director of community programming, Inez Gottlieb. It also succeeded because the
content did what it was supposed to do—address community concerns. Even after a special
consumer-education documentary program called “Check It Out” was aired, which featured
University of Pennsylvania student Olu Hassan Ali doing critical interpretations of consumptive
politics, Gottlieb's undying support was there. Gottlieb, a friend of Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis,
supported both Gandy and the host of Right On!, Bill Adams. Gandy recalled that Adams
always ended his show with the phrase, “Be black, stay black and keep moving. Right on!”
After two years writing for and producing the show, Gandy chose to concentrate solely on his
research and graduate studies. He was never really interested in the corporate aspects of
television; his involvement was driven by his interest in community organization, part of the social work background he had cultivated at the University of Pennsylvania. Gandy finished his coursework, wrote his thesis, graduated with his master of arts degree in communication behavior, and began considering his next steps.

George Gerbner, considered by Gandy to be the only mentor he has ever had, knew that Gandy would be looking to continue his work in media after earning his master's degree. Grebner recommended Gandy to his friend, Herbert I. Schiller, at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD). Herb Schiller was looking for someone to teach television production, build a studio, and supervise students in the studio. He knew that Gandy was ideal for the job, so he made an offer. Gandy accepted and embarked on one of the most valuable and important opportunities of his career. Schiller had just written *Superstate: Readings in the Military-Industrial Complex* (1970) and was working on his next book, *The Mind Managers* (1973), to be released three years later. Both these monographs were important texts concerning the political and economic effects of state apparatus.

Schiller was developing a college called the Lumumba-Zapata College within UCSD (Maxwell, 2003). The college was named after Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the democratic Republic of the Congo, and Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican revolutionary. Schiller's leading role in establishing this college came as an invitation from the students and administration after student protests for a more conscious university effort to critically address the fragmentation of justice and the state of political unrest within its curriculum and elsewhere. Until his death in 2000, Schiller was a radical, left-wing political economist interested in the corporatization of ideas and ideals, which constricted information flows and freedom of expression. The college underwent several name transformations: Lumumba-Zapata College, Third College (because it was the third college of the university and it implicitly referenced third world people), and Marshall College, to honor Thurgood Marshall. Although the college was designed to address the concerns of marginalized peoples and was to be populated by African American, Hispanic American, Native American, and progressive White students, the racial climate at the time became so overwhelming that it severely counteracted the mission of the college.

UCSD was a great place to be for the radical left in the early 1970s, especially with scholars such as Herb Schiller and noted media responsibility and public culture researcher Mike Real. Gandy arrived in 1971 and was there for two years before entering Stanford University's doctoral program in Public Affairs Communication. At Stanford, Gandy was thoroughly trained in a very different orientation to the study of education—the economics of education. His training came from several Marxist professors, such as John (Jack) Gurley, who was a finance professor who wrote a book called *Challengers to Capitalism: Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao* (Gurley, 1998), which became an important tool for Gandy when discussing radical economic perspectives. During his doctoral program, Gandy's cognate in economics became critical to his intellectual development. Gandy learned economics of development, economics of health, economics of technology, economics of education, and so forth. He was immersed in examining institutions from various economic standpoints. One major influence on his work was Emile McAnany, now Walter E. Schmidt Professor of Communication at Santa Clara University. McAnany's research on the role of information in media development, particularly cultural industries and global audience consumption, was instrumental in helping Gandy to conceptualize how audiences receive information and how media structure information, as well as how communication development functions most successfully. During this time, he also honed his multimethodological orientation by learning quantitative, qualitative, and critical methods and analytic techniques.
Gandy developed his TrEE model around this time, for which he is most well-known in many academic circles. The acronym TrEE stood for Transformation, Effectiveness, and Efficiency. In a conference paper that later became the impetus for his work in Tanzania, he explained that successful initiatives pertaining to African development are dependent upon not only the presence of various imports such as technology, food, and other resources but also upon how effective and efficient the imports are and their transformative capacity. Consider, for example, the tsunami disaster of December 2004. Nearly 300,000 people in Somalia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and other countries were killed by the sudden rush of tsunami waves caused by an earthquake in Sumatra that shifted two very large tectonic plates that control the sea floor of India and most of Southeast Asia. With the massive destruction that left thousands of survivors homeless and without basic resources, these developing countries are still trying to recover. With Gandy's model in operation, relief efforts have to consider not just the number of resources being flown in from various humanitarian agencies but also how effective those resources are in recuperating communities and how efficiently the recovery process is running. In other words, as one set of communities is getting relief, are there newly arising issues that are springing up when another set is being resolved? Also, progress has to be measured by considering the area's economic stability. For the relief measures to restore the country, they must have transformative capacity, which is evidenced by a variety of factors including restabilization of housing and real estate, employment, health care, education, and so on. It is only when the effectiveness, efficiency, and transformative capacity are aligned that a relief and development model can be said to be successful. Although seemingly quite complex, it was designed as a simple and instructive model, and has become one of which Gandy is very proud.

While completing his doctoral coursework, Gandy took classes from two very well-known scholars who influenced his work: Martin Carnoy, professor of education and economics, and Hank Levin, another radical political economist professor. They shaped Gandy's dissertation and facilitated perspectives on "education production functions," the idea that if a school can be metaphorically understood as a factory, we need to not only understand and assess the products but also the inputs and outputs if we are to properly comprehend and evaluate school systems. This is a line of research that has evolved to the extant resurgence of what is now understood as human capital theory. Gandy's dissertation was thus a pastiche of concepts explored in various classes such as Marxist political economy as well as economics of education and technology all angled to examine "Instructional technology and the reselling of the Pentagon" (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004), a manuscript that adopted much of Herbert Schiller's political and theoretical positions. In this manuscript, Gandy criticized a capitalist subsidy for education, for introducing technology into schools—what Gandy called the capitalization of education. He believed that if the promoters of education technologies were to be successful, they would need to have a cadre of educators who were technologists and supporting monopoly firms that would capture the industry. In this case, the industry was that of defense contractors. The idea was to reveal how capitalism worked while initiating a political strategy concerning information technology. So, if capital could be understood as a catalyst for change within big government structures, it could use its influence to provide an economic subsidy for the process of managing information technology demand. Of course, it turned out that it did not change teaching because teachers still maintained power and authority.

Before graduating from Stanford in 1976 with a doctorate in Public Affairs Communication, Gandy and Judith adopted a baby girl and named her Imani. When Imani was almost two years old, Gandy graduated from Stanford, traveled to India and Tanzania, and then returned to a post-doctoral fellowship at the Annenberg School. While at Annenberg, he received two
job offers: from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and from Howard University. He decided to go to Howard University, and he claimed:

[Howard University] was the best thing that happened to me, intellectually and in terms of developing my racial identity. I had been the only Black kid throughout my high school years and the only Black kid in my graduating class at Stanford. And now I was teaching at an all Black school... I learned a lot about myself and about how Africans and African Americans relate to one another and approach education. (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004)

He had colleagues and colleagues with spouses who had socialist orientations, and Gandy was married to the daughter of Jewish communists. So, he found many commonalities in terms of perspective and worldview across the university.

At Howard University, Gandy was hired to teach television production, but he preferred doing research on media rather than media production. After earning tenure and having taught production for about eight years, he was able to delve into a more prominent research role as director of Howard's newly forming Center for Communications Research. In 1987, he was appointed to the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication. Gandy is still there, and is now serving as Herbert I. Schiller Professor of Communication.

Contributions to Communication Research

Oscar H. Gandy has developed several lines of research throughout his career, as indicated by the dates noted in parentheses next to each theme he has addressed in his publications. Yet, these lines of research are not to be understood exclusively because much of his research overlaps with other lines. We have simply provided several themes to capture some of the complexities of his work in several areas of mass media studies. There are four rubrics noted: (1) Information Technology and Educational Subsidy; (2) Race, Discrimination, Segmentation, Media Framing and Media Consumption; (3) Privacy and Surveillance; and (4) Media Development.


Gandy's work on information technology and education subsidy arose out of his training related to Marxism and political economy studies. The tasks of Marxist critique and political economics are to expose the production, distribution, and “sale” of technologies, bureaucracies, and social relations to ultimately overturn the social order toward greater human good. In uncovering the complexities of bureaucratic practices, Gandy also expounded upon the nature of market structures and capitalist-driven economies. In Beyond Agenda Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy (Gandy, 1982) and in several articles concerning information subsidies in health, Gandy deconstructed how media education is laced with political intentions. Using an information theory approach, Gandy also analyzed survey data he received from George Gerbner about media headlines in nursing-related news stories. For Gerbner, this was useless data, but Gandy discovered a gold mine. As he sifted through the data, he found that the headlines were often quite different from the news story. He became intrigued with what this meant with respect to which headlines get selected for different audience segments. Gandy explained:

I pursued the idea that it had something to do with the nature of the market. It had
something to do with the nature of the audience and the headline writers and the editors’ perception of the audience that would explain the headline. I argued that it was the extent to which the people in those markets were dependent upon the healthcare system. That would explain whether or not the newspaper would publish what I characterized as the “scare” headline—“Doctors Cause Death,” and this, lo and behold, explained a lot of variance across those markets, in the newspapers that I had, on the basis of the expenditures that were being made in those markets. These expenditures were being made for prescription and non-prescription drugs. Essentially, there were market factors that could explain content. (O. Gandy, personal communication, May 15, 2004)

Gandy (1980a; 1981) published two studies related to health information and subsidized news, in which he argued that news story content and headlines were not innocently constructed. Instead, they were framed for certain audiences. This same logic continued for studies of race-related news stories.


The study of race, discrimination, market segmentation, and media consumption is one of the most significant areas of Gandy’s research. He has written most frequently on this topic, and his capstone writing on this theme came with the release of Communication and Race: A Structural Perspective (1998). The impetus for Gandy’s exploration of media consumption practices emanated from his early work with the nursing study described earlier. In those works, he concerned himself with market factors that could explain media content. For example, if the target media audience were composed of elderly people reliant on prescription drugs, producers of media content would attempt to reflect the concerns of that audience via pertinent headlines and themes. Likewise, Gandy found that racial segmentation occurred in media markets in which there was a high concentration of certain races. So, racial composition led to race-related news stories and stories framed to appeal to or agitate readers of that race-related market segment (Davis & Gandy, 1999; Gandy, Kopp, Hands, Frazer, & Phillips, 1997).

Although many scholars have discussed minority representations in the news (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Entman, 1992; Entman & Rojecki, 2000), Gandy heuristically studied the use of a discrimination frame based on the proportion of minorities in a given market of several newspapers. He discovered that the press tended to promote structural practices that reinforced stereotypes of minorities (Gandy et al, 1997; Goshorn & Gandy, 1995; Dates & Gandy, 1985). Because of the latent discrimination inherent in such practices, such bias virtually went unnoticed. Gandy recognized that these practices are not the result of consumer demand; they are instead the result of a larger mainstream institutional agenda to suppress minority voices, lives, and perspectives—leaving them on the margins and as perennial targets for discrimination. These divisive structures are enwrapped in audience production functions. In trying to make sense of programming decisions, Gandy extended Hank Levin and Martin Carnoy’s idea of “education production functions” to include “audience production functions,” which are the result of seeing media audiences as products of a system that has its own market inputs and outputs that influence how it will function (Gandy, 1979; Gandy & Signorielli, 1981).

Media use is also intricately connected to press coverage. Gandy posited:

Depending on the ways in which the problem of inequality is framed, then, press
coverage may lead citizens toward, or away from, support of particular public policies. Although the response of individuals to media constructions seems also to vary in response to social similarities and differences in their background and social circumstance, the influence of media is substantial. (Gandy, et al, 1997, p. 160)

If Blacks, for example, are framed in news stories as violent criminals, poverty-stricken, uneducated, and morally incapacitated, that is the way some audience members will begin to perceive Blacks because they will sense that they have enough evidence from the media to justify such a posture. The impact on social perceptions is especially adverse when the media framing begins to place the responsibility of structured disadvantage on minorities because audiences are manipulated into believing that minority victims of social problems are entirely or primarily at fault. Media facilitates these ideas via frames.

In their study of 29 newspapers and more than 6,000 individual stories about cross-racial social, economic, and health disparities, as well as general inequalities and discriminatory practices, Gandy et al (1997) noted that four of the most frequent frames were as follows: (1) the relatively high probability of Black loss or disease, (2) the lower probability of Black success, (3) the greater probability of White success, and (4) the lower probability of White loss or disease. Gandy and his associates found that newspapers published in places in which there is considerable Black political power and/or educational attainment tended to have significantly fewer news stories about Black loss. In other words, the frames were less stereotypical. If constraints can be defined as “the ability to predict agreement, acceptance, or rejection of an idea based on other variables” (Davis & Gandy, 1999, p. 371), then certainly the journalistic constraints are lessened in regions in which minority racial compositions are high and there is an exceptional amount of privilege enjoyed by minorities. The implications are clear: Communities in which Blacks enjoy more political clout and resources are less likely to accept discrimination as a reason for low success, so they are not inundated as much with negative references and journalistic constraints on news framing. In other situations, in which the city is larger and the political clout is minimal, this practice of negative framing continues, although it absolves any responsibility of government and policymakers and leaves a deleterious strain on human relations.

Gandy has explored media programming, media use, and press constraints related to African Americans. His research has yielded penetrating results that have revealed patterns of consumption, ideological orientations, media framing, and media evaluation. His work boldly criticized media for its discriminatory practices and deceptive regimes of truth. In his examination of racially coded media content, he uncovered structural tendencies that promote negative racial representations. Additionally, he found that media exposure is, in the first place, an individual choice that is determined by a variety of factors related to personal background. Contrary to media’s stereotypical biases, however, the effects of media can lead to an enhanced racial group identity and media orientation (Barber & Gandy, 1990; Davis & Gandy, 1999; Gandy & Baron, 1998; Gandy, Matabane, & Omachonu, 1987).


Although media reliance and uses vary significantly, media privacy is always a concern. The word surveillance has always had a negative connotation in the United States. Gandy (1989c) asserted that modern surveillance consists of software that senses information about the environment around it. This software is then used to determine the attendance of people and how active they are being. Still called “the new technology,” computer technology allows for unknown, unbiased sources to process all types of information and to track Web site visitation.
patterns. Also, post-September 11, surveillance is also being used to determine whether an individual has the possibility to commit a crime rather than to see if they have actually already committed a crime. The problem is that it creates stereotypes of individuals who commit crimes. Many people of specific age, race, and sex are being searched because of past observations. Furthermore, more and more businesses are now using surveillance as a way to monitor the productivity of workers. Gandy suggested that the United States is the largest supporter and consumer of surveillance. The Internal Revenue Service even uses surveillance to obtain information about money spending and annual income.

The threats to privacy are also present in simple household surveys. From 1978 to 1984, it was found that a majority of citizens felt that polling individuals was helpful and helped businesses make products better for the consumer. In 1983, however, another poll found that the majority of individuals were concerned about their privacy, especially in the credit industry. Gandy pointed out that the government also found many ways to get around the privacy laws that were created in the United States. Although many individuals hate getting junk mail and sales calls, they never asked to be “taken off the list.” In 2004, legislation was approved that allowed consumers to call a government number to be “taken off the list” that businesses use to generate phone calls to consumers asking for their opinions. Privacy is one of the most critical aspects of new information technology.

Gandy's landmark book, The Panoptic Sort: A Political Economy of Personal Information (1993a), systematically examined the nature of surveillance within media industries by adopting the metaphor of the Panopticon. According to Foucault (1980), the Panopticon was a nineteenth century prison structure that allowed “prisoners” to see without being seen, and the “prisoners” were not entirely imprisoned by the state. This is the way Foucault envisioned the nature of social and ideological discipline. Rather than being disciplined solely by the state, people disciplined themselves via surveillance. Gandy explained that this is also the way media industries operate; they develop certain frames, involuted by stereotypes and social constructions, which are efficiently maintained by social systems so that people use these frames to develop daily impressions about others while also coming to “discipline” themselves. The machinations of this discursive disciplining process automatically call into question whether people can independently construct their worldviews or whether these constructions are inherited and recycled through multiple discourses. Likewise, as Gandy's work facilitated discovery of the origins of these discourses, he also examined how stereotypical impulses are sustained by the media, and how minority audiences are compelled to use media despite the potentially damaging effects.

In 1993, Gandy found that although attitudes toward privacy as a public policy concern were increasing, little research had been done that examined these attitudes in isolation. Instead, a spate of studies had been completed that included privacy issues as a question on a survey, and many of these surveys were produced by corporations. In his book, African Americans and Privacy (1993b), Gandy analyzed the use of media by Blacks. His results indicated that Blacks were increasingly wary of any threats to maintaining privacy despite their exclusion from demographic marketing surveys in which their privacy would be at greater risk if they chose to participate. He intuited:

African Americans appear to be concerned about privacy because the loss of control over personal information means greater susceptibility to discriminatory exclusion from employment, insurance, and credit. African Americans continue to be mistrustful of power, but they are apparently no more distrustful of government than other citizens. (Grady, 1993b, p. 193).
As Gandy explained in several studies concerning the competing tensions of introducing greater personal privacy at the expense of greater institutional surveillance (1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1990a; 1990b; 1993a), the risks may severely outweigh the benefits for minorities. As marginalized group members seek to keep up with the demand for greater technological access, they have had to be even more aware of technological invasiveness. The advantages appear to be too great to ignore, but there are aspects of these innovations that raise many privacy concerns, as Gandy illustrated in his studies of audience tracking and caller ID technologies. Truly, capitalism has complicated interracial relationships and has inspired the inequitable distribution of resources to minorities. Likewise, capitalism has encouraged minorities to take a look at risks and to be ever-cautious of new ways big business and government seek to institute nuanced discriminatory and segmentation practices and policies that further promote social division. The most frightening revelation of Gandy's work is that technologies, like the politics that drive them, are amoral (Gandy & Baron, 1998). It is not that they are immoral, but that they have little to no regard for morality, so the ethical principles that should govern mainstream technological practices are instead devoid of them, unless somehow enforced as a result of consumer demand. Privacy and surveillance are not inherently negative aspects of technology; it is how they are enacted and secured within a market-driven economy that becomes problematic.


So far, we have discussed Gandy's research related to technological innovations in the United States. The concerns of new media and technology in the United States (a super power) are quite different from those of developing nations. In another line of research, Gandy explained practical ways to evaluate and develop media technology in third world nations. Through this part of his program of research, Gandy encouraged the steady development of media infrastructures in third world nations (Gandy, Espinosa, & Ordoover, 1983). During his tenure at Howard University, from 1977 to 1987, his work on communication and media development expanded. He traveled frequently to countries throughout Europe and Africa to examine media concerns. Prior to being appointed to the faculty at Howard University, Gandy begun working on a model for media development, which he was able to critique, expand, and apply most often while at Howard. Within this chapter, we will limit our discussion of his media development work to that paradigm.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Gandy developed his TrEE model in the early 1970s, representing Transformation, Effectiveness, and Efficiency (usually discussed in reverse order). In a conference paper that later became the impetus for his work in Tanzania, he explained that successful initiatives pertaining to African development are dependent upon not only the presence of various imports such as technology, food, and other resources but also upon how effective and efficient the imports are and their transformative capacity.

As Gandy explored the needs and assessments related to developing media in third world countries, he discovered that much of his economics and sociology background was especially useful. The principal questions were as follows: How does a country begin to develop, distribute, and use new media? What economic factors are involved in this venture? How do politics influence the development of media? How will the consumers access this new technology? What are the costs and benefits for using a new technology as opposed to keeping or enhancing the old technology? These were all questions answered in Gandy's TrEE model.

Gandy (1992a) asserted that effectiveness is about whether the new media works in a manner
that is the least cumbersome and most facilitative among all technological approaches. Efficiency is cost-related. This is the most pertinent factor to consider as a third world nation considers whether to adopt new media. If a single unit is 10 times the cost of another type of unit, then deciding which is most efficient is based on outputs and money saved rather than just on monies spent. Transformation is the final aspect of the TrEE model. The primary concern of transformation is whether the institutionalization of new media will significantly enhance the nation's ability to get things done. Gandy proposed six criteria for evaluating transformative capacity: capital import dependence (whether the new media will require a high capital/labor ration); labor import dependence (whether imported labor will result in an unwanted shift of labor costs, worker habits, or salary benefits); sectoral balances (whether any sectors of the nation, like that of agriculture or industry, will be adversely affected by the shift to new media); ethnic/regional balance (whether the new media will advantage one segment of population over another); labor force utilization (whether there will be an imbalance in labor force because of a call for a new kind required skill); and prestige (whether at the advent of this new media, it will become a symbol of prestige). These six criteria, with the last one being admittedly much less significant than the others, were developed to ascertain the transformative capacity of media development. The whole TrEE model has been used in several of Gandy's other studies of media development as an evaluation model.

Conclusion

Oscar H. Gandy has written extensively about the strategic division of communities via mass-mediated practices as well as media responsibility and regulation. He has continually argued that information technology is an important resource driven by market structures and belabored by limited structural constraints, public policies, and bureaucratic agendas. Audiences are at risk, particularly Black audiences, and public opinion polls verify this. As long as there are few media owners, there will be adverse media framing and resultant negative public opinions. Gandy's research has demonstrated that when audiences are cognizant of mediated social control and structural threats to privacy, their cognitive structures and interpretive assessments exemplify that awareness when using media. Indeed, the real racial divide in public opinion about technology is about cultural worldview and the way in which culture allows for different ways of processing information, rather than simply interracial relations in a vacuum (Gandy, 2002). Gandy argued that media influences racial and social perceptions and discourses in ways consumers are just now beginning to understand. Through his research, Gandy has shown readers how media industries function to primarily insulate their own interests without exposing either their profit-driven strategies or the risks of this kind of advancement to consumers. Gandy noticed:

We have seen the ways in which the images of people of color have changed in patterns that reflect changes in the estimates of the economic value of racially and ethnically homogenous audiences. These shifts in evaluation have been influenced by shifts in population that have been influenced in quite complex ways by shifts in global political economy. (Gandy, 1998, p. 235)

The commoditization of minority audiences will perhaps always be a facet of capitalist media that sees people as commodities within segmented markets. As these commodities increase in value, however, so also will the voices of the people—resulting in a different kind of media framing compelled by a different set of market interests. Gandy has demonstrated this as well.

Oscar H. Gandy has been one of our most important thinkers in the field of media
communication. He has adopted an interdisciplinary approach to the study of media and public opinion as well as race and surveillance. Like so many others in this volume, he has been a champion of African American inclusion as well as audience empowerment and he continues to define and lead the intellectual discourses concerning the intersections of race, media responsibility, information technology, political economy, and surveillance.

References


Further Reading


Gandy, O. (1986). (Ed.). Communications: A key to economic and political change. Selected proceedings from the 15th annual Communications Conference of the Center for Communications Research, Howard University, Washington, DC.


Oscar H. Gandy, Jr.
Born in Amityville, New York.

Received associate's degree from Nassau Community College.

Received bachelor's degree in Sociology from University of New Mexico.


Received master's degree in Communication Behavior from University of Pennsylvania.
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Lectured at The Third College, University of San Diego.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Published <em>Government and Media: An Annotated Bibliography</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Received doctorate in Public Affairs Communication from Stanford University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Published <em>Beyond Agenda Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Served as acting director, Proposed Center for Communications Research, Howard University, School of Communications (1985–1986).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Became director, Center for Communications Research, Howard University School of Communications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Received grant for project on telecommunications and privacy (1987–1990).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Served as associate Professor, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Served as Fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center of Columbia University to study “Statistical Reality: The Role of the Press in the Communication of Risk”.</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Published <em>The Panoptic Sort: A Political Economy of Personal Information</em>.</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Published <em>Communication and Race: A Structural Perspective</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Received the Dallas Smythe Award from the Union for Democratic Communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Received the Wayne Danielson Award, University of Texas at Austin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Received the Year 2000 Presidential Award from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Named the LeBoff Distinguished Visiting Scholar by New York University.</td>
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- Howard University
- media
- subsidies
- economics of education
- information subsidies

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