

But I find a close reading of such a paper, and of the whole range of periodicals, indispensable to doing an informed news report. Without that, my report, if just from the agency wire, would lack the background to give such meaning, depth, and continuity as justifies an educational station having any news program at all.

One of the contributions of television has been to force the newspaper to go into more depth in background of the news. For TV gets the news first. The newspaper must try to supplement this, to give more dimensions to the news.

The TV report catches the headline reader and probably satisfies him with as much as he wants to know about most things most of the time.

It catches even people who can't read at all or wouldn't bother to.

Thus, it certainly extends the number of people exposed to information that they would not acquire by reading. It unquestionably incites many to turn, at times anyway, to more information from a newspaper. I have no doubt that TV gradually develops newspaper readers and the newspapers in turn develop readers for magazines and books.

But television cannot or does not do much of what makes certain essential reader services of the newspaper. It does not list the votes of Congressmen on civil rights. It does not cover the city council or the school committee or keep tabs on the regulation of utility rates.

It cannot provide the needed text of the riots commission, or the cables on the Tonkin incident, or a Presidential message on housing, or the farm program that needs to be read in detail to have meaning.

It does little or nothing in the whole area of criticism—books, theater, music, art, that affects public taste, although TV certainly has a total effect on public taste greater than all other media.

What TV does do incomparably is live coverage of events that can be scheduled, to get the cameras set up and the commentators mobilized—the national convention, inauguration, election, Presidential press conference. It is magnificent in covering sports events.

It drives home with indelible impact the condition of migrant workers, the race conflict, the Vietnam war, a space launching. It gives us a sense of considerable acquaintance with the public men who seek our votes.

It can, when it chooses, as Edward R. Murrow showed, explore the great issues and give them an immediacy and reality that the printed word cannot match. It stretches the imagination to comprehend the importance of things that had hardly reached our consciousness by reading.

I would not limit the influence of television to what we call news and public affairs. Its influence is pervasive, often subtle. The cracks of the Smothers brothers about politicians and institutions and our mores are not to be discounted.

Or, in another direction, the frequent infiltration of the military into big football games must be more appreciated by Secretary Rusk than by Senator McCarthy. People are probably influenced more when they are caught off balance.

Broadcast music and plays bring them to people who never would have them. And it may well be that such an infrequent event as a 4-hour African program is more instructive to many than day-to-day news reports from Africa.