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Going Places: Mobility, Domesticity,
and the Portrayal of Television in *New Yorker* Cartoons,
1945-1959

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The installation of television in the American home following World War II was more than a revolution in technology and visual content. It merged Americans' residual desire for greater mobility with their newfound yearning for domestic harmony. This article introduces the concept of "symbolic mobility," as revealed in the contemporaneous cartoons of *The New Yorker* magazine, to explain how Americans adopted the new sensibilities of television.

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In 1951, *The New Yorker* published a single-panel black-and-white cartoon showing a man and woman seated next to a lake outside their cottage in the woods. They are watching the moonrise over the lake. It is a bucolic scene that was sought out by scores of Americans every summer in an attempt to escape the anxieties of modern urban life. Only this summer is different, as the caption reveals. The man says to the woman. “Know what would make this place perfect?” he asks. “Television.”ⁱ The humor centers around the fact that although the couple in the cartoon have likely traveled some distance to separate themselves from their otherwise mean existence, the man desires to use television to transport them yet again—from nature’s authentic pastoral splendor to the simulated vistas offered through the cathode ray tube: baseball games, Milton Berle, and Hopalong Cassidy. Far from being outrageous, the premise of the cartoon was all-too on target: Americans had long exhibited a deep-seated urge to move, physically, imaginatively, and psychologically, to create a non-geographic sense of community, and television seemed to be yet another tool to carry this out.

The above is one example from a range of television themes tackled by *The New Yorker’s* stable of cartoonists. At the time the cartoon appeared, about 24 percent of American homes had televisions, almost three times as many as the previous year.ⁱⁱ The price of television receivers was dropping steadily, which meant that average Americans no longer had to take in a program at the local tavern or at the home of a well-to-do friend. *The New Yorker*, as one of the country’s preeminent vendors of wry observational humor, could hardly ignore the phenomenon. The weekly magazine had already published more than 100 cartoons about television in the previous five years, and there was little question that the box in the living room had become not just the “talk of the town” but the talk of the nation.

Much of that talk centered on obvious topics: program quality, advertising, and the effects television viewing, all of which have been amply discussed in the historical literature. But, as the

following analysis of *The New Yorker’s* cartoons reveals, television’s introduction into American consciousness resonated at a more subtle level than can be gleaned from traditional historical sources. More than being “images by radio,” as RCA President David Sarnoff often put it, television called forth worries and aspirations that Americans had yet to openly acknowledge.ⁱⁱⁱ In particular—as the man in the cartoon above suggests—the adoption of television revealed latent assumptions and perceived contradictions about the nature of time and space, about home and family, and about public and intimate life in the 1950s. These issues become clearer when we place them within the context of 1950s domesticity and mobility.

The significance of television

The technical development television stretches back to the 1920s, but the system of programming, networks, regulation, and large-scale public consumption achieves a critical mass in the 1950s. By the end of the decade, television would be in more than 85 percent of homes, and Americans would be watching on average more than five hours a day.^{iv} This study focuses on television’s formative years following World War II, from 1945, when television begins to accumulate some symbolic presence in *The New Yorker*, to 1959, when television ceases to be a novelty and becomes “ordinary and familiar.”^v

Television is, of course, an extension of an older technology, radio, which delivers a communication signal to remote receivers using the electromagnetic spectrum. Television also borrowed many of its ideas about content from radio: boxing, news, vaudeville variety shows, domestic comedies. Despite its hand-me-down origins, however, we should not underestimate the importance of television and its unique position in the second half of the 20th century. Television was adopted at a faster rate than any previous media technology. Television, despite its high initial cost, was in 80 percent of American homes within 12 years (of 1946); radio took 17 years to achieve the same level of penetration.^{vi} Judging

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simply by the number of cartoons published in *The New Yorker* each year, television also achieved three or four times as much symbolic attention as did radio in its heyday.^{vii}

One reason for the greater impact is that television was much more “imperial in its claims on the consciousness than radio.”^{viii} Unlike radio, which you could listen to while doing other things, television monopolized both visual and aural channels. Television provided a “more comprehensive reality than radio was able to achieve. It gathered to itself more of the senses, invited you to live in its alternative reality.”^{ix} Television also arrived during America’s latest spatial crisis. GIs returning from the World War II encountered a severe housing shortage, a vestige of the Depression years, when building capital was in short supply.^x The response for many of these displaced families was to head for the “crabgrass frontier,” the suburbs. Television became a way for these new frontier-dwellers to maintain contact with the cities.^{xi}

Thoughts on mobility

Since the first half of the 20th century, notions of mobility have influenced thinking about communication.^{xii} Shannon and Weaver’s influential 1949 model of communication focused on how messages moved over wires from one place to another, and has since been labeled a transmission or transportation model.^{xiii} Historian James Carey has linked this “transportation metaphor” back to the 19th century, when the movement of information was seen in the same light as the transport of goods and people. Carey argues that the transportation model “is a view of communication that derives from one of the most ancient of human dreams: the desire to increase the speed and effect of messages as they travel in space.”^{xiv} The metaphor implies that in the communication process symbols are “moved” from one “place” to another. Until the print revolution of the middle 15th century, communication was relatively fixed in terms of space. Communication was local. Communities emphasized continuity and ritual over long periods of time rather than geographic reach. The rapid and broad dissemination of information by print following the invention of moveable type reversed the roles: with space more fluid and accessible, the continuity of messages over time became less important. The electrical telegraph in the 19th century stretched these distinctions further by allowing communication to instant-

aneously reach across thousands of miles. In this regard, electrical communication technologies have been called “space-binding” media.^{xv} Electrical communication—the telegraph, followed by radio and television—became a key feature in America’s nationalistic drive, binding together the spacious continent not according to history, ritual, or tradition, but according to shared temporal experience, ephemeral to be sure, but endlessly malleable and renewable.

Mobility implies movement from one physical location to another, often for economic advantage. The land provided opportunities not only in its natural resources but also by creating variations in supply and demand through distances traveled to tap those resources. Thus, to change one’s position on the land—to exercise mobility—was to potentially change one’s fortunes. Historians and social scientists have also use mobility to describe change in status, as in “upward mobility.” Here, the term concerns movement between social or economic classes and relates to issues of consumption and abundance.^{xvi} This essay makes use of both of these definitions of mobility and adds a third: “symbolic mobility.” Symbolic mobility refers to the ability to experience different mental, psychological, and emotional states through the use of mediating symbols. While humans have always engaged in this practice through storytelling and art, the density of information input from the televisual image that arrived in the 20th century allowed a greater degree of verisimilitude than had been previously possible in symbolic communication.

Similar to social mobility, symbolic mobility is concerned less with the natural world and its physical limitations than with the community of human construction. In geographic mobility, one leverages physical resources (land, natural resources, elevation, etc.) to change one’s lot; with social mobility, one leverages social traditions and expectations to improve one’s status; often with symbolic mobility, one leverages the symbol-making system to alter one’s mood or mental state, such as a sense of security. Symbols can move bi-directionally. Whereas in the spatial world, one literally must go to the mountain because the mountain will not move, in the symbolic world, because symbols are more compact, fluid and independent, movement is created through a simultaneous exchange based on being present in time but not in space.

Symbolic mobility, then, represents an experience having few or no direct physical con-

sequences. No wonder, then, that both radio and television came to be seen primarily as devices of mere entertainment rather than tools for self-transformation, as had earlier forms of mobility. As a means of exercising one's mobility, television provided little more than a sightseeing experience; the travelers never left the comfort of the tour bus.

Roots of American Mobility

The conditions that made the 1950s so conducive to mobility had been developing for more than a century in Americans' relationship with a spacious country. Alexis de Tocqueville acknowledged this relationship in 1835 when he wrote, "God himself gave [Americans] the means of remaining equal and free, by placing them upon a boundless continent, which is open to their exertions."^{xvii} Communication scholar James Carey has similarly noted the 18th and 19th century religious roots of mobility. "The vast and, for the first time, democratic migration in space was above all an attempt to trade an old world for a new and represented the profound belief that movement in space could be in itself a redemptive act. It is a belief Americans have never quite escaped."^{xviii} In making an argument for his "frontier hypothesis" in 1893, historian Frederick Jackson Turner went on to explain the relationship of geography to American values in more secular terms, boldly declaring, "The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development."^{xix} The idea of the frontier was powerful in the American consciousness in part because it symbolized the opportunity to remake oneself. Those who found themselves limited economically or socially could head west to the open lands and have a chance (although not a guarantee) at some measure of success.^{xx} Historian David Potter further linked mobility with status. Geographical movement gave Americans the ability to make a new life away from the family home in order to achieve status on their own rather than through status handed down from the family.^{xxi}

In his 1893 essay, however, Turner also proclaimed that the place of American self-realization and self-transformation had closed. The opportunities born of the frontier's geographic mobility were gone, soaked up by those who had migrated westward earlier in that century.^{xxii} But what had happened to the desire to explore, transform, and redeem the self? Did it also evaporate with the

opportunities? Decidedly not. In the late 1890s, not long after Turner published his famous monograph, Americans began looking to other frontiers—the planet Mars, in particular—for some sense of unexplored opportunity.^{xxiii} The red planet would hold their attention for the next few decades, inspiring poems, literature, and scientific inquiry, culminating with the localized panic over Orson Welles' 1938 "War of the Worlds" broadcast. About the same time, Americans began stretching concepts of space with radio, a technology that allowed the voice to carry great distances. By the 1920s, this trend became institutionalized in the fad known as "DXing," the goal of which was to use one's radio receiver to pick up the most geographically remote radio transmission possible. In the 1950s, with the development of the interstate highway system and aviation, Americans continued to expand the means of mobility even if the traditional impulses—improvements to economic and social standing—were no longer at stake. The relative economic parity brought by 1950s prosperity meant that the tangible benefits of geographic and social mobility were harder to realize. According to Potter, abundance threw out of balance the two forces essential to a healthy society: mobility, "which involves the welfare of man as an independent individual," and status, "which involves his welfare as a member of the community. It destroyed this balance by making a good standard of living available for any man, while perpetuating a low standard as usual for most men."^{xxiv} One could move, but it was likely that similar social and economic opportunities would be waiting in the new place.

The post-WWII housing shortage and subsequent building boom relocated American self-realization from "out there" to "right here." The 1950s version of fulfillment was to be found in the home and family, quite likely a suburb, rather than the distant frontier. Kenneth Jackson dubbed this new locus of fulfillment "the crabgrass frontier."^{xxv} In the decade of the 1950s, the suburbs grew by 57 percent. By 1960, almost a third of Americans—55 million—lived in the suburbs.^{xxvi} Jackson notes that suburbanites voluntarily cut themselves off from the variety of experiences offered by the metropolis and centered their lives within the home rather than the community or neighborhood.^{xxvii} The 1950s suburban culture was not, Spigel argues, a return to the Victorian emphasis on domesticity. "The ideal was that one could be alone in one's home, but still

be attached to the community.”^{xxxviii} But the urge to move persisted, abetted by the growth of automobile culture, which provided not only opportunities for mobility, but also a new pace to life. One could seek out life rather than waiting for it to come to you on the front porch.

Significantly, the nature of the American home changed after the war. Once a place of production (child-rearing, cooking, etc.), it became a place of entertainment and for the enjoyment of abundance through conspicuous consumption and display.^{xxxix} The home also became a more private place, removed from the urban and industrial centers. Those inhabiting the suburbs used electric media such as television as “instruments of social sanitation,” to remove themselves from life’s unpleasantness. With television, one could enjoy the “thrills of urban culture, without having to deal with the hustle and bustle of city life.”^{xxx} Moreover, one could more easily segregate work/production and domestic/consumption environments to prevent one from contaminating the other.^{xxxi}

The 1950s domestic agenda was forged in the crucible of the Cold War and the threat of communism. In this context, argues historian Elaine Tyler May, the post-war home was a site of “containment,” where “potentially dangerous social forces of the new age might be tamed, where they could contribute to the secure and fulfilling life to which postwar women and men aspired.”^{xxxii} Still, all of the comforts and advantages of suburban life could not quell the desire to move, and so Americans attempted to simultaneously accommodate two goals—domestic containment and mobility. The newly arrived television system was a tool well suited to this purpose. Cultural critic Raymond Williams has labeled this phenomenon “mobile privatization”—“two apparently paradoxical yet deeply connected tendencies . . . : on the one hand mobility, on the other hand the more apparently self-sufficient family home.”^{xxxiii} Or, as Shawn Moores has succinctly put it, “simultaneously staying home and, imaginatively at least, going places.”^{xxxiv} However, unlike May, Williams thought of this development in no way as a retreat from the external world. “It is a shell which you can take with you, which you can fly with to places that previous generations could never imagine visiting.”^{xxxv} In his cultural history of the American motel, Keith Sculle observes a similar contradiction. “Much of the ‘American dream’ is comprehended in travel, progress, and social advance on the one hand and

psychological fulfillment in one’s own residence on the other hand. Whereas, home represents an ideal achieved through fixedness, mobility implies change. In practice, both home and mobility have rivaled each other for Americans’ affections.”^{xxxvi}

The constant desire for self-definition, self-renewal, self-repair requires a measure of freedom to explore both real places and the individual psyche, and the development of the American frontier in the 18th and 19th centuries certainly provided this. But along with this freedom came complications: more abundant goods and services, more competition over resources and status, a more populous world connected by more efficient communication networks. The companion to freedom, in this case, was anxiety: worries over wanting and not having, worries about not being in control of one’s own destiny. Abundance, communism, and the Bomb all fed these worries, and by the 1950s many Americans were seeking shelter in their homes.

Cartoons as evidence

Cartoons in *The New Yorker* and similar publications provide a unique perspective on culture and history for a variety of reasons. Because of their highly concentrated nature, cartoons reveal rather than explain. Like print advertising, which has been regularly studied as a mirror of culture, cartoons do their work with a minimum of symbols.^{xxxvii} The artwork is spare—often simple black-and-white line drawings—and the captions, when they are applied, are usually brief—a line or two. Cartoonists rely on their audiences to fill in the necessary cultural context to make meaning. Cartoons communicate effectively precisely because this cultural context is so broadly available and so commonly shared. Although they appear to be rather blunt tools—using such devices as metaphors, stereotypes, and clichés—cartoons are in fact sophisticated expressions “because the complexity and completeness of their primary visual sign plus secondary signs.”^{xxxviii}

Cartoons have been a staple of *The New Yorker* since its founding in 1925 by Harold Ross and have become the signature element of the magazine.^{xxxix} Each week, *The New Yorker* considers about 2,500 cartoon ideas and publishes 15 to 20 of those.^{xl} The cartoons tend to circulate beyond the magazine itself, and because they are filtered through the experiences of the magazine’s writers and editors, they “reflect the sensibilities of well-educated, liberal whites in the United States.”^{xli}

The New Yorker cartoon differs from the political cartoon, more common to newspapers, in that it rarely focuses on current political issues. *The New Yorker* cartoon's métier has always been the observation of everyday culture. Nothing is more commonplace than the technologies we take for granted—radio, television, automobiles—and these are frequent subjects for *The New Yorker* cartoonist's pen. The cartoons rarely point fingers at any one individual or issue, as political cartoons tend to do, but rather illustrate the contradictions and foibles common to all of us.^{xlii} As a more diffuse expression, *The New Yorker* cartoon probably lacks the immediate impact of a political cartoon, but it makes up with its longevity. A *New Yorker* cartoon will unlikely inspire a riot (as some political cartoons do), but it might earn a permanent place in the social consciousness.

Despite efforts on the part of editors to not repeat the same ideas in cartoons, the cartoons are striking in their consistency. In total, 531 cartoons about television were published between 1946 and 1959, an average of about 35 a year.^{xliii} In general, these offer an acerbic view of the new medium. The public had already experienced radio broadcasting for more than two decades and was aware of its unfulfilled promise and its commercial leanings.^{xliv} Television was also an easy target because of its iconic nature. The box, the tube, the signature rabbit ears, and rooftop antennas were all easy to incorporate into a small rectangle, and all communicated in multiple ways.^{xlv} Television is simultaneously apparatus, experience, environment, economic system, and symbolic communication stream.^{xlvi} Thus, the cartoons range from lampooning the device (it doesn't always work so well), to how people watch (often in silent dyads), to the places and situations in which they watch (principally the home), to the visual representations made through the device (as a proxy to the networks). In a sense, television received so much of the cartoonists' attention because it was so commonplace and trivial. In all, the cartoons represent a broad array of discourse, which suggests the degree to which television inserted itself into social and cultural practice. We should also note that the cartoons were drawn primarily by men, as well as by a group of individuals who grew up before television. Thus, the cartoons represent an outsider's view of television.^{xlvii}

Symbolic relocation

One of the most common uses of television by audiences, according to *The New Yorker* cartoonists, was to partake of remote experiences without leaving the home. Early television producers, looking for cheap and convenient forms of programming, set up their cameras at scheduled events, in particular, at sporting contests. These broadcasts allowed audiences to participate as spectators in the conventional sense, but without the challenges of actually traveling to the event. *The New Yorker* cartoonists frequently observed the audience's contradictory urges to "be there" but also be at home. One of the magazine's first television cartoons, in May 1945, shows a man watching a horse race from home while sitting astride the one-legged stool commonly used by horse racing aficionados at the track. By using the stool, he simulates being at the track while also being at home. From the expression on his face, he's not the least bit disappointed with his new vantage point in front of the television set.^{xlviii}

Because of its added visual information, television provided a level of authenticity that prior mediated experiences could not. *The New Yorker* cartoonists toyed with just how authentic the televisual representation might be. One cartoon shows a man and woman watching a tennis match on TV. Their view from home is obstructed in the same way as if they were present at the match because a woman sitting in the bleachers at the arena is wearing a large hat and blocking the camera's view.^{xlix} Here, the television camera stands in for the human participant, takes their seat, and acts as a visual prosthesis. The goal of using television's symbolic mobility, many of the cartoons suggest, was for audiences to authentically reproduce the remote experience in the living room. Other common experiences requiring mobility were fodder as well. In one cartoon published in January, a boy and girl go to the beach without leaving the house, even donning bathing suits and spreading beach blankets in front of the television set showing a beach scene.^l In another, a man takes his son to a parade by standing in front of the television set with his son on his shoulders. Together, they watch, as if they were on the street.^{li}

One common audience use of broadcast media, beginning with radio, was to expand the environment for receiving a message and thereby exert control over more individuals. Churches were among the earliest broadcasters, intent on expanding the reach of their message beyond the pulpit and pews.^{lii}

At the same time, audiences sought to bring external experience under greater domestic control. The two impulses converged in televised religious services, which allowed audiences to partake of the sermon without going to church. Most everyone, including the churches and *The New Yorker* cartoonists, quickly realized that taking in one's sermons at home created the potential for something less than a religious experience. One cartoon shows a man sitting next to the television but not watching it. He is reading the Sunday newspaper and smoking a cigarette in his pajamas—activities that would likely be prohibited in church. On the television is a preacher delivering a sermon, but the man is hardly paying attention.^{liii} Religion received in the domestic environment had practical advantages for would-be parishioners. They didn't have to dress up, they could avoid the social experience, they could divide their attention without being harshly judged by others, and they could avoid the collection plate—the latter being a primary concern for churches. One cartoon shows a man and woman—also in pajamas—watching the Sunday morning church service on television. The church pastor on the screen says: “In closing, I wish to announce that, for obvious reasons, these regular Sunday-morning broadcasts will be discontinued.”^{liv}

Symbolic mobility could be more efficient than actually engaging geography. Television allowed viewers to sprint around the globe by simply changing channels. *The New Yorker* cartoonists pointed out how this efficiency could produce a lack of context or meaning.^{lv} One cartoon from 1958 shows a man and woman in the living room. The woman says: “While you were dozing, I saw a news roundup called ‘World in Crisis,’ the Belmont Stakes, and a Butter Festival in Wisconsin.”^{lvi} Another cartoon shows a news reader signing off from his broadcast: “That’s about it folks. Cold wave to stay. Thousands laid off in Detroit. Cost of living continues to climb. Missile lag called irreparable disaster. Dulles doubts value of summit talks. And now, until tomorrow, a topnotch day to you all.”^{lvii} As an agent of “travel,” television provided whirlwind tours the likes of which no tourist had ever experienced.

Television permitted a dizzying parade of locales, situations, and mental states into the home, which sometimes disrupted domestic relations. As television outsiders (having grown up in the age of print and radio), the cartoonists saw the downside of symbolic mobility. For one, it could be as mentally exhausting as geographic mobility was physically

taxing. One cartoon shows a man about to turn on the TV. His wife objects. “Do I have to have a reason?” she says. “I’m just not in the mood for a worldwide news roundup.”^{lviii} (Note the assumption that television will permit the viewer to alter her mood, not her physical circumstances.) On the other hand, some audience members may have considered symbolic mobility all too easy, a reason for laziness or a source of ennui. In one cartoon, a couple is watching a missile launch on television. The woman complains: “What’s happening to us, John. People will soon be going to the moon, and we don’t even seem to get out of the house anymore.”^{lix} Another shows a woman in her bathrobe and a man drinking a beer while watching television. She says: “Surely, Fred, there must be more to life than this.”^{lx} The cartoons also suggest that easy mobility could be scary, leading viewers to hunker down domestically. In a cartoon from 1958, a period dominated by atomic bombs and missile crises, a man is shown watching the news in the first panel. In the next panel, he goes to bed and sleeps under the bed instead of in it.^{lxi}

Some of the cartoons portray viewers as so absorbed in other places, they fail to notice what is going on in the home. In one cartoon, a woman who has been watching in the dark with her husband turns on the lights to discover a group of empty chairs. The friends attending her “TV party” have left without her noticing.^{lxii} In a similar cartoon, a family is gathered around the television oblivious to the fact that burglars have entered their home.^{lxiii} Women, in particular, were portrayed as distracted from domestic duties by their viewing of daytime television, burning meals and holes in the shirts they are ironing.^{lxiv} On a similar theme, a cartoon shows a man creeping into the house after a late night out. His wife is in the living room waiting up for him, but since she’s intently watching TV, she doesn’t notice him coming in. Thanks to television, she is not “mentally” present in the home, as she would normally be.^{lxv}

The ambiguous nature of the televisual experience — just how real was it? — made symbolic relocation all the more plausible to audiences. A number of early cartoons explored the metaphysics of the television viewing experience, generally suggesting that the audience might have perceived television as a reality they could reach out and touch. The only thing separating them from the television world was the glass “mirror” in the receiver. Thus, according to the cartoonists, a viewer might believe

that tiny men played baseball games inside the receiver cabinet, or that a TV repairman might find tiny actors inside while servicing the device, or that safe viewing of television pictures of Niagara Falls might require a mop to take care of the water dripping from the set.^{lxvi}

Control and containment

Spatial models of communication envision communication as control at a distance, in which symbols replace the need for physical contact.^{lxvii} Television in the home, according to *The New Yorker* cartoons, promised (but did not always deliver) viewers a measure of control and certainty that they might have otherwise lacked in an era fraught with threats of the “Red Menace” and the atomic bomb. But as much as Americans could use television to contain external threats through symbolic mobility, *The New Yorker* cartoonists acknowledged the degree to which television itself threatened the 1950s home from within by challenging traditional relationships and communication patterns. Borrowing from radio advertising techniques, television manufacturers frequently portrayed television not as an alien device but rather as another member of the family. Advertising historian Roland Marchand referred to this trope as the “family circle,” in which the television receiver fills out the circle of Mom, Dad and the kids and thus happily completes the family unit.^{lxviii} Of course, advertisers were seeking positive associations for their product. *The New Yorker* cartoonists, however, took a more jaundiced view of the television in the home. While they, too, occasionally depicted the family circle, more often they presented a dyad, usually a husband and wife passively attending to the television programming. Unlike the advertisers, the cartoonists often saw a dysfunctional family, one in which family members are forced to renegotiate their relationships because television’s presence in the home. Most frequently, the family members are mute; the television is speaking to them, but no one speaks back.

Symbolic mobility allowed people to shift experience from the threatening public arena to the privacy of the home, where it was more easily contained. By the late 1940s, televisions began appearing in homes in large numbers, moving primary viewing from the local tavern to the domestic arena. Given the high cost of televisions at the time, the fact that Americans so quickly adopted the technology for the home hints at the importance of the underlying domestic containment agenda. A

1948 cartoon shows a man watching a boxing match on television. Reading the signs conventionally, we might take the man to be at the bar. After all, he is standing with his foot propped on a foot rail and watching a sporting event.^{lxix} But the details reveal that he is watching from home and only simulating the trappings of the tavern. Similar is the December 29, 1956, cartoon in which a man with a party hat and horn is watching another man on the television holding up a clock. He is preparing to celebrate New Year’s Eve at home, minus the hustle and bustle of Times Square.^{lxx} Of course, the remote experience of the New Year’s Eve celebration has become so common that the cartoon is drained of its comedic value in a contemporary context, but in its time, the cartoon suggests the value individuals placed on managing their external experiences by relocating them with the confines of the home. Television was subsumed into the larger containment effort. One cartoon shows an appliance salesman offering a housewife the ultimate television set, which includes a stove, washer, dryer, and radio. Says the salesman: “With this model, Madam, you get your whole life in one compact unit.”^{lxxi} That is, TV made the domestic agenda possible by giving the woman a means for symbolically leaving the domestic encampment behind for periods of time, even as she is tending to domestic chores.

Domestic control meant not only fending off crowds but also the intrusion brought, ironically, by the controlling technology itself. Particularly in television’s early years, the cartoons suggest that viewers worried that the technology allowed them to be observed from afar. For instance, a woman in one cartoon who is emerging from the shower clutches a towel to prevent a man on television from seeing her naked; or a man chastises his wife for watching television in her bedclothes. Another shows a woman sitting in the lap of her suitor at home. She sees a man on the television screen and shouts, “My God! My husband!” Her face is in horror as if she has been caught.^{lxxii} Television also allowed commercial vendors to colonize the domestic space by giving them symbolic access to the home and its occupants. Advertising, for some viewers, was the nadir of the broadcasting experience, not only because it was annoying but because it seemed to encroach on the viewer’s sense of local control.^{lxxiii} The intent of television advertising was clearly persuasion, and *The New Yorker* cartoonists explored just how susceptible the public might be to the commercials.^{lxxiv} In 1948, Charles Addams summarized one common worry

about advertising by portraying the TV pitchman as a hypnotist: “You will go to the hall closet. You will get your hat. You will get your purse. You will walk to your neighborhood grocer and you will take advantage of your special offer of three boxes of Sampson’s Egg Noodles for the price you ordinarily pay for two. You will go to the hall closet...”^{lxxv}

Some of the cartoonists portrayed viewers striking back and asserting their control over the television experience. One cartoon suggests that television offered reciprocal power, with viewers acting upon content producers. It shows a man sticking a pin into a voodoo doll that resembles the advertising pitchman on the TV screen. The pitchman grimaces in pain.^{lxxvi} In another, a woman is talking to another woman while her husband is simultaneously reading a book and watching television. He has a wired remote control in one hand. The woman says to her friend: “He stopped looking at television ages ago, but he still loves to turn off the commercials.”^{lxxvii}

Ironically, advertising represented the practical limits of symbolic mobility. So many of the ads encouraged viewers to “go out” and buy precisely because vendors could not sustain themselves on “symbolic” sales. Eventually, the audiences had to leave the house to participate in the consumer economy in order to buy the goods and bring them home. Thus, fending off commercial entreaties represented another contradiction, because to exhibit the evidence of economic affluence and status, one had to consume.

Television, as a domestic appliance, raised new questions about family power dynamics and who most valued symbolic mobility. If the home was the woman’s domain, then TV in the home intruded on traditional assumptions. While women in *The New Yorker* cartoons maintain their domestic dominance conversationally—they generally talk while the men watch—men more often control the television environment, leading to some battles.^{lxxviii} Typical is the 1957 cartoon showing the father watching baseball. Mother and daughter are standing by with their challenge to father’s control. “We’ve had all this out before,” the woman tells her husband. “Extra innings runs into ‘The Mickey Mouse Club.’”^{lxxix} An exaggeration of the theme shows the husband drawing a gun and threatening his wife if she changes the channel from his baseball broadcast.^{lxxx} With so many men watching their sporting contests at home, many women doubtless echoed the sentiments of one cartoon wife, who, with dustpan

and broom in hand, says to her husband in the easy chair: “For heaven’s sake, why don’t you go to one once in a while.”^{lxxxi} In attempting to answer that question, we might argue that by removing the individual from the localized event (i.e., the baseball game), television took the event out of its context. It was no longer a sporting contest; rather, it was a domestic activity, and thus there was nothing to “go” to physically. With television, the game centered not around the field but around the living room. In a sense, baseball’s home plate came to refer to the domestic residence.

Television brought the segregated experiences of the external world within the home, requiring further domestic accommodation. In particular, sporting events—viewed as primarily a masculine experience—entered the feminized environment of the home, leading to comic possibilities for *The New Yorker* cartoonists. In one a man watches baseball while his wife reads in the other room. “Oh, just for once come and watch it with me,” he tells her. “It’s Ladies’ Day, you know.”^{lxxxii} Here, even without the geographical complications of attending the game, the gender division within the home still proves difficult.

But if men were seen as excessively enamored with symbolic mobility, women were not far behind, often shown sacrificing their cooking or house-keeping in order to watch a television program. Traveling televisually, a family member could be absent without leaving home, generating the same kind of alienation and longing that physical absence produced. One cartoon shows a woman watching a soap opera with hanky. Her husband comes over to her and says, “Mabel, I’d like to speak to you—about our life.”^{lxxxiii} Women could also retaliate against their absentee spouses in kind. A 1953 cartoon shows a man walking into his apartment after work. His wife is seated watching baseball game. Empty beer bottles are strewn around her chair. She greets her husband: “Hya, Hon. I’m a baseball fan.”^{lxxxiv} Or a woman might respond by simply buying her own television set.^{lxxxv}

Much of the containment effort in the 1950s was done on behalf of children, who, with the post-war baby boom, had arrived in large numbers. Television both hampered and assisted the effort, according to *The New Yorker* cartoons, thus posing more contradictions. Television brought ideas into the home without knowledge of who would ultimately receive them. As portrayed in *The New Yorker* cartoons, children could use television to

symbolically experience situations and psychological states beyond the control of the parents. Television dissolved the barrier that text had provided to prevent children from experiencing taboo subjects and provided a more concrete experience than radio's "theater of the mind."^{lxxxvi} Thus, added to the threat of communism and atomic annihilation was the concern over prematurely mature children. Sexuality was a common theme, with the television, for instance, exposing infants and young children to images of passionate kissing.^{lxxxvii} Television, according to the cartoons, could also dissolve the illusion of the American work ethic by showing children profiting by gambling with dad on a boxing match or winning big on a TV quiz program.^{lxxxviii} If the television world was to be placed off limits to children, parents would have to resort to physical—not symbolic—measures, as in padlocking the doors on the television cabinet.^{lxxxix}

Television, according to the cartoons, could easily deliver children into the clutches of an advertiser. A number of cartoons highlight the attempts of cigarette manufacturers in particular trying to reach children without parental supervision.^{xc} At the same time, television consumers understood to some degree that symbolic mobility was benign, and for that reason, children need not be protected from it. Even more, it could assist parents in creating a more self-sufficient home by functioning as a babysitter. One cartoon shows a vacant chair and TV set, which is off. On top of the set is an apple, and taped to screen is a note: "Jimmy Dear—Here is an apple and cookies. Milk in the refrigerator. Will be home about 5:30. Love Mother."^{xcii}

As a democratic technology—one person, one receiver—television both gave and took away. It created opportunities but also altered the domestic environment. One of the most prescient of *The New Yorker's* cartoons in this period shows what would eventually be dubbed the "nuclear family" blown asunder. In the living room is dad watching a sporting event; in the dining room is mom watching something else; in the next room is daughter watching her own program.^{xciii} Each family member inhabits a separate psychological space, traveling to a different symbolic location.

The clash of public and private

Electric media have long forced consumers to reconsider the nature of private and public experience.^{xciiii} Whereas people once left their homes

to attend speeches, plays, concerts and the like, new media, beginning with the phonograph, made simulations of those events available in the home. Broadcasting, with its ability to span long distances and penetrate walls, extended the range of domestically consumed public expression. Similarly, increased mobility, whether horizontal, social, or symbolic, tended to violate boundaries—geographical, social, cultural, etc. Much of this (although not all) took place in the home. Symbolic mobility allowed more fluid movement between public and private spaces.

As with radio listeners before them, television viewers often treated the medium as their personal, intimate communication space, even though millions shared that space. For instance, saying "hello to the folks back home" became a common bit of fodder in live programs, a televisual tipping of the hat to someone on the street. In a 1950 version of the gag, a group of men and one older woman are drinking watching television at Joe's bar. A man on the television screen says, "Hello, Ma and all you guys at Joe's." While the message is intended for a limited few, the television signal reaches well beyond Joe's, carrying this private remark into the public arena.^{xciv} The humor in the above cartoon derives from the fact that "Ma" is at the bar (where, presumably, she should not be) rather than at home, but the "Hello, Ma!" gag also illustrates how television exacerbated the clash between public and private spheres.

Intimate expression came from television professionals as well as the random person caught by the camera. Techniques such as directly addressing the viewer implied a two-way apparatus that mimicked interpersonal communication and allowed television producers to suggest a kind of intimacy that disguised the anonymous and public nature of the broadcast.^{xcv} One cartoon shows a man watching the television screen, which portrays a product pitchman about to eat a TV dinner. The pitchman says: "Enjoy a Hitz TV dinner, folks, while looking at me. See how I'm enjoying it while looking at you!"^{xcvi} Of course, individuals on the transmitting side of the television camera could not see their audience, but that fact didn't stop the cartoonist in this case. *The New Yorker* cartoonists also repeatedly suggest that audiences were aware that television was oblivious to the individual characteristics of its viewers. In one cartoon, a man has fallen asleep in front of TV. Yet, the TV announcer plods on with, "Thank you for inviting us into your living room. If you liked our show, why don't you drop us a . . ."^{xcvii} In another, the announcer invokes the usual greeting:

“Hi there, boys and girls, mommies and daddies, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas...” But the audience in this case is revealed to be a dog.^{xcviii}

Not only did TV not speak to anyone in particular, according to the cartoons, it promoted a false sense of intimacy. Shortly following the first television broadcast of a royal wedding in Great Britain, Rea Gardner drew a cartoon of a couple watching the wedding coverage. The woman is crying, prompting the man to say, “But, darling, you don’t even know them.”^{xcix}

Conclusions

Frederick Jackson Turner, even as he closed the door on the American frontier, never questioned the durable nature of American mobility, which he linked to the American character. At the end of his 1893 essay, he alluded to as much:

He would be a rash prophet who should assert that the expansive character of American life has now entirely ceased. Movement has been its dominant fact, and, unless this training has no effect upon a people, the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise. But never again will such gifts of free land offer themselves.^c

If the gifts of the land were exhausted, the bounties of the symbolic world seemed limitless. In accepting symbolic mobility, television viewers of the 1950s could maintain the domestic environment while psychologically experiencing their contemporary version of the frontier, the “other” place. Symbolic mobility afforded Americans a level of control they appreciated, allowing them to alter their psychological experience. Unlike the goals of early kinds of mobility, in which individuals sought to

better their economic situation or social standing, the goal of symbolic mobility was less tangible and somewhat contradictory. One could escape the conformity of the 1950s without the risks of being ostracized or losing the privileges of the consumer society. One could be comfortably entertained in the domestic shelter even as the threats of communism and atomic annihilation lurked outside. *The New Yorker* cartoons demonstrate the conflicted nature of experience in the 1950s. Television did not settle any of these conflicts, but it may have made them seem less problematic by allowing viewers to easily move between various psychological states.

The study of culture through cartoons has its limitation. Cartoons are merely suggestive and difficult to generalize. But their limitations are also their strength. If cartoons are a mirror of society, then, like television itself, cartoons are a distorted mirror. *The New Yorker* cartoons, although exaggerations, acknowledge the contradictory impulse to go somewhere without leaving home and the degree to which newcomers to television had to reorient their thinking about space and place. To physically leave the home while remaining in it was impossible, so 1950s Americans chose the symbolic sorties that television enabled. The choice involved extensive accommodation on the part of the viewer: an appreciation for the remote, simulated experience over the local, authentic experience; acceptance of the camera’s eye, beyond individual’s roving eye; acceptance of the highly commercialized selection of experience; the ceding of control of experience to large bureaucratic organizations; and the loss of group experience. By removing the corpus from direct experience, by engaging in symbolic mobility, Americans embraced a kind of experience without immediate or tangible consequences—an experience better known as entertainment.

Notes

- ⁱ Barney Tobey, *The New Yorker*, 18 August 1951. All of the cartoons discussed in this article are available in Robert Mankoff, ed., *The Complete Cartoons of The New Yorker* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 2004).
- ⁱⁱ Christopher H. Sterling and John M. Kittross, *Stay Tuned: A Concise History of American Broadcasting*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1990), 656.
- ⁱⁱⁱ David Sarnoff, "Radio-vision era is dawning," *New York Times*, 31 May 1939, XX9.
- ^{iv} Leo Bogart, *The Age of Television: A Study of Viewing Habits and the Impact of Television on American Life*, 3d ed. (New York: F. Ungar, 1972), 70.
- ^v Sterling and Kittross, 371.
- ^{vi} Sterling and Kittross, 656. On an inflation-adjusted basis, TV in the 1950s was also more expensive to acquire than radio in the 1920s. For instance, a black-and-white tabletop television set cost between \$129 and \$289, about \$1,000 to \$2,500 in 2011 dollars. By comparison, a new Hudson Hornet 6 automobile cost \$2,200 in 1954.
- ^{vii} The most cartoons published in *The New Yorker* about television, 56, came in 1953, compared with the most published about radio, 24, in 1943.
- ^{viii} Jeffrey Peter Hart, *When the Going Was Good! American Life in the Fifties* (New York: Crown, 1982), 141.
- ^{ix} Hart, 141.
- ^x Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- ^{xi} Television would follow radio into the domestic space, but first it made a detour—into the corner pub. There, many Americans took in their first glimpses of the new technology. The local bars used television to attract and maintain patrons, while at home television would shed its mercenary function. The pub experience of television was also a public one. See Anna McCarthy, *Ambient Television* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).
- ^{xii} James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).
- ^{xiii} Also known as a mathematical model of communication, the model has been criticized for conceiving of communication as strictly one way, from sender to receiver. See Claude E. Shannon and Warren Weaver, *A Mathematical Model of Communication* (Urbana, IL, 1949).
- ^{xiv} James W. Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication," *Communication 2* (1975): 3.
- ^{xv} See Harold Adams Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950) and *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).
- ^{xvi} David Morris Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).
- ^{xvii} Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 2003), 230.
- ^{xviii} Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication," 16.
- ^{xix} Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920), 1.
- ^{xx} Ralph Mann, "Frontier Opportunity and the New Social History," *Pacific Historical Review 53* (1984).
- ^{xxi} Potter, 91-110.
- ^{xxii} Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 38.
- ^{xxiii} Michael Brown, "Radio Mars: The Transformation of Marconi's Popular Image, 1919-1922," in *Transmitting the Past: Historical and Cultural Perspectives in Broadcasting*, ed. J. Emmett Winn and Susan L. Brinson (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005).
- ^{xxiv} Potter, 109.

- ^{xxv} Jackson.
- ^{xxvi} Frank Hobbs and Nicole Stoops, *Demographic Trends in the 20th Century: Census 2000 Special Reports* (U.S. Dept. of Commerce: Washington, D.C., 2000), 33.
- ^{xxvii} Jackson, 278-281.
- ^{xxviii} Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
- ^{xxix} Spigel, 280.
- ^{xxx} Spigel, 110.
- ^{xxxi} Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1990); Spigel; Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1986).
- ^{xxxii} Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 14.
- ^{xxxiii} Williams, 19.
- ^{xxxiv} Shaun Moores, "Television, Geography and 'Mobile Privatization,'" *European Journal of Communication* 8 (1993), 365.
- ^{xxxv} Quoted in Moores, 376.
- ^{xxxvi} Keith Sculle, "The Best of Both Worlds: Home and Mobility in Motel Postcard Iconography," *Material Culture* 31, no. 3 (1999), 26.
- ^{xxxvii} Marchand; Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Vintage, 1985).
- ^{xxxviii} Linus Abraham, "Effectiveness of Cartoons as a Uniquely Visual Medium for Orienting Social Issues," *Journalism and Communication Monographs* 11 (2009): 119-165; Katherine Meyer et al., "Women in July Fourth Cartoons: A 100-Year Look," *Journal of Communication* 30 (1980): 21.
- ^{xxxix} Corey notes that *The New Yorker*, in its cartoons, short fiction, and casual editorials, demonstrated an ambivalence toward consumer culture and consumption which stemmed from 19th century intellectuals such as Henry David Thoreau and Thorstein Veblen. This ambivalence was not easily resolved, given that *The New Yorker*, as a commercial enterprise, was a home for both the "culturally uplifting" literature and criticism and "debasing" commercialism (advertising). In part, the publication addressed the problem by allowing the two views to coexist within its pages. See Mary F. Corey, "Mixed Messages: Representations of Consumption and Anti-Consumption in *The New Yorker* Magazine: 1945-1952," *American Periodicals* 4 (1994): 78-95.
- ^{xl} Feinberg, "Still at the Old Drawing Board," *Horizon*, January 1981, 54.
- ^{xli} Ruth Thibodeau, "From Racism to Tokenism: The Changing Face of Blacks in *New Yorker* Cartoons," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53 (2001): 485.
- ^{xlii} Donnelly and Edwards argue that cartoons, because they are closely tied to an historical context and are influenced by social forces, project a kind of "controlled reality." See David F. Donnelly and Janis L. Edwards, "'Television Is a Funny Business' (1946): A Collection of Cartoons Assembled by Dr Allen B. Dumont and Privately Printed for His Friends," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 16 (1996): 427-445. Other scholars have argued the value of cartoons in studying popular culture, both generally and about communication technology specifically. See Mary F. Corey, *The World through a Monocle: The New Yorker at Midcentury* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999); Thibodeau; Cecelia Tichi, *Electronic Hearth: Creating an American Television Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Josh Greenberg, "Framing and Temporality in Political Cartoons: A Critical Analysis of Visual News Discourse," *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 39 (2002): 181-198; Kathleen J. Turner, "Comic Strips: A Rhetorical Perspective," *Central States Speech Journal* 28 (1977): 24-35.
- ^{xliii} Excluded are cartoons in which a television set is simply a part of the visual backdrop and not germane to the joke.
- ^{xliv} James L. Baughman, "The Promise of American Television, 1929-1952," *Prospects* 11 (1986): 119-34.
- ^{xlv} Historian Warren Susman has noted that "objects of everyday life attain iconographic significance in the modern world, and none are more useful, it would seem, than icons from the realm of communications." See Warren Susman, "Culture and Communications," in *Culture as History*, ed. Warren Sussman (New York: Random House, 1984), 263-4.
- ^{xlvi} Tichi, *Electronic Hearth*.
- ^{xlvii} Tichi, *Electronic Hearth*.
- ^{xlviii} Sam Cobean, *The New Yorker*, 26 May 1945.
- ^{xlix} Chon Day, *The New Yorker*, 14 July 1945.
- ^l Bernie Wiseman, *The New Yorker*, 26 January 1952.
- ^{li} Charles E. Martin, *The New Yorker*, 9 January 1954.

- lii Dave Berkman, "Long Before Falwell: Early Radio and Religion—As Reported by the Nation's Periodical Press," *Journal of Popular Culture* 21:4 (1988), 1-11.
- liii Richard Decker, *The New Yorker*, 31 August 1946.
- liv Dana Fradon, *The New Yorker*, 27 March 1954.
- lv Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York: Viking, 1985).
- lvi Richard Decker, *The New Yorker*, 7 June 1958.
- lvii Whitney Darrow Jr., *The New Yorker*, 18 January 1958.
- lviii Barney Tobey, *The New Yorker*, 8 March 1958.
- lix Richard Decker, *The New Yorker*, 19 April 1958.
- lx Whitney Darrow Jr., *The New Yorker*, 16 February 1957
- lxi Claude Smith, *The New Yorker*, 23 August 1958.
- lxii Whitney Darrow Jr., *The New Yorker*, 24 March 1951.
- lxiii Sidney Hoff, *The New Yorker*, 31 March 1951.
- lxiv Anatol Kovarsky, *The New Yorker*, 29 December 1951; Chon Day, *The New Yorker*, 3 June 1950; William Steig, *The New Yorker*, 18 November 1950.
- lxv Claude Smith, *The New Yorker*, 17 June 1950. Wiseman, *The New Yorker*, 2 February 1952.
- lxvi Robert J. Day, *The New Yorker*, 10 July 1954; Stan Hunt, *The New Yorker*, 3 May 1958; Tom Funk, *The New Yorker*, 20 July 1946.
- lxvii Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication."
- lxviii Marchand, *Advertising the American*.
- lxix Saul Steinberg, *The New Yorker*, 1 May 1948.
- lxx Chon Day, *The New Yorker*, 29 December 1956.
- lxxi Barney Tobey, *The New Yorker*, 25 July 1959.
- lxxii Sam Cobean, *The New Yorker*, 29 September 1945; Arno, *The New Yorker*, 16 July 1949; Richard Taylor, *The New Yorker*, 29 December 1945.
- lxxiii Baughman, "Promise of American Television," 120; Pam Pennock, "Televising Sin: Efforts to Restrict the Televised Advertisement of Cigarettes and Alcohol in the United States, 1950s to 1980s," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 25 (2005): 619-636. The public's suspicions about television advertising likely carried over from radio. See Susan Smulyan, *Selling Radio: The Commercialization of Broadcasting, 1920-1934*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.
- lxxiv *The New Yorker's* cartoons and articles often critiqued, satirized and lampooned the consumerist agenda of the publication's own advertisements. See Corey, "Mixed Messages."
- lxxv Charles Addams, *The New Yorker*, 10 July 1948.
- lxxvi Robert Stevenson, *The New Yorker*, 31 January 1959.
- lxxvii James Mulligan, *The New Yorker*, 16 June 1956.
- lxxviii Male control of the television is explored more fully in David Morley, *Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure* (London: Comedia Pub. Group, 1986).
- lxxix Barney Tobey, *The New Yorker*, 29 June 1957.
- lxxx Garrett Price, *The New Yorker*, 5 September 1953.
- lxxxi Claude Smith, *The New Yorker*, 26 June 1954.
- lxxxii Dana Fradon, *The New Yorker*, 25 July 1959
- lxxxiii James Mulligan, *The New Yorker*, 28 January 1956.
- lxxxiv Barney Tobey, *The New Yorker*, 1 August 1953
- lxxxv James Mulligan, *The New Yorker*, 24 September 1955
- lxxxvi Neil Postman, *The Disappearance of Childhood* (New York: Delacorte, 1982).
- lxxxvii Garrett Price, *The New Yorker*, 18 October 1952; Price, *The New Yorker*, 21 February 1959.
- lxxxviii Whitney Darrow Jr., *The New Yorker*, 12 August 1950; Darrow, *The New Yorker*, 25 August 1956.
- lxxxix Bernie Wiseman, *The New Yorker*, 26 May 1951.
- xc Whitney Darrow Jr., *The New Yorker*, 27 September 1952; James Mulligan, *The New Yorker*, 14 March 1953; Fradon, *The New Yorker*, 25 August 1951. Although the cartoonists frequently lampooned the inanity of advertising, they never mention the television networks that profited from the advertising.
- xcii Claude Smith, *The New Yorker*, 9 September 1950

^{xcii} Model, *The New Yorker*, 15 September 1956.

^{xciii} Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

^{xciv} Garrett Price, *The New Yorker*, 5 August 1950.

^{xcv} Peters has argued that broadcasters, beginning with radio, adopted direct address and other techniques of intimacy to counter the anonymous nature of broadcasting. See John Durham Peters, "The Uncanniness of Mass Communication in Interwar Social Thought," *Journal of Communication* 46, no. 3 (1996): 108-123.

^{xcvi} Claude Smith, *The New Yorker*, 18 July 1959.

^{xcvii} Perry Barlow, *The New Yorker*, 7 April 1951.

^{xcviii} Robert Kraus, *The New Yorker*, 4 May 1957.

^{xcix} Rea Gardner, *The New Yorker*, 17 July 1948.

^c Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 37.