Network: The Other Cold War

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> *The movie community is now getting clobbered by TV, and lashes out at anybody in its bewildered petulance.*
>
> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (320)

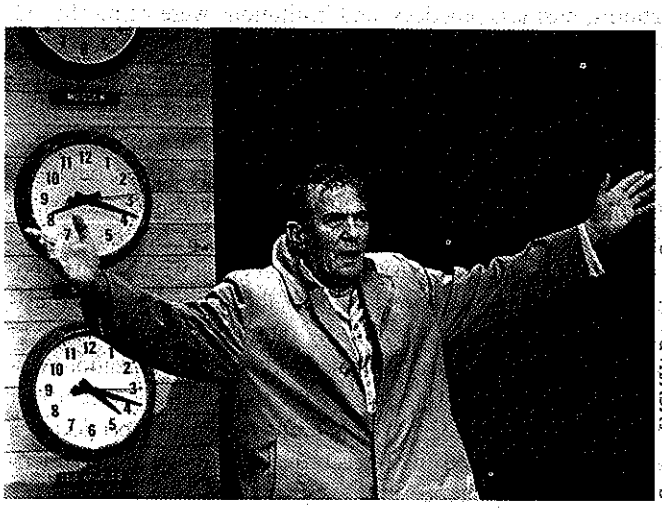
> *Film subjects and forms are as likely—or more likely—to be determined by the institutional and cultural dynamics of motion picture production than by the most frenetic of social upheavals.*
>
> Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America* (322)

In 1961, Newton Minow, the Kennedy-appointed chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, issued a challenge to the National Association of Broadcasters:

> I invite you to sit down in front of your television set when your station goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit and loss sheet or rating book to distract you—and keep your eyes glued to that set until the station signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland. You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, western badmen, western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence, and cartoons. (Barnouw 300)

Fifteen years later, another television critic, as equally implicated in the medium as Minow, issued a remarkably similar catalog of the televisual experience; his variant ended, however, in a slightly different challenge to the American people: "Television is not the truth. Television is a goddamned amusement park. Television is a circus, a carnival, a traveling troupe of acrobats, storytellers, dancers, singers, jugglers, sideshow freaks, lion tamers, and football players." The critic was Howard Beale, martyred hero of Sidney Lumet and Paddy Chayefsky's *Network*. And the challenge was deceptively simple: "Turn off your television sets," Beale cajoled.

Though few followed his instructions, Beale captured the attention of a nation. In this paper, I will argue that, first of all, Beale's challenge is nowhere as simple as it seems, that buried within this challenge can be found the history of the difficult relationship between film and television. Moreover, I hope to suggest through my reading of the film that the intimate ties of the medium of television—and thus the film industry's depictions of television—to the Cold War make *Network*'s message, and the peculiarities of its timing, as public a statement as Minow's, and one far more ideologically loaded.



Courtesy of MGM/UA Entertainment Co.

Peter Finch in *Network*, (1976).

It is of course a commonplace to suggest a connection between the rise of television and the Cold War. From the beginnings, as Erik Barnouw brilliantly narrates in his history of the medium, broadcasting was connected at its root to American military dominance. During World War II, despite the hold that had been placed on the development of television itself, there was nonetheless in production "a navy item closely related in technology to television, but with a name not yet to be spoken, even in a whisper—radar" (Barnouw 89). The most influential of broadcasting executives were directly involved in the war effort, including "Colonel William S. Paley with Psychological Warfare, and Colonel David Sarnoff with the Signal Corps"(93). And during the 1950s, broadcasting would come, via the Voice of America and the United States Information Agency, and under the guidance of John Foster Dulles, to be used directly but covertly for military purposes.

Television's birth as a mass medium can be linked directly to the end of World War II,[1] but so can the beginning of television's difficulties. "The peace that had ended World War II," Barnouw points out, "and with it the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union, had also ended the homefront truce between left and right. War had been replaced by 'cold war'—at home, by a hunt for traitors, who might be anyone, even your neighbor" (106-107). By the end of 1947, the industry's second full year of broadcasting, it was under investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee. As Barnouw argues, the entire history and form of television were determined by the war and the red-hunts that followed: "These were formative years for television. Its program patterns, business practices, and institutions were being shaped. Evolving from a radio industry born under military influence and reared by big business, it now entered an adolescence traumatized by phobias. It would learn caution, and cowardice" (112). In fact, the medium was intimately involved not merely in the Cold War ethos that colored its programming practices, but in the "events" of the Cold War itself, from the televising of the Army-McCarthy hearings to Nixon and Krushchev's "kitchen debate," from the Cuban missile crisis to the moment at which contemporary American broadcasting was born, the assassination of President Kennedy (Barnouw pointedly refers to these four days of broadcasting, during which the network news organizations displayed their "maturity" [338], as "the most moving spectacular ever broadcast"[338, 331]). And during these two short decades, as the Cold War heated up, television came to dominate the American cultural imagination.

One important but underconsidered aspect of the connection between television's rise and the Cold War, however, is the anxiety that this rapid growth in the cultural influence of television produced in its wake, most notably a concern about the older, traditional American culture ostensibly being left behind. Included within this "traditional" culture was, ironically, the last new kid on the block, the film industry. Just on the heels of television's rise came the seemingly devastating 1948 U. S. Supreme Court decision that forced the separation of film production and distribution from exhibition, effectively killing the studio system of Hollywood's so-called "Golden Age." Searching for work during the ensuing movie-industry panic, film artists began flocking to the new medium, producing a talent gap that seemed to parallel the even more dangerous viewership gap. In a feeble attempt at response, studios such as Warner Brothers refused to permit the depiction of television sets in their movies: "The assumption seemed to be that if television were banned from feature films, it could not survive" (Barnouw 193). With this stratagem, representation itself became the field of battle. Though Warner's tactic clearly did not succeed, the relationship remained an uneasy one, with the balance of power between television and film continuously contested.

THE ANXIETY OF OBSOLESCENCE

I have elsewhere described the sort of cultural anxiety experienced by the practitioners of one medium about newer media, particularly that revealed in the novels of the late twentieth century, as "the anxiety of obsolescence."[2] The anxiety of obsolescence is, among other things, an inversion of Harold Bloom's description of the "anxiety of influence" in modernist poetry. As Bloom argues, modern poets must struggle against their sense of belatedness, brought on through their encounters with their canonized forebears. In the anxiety of obsolescence, by contrast, the practitioners of an older cultural form feel themselves threatened not by the past but by the future, as their very medium seems edged out by newer, more pervasive technologies. In the postmodern novel, for instance, one repeatedly finds film and television characterized as mind-numbing, individual-crushing, potentially fascistic forms that are largely responsible for the deterioration of the American reading public. In the words of the inimitable Marshall McLuhan, "the student of media soon comes to expect the new media of any period to be classed as *pseudo* by those who have acquired the patterns of older media, whatever they may happen to be" (199). The history of twentieth-century media is filled with such anxious backlashes; thus film, though barely half a century old itself, found the need for retrenchment in the face of television's incursion.[3]

Ultimately, however, in exploring the anxiety of obsolescence, it matters precious little whether the older cultural form—the novel, for instance—is *actually* being displaced from a position of cultural primacy by the newly developing form, nor does it matter whether the older form was *actually* central to begin with. What is of importance is that one set of cultural producers *feels* that they are being replaced by another—the perception of displacement is sufficient. As John Barth has himself argued, "whether historically the novel expires or persists seems immaterial to me; if enough writers and critics *feel* apocalyptical about it, their feeling becomes a considerable cultural fact" (32). This perception of obsolescence, I wish to argue here, was rampant in the film industry throughout the 1960s and the early 1970s, and the object of that anxiety was largely television. After all, as Lynn Spigel has described it in *Make Room for TV,* "it was the theater (and most often the movie theater) that television promised to replace"(106). *Promised*, that is, from the consumer's point of view; from the perspective of the filmmakers, the word is more accurately *threatened.* One can imagine, from the film industry's perspective, a scene much like Krushchev's U.N. shoe-pounding, a gleefully militaristic televisual machine declaring, in no uncertain terms, *we will bury you.*

Network can be usefully read as a document of the anxiety of obsolescence, and thus the site of one skirmish in the cultural conflict that one might think of as the Other Cold War. *Network* reveals the détente between film and television, the superpowers of the entertainment industry, during this late moment in the Cold War era. On the one hand, during the late 1970s, television was experiencing its own anxiety, as its cultural dominance began to show signs of weakness: "despite the flow of cash and the public euphoria, a deep uneasiness was taking hold of American broadcasting. Its trade press kept chronicling technological developments—relating to cable, two-way television, pay-television, fiber optics, satellites, videodiscs, videocassettes, teletext—that

kept the industry in constant uncertainty about its future" (Barnouw 468). On the other hand, one must remember, as Robert Sklar points out in *Movie-Made America*, that even during this Hollywood renaissance of the 1970s (which Pauline Kael has referred to as the one true "Golden Age"), what the film industry was fighting for was "a place within a complex of media and popular entertainment industries that was dominated, more completely than ever before—or since—by the television broadcast networks" (Sklar 321). Given the already constrained nature of this goal—merely fighting for a place, for the right to continued existence—we can begin to contextualize the quote from Sklar which serves as one epigraph to this paper: "Film subjects and forms are as likely—or more likely—to be determined by the institutional and cultural dynamics of motion picture production than by the most frenetic of social upheavals" (322). Even in an era as socially and politically fraught as the Cold War, Hollywood, with the anxiety of obsolescence setting in, is more likely to make movies "about" its own concerns—in this case, the televisual Gorgon—than "about" the political and social tensions afflicting the world-at-large. Hence *Network*.

And yet: the production of *Network* can be read precisely as an allegory of the Cold War, at least as reimagined through the film industry's anxiety of obsolescence. That industry, valiantly bringing us this tale of the dehumanization inherent in mass culture, can be seen as an easy stand-in for the "good guys," the United States. Television, the evil empire out to destroy the individual for benefit of the collective, might represent the Soviet Union. And Chayefsky and Lumet, who bring us this tale of the horror behind the glass curtain, would of course be defectors, having both come from the nightmare of television to the safety of film, where their stories can be told. Too much, of course, can be made of this analogy; like all allegories-after-the-fact, it falls apart upon close inspection. Chayefsky actually seems more appropriately described as a George Orwell figure than a Solzhenitsyn, the disillusioned fellow-traveler now venting his spleen on the system he so repudiates—or, rather, the system that repudiated him; Chayefsky's purview had been the live anthology drama, a form done away with under sponsor pressure. Chayefsky's defection thus seems an altogether pragmatic one; as Barnouw points out, "the death of the live anthology was Hollywood's gain; the trend was to film" (166). But no matter. That such a film industry/Cold War allegory is valid on at least some level can be seen in what many read as the last major strategem of the Cold War: Could it be any accident that the elaborate U.S. strategic defense initiative which was partly responsible for breaking the Soviet treasury was code-named after a blockbuster Hollywood film? Could it be any accident that the project was so named by a former movie star? The Cold War, from HUAC to *Star Wars*, was always conducted with one eye on Hollywood—and vice versa.

And though these two Cold Wars seem to end differently, their ends have more in common than would at first appear. On the one hand, the Soviet Union crumbled; on the other, television retains its cultural dominance. But, from a certain perspective, what the fall of the Berlin wall revealed was not the universal might of the United States' political system, but the power of the capitalist economy under its surface. And the same may be said of what can be considered the film industry's ultimate "victory" in the Other Cold War. The wall surrounding the three networks of the evil empire has fallen, and with their reduction to a mere part of the broadcasting spectrum, what has been revealed is the ultimate dominance of the *corporations* behind film, rather than the medium itself. The Hollywood studios have, through their television production wings, infiltrated that dark heart of the big three themselves. With the overturning of the laws preventing studios from owning networks, Disney has purchased ABC, and Twentieth-Century Fox, Warner Brothers, and Paramount have been able to create rival networks. And cable TV and the VCR were the Levis and rock-and-roll that brought the Other Cold War to an end.

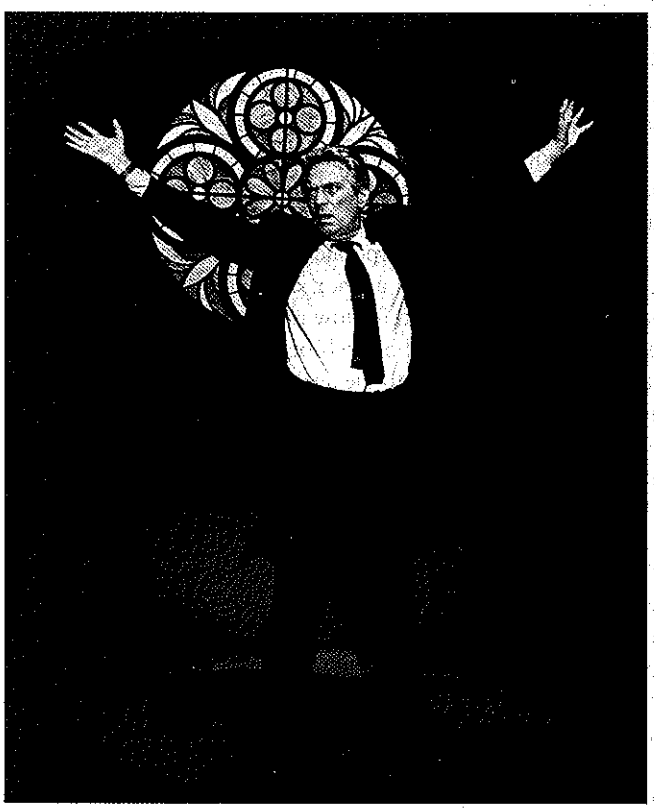
THE EVIL EMPIRE

But this analogy is getting ahead of itself: In 1976, the situation between film and television was still an unmistakable détente. Paddy Chayefsky's biographer, Shaun Considine, in writing about the mid-seventies state of the evil empire, sounds very much as though he's describing the failure of the socialist experiment: "In the beginning, the purpose of television was that of a small but conveniently accessible conduit, one that would bring art, information, and now and then, popular entertainment, to the deprived masses. But the minor medium became a monster, sucking in millions of viewers, and instead of educating and enriching lives, television became"—and here he quotes *Network*'s Howard Beale—"'the most awesome goddamned propaganda force in the whole world'" (Considine 303). George Orwell, indeed.

In *Network* we have Chayefsky's *1984*, in which the ultimate evil—and totalized control—of the televisual system is laid bare. In *Network*, we find UBS—the United Broadcasting System—on the brink of a corporate shakeup. Howard Beale, the network's long-time news anchor, despairing in the knowledge that he is about to be fired for low ratings, announces during his newscast his intent to kill himself on the air in a week. Beale is taken off the air, returned to the anchor desk, fired, re-hired, promoted, and ultimately assassinated, all—as the authoritative newsanchor-sounding voiceover lets us know—because of his ratings. Max Schumacher, Beale's best friend and the director of UBS's news division, is similarly asked to resign, asked to return, and finally put out to pasture. And in the background, through all of this shuffling, are the corporate machinations which underlie everything on the air: UBS was bought out ten months before by the voracious, profit-hungry CCA; CCA is on the edge of being purchased by the Western World Funding Corporation; the Western World Funding Corporation is a consortium of financial interests acting as agents for the Saudis.

But because of the abstract and unquantifiable nature of the threat that these corporate shenanigans represent—isn't this just postmodern multi-national business as usual?—the audience (the movie's audience, that is, a distinction that will become vitally

important) is led to focus on the manipulative force of television and its dehumanizing influence. Following a line of critique taken up many times by discourses ranging from the popular to the elite, from the "factual" to the "fictional," *Network* accuses television of contributing, through its mechanicity, to the "humanoidization" of the American population and of fostering, through its wiring together of the American populace, a species of mass-think. Television has reduced life, we are told, to the lowest common denominator; it has produced a generation which cannot think, cannot feel, and which has learned everything it knows about life from Saturday morning cartoons. But more than anything, television has, through its manipulative use of spectacle, diverted its benumbed viewers from the Real which surrounds them, lulling them into enthusiastic submission. This is the plaint taken up by Neil Postman in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, in which he decries television, not because, as he says, it is entertaining, but because it has made entertainment itself the natural format for all experience (87). In *Network*, the news becomes *"The Howard Beale Show,"* programmed by the head of UBS's entertainment wing and starring the mad prophet of the airwaves and his various sidekicks, including Sybil the Soothsayer and Miss Mata Hari and Her Skeletons in the Closet. With a dramatic announcing voice, with sets that evoke the religious, the mystical, and even the occult, with a live studio audience and an employee in charge of generating applause from them, the news turns entirely to entertainment, and the gap between Eric Sevareid and Ed Sullivan at last closes.



Courtesy of United Artists Corporation.

Network newscaster Howard Beale (Peter Finch), whose performance as a mad prophet has made his TV ratings soar, in a scene from MGM's *Network*, a United Artists release.

At our first viewing of the all-new *"Howard Beale Show"* after its reprogramming, Beale treats his thrilled audience to a rant on precisely this topic—television. He is, we are led to believe by his status as televisual Cassandra, as close to being the "voice of the filmmakers" as is possible in this diatribe; his rant is a precise analysis of the ills that television has engendered, the film seems to argue, though no one will pay sufficient attention to this warning. Beale begins by addressing the destruction of the American imagination by television, making use of the popular wisdom that, in the television age, no one reads anymore. The studio audience nods approvingly, agreeing as it nonetheless soaks up the spectacle before it. It is here that Beale so bitingly catalogs the banality of the televisual spectrum, before summing it all up:

> We're in the boredom-killing business. So if you want the truth, go to God. Go to your gurus. Go to yourselves. Because that's the only place you're ever going to find any real truth. But man, you're never going to get any truth from us. We'll tell you anything you want to hear. We lie like hell. We'll tell you that Kojak always gets the killer and that nobody ever gets cancer at Archie Bunker's house and no matter how much trouble the hero is in, don't worry, just look at your watch, at the end of the hour he's going to win. We'll tell you any shit you want to hear. We deal in illusions, man. None of it is true.

This dealing in illusions, this business of killing boredom, this universal employment of the happy ending—all of these are valid criticisms of television as a medium. But the viewer must pay close attention to what begins to happen visually at this point: Beale walks out into the audience to talk directly to them. As the shot widens, we see the boom mike, the television cameras, the technical personnel working to send exactly this message about television's horror out over the televisual airwaves. *Aha*, we begin to think: *Irony*. Beale continues:

> But you people sit there day after day, night after night, all ages, colors, creeds. We're all you know. You're beginning to believe the illusions we're spinning here. You're beginning to think that the tube is reality and that your own lives are unreal. You do whatever the tube tells you. You dress like the tube. You eat like the tube. You raise your children like the tube. You even think like the tube. This is mass madness, you maniacs! In God's name, you people are the real thing! We are the illusion! So turn off your television sets. Turn them off now! Turn them off right now! Turn them off and leave them off! Turn them off right in the middle of the sentence I'm speaking to you now! Turn them off!

And with that final flourish, Beale passes out cold on the set. Instantly, the theme music is cued, the crowd handler

jumps around calling for applause, and the cameras zoom in on Beale's crumpled form. Yes, we nod to ourselves. Irony: everything Beale says is true, and yet it has all been orchestrated for the cameras, just another part of the spectacle perpetrated on a gullible American public by the manipulative profit-seeking television industry. And the audience, exactly as they were intended, eats it up.

The film has been carefully constructed, so much so that, by this point, it is all too easy to forget that *we are* the audience. That there is another camera framing this scene, another set of personnel orchestrating its production, another script. That there is another set of ideas and ideologies behind the staging of this spectacle. That perhaps the criticisms of television to which we so readily agreed—that it deals in illusions, that it works only to kill boredom, that it relies ridiculously on the happy ending—are all equally valid criticisms of film, or at least of Hollywood film. And indeed of the film we are watching: Max Schumacher, in the process of leaving his wife for Diana, a younger woman, a woman he describes as part of 'the television generation," narrates for his amused wife the ways Diana treats their relationship as if it were a made-for-TV movie. She has a number of "scenarios" laid out for them, says Max, in all of which he returns to his wife "because the audience won't buy a rejection of the happy American family." Again, we nod knowingly, and again this criticism of television's appeal to the audience's lowest common denominator is utterly disingenuous, for what happens at the end of the film but that Max leaves the vulturous Diana and returns to his long-suffering wife, as we have been hoping he would all along? And though, along with Pauline Kael, we may be unsure whether to take the viewers' "obedience" to Beale's call to scream out "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore!" as "proof of their sheeplike obedience to TV" or as "evidence that the Prophet has struck a nerve," in judging television's manipulativeness, we must confront the fact that it is nonetheless the *film* that turned Beale's line into the rallying cry of a generation (Kael 704). In parallel fashion, Howard Beale's diatribe against television, which we already know to take with an ironic lilt, given the inclusion of the televisual apparatus in the production of this very speech, is in its particulars thoroughly disingenuous, to the point that one begins to suspect the hidden presence of a final line to this rant: "Turn off your televisions," indeed: and for God's sake, come back to the movies.

Courtesy of MGM/UA Entertainment Co.

TV executive Diana Christenson (Faye Dunaway) discusses the forthcoming year's programming with her staff, and plots to get the major audience share, in MGM's *Network*, a United Artists release.

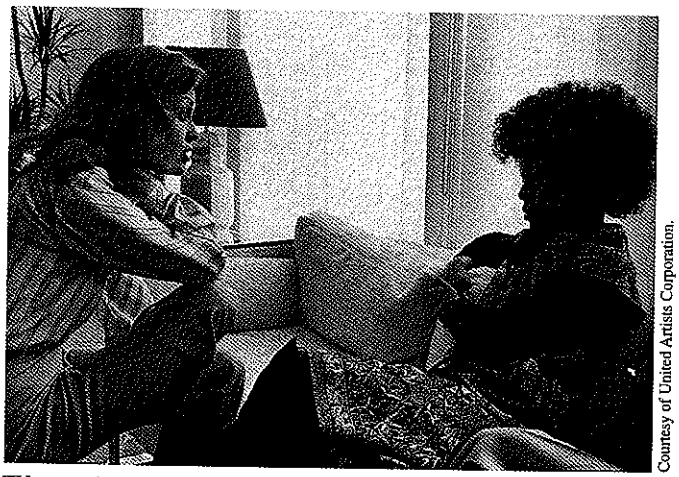
Thus, *Network* reveals a peculiarly Cold War-like patriotic sentiment—our system of representation is based upon the Truth; theirs is constructed of illusions and lies—under this seemingly neutral, disinterested dismantling of the televisual illusion. *Network* becomes a species of propaganda particularly appropriate to the era, if one that appears to be concerned only with the "institutional and cultural dynamics of motion picture production," rather than commenting upon the social dynamics of the Cold War itself (Sklar 322). But, as Freud would claim about all instances of anxiety, the true object and the manifest object are not at all the same. The anxiety of obsolescence is not different: the obsolescence feared, while overtly cultural, is nonetheless social at root. This more latent anxiety can also be read in the postmodern novel, in which the (predominantly white male) novelist is able to sublimate his fears of displacement by the social other through his castigation of television for the mechanicity, the deceit, and the surveillance that have seemingly destroyed the novel's cultural position. This sublimation is always incomplete, however, and the fear of the other peeks through at critical disjunctures in the text. In *Network*, these disjunctures largely crop up around the character of Diana Christenson, UBS's head of programming.

Diana is at once the focus of *Network*'s argument about the dehumanizing effects of television and the site at which that argument begins unraveling. She is, we are told by Max Schumacher in his parting speech, "television incarnate." She is everything we are led to despise about the medium: crass, cold, calculating, and terrifyingly business-driven. Diana is the one who proposes "programming" the news. Diana is the one who cannot stop talking about shares and market ratings during sex. Diana is the one who scripts her life like a movie of the week. But is it accurate to claim, as Schumacher does, that she is "television incarnate"—when in fact it seems to be Howard Beale himself who has turned into a television? As he responds when Schumacher expresses concern about his mental health, "I'm imbued with some special spirit—it's not a religious feeling at all, it's a shocking eruption of great electrical energy. I feel vivid, flashing, as if suddenly I'd been plugged into some great electromagnetic field." And in fact he is filled with a "special spirit," and has been "plugged in" to a network larger than himself: Beale speaks with no voice of his own, but like television merely channels the messages—significantly, most of them corporate-driven—that he is given to spout. If it is Beale, then, who has turned into a television set, why is Diana so vilified while he is treated as a martyr?

A LOSS OF PRESUMED SOCIAL SUPERIORITY

The answer is the dark underside of the anxiety of obsolescence. Just under the surface of the film's apparent technophobia, of its conviction that new media are destroying our humanity, of this fear on the part of the practitioners of an older medium that they are being displaced, we discover another set of anxieties, which re-key that displacement. Rather than experiencing a loss of cultural centrality, we sense a loss of presumed *social* superiority. Such is unquestionably the case in *Network*: for all Diana's faults, for all her "humanoid" qualities, the greatest of these seems to be being female. She becomes, as Pauline Kael has pointed out, an easy reactionary target: "The trick in *Network*," Kael claims, "is to use a woman's drive toward fame or success as the embodiment of the sickness in the society" (706). And in fact we can see such impulses to close American culture to the forces of the Other throughout the film: Diana becomes emblematic of the havoc the women's movement has wreaked on culture; Laureen Hobbs and the Ecumenical Liberation Army represent the twin horrors of racial and economic revolutionaries. And Howard Beale's second rant on the refurbished "*Howard Beale Show*" takes on the forthcoming sale of CCA to the Saudi Arabian interests: "I don't want the banks selling *my country* to the Arabs!" he exclaims. It is, after all, *Howard's* country, Sidney's country, Paddy's country—the country of the middle-aged white man, who feels himself being cheated out of his birthright by "humanoids" like Diana (the subhuman female) and "terrorists" like Laureen Hobbs. The clearest statement of this sense of displacement in the film comes from Diana, of all people:

> The American people are turning sullen. They've been clobbered on all sides by Vietnam, Watergate, the inflation, the depression; they've turned off, shot up, and they've fucked themselves limp and nothing helps. . . . The American people want somebody to articulate their rage for them.



Courtesy of United Artists Corporation.

TV network executive Diane Christenson (Faye Dunaway) forms an alliance with political activist Laureen Hobbs (Marlene Warfield) in MGM's *Network*, a United Artists release.

But though Diana here expresses it, and will articulate it on the air through Laureen and the ELA, this rage is clearly a white male anger; in fact what is besieging "the American people" are the women's movement, black power, the Maoists, and the Arabs.

Perhaps, then, Sklar's comment—"Film subjects and forms are as likely—or more likely—to be determined by the institutional and cultural dynamics of motion picture production than by the most frenetic of social upheavals"—is less apt than it appears in the case of *Network* (Sklar 322). While the film purports itself to be about the horrors of television, behind the medium lurk the horrors of the other, and thus the film is precisely a reaction to those "frenetic social upheavals" of the late '60s and early '70s. Though it has been easy to read *Network* as merely allegorical in its relationship to the Cold War, simply playing out the détente between the insular worlds of film and television production, the film finally reveals itself to be subject to all the same pressures that the rest of the United States faced during the post-war period. The central motif of Cold War public life, and particularly mediated public life, was the need to know ones enemies. *Network*, in relentlessly naming those enemies, demonstrates the same paranoia, the same fears of the other that HUAC exemplified. From the vilification of Diana Christenson and Laureen Hobbs to the martyrdom of Max Schumacher and Howard Beale, *Network* betrays not simply a retrenchment of film in the face of television, but of filmic ideology in the face of potential revolution. This divisive spirit, hierarchizing not forms of mediation but aspects of human difference, may, in the final analysis, be less indicative of a Cold War than a Civil War.

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Notes

1. See, for instance, Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for Television*, and Cecelia Tichi, *Electronic Hearth*, in addition to Barnouw's *Tube of Plenty*.
2. See my unpublished dissertation, *The Anxiety of Obsolescence: The Postmodern Novel and the Electronic Media*.
3. The founding document of such media history is of course Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media*; more recently, however, see Paul Levinson, *The Soft Edge*, and Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation*, each of which pointedly avoid McLuhan's technological determinism by exploring the cultural circumstances of new technological developments within a living media ecology.

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