The coverage led to action. Immediately after the hearings, senators began efforts, in earnest, to silence McCarthy. They ultimately censured him, marking only the fourth time in two centuries that the Senate had taken such severe action. In December 1954, the senators voted 67–22 to strip McCarthy of his power, subjecting him to public disgrace. McCarthy's life came to an abrupt end three years after the Senate action. A heavy drinker, he died of liver disease associated with alcoholism. He had not yet reached his fiftieth birthday.

**Trial by Television**

Beginning in 1950 and continuing for three years, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy became a fierce presence in America. Stopping him required a power of great might. That valiant savior of the democratic way of life began to emerge when Edward R. Murrow committed See It Now to attacking the anticommunist demagogue, first with the Radulovich segment and then with the program crafted to reveal McCarthy as a malicious and mean-spirited bully. ABC then joined the campaign by airing live coverage of the Army-McCarthy hearings—including Joseph Welch's gripping verbal assault. The entire drama, thanks to the TV cameras, unfolded in the living rooms of 80 million Americans.

McCarthy and McCarthyism had gained such enormous power that no single entity was strong enough to defeat them. Ultimately, the U.S. Senate, the White House, and the American public all found it increasingly difficult to abide the senator's unfair tactics. And yet, the frustration that drove each of these constituencies was informed by the medium of television. For TV clearly was pivotal to exposing exactly how McCarthy operated.

It took a force of immense potential and proportion to tame a power as diabolical as the Roman candle known as Joe McCarthy. But in the early 1950s, the infant institution of television news distinguished itself—in its finest hour—by demonstrating that it was fully equal to such a formidable task.

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**11**

**PUSHING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT ONTO THE NATIONAL AGENDA**

By the 1950s, slavery had been outlawed in the United States for nearly a century, but southern racists had devised other forms of tyranny to keep black Americans in their "place." Poll taxes, grandfather clauses, unfairly administered literacy tests, and various acts of intimidation denied African Americans the right to vote, and the concept of "separate but equal" deprived them of public facilities and decent educations.

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court pronounced six words that forever altered the legal status of black Americans: "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." The Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka decision prompted blacks to challenge unjust laws and discriminatory practices, spawning the Civil Rights Movement. The initial challenges largely failed, though, because of the wall of bigotry that segregationists had constructed—they ruled the American South the way kings had ruled feudal estates.¹

And then came television. By covering the movement's various events, TV news awakened people throughout the country to the realities of black oppression in the South. By pushing those realities into the face of...
the American people everywhere, television news propelled the Civil Rights Movement into the American consciousness and onto the national agenda. Northern newspapers such as the New York Times and the Boston Globe also covered the movement, but television news had much more impact.

Journalists and scholars alike have praised the vital role that television played in advancing American race relations during the late 1950s and early 1960s. CBS producer William Peters said, “The Negro revolution of the 1960s could not have occurred without television coverage.” Among the scholars who have lauded TV’s role in mobilizing the nation to end segregation is William A. Wood. In his book Electronic Journalism, Wood wrote, “The on-the-scene coverage of intimidation and bestiality in the old South made indelible impressions on many who had been oblivious to or indifferent over home-grown, American brutality and injustice. Suddenly men and women all over the country were as close as across the street to the crucible of revolution. Whites everywhere were awakened.”

As the TV cameras showed blacks being cursed, spit upon, attacked by police dogs, and blasted with firehoses merely for trying to exercise the rights that were guaranteed to them by the Constitution, those images became imbedded into the nation’s consciousness. Public opinion suddenly galvanized in support of the Civil Rights Movement.

The First Great TV News Story

By the late 1950s, television news was competing with newspapers on a daily basis, and the Civil Rights Movement was the first great television news story. NBC newsman Bill Monroe wrote, “When you see and hear a wildly angry man talking, whether he is a segregationist or integrationist, you can understand the man’s anger, you can feel it—the depth of it, the power of it. But if you read a description of what the man said, you find that, by comparison, the words are dried-up little symbols through which only a fraction of the story comes.”

That the Civil Rights Movement was a great TV news story didn’t mean, however, that the South wanted network journalists to report it.

The stability of African-American oppression rested on local control of information, with many southern newspapers refusing to publish stories that might disturb the existing racial pattern. When segregationists realized that television was disrupting the system, they began to view reporters as outside agitators—and enemies. Dan Rather of CBS recalled looking for a motel to stay at while covering a story in Mississippi and being greeted by a sign in the window that read “NO DOGS, NIGGERS OR REPORTERS ALLOWED.” Charles Quinn of NBC recalled that many southerners developed nicknames for ABC, CBS, and NBC—Afro Broadcasting Company, Colored Broadcasting System, and Nigger Broadcasting Company.3

Segregationists didn’t stop with name calling, as dozens of correspondents were injured while covering the movement. When NBC’s Richard Valeriani was reporting from Alabama in 1965, he was struck from the back with the wooden handle of an ax, sustaining a severe head wound that kept him in the hospital for several days. Valeriani recalled how law enforcement officials responded, saying, “A state trooper saw the whole thing. He took the ax handle away from the guy, telling him, ‘You’ve done enough damage for one night.’ But that was it. The trooper didn’t even arrest the guy.”

Knocking Down Walls in Little Rock

Observers point to a Gothic-style high school in Arkansas as the backdrop for the first chapter in television’s epic coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. CBS correspondent Robert Schakne said, “Little Rock was the first case where people really got their impression of an event from television. It was the event that nationalized a news story that would have remained a local story if it had just been a print story.”

During the summer of 1957, African-American leaders in Little Rock challenged the segregated school policy by enrolling nine black students in the city’s most highly regarded public high school, which was all white. In early September, network cameras were on hand to show the nation that the students walked gravely toward Central High School—the girls in white blouses, the boys in pressed trousers—but then were turned
black youngsters were dwarfed by thousands of angry segregationists who covered the school grounds, chanting, "Two-Four-Six-Eight! We don't wanna integrate!" The soldiers—with their bayonets drawn and pointed toward the mob—surrounded the frightened African-American students and inchéd their way through the angry sea. The faces were contorted as the white crowd jeered and screamed, "Go home, nigger!"

Coverage continued throughout the school year. The cameras documented uniformed soldiers marching through the streets of Little Rock and the barrage of curses and threats spewed onto the black students as they walked across the school grounds. Each morning viewers around the country saw the caravan of military jeeps in front of and behind the station wagon escorting the black students from their homes to the school; each afternoon, the cameras recorded the return trip taking the students home again.

### Breaking Barriers at the University of Georgia

By early 1961, the country had a youthful new president, and civil rights leaders savored new hope that John F. Kennedy's Democratic administration would provide more support for their march toward racial equality.

Testimony to the new optimism came the same month as Kennedy's inauguration, when a federal court ruled that the University of Georgia had to admit African-American students. The two young people were Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter, who later would make her mark on journalism as Public Broadcasting Service correspondent Charlayne Hunter-Gault. Their admission unleashed a maelstrom of hatred, and the networks rushed to Athens, Georgia, to document it.

The attention centered on Hunter because she, being female, was required to live on campus, while Holmes, being male, was allowed to move off campus. Then a frightened eighteen-year-old, Hunter appeared nightly on the TV screen for days on end, looking toward the ground as white students screamed and spit at her. One piece showed the world how students taunted Hunter; the film showed a white girl walking up to Hunter, tossing a quarter on the floor and sneering, "Here, nigger. Here's a quarter. Go change my sheets."
On another occasion, the cameras focused on the hundreds of students who gathered outside Hunter's dormitory, holding a banner scrawled with the angry words "Nigger, go home!" Other footage showed the police trying to disperse the crowd by using tear gas and then how the tactic merely enraged the mob even more—to the point that events surged out of control. TV viewers saw hundreds of segregationists roaming the campus, committing random acts of vandalism and burning effigies of African Americans.\textsuperscript{14}

Although the contempt that the students demonstrated toward Hunter initially must have seemed beyond belief to many northern viewers, similar images would become commonplace in the next few years. The same scenes unfolded time and time again as educational institutions in the South—including the University of Mississippi later in 1961 and the University of Alabama in 1963—gradually and fitfully became desegregated.

**Riding Buses for Freedom**

The next phase of coverage evolved from a Supreme Court decision banning segregation in interstate travel. To test the new law, in May 1961 a racially mixed group of college students purchased bus tickets to take them from Washington, D.C., to New Orleans. When the students were dubbed "freedom riders," TV had its next story.\textsuperscript{15}

NBC cameraman Moe Levy boarded one of the buses with the students, capturing their images on film. The young men and women who climbed aboard the first two buses in Washington were well dressed and well groomed. One slender young African-American woman wore a tailored suit and carried a white patent leather purse. The young man beside her wore a dark suit and striped tie, a carefully folded handkerchief protruding from his breast pocket.\textsuperscript{16}

As the freedom riders traveled south through Virginia and the Carolinas, segregationists occasionally taunted them, but those acts were quickly eclipsed once the buses crossed into Alabama. The state police had promised to escort the buses, but at some point along the way the police cars vanished. So when the buses pulled into the Montgomery station, a mob of 2,000 segregationists—armed with bricks, baseball bats, and lead pipes—attacked the students. Although no images of the bloodbath were filmed because the mob smashed Levy's camera, the networks broadcast footage of the bruised and blood-soaked students in their hospital beds. The young men and women lost teeth and suffered broken bones, many of them beaten so severely that they were disfigured for the rest of their lives. Levy was repeatedly clubbed; one of his legs was permanently injured.\textsuperscript{17}

**Defying the Power Structure in Birmingham**

In the early 1960s, Alabama's largest city became a notorious battlefield in the civil rights struggle. For it was in Birmingham that 3,000 black men, women, and children were arrested in one seething spring, many of them injured by police brutality. Cameras were in place to spread the images throughout the country, and viewers saw footage they'd never forget.\textsuperscript{18}

In 1963, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders targeted Birmingham for a series of nonviolent protests aimed at overturning the city's white power structure. The campaign began in early April with demonstrators picketing stores and conducting sit-ins at lunch counters. In week two, the campaign expanded to marches. As the arrests climbed to triple digits, demonstrators from other cities streamed into Birmingham.\textsuperscript{19}

Television broadcast the peaceful protests across the nation, showing that some participants were in their twenties but others were middle-aged women in dresses, hats, and white gloves. The only violence portrayed on film was by whites. Footage would begin with blacks walking quietly up to a lunch counter and sitting on the stools. As the waitresses ignored them, the blacks continued to gaze forward, some of them lost in prayer. The serenity was soon shattered by a white segregationist approaching one of the peaceful protesters from the rear and pouring a bottle of ketchup over the person's hair. The blacks remained poised as the whites pointed their fingers and laughed at the ketchup dripping onto
the protester’s shirt or blouse. In some scenes, the whites became enraged by the victim’s lack of reaction and pulled at the person’s clothes and pushed him or her off the stool. Then a white police officer would enter the picture, arresting the blacks while allowing the whites to go free.

During the next several weeks, as the daily dramas continued to play out on the evening news, the eyes of the nation turned to Birmingham. Every day the arrest total grew larger. The black community’s ability to unite and the protesters’ willingness to be arrested increasingly frustrated and angered police commissioner “Bull” Connor and the other racist authorities. The protest had now continued for a full month, the city jail was overflowing, and the protesters were clearly succeeding in their efforts to shine the spotlight on Birmingham. Tension was high.

In early May, protesters introduced a daring new strategy to win the nation’s compassion: having school children join the demonstrations. Thousands of African-American boys and girls, many still in elementary school, took to the streets for a massive march through downtown. The children celebrated the “Black and Glad” aspect of the movement, laughing and dancing while they sang simple freedom songs to a jazz tempo—creating dynamite television images.20

Connor was not amused. He arrested 700 youngsters and ordered his officers to become more physical. Protesters were stunned when the police began using high-pressure firehoses that were so powerful that even the strongest of men couldn’t remain standing against them. The officers manning the hoses pushed women and children to the ground and pinned them against buildings as if they were animals.

The second instrument of domination that Connor authorized was even more startling. Under his orders, German shepherd police dogs, trained to attack dangerous criminals, were brought to the scene. The ferocious animals snarled and pulled at the leashes that the officers used to control them. Many of the school children were so frightened that they cried hysterically. As they did, some parents threw stones and bottles at the officers. Connor responded by ordering the dogs forward as he yelled proudly, “Look at those niggers run!”21

Television captured the terror. And that night on their TV screens, the American people witnessed a level of police brutality far beyond any-

thing they’d ever imagined could take place in the United States. Viewers saw, for example, a middle-aged woman being held to the ground by five white police officers, one with a knee across her throat. Those same viewers also watched as a dignified woman, dressed in high heels and a pearl necklace, knelted in prayer amid the chaos on all sides of her.22

The specific scene from that day that produced the most reaction was of a police dog, with its fangs bared, tearing at the stomach of a black schoolboy. The officer controlling the dog grabbed the boy’s sweater, holding the victim in place so the dog could maul him. One historian went so far as to credit the success of the Birmingham campaign to that one image, writing, “If there was any single point at which the 1960s generation of ‘new Negroes’ turned into a major social force, the appearance of that photograph was it. Intense pressure on President Kennedy to initiate federal action began to be applied the moment that image appeared.”23

An editorial in the New York Times spoke for millions of television viewers when it stated, “The use of police dogs and high-pressure firehoses to subdue school children in Birmingham is a national disgrace.” Americans around the country demonstrated their solidarity with the Birmingham protesters when 250,000 people spontaneously organized public marches in forty cities.24

In Alabama, negotiations that previously had failed now succeeded. The day after the images of the firehoses and police dogs were televised, President Kennedy sent a Justice Department official to Birmingham to act as a mediator between city officials and the demonstrators. And exactly one week after the shocking images had aired, the leaders reached an agreement that allowed, for the first time, African Americans to shop at city stores and eat at city restaurants.25

The TV images prompted action on the national level as well, propelling Kennedy to propose civil rights legislation of a scope and boldness that a few months earlier wouldn’t have been possible. In a speech televised live during prime time, the president said what African Americans had been waiting generations to hear, “We preach freedom around the world, but are we to say to the world—and much more importantly, to each other—that this is the land of the free, except for the Negroes? The time has come for this nation to fulfill its promise.”26
Marching on Washington

Building on the momentum that the Birmingham images had created, civil rights leaders took their crusade to the power center of American government. And as they planned the March on Washington, organizers kept foremost in their minds that the event had the potential to become a television spectacle—a promise that was fully realized.

Network coverage of the August 28, 1963, demonstration began early. NBC led its rivals with the network's popular Today morning program kicking off with a thirty-minute report, followed by updates throughout the day, a two-hour recap in the afternoon, and a final report during prime time. ABC hopped in and out of coverage as the day progressed, and CBS carried the speeches live for three hours in the afternoon, then ran an hour-long special in the evening. The networks received exuberant praise for their coverage. A Washington Post story began, "As a TV spectacular, the March on Washington was a program without parallel," and Variety awarded the networks a "Great Coverage of Great Event" citation.

And a great event it was. With heads high and chests forward, 200,000 Americans marched, some spending their life savings to make the pilgrimage to the nation's capital. The demonstrators showed well on television, especially when the networks took their cameras high into the Washington Monument for panoramic shots. The images showed marchers carrying signs that demanded "Decent Housing Now" and "Jobs and Freedom Now."

The main speaker of the day was a man the TV camera loved—and helped boost to his preeminent stature in the movement. Martin Luther King, Jr., with his broad face and muscular neck and shoulders, filled the television screen with a sense of physical as well as spiritual power. In his rich baritone voice, the thirty-four-year-old Baptist preacher spoke the moving words that generations of African-American boys and girls would commit to memory, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."
Television took a step toward that dream a few days later when NBC produced *The American Revolution of '63*, a news special that's been described as the magnum opus of civil rights coverage. The *New York Times* called the program "a turning point in TV's journalistic evolution. Never before has so much valuable prime time been accorded to a single domestic issue in one uninterrupted stretch."30

It was particularly courageous for NBC to air the three-hour program because sponsors refused to support it, fearing segregationists would boycott any products advertised during the show. The network stood firm, canceling its entire evening of commercial programming to show the special. By filling the breaks with in-house ads for NBC rather than commercials from paying sponsors, the network lost half a million dollars in revenue in a single night.31

The program profiled cities that had played key roles in the movement up to that point, giving the network a chance to replay images of terrified students in Little Rock and ferocious police dogs in Birmingham. The introductory statement was as stirring as the footage, "Did this American Revolution begin this year in Birmingham? Or did it begin in 1954 with a Supreme Court decision? Or in 1863 with a Presidential proclamation? Some of its roots reach back to 1776 to an independence declaration—even back to the year 52 when the Apostle Paul, preaching in Athens, said, 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men.'"32

NBC's president later pointed to the program as a sterling example of how television news could shape history: "Watching *The American Revolution of '63*," Robert E. Kintner said, "many people sensed for the first time the depth and continuity of what had previously seemed a spasmodic and puzzling protest. The program helped establish the national consensus which expressed itself in the Civil Rights Act of 1964."33

Some Americans, however, still adamantly opposed the civil rights revolution—and the medium that was propelling it onto the national agenda. Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett said, "Fellow Americans, you are witnessing one more chapter in what has been termed the 'Television Revolution.' The TV networks have publicized and dramatized the race issue far beyond its relative importance in today's world. The three-hour special program and the degree of coverage accorded to the August 28 March on Washington underlined the fact that the American public is being propagandized by overemphasis."34

Barnett wasn't the only segregationist who chastised television for supporting the movement. After NBC canceled its telecast of the Blue-Gray college football game because black players weren't allowed to participate in it, Alabama Governor George Wallace denounced the decision as "irresponsible." And when CBS president Frank Stanton testified at a Senate hearing, South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond attacked him for devoting too much coverage to civil rights, asking Stanton point blank, "Don't you care about white people?"35

### Seeking Voting Rights in Selma

In 1964, civil rights leaders turned their attention toward blacks being denied the vote, focusing specifically on Selma, Alabama, where Americans of African descent comprised 57 percent of the residents but less than 1 percent of the registered voters. Martin Luther King, Jr., set out to change that statistic by asking supporters from around the country to come to the city and undertake a voter registration campaign.36

The supporters heeded the call, as did network correspondents. Typical of the images they broadcast was one showing a tall, distinguished-looking black man in a suit and tie being taunted by white hooligans at the registrar's office. The teenage boys pushed the middle-aged man out of line and then chased him down the street, yelling obscenities at him. When one of the thugs knocked off the man's hat and he leaned over to pick it up, the boys kicked him. The TV camera showed the episode in its shameful entirety.37

King's most daring idea for drawing attention to the voter registration drive was to lead a march from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery 50 miles to the east. The journey would end with the protesters delivering a petition to Governor Wallace, even though the legendary racist publicly opposed the event.38

On Sunday, March 7, 1965, some 600 men and women started walking down U.S. Route 80. But after marching 300 yards, they found the highway blocked by fifty state troopers. The men were led by James G. Clark,
Selma’s quick-tempered sheriff—a graduate of the “Bull” Connor school of police brutality. After the marchers refused to disperse, Clark and his men attacked them in full force.

TV images of the event showed clubs flying in all directions as black men and women screamed and fell to the ground while the officers continued forward, stomping on the people who lay on the pavement. Then the film showed officers running after particular marchers, striking them without mercy. A middle-aged woman in a head scarf hunched down on her knees, but an officer struck her on the head with his nightstick; when the woman collapsed on the ground, another officer ran into the picture and kicked her in the stomach and clubbed her again.39

Officers being mounted on horses added another gruesome dimension to the scene. Looking like Cossacks overpowering the peasants, the mounted men spurred their horses and charged into the crowd with nightsticks swinging and steel-toed boots kicking at the protesters. Meanwhile, hundreds of whites stood on the edge of the highway whooping and cheering.40

Scenes on TV became even more horrifying when clouds of tear gas filled the screen. As the white officers covered their faces with gas masks, African-American men and women fell coughing and sputtering to the ground. Officers raced from one bleeding body to the next, striking each one again and again with their nightsticks. The cameras moved in for close-ups of some of the bloody figures lying motionless, and still the officers continued to beat and kick them. Other cameras followed officers into the black sections of Selma where they used bullwhips to brutalize men and women who’d been nowhere near the march. Once again, the TV camera showed it all.41

The incident—dubbed “Bloody Sunday”—ignited a powder keg of protest across the country. Members of Congress, governors, and clergymen denounced the brutality. Michigan Governor George Romney led 10,000 marchers in a demonstration in Detroit, 15,000 New Yorkers protested in Harlem, and thousands of other indignant Americans snarled traffic in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington.

Like much of the nation, President Lyndon Johnson found the images appalling. After Governor Wallace flew to Washington to meet with the president, Johnson announced, “I told the governor that the brutality in Selma last Sunday must not be repeated.” When another Selma march was conducted two weeks after the first, the crowd swelled to more than 3,000 protesters from across the country. With President Johnson insisting that Wallace provide protection for the marchers, the event unfolded without violence.42

But LBJ’s more important activity that month was a televised address to a joint session of Congress. The speech, which Johnson delivered with visible emotion, was in preparation for a voting rights bill he submitted two days later—which was enacted within four months. Johnson said, “Many of the issues of civil rights are complex and difficult. But about this there can be no argument: Every American citizen must have an equal right to vote.”43

Television Images Nourish a Social Revolution

Congress ultimately passed two pieces of legislation that became the most important tangible products of the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and prohibited restaurants, hotels, theaters, and other facilities of public accommodation from turning away any person on the basis of race. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned all barriers to Americans exercising the right to vote.

In the same breath that journalists, historians, and activists speak of these landmark pieces of legislation, they describe the pivotal role television news played in gaining support for the measures. In particular, observers point to the televised images of police brutality in Birmingham and Selma. NBC commentator Edwin Newman said, “When the people around this country saw people being beaten by hoodlums while they were seeking the right to vote, there was a sense of righteous indignation. The effect of these scenes, brought into our homes via television, was one
of shock. We saw civil rights marchers and children being bitten by police dogs. The Civil Rights Act suddenly had the support it needed. Those images changed history.⁴⁴

From a historian's viewpoint, Gary Orfield wrote of the images from Birmingham, "Anyone watching TV could understand what it felt like to have a dog, capable of tearing a man apart, lunge at him during a peaceful march. One image of a woman held down by five policemen was worth a million pious words. Brutal use of powerful fire hoses to knock down demonstrators made the crisis clear in homes across the country." And John Lewis, who in 1965 led the voting rights march in Selma and today is a member of the U.S. Congress, said, "If it hadn't been for television on that day, we wouldn't have gotten the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Civil Rights Movement in this country owes a great deal to television."⁴⁵

Newspapers and magazines can communicate information about an event, but television news has the power to simulate the experience of actually being part of that event. For two centuries, a minority of American citizens committed to advancing the cause of black civil rights had struggled to convince the majority that their cause was just. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, television allowed that minority to succeed by bringing a simplicity and a moral clarity to the confrontation. The bigotry of the segregationists and the determination of the African Americans, so vividly expressed on screens across America, spoke louder than any printed page. The images that TV news conveyed to its viewers moved the conscience of a nation and helped propel the people of the United States to take concrete steps toward leveling the racial playing field in this country.

12

VIETNAM WAR

Bringing the Battlefield into the American Living Room

The coming of age of television news not only coincided with the Civil Rights Movement but also emerged at virtually the same time as the U.S. military buildup in Vietnam. The network evening news programs expanded from fifteen minutes to half an hour in 1963; the first ground troops were sent to Indochina in 1965. The Vietnam War, therefore, became the first televised war. It also eventually became the least successful foreign war in American history.

Many media and political experts have argued that by bringing grisly images of battle into the American living room, TV news played a key role in turning the public against the Vietnam War and, ultimately, in hastening the end of that conflict. Although those observers are divided on whether ending the war was the right or wrong decision, they agree that television showed the raw horror of war in ways that print journalism could not. Violence, carnage, and human suffering were depicted in withering reality; topics such as politics and strategy, which weren't easily translated onto film, were largely ignored. So television viewers were left to conclude that the Vietnam War was immoral and senseless.

Numerous scholars and journalists have made this point. In the book The Vietnam Legacy, Edward Shils wrote, "Television gave the American