ment, he mentioned only one son, Andrew, "who shall enjoy and possess the said estate" (ref. 446 year 1736 Register of Wills, County of Philadelphia). Anthony Sadowski died in 1736 in Pennsylvania and was buried in Douglassville.

Through a more thorough examination of Joseph Wytrwal's historical statements, many discrepancies can be found which cause one to question his worth as a Polish-American historian. On the other hand, as a sociologist, he offers much analytical thought and data to the student of social sciences.

*Pittsburgh*  
Joseph A. Borkowski


I read Blakely's volume just prior to testifying on the public broadcasting sections of the House version of what may yet be a major rewriting of the Communications Act of 1934. I am much in his debt. A veteran of the educational broadcasting wars, he has managed to clarify the history of noncommercial broadcasting from the 1920s through to the present without lapsing into insider stories or personal encomiums.

There are little bits and pieces of this history in virtually all our memories: one or another commission report, the beginnings of a public station (such as WQED in Pittsburgh), the first importation of a British serial, the Nixon attack. Here is the history set straight — in all its jerry-built crookedness. Public broadcasting is a Burkean delight. It is a mixed governmental and private enterprise, both local and national in financing and control and stirred by continuing battles over federalism in a manner which would have done credit to the Congress of the 1850s. Guided by an ethic of noncommercialism, it has managed to offer prestigious institutional advertising to some of the largest multinational firms. Proud of its special character and its cultural mission, it has enlightened our days with old radio serials, professional tennis, and disco dancing lessons.

The entire mixture is so wonderfully confused that I would — in certain moods — be willing to take it as a protean cultural form, resisting all attempts to explain or justify it on philosophical grounds. Blakely, unfortunately, is not willing to settle for a mystical historicism. There is a genius in the jerry-built form (the term is his)
and the variety of public broadcasting but, he insists, its first and guiding principle is — and must remain — the "public interest."

There is a way of talking sensibly about the public interest (see, for example, Brian Barry's Political Argument) but, I believe, the dominant message which is conveyed by contemporary theorizing about the idea is that it should be avoided as long as possible. If you can attach an "interest" to particular individuals, do so. Only attribute an interest to the public when it is impossible to distinguish beneficiaries from the great mass of mankind. This bias for specification encourages a series of sensible validating questions: Do the supposed beneficiaries really care? Are they willing to pay for what they get? Would they pay if they had the money or if there was a market in which consumers and providers could trade?

Blakely avoids both the philosophical complexities of the concept of a "public interest" and the caution that it should be used sparingly. As a result, both in his history and in his perspective on the future, he fails to recognize the way in which claims for certain forms of broadcasting as merit goods have been shaped by the lack of an effective market. If people could pay for radio and television programs in the way they do for print — if broadcasting programs were not public goods — then there would be only a narrow range of issues in which the public interest would have to be mobilized. Blakely quotes an insightful comment by Ronald Coase but for the most part he ignores the way in which the technology of the market has structured his own life and those of his colleagues. If there were no free-riders, this would be a very different history.

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This is an exceptional volume in Greenwood's series and reads like the definitive work on the subject. Richard Saunders uses well government sources and the special economic literature on railroads. All phases of the study are investigated carefully and painstakingly.