

INTRODUCTION TO

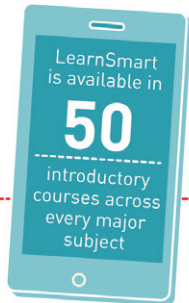
MASS COMMUNICATION 8e

MEDIA LITERACY
AND CULTURE
STANLEY J. BARAN

I want to do better in class!

Have you tried LearnSmart?

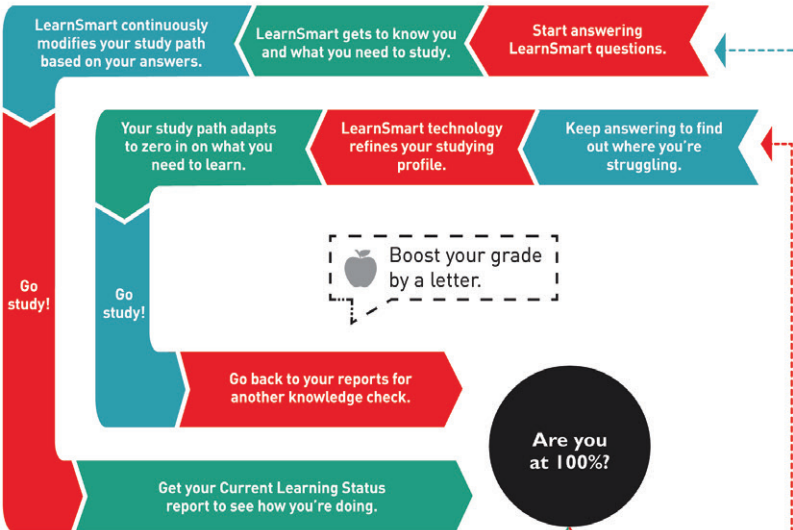
NO
YES



Let LearnSmart help! As your own digital tutor, LearnSmart will continually test your knowledge to pinpoint your strengths, weaknesses and confidence in the material to help you learn faster and smarter.

LearnSmart's technology gets to work, crunching the numbers and sorting your data.

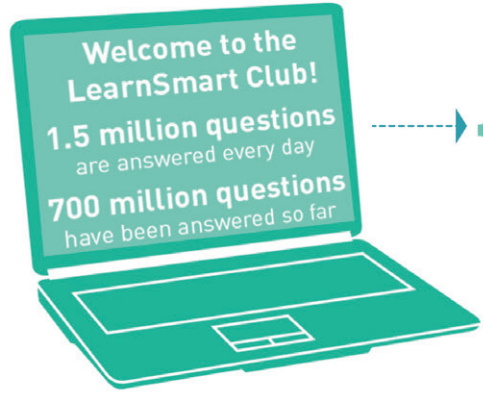
Get started!



Don't let studying ruin your weekend. LearnSmart tells you exactly how much time you need to spend on each concept, down to the minute.

I am performing in class!
For more information, visit mhlearnsmart.com

YES NO



Continue using LearnSmart for customized study recommendations that will help you master course concepts and retain knowledge over time.



Connect Mass Communication Media Bank: CNN Video Clips

France's Ban on Full-Face Veils

Photoshop and Image Manipulation

Changes to FCC Media Ownership Rules

Media Coverage of Sensational Stories: The Balloon Boy Hoax

Adult Literacy: America's Failing Grade

Book Battle: Paper or eBook?

Free Newspaper as a Tool for Development in Mozambique

Generating Revenue with a Digital Paywall: *The New York Times*

Magazine Advertising Malaise

Cigarette Ads Pulled from Magazines

Walmart's New Digital Video Rental Plan

Nigeria's Nollywood

Satellite Radio

FCC Rulings on Broadcast Ownership

Net Neutrality

Closing the Broadband Gap

Supreme Court Examines Ban on Violent Video Games

Video Games as Tools for Rehabilitation

SOPA Piracy

Social Media Monitoring

Too Big to Fly? Social Media and Public Relations

BP's Oil Spill Public Relations Disaster

Facebook and Your Ads

Advertising in Schools

Getting Young Latinos to Complete the Census

Violent Video Games: Ratings and Access

Wikileaks and International Diplomacy

Pakistan's List of Banned Text Message Words

VOA's Persian News Network: Broadcasting in Iran

Google's Landing Page in China

For more information about Connect Mass Communication, visit connect.mcgraw-hill.com

Eighth Edition

Introduction to
Mass Communication
MEDIA LITERACY AND CULTURE

Stanley J. Baran

Bryant University





INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION: MEDIA LITERACY AND CULTURE, EIGHTH EDITION

Published by McGraw-Hill, a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. Copyright © 2014 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Previous editions © 2013, 2012, and 2010. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., including, but not limited to, in any network or other electronic storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

Some ancillaries, including electronic and print components, may not be available to customers outside the United States.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 QDB/QDB 1 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

ISBN 978-0-07-352621-8
MHID 0-07-352621-5

Senior Vice President, Products & Markets: *Kurt L. Strand*
Vice President, General Manager, Products & Markets:
Michael Ryan
Vice President, Content Production & Technology Services:
Kimberly Meriwether David
Managing Director: *David Patterson*
Director: *Susan Gouijnstook*
Marketing Manager: *Clare Cashen*
Director of Development: *Rhona Robbin*
Development Editor: *Kirstan Price*
Lead Digital Content Editor: *Scott Harris*
Director, Content Production: *Terri Schiesl*

Content Project Manager: *Jennifer Gehl*
Senior Buyer: *Laura Fuller*
Designer: *Tara McDermott*
Cover/Interior Design: *Ellen Pettengell*
Cover Images: (*silhouette*) © Getty Images/AWL Images;
(*background*) © Getty Images/Alan Copson
Content Licensing Specialist: *Ann Marie Jannette*
Photo Research: *Emily Tietz, Editorial Image, LLC*
Compositor: *Aptara®, Inc.*
Typeface: *10/12 Minion*
Printer: *Quad/Graphics*

All credits appearing on page or at the end of the book are considered to be an extension of the copyright page.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Baran, Stanley J. author.

Introduction to Mass Communication : Media Literacy and Culture / Stanley Baran, Bryant University.—
Eighth Edition.

pages cm

Includes index.

Revision of the 7th ed. published in 2011.

ISBN 978-0-07-352621-8 — ISBN 0-07-352621-5 (hard copy)

1. Mass media. 2. Mass media and culture. 3. Media literacy. I. Title.

P90.B284 2013

302.23—dc23

2012041518

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw-Hill, and McGraw-Hill does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

In loving memory of my mother,
Margaret Baran;
she gave me life;
and in honor of my wife,
Susan Baran;
she gave that life meaning.

About the Author



Stanley Baran earned his Ph.D. in communication research at the University of Massachusetts after taking his M.A. in journalism at Pennsylvania State University. He taught for four years at Cleveland State University, eventually moving to the University of Texas. He led the Department of Radio-TV-Film's graduate program for six of his nine years in Austin and won numerous teaching awards there, including the AMOCO Teaching Excellence Award as the best instructor on that 40,000-student campus, the College of Communication's Teaching Excellence Award as that college's outstanding professor, and *Utmost Magazine's* Student Poll for best instructor. Dr. Baran moved to San Jose State University in 1987 and served nine years as chair of the Department of Television, Radio, Film, and Theatre. At SJSU he was named President's Scholar as the university's outstanding researcher. Now, he teaches at Bryant University, where he is the founding chair of that school's Communication Department. Among his other experiences shaping this book are service as a Fulbright Scholar and his many years of professional activity in audience research, writing for radio, and producing for television. Dr. Baran has published 10 books and scores of scholarly articles and sits or has sat on the editorial boards of six journals. His work has been translated into half a dozen languages. He is a skilled boater and a tenor saxophonist for the Wakefield, Rhode Island, Concert Band. He is married to Susan Baran and has two very cool children, Matt and Jordan, who grew up much faster than he wanted.

Brief Contents

Preface xv

PART ONE LAYING THE GROUNDWORK 2

- 1 Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy 2
- 2 Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication 28

PART TWO MEDIA, MEDIA INDUSTRIES, AND MEDIA AUDIENCES 46

- 3 Books 46
- 4 Newspapers 70
- 5 Magazines 97
- 6 Film 120
- 7 Radio, Recording, and Popular Music 150
- 8 Television, Cable, and Mobile Video 180
- 9 Video Games 208
- 10 The Internet and the World Wide Web 230

PART THREE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INDUSTRIES 263

- 11 Public Relations 263
- 12 Advertising 286

PART FOUR MASS-MEDIATED CULTURE IN THE INFORMATION AGE 316

- 13 Theories and Effects of Mass Communication 316
- 14 Media Freedom, Regulation, and Ethics 350
- 15 Global Media 382

Glossary G-1

References R-1

Credits C-1

Index I-1

Contents

Preface xv

PART ONE LAYING THE GROUNDWORK 2

1 Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy 2

What Is Mass Communication? 4

Communication Defined 4

Mass Communication Defined 6

What Is Culture? 9

Culture as Socially Constructed Shared Meaning 9

Functions and Effects of Culture 9

Mass Communication and Culture 14

Mass Media as Cultural Storytellers 15

Mass Communication as Cultural Forum 15

Scope and Nature of Mass Media 16

The Role of Technology 16

The Role of Money 17

CULTURAL FORUM Audience as Consumer or Audience as Product? 18

Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy 18

The Gutenberg Revolution 19

The Industrial Revolution 20

Media Literacy 21

Elements of Media Literacy 21

Media Literacy Skills 24

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Recognizing Cultural Values 26

Resources for Review and Discussion 26

Review Points 26

Key Terms 27

Questions for Review 27

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 27

2 Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication 28

Industries in Transition 31

The Good News for Media Industries 32

Changes 33

Concentration of Ownership and

Conglomeration 33

Globalization 35

CULTURAL FORUM Concentration, Conglomeration, and Serving Democracy 36

Audience Fragmentation 37

Hypercommercialism 38

Erosion of Distinctions among Media:

Convergence 39





DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Reconsidering the Process of Mass Communication 41

- Interpreter A—The Content Producer* 41
- The Message* 42
- Feedback and Interpreter B—The Audience* 43
- The Result* 44

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE The Fraction of Selection 44

Resources for Review and Discussion 44

Review Points 44

Key Terms 45

Questions for Review 45

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 45

PART TWO MEDIA, MEDIA INDUSTRIES, AND MEDIA AUDIENCES 46

3 Books 46

Book Timeline 48

A Short History of Books 49

Books Come to Colonial North America 49

Books and Their Audiences 52

The Cultural Value of the Book 52

Censorship 53

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Our Bodies, Ourselves 54

Aliteracy as Self-Censorship 55

Scope and Structure of the Book Industry 57

Categories of Books 57

Trends and Convergence in Book Publishing 58

Convergence 58

Smartphones, Tablets, and e-Readers 59

Conglomeration 61

Demand for Profits and Hypercommercialism 62

Growth of Small Presses 64

Restructuring of Book Retailing 65

CULTURAL FORUM Americans Don't Burn Books 66

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS The Lessons of Harry Potter 67

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Literacy: Limiting Access to Books in School 68

Resources for Review and Discussion 69

Review Points 69

Key Terms 69

Questions for Review 69

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 69

4 Newspapers 70

Newspaper Timeline 72

A Short History of Newspapers 73

The Earliest Newspapers 73

The Modern Newspaper Emerges 75

Newspapers and Their Audiences 78

Scope and Structure of the Newspaper Industry 78

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Nonprofit Newsrooms Fill the Reporting Void 79

Types of Newspapers 79

CULTURAL FORUM Smaller Is (Sometimes) Better 83



The Newspaper as an Advertising Medium 84

The News and Feature Services 85

Trends and Convergence in Newspaper Publishing 85

- Loss of Competition* 86
- Conglomeration: Hypercommercialism, Erosion of the Firewall, and Loss of Mission* 87
- Convergence with the Internet* 88
- Smartphones, Tablets, and e-Readers* 90
- Changes in Newspaper Readership* 91

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Interpreting Relative Placement of Stories 93

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Reading the Newspaper: Hard Copy vs. Online vs. Mobile 93

Resources for Review and Discussion 94

Review Points 94

Key Terms 94

Questions for Review 94

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 95

5 Magazines 97

Magazine Timeline 98

A Short History of Magazines 100

- The Early Magazine Industry* 100
- The Mass Circulation Era* 101
- The Era of Specialization* 102

Magazines and Their Audiences 104

Scope and Structure of the Magazine Industry 104

- Categories of Consumer Magazines* 105

Magazine Advertising 105

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE No Ads? No Problem: Consumer Reports 108

- Types of Circulation* 108
- Measuring Circulation* 109

Trends and Convergence in Magazine Publishing 110

- Online Magazines* 110
- Smartphones, Tablets, and e-Readers* 111
- Custom Magazines* 112
- Meeting Competition from Cable Television* 113

CULTURAL FORUM Interruptive Ads: Invasive or Necessary? 114

- Advertorials* 114
- Advertiser Influence over Magazine Content* 115

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS: Recognizing the Power of Graphics 117

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Identifying Digital Alteration 118

Resources for Review and Discussion 118

Review Points 118

Key Terms 119

Questions for Review 119

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 119

6 Film 120

Film Timeline 122

A Short History of the Movies 124

- The Early Entrepreneurs* 124
- The Coming of Narrative* 126

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE African American Response to D. W. Griffith: The Lincoln and Micheaux Film Companies 129

- The Big Studios* 129
- Change Comes to Hollywood* 130

Movies and Their Audiences 134

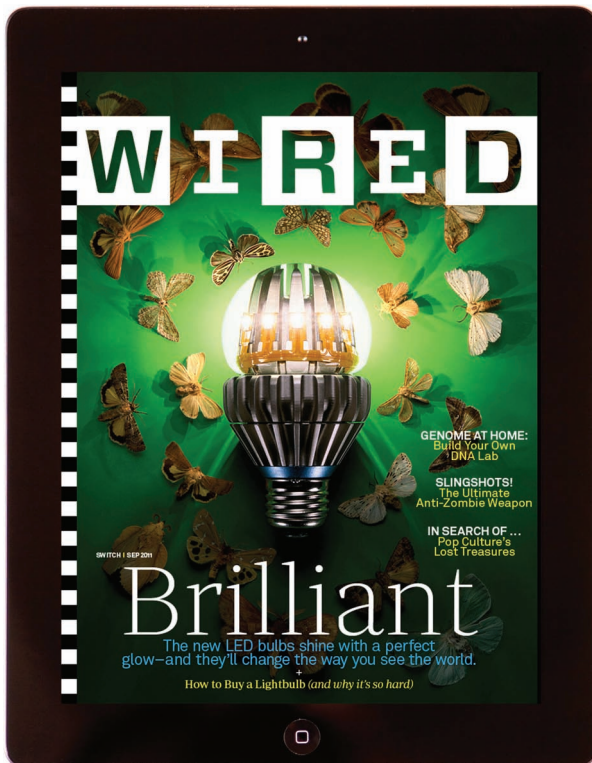
Scope and Nature of the Film Industry 136

CULTURAL FORUM Will We Continue to Go to the Movies? 137

- Three Component Systems* 138
- The Studios* 139

Trends and Convergence in Moviemaking 141

- Conglomeration and the Blockbuster Mentality* 141
- Convergence Reshapes the Movie Business* 143
- Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking Sites* 145



DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Recognizing Product Placements 145

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Product Placement in Movies 147

Resources for Review and Discussion 148

Review Points 148

Key Terms 148

Questions for Review 149

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 149

7 Radio, Recording, and Popular Music 150

Radio/Recording Timeline 152

A Short History of Radio and Sound Recording 154

Early Radio 154

Early Sound Recording 155

The Coming of Broadcasting 156

The Coming of Regulation 157

Advertising and the Networks 158

The Golden Age 158

Radio and Its Audiences 160

Scope and Nature of the Radio Industry 160

FM, AM, and Noncommercial Radio 160

Radio Is Local 161

Radio Is Fragmented 161

Radio Is Specialized 161

Radio Is Personal 162

Radio Is Mobile 162

The Business of Radio 163

Radio as an Advertising Medium 163

Deregulation and Ownership 163

Scope and Nature of the Recording Industry 164

The Major Recording Companies 164

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Rock 'n' Roll, Radio, and Race Relations 166

Trends and Convergence in Radio and Sound Recording 167

The Impact of Television 167

Satellite and Cable 168

Terrestrial Digital Radio 169

Web Radio and Podcasting 170

Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking Sites 170

Digital Technology 171

The Internet and the Future of the Recording Industry 172

Industry-Approved Downloading 173

P2P Downloading 173

CULTURAL FORUM The Future of the Music Business? 174

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Listening to Shock Jocks 175

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Listening to Shock Jocks with a Media-Literate Ear 177

Resources for Review and Discussion 177

Review Points 177

Key Terms 178

Questions for Review 178

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 179

8 Television, Cable, and Mobile Video 180

Television Timeline 182

A Short History of Television 183

Mechanical and Electronic Scanning 184

The 1950s 185

The Coming of Cable 190

Television and Its Audiences 191

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE The Creation of *Sesame Street* 192

Scope and Nature of the Broadcast Television Industry 193

The Networks and Program Content 193

How a Program Gets on the Air 193

Cable and Satellite Television 195

Programming 196

CULTURAL FORUM Bundle or À la Carte? 200

Trends and Convergence in Television and Cable 200

VCR 201

DVD 201

DVR 201

Video on the Internet 202



Interactive Television 203
Phone-over-Cable 204
Smartphones, Tablets, and TV Everywhere 204

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Recognizing Staged News 204

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE No Video for a Week 206

Resources for Review and Discussion 206

Review Points 206

Key Terms 207

Questions for Review 207

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 207

9 Video Games 208

Video-Game Timeline 210

A Short History of Computer and Video Games 211

Today's Games Emerge 212

Rapid-Fire Developments 214

Games and Their Players 215

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Using Games for Good 216

What Is a Video Game? 216

Who Is Playing? 217

Scope and Nature of the Video-Game Industry 218

Trends and Convergence in the Video-Game Industry 220

Convergence Everywhere 220

Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking

Sites 222

Hypercommercialism 222

CULTURAL FORUM Are Games Good or Bad? 224

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Using the ESRB Ratings 226

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Masculinity and Femininity in Game World 228

Resources for Review and Discussion 228

Review Points 228

Key Terms 229

Questions for Review 229

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 229

10 The Internet and the World Wide Web 230

Internet and World Wide Web Timeline 232

A Short History of the Internet 234

Development of the Computer 234

Military Applications 235

The Personal Computer 237

The Internet Today 238

The World Wide Web 238

Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking Sites 242

The Internet and Its Users 243

Changes in the Mass Communication Process 243

The Double Edge of Technology 244

McLuhan's Renaissance 244

Reconceptualizing Life in an Interconnected World 246

The Internet and Freedom of

Expression 246

Freedom of the Press for Whom? 247

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Shutting Down the Internet to Save the Internet 249

Controlling Internet Expression 250

Pornography on the World Wide Web 250

Copyright (Intellectual Property Ownership) 251

Privacy 252

Virtual Democracy 255

CULTURAL FORUM My 873 Friends and I Would Like to Be Alone, Please: Facebook & Privacy 257

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS The Five Internet Freedoms 258

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE A Cost/Benefit Analysis of Twitter 259

Resources for Review and Discussion 260

Review Points 260

Key Terms 260

Questions for Review 261

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 261



11 Public Relations 263

- Public Relations Timeline 264
- Defining Public Relations 265
- A Short History of Public Relations 266
- USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE** The MADD Campaign 267
 - Early Public Relations* 267
 - The Propaganda–Publicity Stage* 268
 - Early Two-Way Communication* 269
 - Advanced Two-Way Communication* 270
 - Shaping the Character of Public Relations* 271
- Public Relations and Its Audiences 272
- Scope and Structure of the Public Relations Industry 273
 - Public Relations Activities* 274
- CULTURAL FORUM** Big but Silent No More: Protecting a Company’s Good Name in the Era of Social Media 277
 - Public Relations’ Management Function* 278
 - Organization of a Public Relations Operation* 278
- Trends and Convergence in Public Relations 279
 - Globalization, Concentration, and Specialization* 279
 - Convergence* 280
 - Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking Sites* 281
 - Trust in Public Relations* 281
- DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS** Recognizing Video News Releases 282
- MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE** Finding VNRs 284
- Resources for Review and Discussion 284
- Review Points 284
- Key Terms 285
- Questions for Review 285
- Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 285

12 Advertising 286

- Advertising Timeline 288
- A Short History of Advertising 289
 - Early Advertising* 291
 - Industrialization and the Civil War* 291
 - Magazine Advertising* 292
 - The Advertising Agency and Professionalism* 292
 - Advertising and Radio* 293
 - World War II* 293

- USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE** Effecting Positive Social Change 294
 - Advertising and Television* 295
- Advertising and Its Audiences 296
 - Criticisms and Defenses of Advertising* 296
 - Specific Complaints* 297
- CULTURAL FORUM** Kids’ Advertising: Is Self-Regulation Enough? 299
- Scope and Nature of the Advertising Industry 301
 - The Advertising Agency* 301
 - Types of Advertising* 302
 - The Regulation of Advertising* 303
 - Measuring the Effectiveness of Advertising* 305
- Trends and Convergence in Advertising 306
 - New and Converging Technologies* 306
 - Smartphones, Tablets, and Social Networking Sites* 307
 - Increased Audience Segmentation* 310
 - Psychographics* 310
 - Globalization* 311
- DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS** Interpreting Intentional Imprecision 311
- MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE** Finding Those Little White Lies 313
- Resources for Review and Discussion 314
- Review Points 314
- Key Terms 314
- Questions for Review 315
- Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 315



13 Theories and Effects of Mass Communication 316

Mass Communication Theories and Effects Timeline 318

The Effects Debate 318

- Micro- Versus Macro-Level Effects* 320
- Administrative versus Critical Research* 321
- Transmissional versus Ritual Perspective* 322

Defining Mass Communication Theory 322

A Short History of Mass Communication Theory 323

- The Era of Mass Society Theory* 324
- The Emergence of the Limited Effects Perspective* 325
- Cultural Theory—A Return to the Idea of Powerful Effects* 332
- The Meaning-Making Perspective* 337

The Effects of Mass Communication—Four Questions 339

- Does Media Violence Lead to Aggression?* 339

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Television and the Designated Driver 342

- Do Portrayals of Drugs and Alcohol Increase Consumption?* 343
- What Is Media's Contribution to Gender and Racial/Ethnic Stereotyping?* 344

CULTURAL FORUM A Friend by Any Other Name: Research on Facebook and Relationships 346

- Do Media Have Prosocial Effects?* 347

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Applying Mass Communication Theory 347

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Be a News Production Researcher 348

Resources for Review and Discussion 348

Review Points 348

Key Terms 349

Questions for Review 349

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 349

14 Media Freedom, Regulation, and Ethics 350

Media Freedom, Regulation, and Ethics Timeline 352

A Short History of the First Amendment 354

- Early Sentiment for a Free Press* 354
- Defining and Refining the First Amendment* 355

CULTURAL FORUM First Amendment Protection for Violence but Not for Sex 356

- Other Issues of Freedom and Responsibility* 361

Social Responsibility Theory 366

Media Industry Ethics 366

- Defining Ethics* 367
- Three Levels of Ethics* 367
- Balancing Conflicting Interests* 367

USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Journalists as Truth Vigilantes? 372

- Codes of Ethics and Self-Regulation* 374

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Media Reform 376

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Talk to the FCC 378

Resources for Review and Discussion 378

Review Points 378

Key Terms 379

Questions for Review 379

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 379



15 Global Media 382

Global Media Timeline 384

A Short History of Global Media 386
The Beginning of International Mass Media 386

CULTURAL FORUM Al Jazeera English: Coming to Your Town? 388

Global Media Today 390
Comparative Analyses 391



USING MEDIA TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE Social Media and the Middle East Democracy Movement 396
Programming 397

The Debate over Cultural Imperialism 399
The MacBride Report and the NWIO 399
The Case for the Global Village 400
The Case against the Global Village 400

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS Making the Invisible Visible: Comparative Analysis 401

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGE Do Your Own Comparative Analysis 403

Resources for Review and Discussion 403

Review Points 403

Key Terms 404

Questions for Review 404

Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion 404

Glossary G-1

References R-1

Credits C-1

Index I-1

From the Author



Dear Friends,

The media, like sports and politics, are what we talk about, argue over, dissect and analyze. Those of us who teach media know that these conversations are essential to the functioning of a democratic society. We also know that what moves these conversations from simple chatting and griping to effective public discourse is media education. And regardless of what we might call the course—Introduction to Mass Communication, Introduction to Mass Media, Media and Society, or Media and Culture—media education has been part of the university for more than five decades. From the outset, the course has fulfilled these goals:

- ▶ Increasing students' knowledge and understanding of the mass communication process and the mass media industries
- ▶ Increasing students' awareness of how they interact with those industries and their content to create meaning
- ▶ Helping students become more skilled and knowledgeable consumers of media content

We now call the fulfillment of these goals *media literacy*.

A Cultural Perspective

This text's cultural orientation toward mass communication places a great deal of responsibility on media consumers. In the past, people were considered either victims of media influence or impervious to it. The cultural orientation asserts that audience members are as much a part of the mass communication process as are the media technologies and industries. As important agents in the creation and maintenance of their own culture, audience members have an obligation not only to participate in the process of mass communication but also to participate critically as better consumers of mass media.

Enriching Students' Literacy

The focus of this book, from the start, has been on media literacy and culture, and those emphases have shaped its content and its various learning aids and pedagogical features. But with this, the eighth edition, McGraw-Hill and I have added the digital teaching and learning environment Connect® to our arsenal of educational tools. Connect makes managing assignments easier for instructors like us and learning and studying more interactive, motivating, and efficient for our students. Assignable video and critical thinking activities in Connect support the themes and goals of *Introduction to Mass Communication*. LearnSmart™, a proven adaptive learning program, is also available in Connect; it guides students with personalized learning plans and frees up valuable class time for discussion and activities.

My Thanks to You

Thank you for teaching mass communication. There are few college courses that will mean more to our students' lives now and after they graduate than this one. Thank you, too, for considering *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture* for use in your course. I have poured the last 15 years of my career into this text and what it has to say about mass communication and the world that our interaction with the media produces. Your interest in this text confirms my passion.

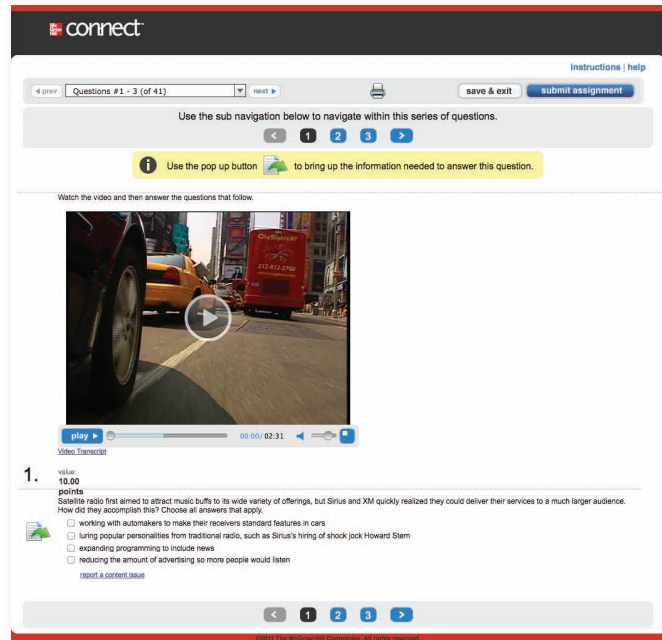
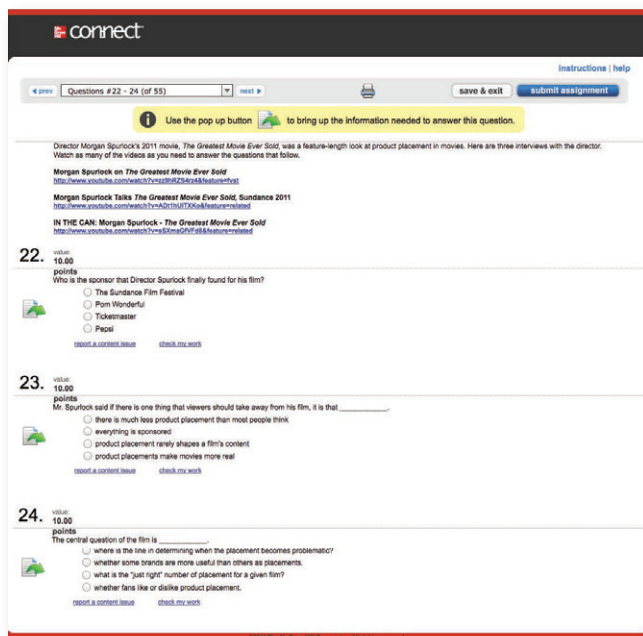
—Stanley J. Baran

Introducing Connect Mass Communication

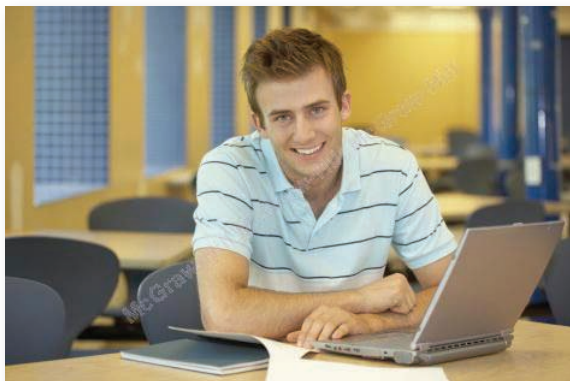
Connect to Success

Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture is available to instructors and students in print and eBook formats, as well as within an integrated online assignment and assessment platform. These online tools, collectively called Connect Mass Communication, make managing assignments easier for instructors—and make learning and studying more motivating and efficient for students.

Assignable and Accessible Activities Instructors can deliver assignments and tests easily online, and students can practice skills related to key course challenges at their own pace and on their own schedule. Available activities include chapter pre- and post-tests, CNN and Internet video activities, and Media Literacy Worksheets. Students can review fundamental concepts, practice applying media literacy skills, and complete other activities to help them achieve success in the course.



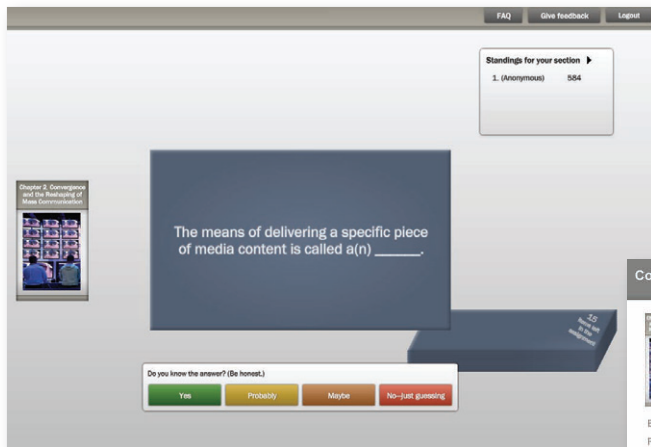
Real-time Reports Printable, exportable reports show how well each student (or section) is performing on each course segment. Instructors can use this feature to identify students who are at risk of falling behind as well as to spot problem areas *before* they crop up on an exam.



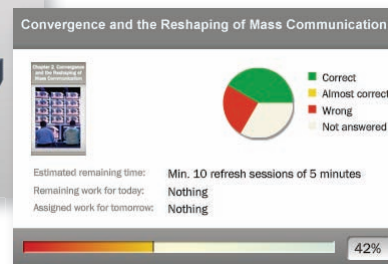
Integrated eBook A fully loaded eBook allows students to review *Introduction to Mass Communication* anytime and anywhere. They can highlight, take notes, and quickly search for key terms and phrases.

Connect to Personalized Learning

LearnSmart, McGraw-Hill's adaptive learning system, assesses students' knowledge of course content and maps out dynamic, personalized study plans that ground students in the fundamental concepts of mass communication. Available within Connect, LearnSmart uses a series of adaptive questions to pinpoint the concepts students understand—and those they don't. The result is a proven online tool that helps students learn faster, study more efficiently, and improve their performance. LearnSmart allows instructors to focus valuable class time on higher-level concepts, activities, and discussion.



Personalized Learning Path Diagnostic questions adapt to individual students, identifying knowledge gaps and providing a personalized, round-the-clock study program to help them succeed in the course. LearnSmart also identifies the concepts students are most likely to forget, and encourages periodic review to ensure that concepts are truly retained.



Valuable Reports and Tools A personalized learning calendar shows each student her or his progress through the course. Interactive reports help students take responsibility for their own learning.

Mobile Access LearnSmart gives students the freedom to study whenever and wherever they choose. It can be accessed from any computer and via mobile devices using an app available from the iTunes store.



Preface

Key Features and Learning Aids

Students must bring media literacy—the ability to critically comprehend and actively use mass media—to the mass communication process. The eighth edition of *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture* includes a variety of boxed features and in-text learning aids to support student learning and enhance media literacy skills.

Boxed Features



Using Media to Make a Difference boxes highlight interesting examples of how media practitioners and audiences use the mass communication process to further important social, political, or cultural causes.



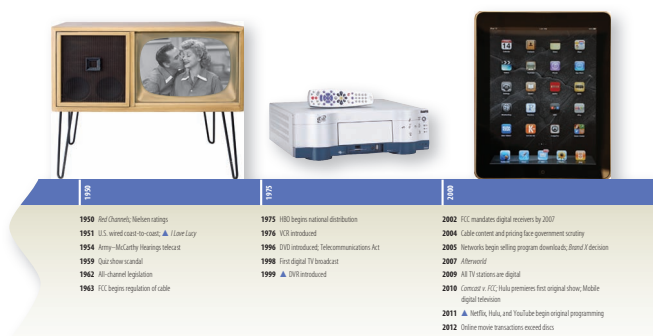
Cultural Forum boxes highlight media-related cultural issues that are currently debated in the mass media to help students develop their critical thinking skills.



Media Literacy Challenge boxes, new to the eighth edition, build on ideas from each chapter's "Developing Media Literacy Skills" section and ask students to think critically about media content they encounter in their daily lives.

In-Text Learning Aids

- ▶ Chapter learning objectives and chapter-ending lists of key terms focus student learning.
- ▶ Historical timelines and overviews provide students with a critical foundation for understanding current issues in the media landscape.
- ▶ Review Points allow students to make sure they have focused on each chapter's most important material; new for the eighth edition, the review points are tied directly to learning objectives.
- ▶ Questions for Review further highlight key concepts, and Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion encourage students to investigate their own cultural assumptions and media use and to engage one another in debate on critical issues.
- ▶ A comprehensive list of references is provided at the end of the book.



Changes to the Eighth Edition: Highlights

The eighth edition maintains its commitment to enhancing students' critical thinking and media literacy skills. Chapters 3 through 15 include new sections dedicated to smartphones, tablets, and social networking sites. Statistics and data have been updated throughout. Additional key changes include the following:

Chapter 1 Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy: Sharpened focus on the mass communication process and media literacy.

Chapter 2 Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication: New discussion of the explosion of smartphones and their convergence with virtually all other electronic and print media.

Chapter 3 Books: New discussion of print-on-demand, the revival of printed books, and the spread and influence of e-readers and tablets.

Chapter 4 Newspapers: New and updated sections on how newspapers are monetizing their news and going mobile, the health of the local press, and new forms of group-funded journalism.

Chapter 5 Magazines: Updated coverage of the digital-only magazine reader, action codes (QR) and near-field communication chips (NFC), and greater reader interactivity.

Chapter 6 Film: Enhanced examination of the movement to debut movies on Facebook, Netflix, and Hulu, as well as discussion of Hollywood's resurgence.

Chapter 7 Radio, Recording, and Popular Music: Updated looks at the seeming paradox of more music (but fewer big label sales) than ever; industry concentration and its impact on artists; cloud music services and the rise of streaming services like Pandora and Spotify; and the Rush Limbaugh vs. Sandra Fluke controversy.

Chapter 8 Television, Cable, and Mobile Video: New and updated coverage of the TV Everywhere movement, network/affiliate relationships, cable cord cutting, and the growth of Facebook video.

Chapter 9 Video Games: Updated discussion of the demise of the console and the rise of smartphone and social network gaming, PlayStation Vita as counter to this trend, creation of the likes of Humble Indie Bundle as counter to "industrialized" game creation, and a look at the debate over whether games are good or bad.

Chapter 10 The Internet and the World Wide Web: New and updated material on social networking and political action (specifically Occupy Wall Street and anti-SOPA), growing privacy challenges and the Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights, the ICANN expansion of top-level domain names, the Facebook purchase of Instagram, the introduction and growth of tablets, and the rise of mobile spam.

Chapter 11 Public Relations: Examination of consumer demand for greater corporate responsibility, the rise of cause marketing (aided by smartphones and social networking, such as apps like Gripe), and new FCC rules on video news releases.

Chapter 12 Advertising: New discussion of new return on investment (ROI) and accountability measures, the explosion of advertising in "developing" markets (the BRICS and MIST, specifically China, India, and Brazil), the growth of out-of-home advertising, and neuromarketing research.

Chapter 13 Theories and Effects of Mass Communication: Updated coverage of theory and research on TV and video game violence and on social media use and friendships.

Chapter 14 Media Freedom, Regulation, and Ethics: New sections on *Brown v. EMA*, in which the Supreme Court extends First Amendment protection to violent video games; debate over whether WikiLeaks' source Bradley Manning is a traitor or a free speech hero; and examination of the question of the role of journalists—should they be truth vigilantes?

Chapter 15 Global Media: Updated discussion of the growing popularity of Al Jazeera in the United States and the American government's challenge to Chinese Internet censorship.

Teaching and Learning with *Introduction to Mass Communication*



The Online Learning Center for *Introduction to Mass Communication* includes comprehensive teaching resources:

- ▶ Instructor's Manual
- ▶ Test Bank
- ▶ PowerPoint presentations
- ▶ Media Literacy Worksheets

Refer to the back inside cover of the text for a list of the CNN video clips that can be found in the Connect Media Bank.



Design your own ideal course materials with McGraw-Hill's Create™. Rearrange or omit chapters, combine material from other sources, upload your syllabus or any other content you have written to make the perfect resource for your students. Search thousands of leading McGraw-Hill textbooks to find the best content for your students; then arrange it to fit your teaching style. You can even personalize your book's appearance by selecting the cover and adding your name, school, and course information. When you order a Create book, you receive a complimentary review copy. Get a printed copy in 3 to 5 business days or an electronic copy (e-Comp) via e-mail in about an hour. Register today at <http://www.mcgrawhillcreate.com>, and craft your course resources to match the way you teach.



CourseSmart offers thousands of the most commonly adopted textbooks across hundreds of courses from a wide variety of higher education publishers. It is the only place for faculty to review and compare the full text of a book online, providing immediate access without the environmental impact of requesting a printed exam copy. At CourseSmart, students can save up to 50 percent off the cost of a printed book, reduce their impact on the environment, and gain access to powerful web tools for learning, including full text search, notes and highlighting, and e-mail tools for sharing notes among classmates. Visit coursesmart.com to learn more or to purchase registration codes for this exciting product.



Tegrity Campus

<http://tegritycampus.mhhe.com>

Tegrity is a service that makes class time available around the clock. It automatically captures every lecture in a searchable format for students to review when they study and complete assignments. With a simple one-click start-and-stop process, you capture all computer screens and corresponding audio. Students replay any part of any class with easy-to-use browser-based viewing on a PC or Mac. With Tegrity Campus, students quickly recall key moments by using Tegrity Campus's unique search feature, which lets them efficiently find what they need, when they need it, across an entire semester of class recordings. Help turn all your students' study time into learning moments immediately supported by your lecture. To learn more about Tegrity, watch a two-minute Flash demo at <http://tegritycampus.mhhe.com>.



Campus

Discover What's Possible



McGraw-Hill Campus™

McGraw-Hill Campus is a new one-stop teaching and learning experience available to users of any learning management system. This institutional service allows faculty and students to enjoy single sign-on (SSO) access to all McGraw-Hill Higher Education materials, including the award-winning McGraw-Hill Connect® platform, from directly within the institution's website. McGraw-Hill Campus provides faculty with instant access to all McGraw-Hill Higher Education teaching materials (e.g., eTextbooks, test banks, PowerPoint slides, animations, and learning objects), allowing them to browse, search, and use any instructor ancillary content in our vast library at no additional cost to instructor or students. Students enjoy SSO access to a variety of free (e.g., quizzes, flash cards, narrated presentations) and subscription-based products (e.g., McGraw-Hill Connect). With this program enabled, faculty and students will never need to create another account to access McGraw-Hill products and services.

Acknowledgements

A project of this magnitude requires the assistance of many people. For this latest edition I benefitted from several e-mails from readers—instructors and students—making suggestions and offering advice. This book is better for those exchanges.

Reviewers are an indispensable part of the creation of a good textbook. In preparing for the eighth edition, I was again impressed with the thoughtful comments made by my colleagues in the field. Although I didn't know them by name, I found myself in long-distance, anonymous debate with several superb thinkers, especially about some of the text's most important concepts. Their collective keen eye and questioning attitude sharpened each chapter to the benefit of both writer and reader. (Any errors or misstatements that remain in the book are of course my sole responsibility.) Now that I know who they are, I would like to thank the reviewers by name.

Lee Banville, *University of Montana*
Rick Bebout, *West Virginia University*
Bob Britten, *West Virginia University*
James Burton, *Salisbury University*
Nathan Claes, *State University of New York–Buffalo*
Helen Fallon, *Point Park University*
Ray Fanning, *University of Montana*
Richard Ganahl, *Bloomsburg University*
Paul Hillier, *University of Tampa*
Charles Marsh, *University of Kansas–Lawrence*
Susan McGraw, *Henry Ford Community College*
Bob Mendenhall, *Southwestern Adventist University*

Jensen Moore, *West Virginia University*
Timothy Pasch, *University of North Dakota*
Kenneth Ross, *Eastern Connecticut State University*
Siobhan Smith, *University of Louisville*
Jeff South, *Virginia Commonwealth University*
Richard Taflinger, *Washington State University–Pullman*
Clifford Vaughn, *Belmont University*
Kimberly Vaupel, *Henry Ford Community College*
Joe Wisinski, *University of Tampa*

Special thanks to Bob Mendenhall and Cliff Vaughn for their help in reviewing Connect activities. Thanks also to the instructors who supervised class testing of the LearnSmart modules: Cathy Bullock (Utah State University), Yolanda Cal (Loyola University, New Orleans), Daekyung Kim (Idaho State University), and Bruce Mims (Southeast Missouri State University).

I would also like to thank the reviewers of the first seven editions. **Seventh Edition Reviewers:** Kwasi Boateng, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Mike Igoe, Buffalo State College; Joe Marre, Buffalo State College; Sonya Miller, University of North Carolina–Asheville; Yuri Obata, Indiana University–South Bend; Danny Shipka, Louisiana State University. **Sixth Edition Reviewers:** Chris Cakebread, Boston University; Cynthia Chris, College of Staten Island; Laurie Hayes Fluker, Texas State University; Jacob Podber, Southern Illinois University–Carbondale; Biswarup Sen, University of Oregon; Lisa A. Stephens, University of Buffalo; Denise Walters, Front Range Community College. **Fifth Edition Reviewers:** Jennifer Aubrey, University of Missouri; Michael Boyle, Wichita State University; Tim Coombs, Eastern Illinois University; Denise Danford, Delaware County Community College; Tim Edwards, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Junhao Hong, State University of New York at Buffalo; Mark Kelly, University of Maine; Alyse Lancaster, University of Miami; Carol S. Lomick, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Susan Dawson-O'Brien, Rose State College; Alicia

C. Shepard, University of Texas at Austin; Tamala Sheree Martin, Oklahoma State University; Stephen D. Perry, Illinois State University; Selene Phillips, University of Louisville. **Fourth Edition Reviewers:** Kristen Barton, Florida State University; Kenton Bird, University of Idaho; Katia G. Campbell, University of Colorado; Paul A. Creasman, Azusa Pacific University; Annette Johnson, Georgia State University; James Kelleher, New York University; Polly McLean, University of Colorado; Anthony A. Olorunnisola, Pennsylvania State University; Stephen D. Perry, Illinois State University; Michael Porter, University of Missouri; Stephen J. Resch, Indiana Wesleyan University; Christopher F. White, Sam Houston State University. **Third Edition Reviewers:** Jenny L. Nelson, Ohio University; Terri Toles Patkin, Eastern Connecticut State University; Alyse Lancaster, University of Miami; Deborah A. Godwin-Starks, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne; Kevin R. Slaughter, George Mason University; Enid Sefcovic, Florida Atlantic University; David Whitt, Nebraska Wesleyan University; Roger Desmond, University of Hartford; Carol S. Lomicky, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Jules d’Hemecourt, Louisiana State University; Junhao Hong, State University of New York at Buffalo; Gary J. Wingenbach, Texas A&M University. **Second Edition Reviewers:** Rob Bellamy, Duquesne University; Beth Grobman Burruss, DeAnza College; Stephen R. Curtis, Jr., East Connecticut State University; Lyombe Eko, University of Maine; Junhao Hong, State University of New York at Buffalo; Carol Liebler, Syracuse University; Robert Main, California State University, Chico; Stephen Perry, Illinois State University; Eric Pierson, University of San Diego; Ramona Rush, University of Kentucky; Tony Silvia, University of Rhode Island; and Richard Welch, Kennesaw State University. **First Edition Reviewers:** David Allen, Illinois State University; Sandra Braman, University of Alabama; Tom Grimes, Kansas State University; Kirk Hallahan, Colorado State University; Katharine Heintz-Knowles, University of Washington; Paul Husselbee, Ohio University; Seong Lee, Appalachian State University; Rebecca Ann Lind, University of Illinois at Chicago; Maclyn McClary, Humboldt State University; Guy Meiss, Central Michigan University; Debra Merskin, University of Oregon; Scott R. Olsen, Central Connecticut State University; Ted Pease, Utah State University; Linda Perry, *Florida Today* newspaper; Elizabeth Perse, University of Delaware; Tina Pieraccini, State University of New York–College at Oswego; Michael Porter, University of Missouri; Peter Pringle, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; Neal Robison, Washington State University; Linda Steiner, Rutgers University; and Don Tomlinson, Texas A&M University.

The eighth edition was written with the usual great support (and patience) of my McGraw-Hill team. The Internet may make producing a book more efficient, but it does have a big drawback—despite spending hundreds of hours “working together,” I have yet to meet my teammates face-to-face. This, certainly, is my loss. Still, I have had few better colleagues than Julia Akpan, Susan Gouijnstook, Kirstan Price, Jennifer Gehl, Ann Jannette, and Emily Tietz. An author cannot surround himself with better people than those McGraw-Hill has given me.

Finally, my most important inspiration throughout the writing of this book has been my family. My wife, Susan, is educated in media literacy and a strong disciple of spreading its lessons far and wide—which she does with zest. Her knowledge and assistance in my writing is invaluable; her love in my life is sustaining; her fire—for improved media literacy and for our marriage—is empowering. My children—Jordan and Matthew—simply by their existence require that I consider and reconsider what kind of world we will leave for them. I’ve written this text in the hope that it helps make the future for them and their friends better than it might otherwise have been.

S.J.B.

Eighth Edition

Introduction to
Mass Communication

MEDIA LITERACY AND CULTURE





Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy

Learning Objectives

Mass communication, mass media, and the culture that shapes us (and that we shape) are inseparable. After studying this chapter, you should be able to

- ▶ Define *communication*, *mass communication*, *mass media*, and *culture*.
- ▶ Describe the relationships among communication, mass communication, culture, and those who live in the culture.
- ▶ Evaluate the impact of technology and economics on those relationships.
- ▶ List the components of media literacy.
- ▶ Identify key skills required for developing media literacy.

Our experiences of the world are increasingly mass mediated.

YOUR SMARTPHONE'S RADIO ALARM SINGS YOU AWAKE. It's Adele, the last few bars of "Rolling in the Deep." The laughing deejay shouts at you that it's 7:41 and you'd better get going. But before you do, he adds, listen to a few words from your friends at Best Buy electronics, home of fast, friendly, courteous service—"Buyer be happy!"

In the living room, you find your roommate has left the television on. You stop for a moment and listen: The economy is showing stronger signs of rebounding, brightening the employment picture for new college grads, several states are considering Clean Election laws to take money out of politics, democratic chaos continues to sweep across the Middle East, and you deserve a break today at McDonald's. As you head toward the bathroom, your bare feet slip on some magazines littering the floor—*Wired*, *Rolling Stone*, *People*. You need to talk to your roommate about picking up!

After showering, you quickly pull on your Levi's, lace up your Nike cross-trainers, and throw on an Under Armour jacket. No time for breakfast; you grab a Nature Valley granola bar and the newspaper and head for the bus stop. As the bus rolls up, you can't help but notice the giant ad on its side: *Transformers: Turning Toys Into Gold*. Rejecting that as a movie choice for the weekend, you sit down next to a teenager listening to music on his headphones and playing a video game. You bury yourself in the paper, scanning the lead stories and the local news and then checking out *Doonesbury* and *Dilbert*.

Hopping off the bus at the campus stop, you run into Chris from your computer lab. You walk to class together, talking about last night's *Family Guy* episode. It's not yet 9:00, and already you're involved in mass communication.

In this chapter we define *communication*, *interpersonal communication*, *mass communication*, *media*, and *culture* and explore the relationships among them and how they define us and our world. We investigate how communication works, how it changes when technology is introduced into the process, and how differing views of communication and mass communication can lead to different interpretations of their power. We also discuss the opportunities mass communication and culture offer us and the responsibilities that come with those opportunities. Always crucial, these issues are of particular importance now, when we find ourselves in a period of remarkable development in new communication technologies. This discussion inevitably leads to an examination of media literacy, its importance and practice.

What Is Mass Communication?

"Does a fish know it's wet?" influential cultural and media critic Marshall McLuhan would often ask. The answer, he would say, is "No." The fish's existence is so dominated by water that only when water is absent is the fish aware of its condition.

So it is with people and mass media. The media so fully saturate our everyday lives that we are often unconscious of their presence, not to mention their influence. Media inform us, entertain us, delight us, annoy us. They move our emotions, challenge our intellects, insult our intelligence. Media often reduce us to mere commodities for sale to the highest bidder. Media help define us; they shape our realities.

A fundamental theme of this book is that media do none of this alone. They do it *with* us as well as *to* us through mass communication, and they do it as a central—many critics and scholars say *the* central—cultural force in our society.

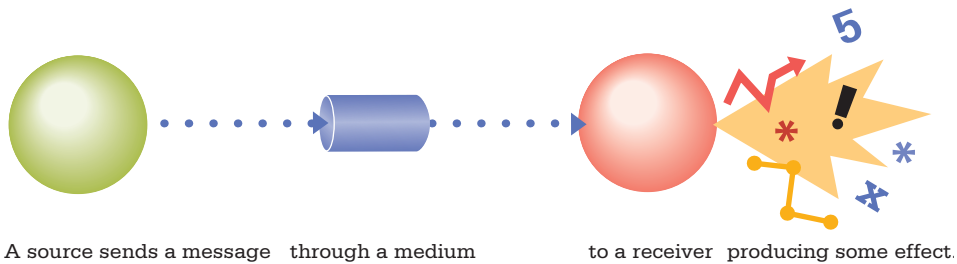
Communication Defined

In its simplest form, **communication** is the transmission of a message from a source to a receiver. For over 60 years now, this view of communication has been identified

with the writing of political scientist Harold Lasswell (1948). He said that a convenient way to describe communication is to answer these questions:

- *Who?*
- Says *what?*
- Through *which* channel?
- To *whom?*
- With *what effect?*

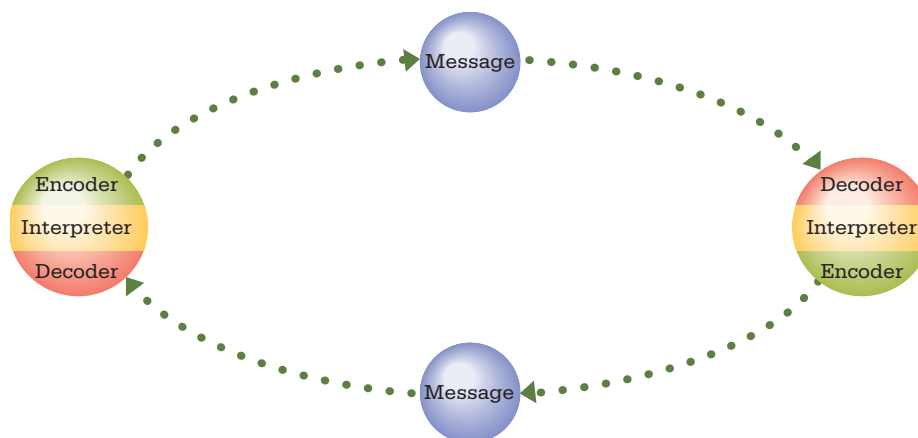
Expressed in terms of the basic elements of the communication process, communication occurs when



Straightforward enough, but what if the source is a professor who insists on speaking in a technical language far beyond the receiving students' level of skill? Obviously, communication does not occur. Unlike mere message-sending, communication requires the response of others. Therefore, there must be a *sharing* (or correspondence) of meaning for communication to take place.

A second problem with this simple model is that it suggests that the receiver passively accepts the source's message. However, if our imaginary students do not comprehend the professor's words, they respond with "Huh?" or look confused or yawn. This response, or **feedback**, is also a message. The receivers (the students) now become a source, sending their own message to the source (the offending professor), who is now a receiver. Hence, communication is a *reciprocal* and *ongoing process* with all involved parties more or less engaged in creating shared meaning. Communication, then, is better defined as *the process of creating shared meaning*.

Communication researcher Wilbur Schramm, using ideas originally developed by psychologist Charles E. Osgood, developed a graphic way to represent the reciprocal nature of communication (Figure 1.1). This depiction of **interpersonal communication**—



▲ **Figure 1.1** Osgood and Schramm's Model of Communication.

Source: From *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* by Wilbur Lang Schramm, 1954. Reprinted by permission of Mary Schramm Coberly.

communication between two or a few people—shows that there is no clearly identifiable source or receiver. Rather, because communication is an ongoing and reciprocal process, all the participants, or “interpreters,” are working to create meaning by **encoding** and **decoding** messages. A message is first *encoded*, that is, transformed into an understandable sign and symbol system. Speaking is encoding, as are writing, printing, and filming a television program. Once received, the message is *decoded*; that is, the signs and symbols are interpreted. Decoding occurs through listening, reading, or watching that television show.

The Osgood-Schramm model demonstrates the ongoing and reciprocal nature of the communication process. There is, therefore, no source, no receiver, and no feedback. The reason is that, as communication is happening, both interpreters are simultaneously source and receiver. There is no feedback because all messages are presumed to be in reciprocation of other messages. Even when your friend starts a conversation with you, for example, it can be argued that it was your look of interest and willingness that communicated to her that she should speak. In this example, it is improper to label either you or your friend as the source—Who really initiated this chat?—and, therefore, it is impossible to identify who is providing feedback to whom.

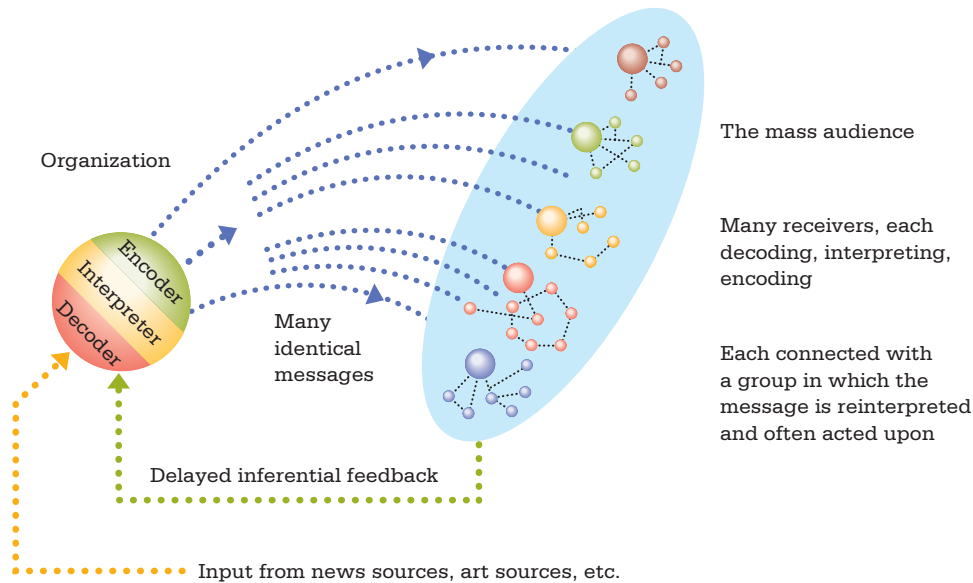
Not every model can show all aspects of a process as complex as communication. Missing from this representation is **noise**—anything that interferes with successful communication. Noise is more than screeching or loud music when you are trying to work online. Biases that lead to incorrect decoding, for example, are noise, as is a page torn out of a magazine story you want to read.

Encoded messages are carried by a **medium**, that is, the means of sending information. Sound waves are the medium that carries our voice to friends across the table; the telephone is the medium that carries our voice to friends across town. When the medium is a technology that carries messages to a large number of people—as newspapers carry the printed word and radio conveys the sound of music and news—we call it a **mass medium** (the plural of medium is **media**). The mass media we use regularly include radio, television, books, magazines, newspapers, movies, sound recordings, cell phones, and computer networks. Each medium is the basis of a giant industry, but other related and supporting industries also serve them and us—advertising and public relations, for example. In our culture we use the words *media* and *mass media* interchangeably to refer to the communication industries themselves. We say, “The media entertain” or “The mass media are too conservative (or too liberal).”

Mass Communication Defined

We speak, too, of mass communication. **Mass communication** is the process of creating shared meaning between the mass media and their audiences. Schramm recast his and Osgood’s general model of communication to help us visualize the particular aspects of the mass communication process (Figure 1.2). This model and the original Osgood-Schramm model have much in common—interpreters, encoding, decoding, and messages—but it is their differences that are most significant for our understanding of how mass communication differs from other forms of communication. For example, whereas the original model includes “message,” the mass communication model offers “many identical messages.” In addition, the mass communication model specifies “feedback,” whereas the interpersonal communication model does not. When two or a few people communicate face-to-face, the participants can immediately and clearly recognize the feedback residing in the reciprocal messages (our boring professor can see and hear the students’ disenchantment as they listen to the lecture). Things are not nearly as simple in mass communication.

In Schramm’s mass communication model, feedback is represented by a dotted line labeled delayed **inferential feedback**. This feedback is indirect rather than direct.



▲ **Figure 1.2** Schramm's Model of Mass Communication.

Source: From *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* by Wilbur Lang Schramm, 1954. Reprinted by permission of Mary Schramm Coberly.

Television executives, for example, must wait a day, at the very minimum, and sometimes a week or a month, to discover the ratings for new programs. Even then, the ratings measure only how many sets are tuned in, not whether people liked or disliked the programs. As a result, these executives can only infer what they must do to improve programming; hence the term *inferential feedback*. Mass communicators are also subject to additional feedback, usually in the form of criticism in other media, such as a television critic writing a column in a newspaper.

The differences between the individual elements of interpersonal and mass communication change the very nature of the communication process. How those alterations influence the message itself and how the likelihood of successfully sharing meaning varies are shown in Figure 1.3. For example, the immediacy and directness of feedback in interpersonal communication free communicators to gamble, to experiment with different approaches. Their knowledge of one another enables them to tailor their messages as narrowly as they wish. As a result, interpersonal communication is often personally relevant and possibly even adventurous and challenging. In contrast, the distance between participants in the mass communication process, imposed by the technology, creates a sort of “communication conservatism.” Feedback comes too late to enable corrections or alterations in communication that fails. The sheer number of people in many mass communication audiences makes personalization and specificity difficult. As a result, mass communication tends to be more constrained, less free. This does not mean, however, that it is less potent than interpersonal communication in shaping our understanding of ourselves and our world.

Media theorist James W. Carey (1975) recognized this and offered a **cultural definition of communication** that has had a profound impact on the way communication scientists and others have viewed the relationship between communication and culture. Carey wrote, “Communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired and transformed” (p. 10).

Carey’s (1989) definition asserts that communication and reality are linked. Communication is a process embedded in our everyday lives that informs the way we perceive, understand, and construct our view of reality and the world. Communication is the foundation of our culture. Its truest purpose is to maintain ever-evolving, “fragile” cultures; communication is that “sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and commonality” (p. 43).



Interpersonal Communication
You invite a friend to lunch.



Mass Communication
Levitan-Lloyd produces *Modern Family*

| | Nature | Consequences | Nature | Consequences |
|----------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Message | Highly flexible and alterable | You can change it in midstream. If feedback is negative, you can offer an alternative. Is feedback still negative? Take a whole new approach. | Identical, mechanically produced, simultaneously sent Inflexible, unalterable The completed <i>Modern Family</i> episode that is aired | Once production is completed, <i>Modern Family</i> cannot be changed. If a plotline or other communicative device isn't working with the audience, nothing can be done. |
| Interpreter A | One person—in this case, you | You know your mind. You can encode your own message to suit yourself, your values, your likes and dislikes. | A large, hierarchically structured organization—in this case, Levitan-Lloyd Productions and the ABC television network | Who really is Interpreter A? Levitan-Lloyd Productions' executives? The writers? The director? The actors? The network and its standards and practices people? The sponsors? All must agree, leaving little room for individual vision or experimentation. |
| Interpreter B | One or a few people, usually in direct contact with you and, to a greater or lesser degree, known to you—in this case, your friend | You can tailor your message specifically to Interpreter B. You can make relatively accurate judgments about B because of information present in the setting. Your friend is a vegetarian; you don't suggest a steak house. | A large, heterogeneous audience known to Interpreter A only in the most rudimentary way, little more than basic demographics—in this case, several million viewers of <i>Modern Family</i> | Communication cannot be tailored to the wants, needs, and tastes of all audience members or even those of all members of some subgroup. Some more or less generally acceptable standard is set. |
| Feedback | Immediate and direct yes or no response | You know how successful your message is immediately. You can adjust your communication on the spot to maximize its effectiveness. | Delayed and inferential Even overnight ratings too late for this episode of <i>Modern Family</i> Moreover, ratings limited to telling the number of sets tuned in | Even if the feedback is useful, it is too late to be of value for this episode. In addition, it doesn't suggest how to improve the communication effort. |
| Result | Flexible, personally relevant, possibly adventurous, challenging, or experimental | | Constrained by virtually every aspect of the communication situation A level of communication most likely to meet the greatest number of viewers' needs A belief that experimentation is dangerous A belief that to challenge the audience is to risk failure | |

▲ **Figure 1.3** Elements of Interpersonal Communication and Mass Communication Compared.

What Is Culture?

Culture is the learned behavior of members of a given social group. Many writers and thinkers have offered interesting expansions of this definition. Here are four examples, all from anthropologists. These definitions highlight not only what culture *is* but also what culture *does*:

Culture is the learned, socially acquired traditions and lifestyles of the members of a society, including their patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. (Harris, 1983, p. 5)

Culture lends significance to human experience by selecting from and organizing it. It refers broadly to the forms through which people make sense of their lives, rather than more narrowly to the opera or art of museums. (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 26)

Culture is the medium evolved by humans to survive. Nothing is free from cultural influences. It is the keystone in civilization's arch and is the medium through which all of life's events must flow. We are culture. (Hall, 1976, p. 14)

Culture is an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life. (Geertz, as cited in Taylor, 1991, p. 91)

Culture as Socially Constructed Shared Meaning

Virtually all definitions of culture recognize that culture is *learned*. Recall the opening vignette. Even if this scenario does not exactly match your early mornings, you probably recognize its elements. Moreover, all of us are familiar with most, if not every, cultural reference in it. *Family Guy*, *Rolling Stone*, McDonald's, Under Armour, *Dilbert*—all are points of reference, things that have some meaning for all of us. How did this come to be?

Creation and maintenance of a more or less common culture occurs through communication, including mass communication. When we talk to our friends; when a parent raises a child; when religious leaders instruct their followers; when teachers teach; when grandparents pass on recipes; when politicians campaign; when media professionals produce content that we read, listen to, or watch, meaning is being shared and culture is being constructed and maintained.

Functions and Effects of Culture

Culture serves a purpose. It helps us categorize and classify our experiences; it helps define us, our world, and our place in it. In doing so, culture can have a number of sometimes conflicting effects.

LIMITING AND LIBERATING EFFECTS OF CULTURE A culture's learned traditions and values can be seen as patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Culture limits our options and provides useful guidelines for behavior. For example, when conversing, you do not consciously consider, "Now, how far away should I stand? Am I too close?" You simply stand where you stand. After a hearty meal with a friend's family, you do not engage in mental self-debate, "Should I burp? Yes! No! Argghhh..." Culture provides information that helps us make meaningful distinctions about right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate, good and bad, attractive and unattractive, and so on. How does it do this?

Obviously, through communication. Through a lifetime of communication we have learned just what our culture expects of us. The two examples given here are positive results of culture's limiting effects. But culture's limiting effects can be negative, such as when we are unwilling or unable to move past patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting or when we entrust our "learning" to teachers whose interests are selfish, narrow, or otherwise not consistent with our own.

U.S. culture, for example, values thinness and beauty in women. How many women endure weeks of unhealthy diets and succumb to potentially dangerous surgical