



Preface

Understanding media in today's world is more than a scholarly exercise; it is a necessary survival skill in a world that has been utterly changed by mass communication. All students, whether they will be practitioners, critics, or consumers, have to be able to analyze the ways in which mass media are being used to change the world. This book provides the tools they need to accomplish that analysis.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The way a text tells the story of media can make a difference in how students master the content. Because of this, *Mass Media in a Changing World* organizes its survey of media with an innovative approach featuring:

- A unique three-part narrative structure. Each chapter is organized around the topics of history, industry, and controversy.
- A synthesis of research and points of view.
- An organization that allows for both comprehensiveness and maximum comprehension.
- An integration of unique multimedia ancillaries that lend meaning and relevance to the themes of every chapter.

This is the story of where the media came from, why they do what they do, and why those actions cause controversies.

THREE-PART NARRATIVE APPROACH

Mass Media in a Changing World has a unique three-part narrative structure. Every chapter is divided into sections on history, industry, and controversy. The three-part structure makes clear the way industry practices developed historically and how those practices have resulted in today's issues. This is the story of where the media came from, why they do what they do, and why those actions cause controversies.

The history sections of each chapter help the student understand that much of what is happening in the media today is actually a process of history repeating itself. War coverage, for example, has always been controversial, and the red-hot Internet economy of the 1990s was an echo of the economic boom created by radio in an earlier day. Many of the fears parents have about the Web and television today are similar to earlier concerns about the effects of silent movies and comic books.

The industry sections, for example, "Understanding Today's Book Publishing Industry," demonstrate that media practices did not develop in a vacuum. Rather, media companies do what they do because of industry objectives, especially economic objectives. Knowing that Hollywood movies are designed for teenage and overseas audiences, for example, explains why

so many of them take the form they do. An added bonus of the industry sections is that they introduce the types of careers that each medium offers for the student who is considering a media profession.

The controversies sections introduce the student to the debates that opponents—including parents, media companies, legislators, consumers, and watchdog groups—are currently fighting about. These battles take place in houses of government, industry board rooms, civic groups, academic classes, and courts of law, and they will continue to rage when today's students go out into the world. Some of these controversies, such as those regarding magazine marketing schemes, are best understood in the context of a specific medium (Chapters 2 through 9). Others, such as advertising directed toward children, are best understood in the context of specific industries (Chapters 10 through 12) and still others, such as the conflict between a free press and fair trials, become clearer when explained in a chapter devoted to media impact, law, or ethics (Chapters 13 through 15).

Dealing with history, industry practices, and controversies in each chapter creates a narrative flow that helps readers understand and remember essential concepts. This organizational scheme creates a recognizable structure for students, providing them with a conceptual framework that breaks up the story of media into progressive chunks of easily mastered material. The book also takes a middle path between industry and critical approaches, providing a survey that is useful not just to those students who want to enter the industry as practitioners, but also to those who plan to be critics, and those who will continue to be media consumers (the latter category includes all students).

ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXT

Because the breadth of content in this course can be overwhelming, *Mass Media in a Changing World* is organized for simplicity as well as comprehensiveness. The introductory chapter sets the stage by explaining the book's three-part structure and introducing some of the essential concepts that will be developed in later chapters. Then each mainstream medium is discussed in its own chapter. In the Part 4, news, public relations, and advertising are given chapters of their own so that students may become aware of the influence of the information and persuasion industries. All of these chapters deal with controversies in impact, law, and ethics.

The final three chapters organize and complete these topics, which allow students to make sense of the overarching issues both within the context of individual media and across all media. In various places in the book, therefore, issues such as violence, stereotyping, and censorship are examined both as general issues and from the perspective of different media. Because ethics is dealt with throughout the book in this way, the final chapter provides an especially effective wrap-up for the content of this course.

The overall structure helps students keep sight of the media world's shape. Each chapter, however, tells its own story. These chapters can therefore be assigned in any order. Some instructors have assigned the impact, law, and ethics chapters first, for example, with effective results. The flexibility of these chapters should make it easy to integrate current news events and guest speakers into the course when the need or opportunity arises.

SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE TEXT

To help students attain a clear understanding of all the important facets of this extensive field of study, *Mass Media in a Changing World* makes use of a number of important learning tools.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

Each chapter begins with a list of learning points that will be covered in the History, Industry, and Controversies sections of the chapter. These highlights represent learning objectives that help students organize their reading and concentrate on key concepts.

CHAPTER-OPENING VIGNETTES

Chapters open with a brief media-related story. These stories introduce the central theme of each chapter and are analyzed so that the student enters a chapter with open eyes and an open mind. For example, the opening vignette in Chapter 1 (Introduction), “Hating America,” explores the phenomenon of growing anti-American sentiment in a post–September 11, 2001, world, beginning a discussion about the social and cultural impact of mass media. Chapter 8 (Television) opens with the vignette “Humiliation TV” and explores the growth of reality TV programming and its effects. The opening vignette in Chapter 12 (Advertising), “The Subservient Chicken,” discusses the wildly popular Burger King Web site and the nature of viral marketing, a technique that allows consumers themselves to spread the marketing message for a company.

MASS MEDIA HISTORY

The history of mass media is an important element of any survey course on mass communication. *Mass Media in a Changing World* presents history using three easily assimilated features:

- History section—Each chapter contains a History section to centralize the discussion of key events in mass communication history.
- Milestones—A Milestones list appears following the History section of each chapter. Each list summarizes the most important events for a chapter, providing the student with a set of priorities to guide them through their review of the History section.
- Timeline appendix—The book contains an extensive Timeline appendix that gathers in one place all of the historical milestones discussed in the text (see page xxii).

CLOSE-UP BOXES ON HISTORY, INDUSTRY, AND CONTROVERSY

These boxed features reinforce the three-part structure of every chapter. Each deals with an interesting example or trend that drives home an important concept in that section of the chapter. In the chapter on radio (Chapter 7), for example, the Close-Up on History box deals with the 1938 *War of the Worlds* broadcast and ensuing public panic. In the chapter on movies (Chapter 5), the Close-Up on Controversy box looks at the social effects of motion pictures that glamorize cigarette smoking. In the chapters on media impact (Chapter 13), media law (Chapter 14), and media ethics (Chapter 15), the Close-Up on Industry box has been recast as a special Close-Up box covering key issues affecting these areas of study.

SELF-QUIZ QUESTIONS

Another unique feature of this text is the set of Self-Quiz questions that run in the chapter margins. These questions enable students to reinforce their

comprehension of the material while it is still fresh in their minds. They also highlight the most important points for key passages in a chapter and make an effective review tool.

CONSIDER THIS QUESTIONS

Critical thinking questions headed Consider This are also placed in the chapter margins. They pose thought-provoking questions to stimulate student thinking and foster discussion. The instructor may also use the Consider This questions as discussion points for class or as writing assignments.

FACT FILES

Fact Files are illustrations or tables providing brief snapshots of important data for a given industry, such as industry leaders, revenue figures, market share, and consumer trends. They are designed to help the student reinforce their understanding of important industry facts and trends. The unique visual design of the Fact Files makes the data easy to understand and retain. Numerous Fact Files appear in each of the first 12 chapters.

KEY TERMS

Understanding the vocabulary of mass media is an important part of the introductory course. *Mass Media in a Changing World* reinforces mass media vocabulary by providing key terms and definitions in the margins of each chapter. Thirty to 35 essential concepts are introduced in each chapter. These concepts, all of which are useful in areas of the liberal arts and sciences besides media studies, are set in boldface, carefully defined in the running narrative, and then amplified with examples chosen to stimulate student interest. In addition, the end of each chapter includes a list of that chapter's key terms, with page reference numbers.

SUMMING UP

An end-of-chapter summary recaps the essential points of the chapter in narrative form. It assists students in reviewing important themes, events, controversies, and concepts.

ELECTRONIC EXCURSIONS

Each chapter concludes with an integrated set of media-related activities using the student CD-ROMs and Web site developed especially for the text. These include some or all of the following for each chapter:

- *Web Excursions*—Recommended Web sites related to the chapter are coupled with critical-thinking questions to help the student assess the content of a given site.
- *CD-ROM Excursions*—These activities point the student to specific, relevant tracks found on the double-CD-ROM package that accompanies the book. These include segments from *Media Tours* and *Media Talk*, which are further described in Integrated Electronic Resources on the next page.

NOTES

A comprehensive list of source notes is organized by chapter and included at the end of the book.

FULL GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

A concise master glossary of essential vocabulary is included at the end of the book. These terms are also page-referenced in the index.

COMPLETE TIMELINE OF MASS MEDIA MILESTONES

This complete Timeline, located in the back of the book, integrates all of the various Media Milestones and other important dates from the book into one comprehensive format. It provides a single place to view, compare, and contrast the historical developments of key mass media. The complete Timeline is an effective study aid for the student who wishes to brush up on key historical events. There is also an interactive version of the Timeline on the companion Web site that uses simple quizzing techniques to further reinforce the study of media history.

INTEGRATED ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Mass Media in a Changing World is more than a text. Its accompanying Media World CD-ROMs, and its Online Learning Center Web site, work together as an integrated learning system to drive home the basic concepts, history, industry practices, and controversies surrounding mass media. This comprehensive system, using a combination of print, multimedia, and Web-based materials, meets the needs of instructors and students with a variety of teaching and learning styles.

For the Student

Each chapter is supported by unique content located on the accompanying Online Learning Center (OLC) Web site for the book (www.mhhe.com/rodman). The OLC includes the following:

- Student self-tests for each chapter, providing a comprehensive set of review questions not found in the book.
- Electronic Timeline study guide, based on the Complete Timeline of Media Milestones from the text.
- Web Excursions activities and links for each chapter.
- Additional Internet Exercises for each chapter.
- Recommended readings, movies, and documentaries for each chapter.
- A PowerWeb database of online articles.

Media World is a double CD-ROM set produced exclusively by McGraw-Hill. It includes video materials to reinforce the student's understanding of the mass media industry and practices. *Media World* content is highlighted in the chapters so that students and instructors can integrate it with the total learning experience. *Media World* includes:

- *Media Tours* videos, providing an inside look at the day-to-day operations of real media organizations.
- *Media Talk* videos, featuring newsworthy interviews about important developments in mass media from the NBC News Archives.

For the Instructor

Additional electronic resources have been developed with the instructor in mind. The Instructor's Resource CD-ROM features the following:

- An Instructor's Manual with optional activities for each chapter.
- A Computerized Test Bank.

- PowerPoint presentations for each chapter.
- A Question Bank for the Classroom Performance System (CPS). CPS is a revolutionary wireless response system that gives instructors immediate feedback from every student in the class. CPS units include easy-to-use software and hardware for creating and delivering questions and assessments to your class. Every student simply responds with their individual, wireless response pads, providing instant results. CPS questions for classroom use are included on the Instructor's Resource CD-ROM for those instructors who choose to adopt this technology, which is available from your school's McGraw-Hill service representative.

There is also an instructor's section of the Online Learning Center (OLC) at (www.mhhe.com/rodman). It includes the following:

- An Instructor's Manual with optional activities for each chapter.
- PowerPoint presentations for each chapter.
- Downloadable Question Bank for the Classroom Performance System (CPS).

Media Tours is a VHS tape that includes the same profiles of real media companies included on the student CD-ROM. The videotape is provided upon request for instructors who prefer to show the clips in class using a videotape player. *Media Talk Lecture Launcher* is a VHS tape that includes the same newsworthy interviews from the NBC News Archives that are included on the student CD-ROM. The videotape is provided upon request for instructors who prefer to show the clips in class using a videotape player.

The author of this text also hosts an electronic discussion group for instructors and students in the basic course in mass media. This group, active since 1997, has been a handy device for distributing up-to-the-minute course updates, as well as serving as a forum for discussions about the nature of this course. You can join the group by sending a blank e-mail message to MediaProfs-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Messages addressed to the author individually can be sent to grodman@brooklyn.cuny.edu.