



培文书系·社会科学系列



# The Transformation of The Media

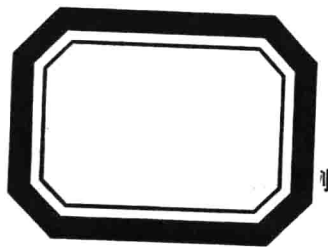
## 传媒的变革

全球化、道德和伦理

[英] 尼克·史蒂文森 著  
Nick Stevenson



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需要重申的是,作者本人的有些观点和结论尚需商榷,有些甚至是不可取的,为此提请读者加以甄别。书中的观点均不代表出版社观点。

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2005年6月

现在知道了  
我所追求的  
人生  
是一个圆周  
围绕着同情和理解  
它在不停地扩展

我寻求的完整  
是圆心加圆周  
而不是  
一个纯粹自我感觉的  
排他的圆心

现在  
处在圆心的奋斗已经结束  
圆周正从四面八方  
向我召唤

——肯尼思·怀特(1989)

顾宜凡 译

# 前言

写这本书所花的时间比我最初所预期的长了很多。这中间有多重原因，包括我对本书方向和侧重点的调整。最初只是想针对后现代主义的某些流派，从道德主义的角度展开争辩，但最终却已延伸到要求我们对一个不断传媒化的时代中道德和伦理问题进行重新思考。书就像人一样，它们最终的结果很少与我们所预期的相吻合，这可能是一个大家都已经熟悉的教训了。

不过，以一本有关“远程”传播的书，来献给住得离我很远的朋友安东尼·艾利略和尼古拉·哲拉提，倒是挺合适的。这本书也是献给露西·詹姆斯——我的“新欢”的。我希望她能与我长相守，从而成为我的“旧爱”。

在我要感谢的人中，我首先想要提到的是对我来说像宝石般珍贵的我的出版商萨拉·开诺。我还要感谢安东尼·艾利略、西昂·后莫、先·梅克尔、约翰·威斯特伽德，特别是麦克·坎尼，在本书改写的不同阶段所给予我的支持。他们对我的能力充满信心，并愿意以朋友的姿态与我就本书所涵盖的许多话题进行辩论，这对我的帮助之大，是他们想像不到的。

我还想感谢以下学者以往和现今的思维和他们对我的鼓励：安东尼·吉登斯、吉姆·麦克盖根、约翰·毕·汤姆森和菲利浦·史莱辛格。在我的好朋友和好同事中，凯蒂·布鲁克、安克依·胡格维特、沙让·麦克唐纳、戴岩·理差逊、莫里斯·鲁切和彼得·杰克逊是值得一提的。我还想特别感谢格拉斯哥大学媒介集团的丽兹·毕迪和古艾格·费娄对本书“卢旺达”一章的帮助。

最后，我要对我的朋友和家庭成员深深道谢，他们是：克里斯·贝伯、莉安·巴特勒、布赖恩·库默、克里斯·道克斯、盖伊·弗朗德斯、艾伦·弗朗斯、尤金·乔哥卡、简·史蒂夫·夏洛特、乔·赫德、科林·拉哥、兰恩·佩里·兰伯特、基蒂·堂娜·勒夫、亚历克斯·麦克唐纳、黑兹尔·梅、乔治亚·梅森、大卫·摩尔、莉安·欧德尔、贾迪什·帕特尔、

尼古拉·派珀、保罗·兰塞姆、大卫·罗斯、博比·辛普森、威廉·丹尼斯、琼·史蒂文森、西蒙·昂格尔、罗布·昂温、埃尔希·韦伯斯特。如果没有你们，世界就显得小得多了。

本书的有些章节已经以不同形式在其他地方发表过：

- 第二章曾以“传媒、伦理和道德”为题发表在1977年伦敦圣贤出版社出版的、吉姆·麦克盖根版的《文化方法论》中。
- 第三章曾以“全球媒体和技术变革：社会公正、认可和日常生活公民权研究的意义”发表在1997《公民权研究》1（3）期中。
- 第四章曾以“全球化，民族文化和文化公民权”为题发表在1997年出版的《社会学季刊》总第38期上。

所有这些章节在本书中都以很不同的形式出现。第五、第六和第七章是第一次发表。

## ***Preface***

The writing of this book has taken much longer than I originally expected. This has been for a multitude of reasons, including a changing of direction and focus by the author. What began as a moralistic polemic against certain versions of post-modernism has ended with a call for us to rethink questions of morality and ethics in an increasingly mediated age. That books are like people in that they rarely turn out as we first expected is probably a lesson with which many of us are already familiar. It is however perhaps fitting that a book concerned with 'long distance' communication should be dedicated to my friends Anthony Elliott and Nicola Geraghty who live so far away. This book is also dedicated to Lucy James. A new love who I hope will stick around long enough to become an old love.

First, I would like to mention my publisher Sarah Caro who is a gem. For support through the different stages of redrafting I would like primarily to thank Anthony Elliott, Sean Homer, Sian Makel, John Westergaard and especially in this context Mike Kenny. Their confidence in my ability and willingness to debate with me many of the issues contained within in the spirit of friendship has helped me more than they think. I would also like to thank the following scholars for their thoughts and encouragement past and present: Anthony Giddens, Jim McGuigan, John B. Thompson and Philip Schelsinger. For being such good friends and colleagues Kate Brookes, Ankie Hoogvelt, Sharon MacDonald, Diane Richardson, Maurice Roche and Peter Jackson are worthy of mention. I would also like to offer special thanks to Liza Beattie and Greg Philo of the Glasgow University Media Group for their help on the Rwanda chapter. Finally a 'big' thank you to my friends and family for all the hope and support they have offered through admittedly troubled times: Chris Baber, Lianne Batchelor, Brian Comber, Chris Docx, Gaye Flounders, Alan and Jan France, Eugene Georgaca, Jane, Steve, Charlotte and Joe Hurd, Colin Lago, Layne and Perry Lambert, Kitty L, Donna Luff, Alex MacDonald, Hazel May, Georgia Mason, David Moore, Lianne Older, Jadish Patel, Nicola Piper, Paul Ransome, David Rose, 'Bobby'



## **PREFACE**

Simpson, William Dennis and June Stevenson, Simon Unger, Rob Unwin, Mrs Wang and Elsie Webster. Without you the world would be a smaller place.

Some of the chapters enclosed in this volume have already appeared elsewhere in a different form:

Chapter 2 appeared as 'Media, ethics and morality', in Jim McGuigan (eds) *Cultural Methodologies*, London, Sage, 1977.

Chapter 3 appeared as 'Global media and technological change: social justice, recognition and the meaningfulness of everyday life citizenship studies', *Citizenship Studies*, 1(3), 1997.

Chapter 4 appeared as 'Globalization, national cultures and cultural citizenship', *Sociological Quarterly*, 38, 1997.

All of these chapters appear here in a very different form, and Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are published for the first time.

continually expanding  
 through sympathy and  
 understanding  
 rather than an exclusive centre  
 of pure self-feeling  
 the whole I seek  
 is centre plus circumference  
 and now the struggle at the centre is over  
 the circumference  
 beckons from everywhere

### Kenneth White (1989)

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# *Introduction*

The transformation of the media at the end of the twentieth century is one of the most important social changes currently facing advanced industrial and indeed global societies. These changes, as this book will make clear, have economic, political and cultural implications for our shared world. Our culture is more profoundly mediated than any other that has existed within human history. From the reporting of the sex lives of politicians to the tragic consequences of war and famine, the spatial flows of the media put us in touch with the lives of people we have never met, while stretching the outlines of our community. If we compare our 'common' world to those that lived at the end of the nineteenth century then one of the major differences we could point towards would be the genuinely mass development of public systems of communication. It is indeed hard to imagine what our lives would be like without the mass media. News from the world's four corners taking months rather than seconds to arrive, politicians escaping the visible public scrutiny of the cameras and no cinemas to visit with our friends and family. The mass media, in one shape or form, have become part of the rituals of everyday life. Yet as we come to the century's close these shared networks of communication are arguably undergoing a change as deep seated as the initial provision of mass television. The emergence of new technologies in respect of digital television, video recorders, the internet and a host of other features are reshaping our shared cultural landscape. Yet what is the 'real' significance of these changes? Do they necessarily make us a more communicative society? How do these elements bear upon the current times in which we live? It is these sorts of questions that this book seeks to map out through a range of issues and concerns.

## ***The media: capital, nation and the public***

In seeking to understand the structures and discourses that shaped the media during the twentieth century we need to investigate the interconnections between capitalism, the nation-state and notions of the public. While the specific interrelations between these concepts have impacted differently depending upon particular histories and societies it is possible to uncover a more general story. These overlapping dimensions have defined the outline of media cultures for much of the preceding century and will continue to have an important bearing upon the next. However, as we shall see throughout this book, the theoretical and practical complexity of the media has been added to by processes of globalisation and more 'uncertain' political frames of reference.

Capitalism during the twentieth century ushered in a mass culture that was based upon standardisation, commodification and conformity. Media industries were invested in in order to gain profits irrespective of questions of value. The mass culture of capitalism then was built upon the order of tried and tested packages which were deeply suspicious of cultural innovation and avant-gardist forms of experimentation. The fear that dominated this particular era was that dominant cultural producers (read the United States) would both push minority cultures to the margins while diminishing more literary and educated sensibilities. Recent transformations however have begun to ask questions of this particular narrative. The age of informational capitalism has meant that advertising, magazines and television programmes have become more explicitly targeted in terms of certain lifestyle niches. This has meant that capitalism is becoming less associated with a culture of mass conformity than with the catering of products to meet the preferences of explicit population groupings. Increasingly television programmes, advertisements, magazines and films are produced with the cultural make up of a particular audience segment in mind. Further, this inevitably creates a situation where commercial media cultures are increasingly orientated around the requirements of social groups who are in full-time employment. For example, the recent development of satellite broadcasting and pay TV can be seen in these terms. In the British context the dominance of Sky TV over certain sporting events (most importantly premiership football) has created a situation whereby access to viewing televised soccer is increasingly determined by ability to pay. We could also point towards the expansion of cable services and the internet and argue that, in addition to more explicitly targeted media cultures, 'informational' capitalism is also creating an increasing divide between the technological rich and the technological poor. This is not to argue however that the mass culture thesis has been completely displaced by a more information segmented culture. One only has to point towards Hollywood's current reworking of popular television serials from the 1960s and the 1970s (*The Avengers* and *Lost in Space* have both been released this summer) to argue



that it continues to rely upon previously established genres and taste communities. Here my argument is not so much that we are entering into what Poster (1995) has called a second media age, but that mass forms of culture continue to work within so-called post-modern processes of fragmentation and differentiation.

Since the advent of the printing press the idea of the nation has been a relatively permanent feature within the popular imagination. The development of the press and television have all been specifically 'national' in focus, ownership and control. Many television programmes, films and newspapers took the idea of a recognisable national identity for granted while symbolically contributing to its construction. The national 'we' is discursively present in the vast majority of the media that we consume on a daily basis. The content of the media of mass communication continues to provide a rough and ready guide as to whether the nation is defined in civic or ethnic terms. Media cultures therefore have been central in helping define the limits of the community. However, two major changes are discernible at this conjuncture. First, the media, as we shall see, are increasingly owned and controlled by large-scale trans-national concerns that only maintain the most minimal of ties to specifically national cultures. These communications conglomerates that are based upon product differentiation and the power of distribution networks are genuinely global institutions in that they sell their products the world over. This has meant that the main agent of governance in terms of communications is no longer the state but the market. The determination of our communicative futures therefore will be driven by the needs of capital rather than the state. Secondly, the transgressing of national boundaries by symbolic goods and peoples has given national cultures a more cosmopolitan orientation. Modern citizens are increasingly used to living in shared cultural environments that are composed of different ethnicities and regularly keep them up to date with developments in different corners of the globe. Arguably then, if the communications media at the beginning of the century were specifically national, at the end they have a more hybrid and global orientation. At this point however my analysis differs sharply from many of the others currently on offer in that I argue that while the nation-state has lost much of its power it is still in a position to maintain its influence. Here I argue that notions of community remain more than contingently tied to ideas of nationhood, and that states still have the ability to shape the communicative identities of their citizens. These arguments press the importance of obligations over rights and of the interconnection between state and civil society more generally.

Finally, the role of the media in the shaping of the public sphere as opposed to commercial and national cultures is an important one. Whereas commercial cultures are concerned with economic exchange, national cultures with common forms of identity and belonging, notions of the public are intimately connected to democratic will formation. That is they depend less upon a structurally determined identity and more on our shared capacity