INTRODUCTION TO mass communication

MEDIA LITERACY AND CULTURE **THIRD EDITION**

Stanley J. Baran

INTRODUCTION TO **mass**

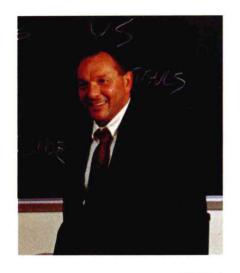# communication

MEDIA LITERACY AND CULTURE

THIRD EDITION

Stanley J. Baran
Bryant College

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 4 years at Cleveland State University, eventually moving to the University of Texas. He led the Department of Radio-TV-Film's graduate program for 6 of his 9 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 9 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 College, where he is the founding chairman of that school's Communication Department. Among the other experiences that helped shape this book are his service as a judge for the Fulbright Scholar Awards 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 he sits or has sat on the editorial boards of five journals. His work has been translated into half a dozen languages. He is a skilled sailor and plays tenor sax in the Wakefield, Rhode Island, Civic Band. He is married to Susan Baran and has three very cool children, Simmony, Matt, and Jordan.

Preface

O N SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, MILLIONS OF AMERICANS—IN FACT, millions of people around the globe—went to bed in shock. The world had changed. The United States no longer seemed invincible. Americans no longer felt safe at home. As everyone, from politicians to pundits to the people next door, said, "Nothing would ever be the same again." Much, in fact, is the same; but not our view of the mass media. The questions we were asking about media in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 and the questions we are raising now are shaped in large part by what happened on that horrific day.

At first we were impressed, even moved, by the performance of our mass media. The coverage of the attack and rescue effort in all media was thorough, knowledgeable, courageous, even-handed, and sensitive. But then we started asking, Why were we caught so badly by surprise? Why didn't we know about the anti-American feelings in much of the world? Where were the media? Then, with the war on terrorism and in Iraq, new questions arose: How many restrictions on media freedom should we accept in time of war? Should we air, unedited, the videotaped ranting of Osama bin Laden? How much should we trust reports from the Arabic television network Al Jazeera? Are reporters Americans first and journalists second, or are they journalists first and Americans second? How much or how little should the press question government policy and our elected leaders? Should the questions stop when troops enter combat?

But it did not take a cowardly terrorist attack on civilians or an invasion of a hostile country to start people thinking and talking about the media. September 11 and the war in Iraq chased from the cultural forum the relentless criticism of the media's performance in the 2000 presidential elections. Dan Rather said that media professionals did not have egg on their faces after that shameful failure of our democracy; they wore the entire omelet. People questioned the media's priorities—a missing Capitol Hill intern garnered more coverage than world events. Others were complaining that movies were starting to look like extra-long commercials, while television commercials were getting increasingly briefer and all media, even novels, were seemingly drowning in more and more advertising. Critics across the political spectrum were concerned that media companies were merging at an unhealthy-for-democracy rate. Concern about media violence and sexual content remained unabated. Furor followed a television network's proposal to air hard-liquor ads. People who

had lost their life savings wanted to know what the media were doing while Enron and WorldCom were stealing from them. To First Amendment advocates, new copyright rules designed to thwart digital piracy were undoing two centuries of fair use copyright protection, with consumers and democracy poorer for it.

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 the realm of chatting and griping to that of effective public discourse is media education—the systematic study of media and their operation in our political and economic system, as well as their contribution to the development and maintenance of the culture that binds us together and defines us. We now call this media education *media literacy*.

Regardless of what an individual course is called—Introduction to Mass Communication, Introduction to Mass Media, Media and Society, Media and Culture—media literacy has been a part of university media education for more than four decades. The course has long been designed to fulfill the following goals:

- to increase students' knowledge and understanding of the mass communication process and the mass media industries;
- to increase students' awareness of how they interact with those industries and with media content to create meaning;
- and to help students become more skilled and knowledgeable consumers of media content.

These are all aspects of media literacy as it is now understood. This text makes explicit what has been implicit for so long: that media literacy skills can and should be taught directly and that, as we travel through the 21st century, media literacy is an essential survival skill for everyone in our society.

Perspective

This focus on media literacy grows naturally out of a *cultural perspective* on mass communication. This text takes the position that media, audiences, and culture develop and evolve in concert. The current prevailing notion in the discipline of mass communication is that, although not all individuals are directly affected by every media message they encounter, the media nonetheless do have important cultural effects. Today, the media are accepted as powerful forces in the process through which we come to know ourselves and one another. They function both as a forum in which issues are debated and as the storytellers that carry our beliefs across time and space. Through these roles, the media are central to the creation and maintenance of both our dominant culture and our various bounded cultures.

This cultural orientation toward mass communication and the media places much 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 actively, appropriately, and effectively. In other words, they must bring media literacy—the ability to effectively and efficiently comprehend and use mass media—to the mass communication process.

Features of This Text

The features that made this text successful in its earlier editions have been retained in this revision.

- **Emphasis on developing media literacy.** The pedagogical features of this book are designed to support and improve media literacy skills. Chapter 2 lays out the elements of media literacy, and an emphasis on media literacy is woven throughout the text. Each chapter from Chapter 3 to 15 contains a section, specific to that chapter's medium or issue, on developing media literacy skills. For example, Chapter 4, Newspapers, offers guidelines for interpreting the relative placement of newspaper stories. Chapter 8, Television, discusses how to identify staged news events on television. Other media literacy topics include recognizing product placements in movies, evaluating news based on anonymous sources, and protecting personal privacy on the Internet.

- **Cultural perspective.** The media—either as forums in which important issues are debated or as storytellers that carry our beliefs and values across people, space, and time—are central to the creation and maintenance of our various cultures. This book advocates the idea that media audiences can take a more active role in the mass communication process and help shape the cultures that, in turn, shape them.

- **Brief historical sections.** Historical sections at the beginning of each chapter on a medium offer relevant background information for students. By providing historical context, these sections help students understand current issues in the media landscape.

- **Focus on convergence.** Each chapter on a medium includes a section called Trends and Convergence. These sections emphasize the influence of new technologies on media and society.

- **Pedagogical boxes included throughout the text.** These boxes give students a deeper understanding of media-related issues and the role of media in society.

Using Media to Make a Difference These boxes highlight interesting examples of how media practitioners and audiences use the mass communication process to further important social, political, or cultural causes. For example, Chapter 6, Film, highlights the African American films and film industry that grew up in response to the D. W. Griffith film, *The Birth of a Nation*.

Cultural Forum These boxes highlight media-related cultural issues that are currently debated in the mass media. Titles include, for example, Advertorials Aimed at Young Girls; Concentration, Conglomeration, and 9/11; and Does DVR Make You a Thief?

Media Echoes These boxes demonstrate that the cultural and social debates surrounding the different media tend to be repeated throughout history, regardless of the technology or era in question. For example, the public relations chapter discusses early PR efforts to encourage women to smoke, and the advertising chapter covers advertisers' more recent attempts to attract teenage smokers.

Key Changes to the Third Edition

Although the book maintains its commitment to critical thinking throughout its pages, several important changes were made to enhance and update this, the third edition.

- A fourth pedagogical box, **Living Media Literacy,** has been added to each chapter. These brief, chapter-ending essays suggest ways in which students can put what they have learned into practice. They are calls to action—personal, social, educational, political. Their goal is to make media literacy a living enterprise, something that has value in how students interact with the culture and media. Several use the stories of "everyday people" who have made a difference. Indicative titles are Start a Citywide Book Conversation, Help a School Start an Online Newspaper, and Smoke-Free Movies.

- Three important changes have been made to the text's structure. First, cable is now discussed at length in its own chapter, **Cable and Other Multichannel Services.** This has been done in recognition of cable's new (and potentially greater) role in the delivery of all media to consumers' homes. Naturally, the economic, regulatory, and cultural issues surrounding this venerable medium are changing and worthy of comment. Second, mass communication theories and the effects of mass media have been combined into one chapter, producing a more seamless discussion of the relationship between *how* we think and *what* we think about media's impact. Finally, the chapter on the Internet and the World Wide Web has been moved to follow the chapters on the more traditional media, placing it in a more

appropriate chronological location for studying their relationship with other forms of mass communication.

- Every chapter has been informed by the events of September 11 and the war on terrorism and the conflict in Iraq. Chapter 10's discussion of privacy, for example, contains an examination of the difficulty in balancing privacy and security in time of war. Concentration and conglomeration and their contribution to the decline of international coverage are part of Chapter 1. The ethical questions raised by 9/11 and the war on terrorism are presented: Do a reporter's patriotism and journalism conflict? What are acceptable levels of criticism of public officials in wartime? What are acceptable levels of government censorship? How much access should media professionals have to battle zones? How should advertisers make use of the tragedy?

- Chapters are now introduced by graphically attractive historical timelines of the medium or issue under discussion and a list of the chapter's learning objectives.

- In previous editions each chapter closed with a chapter review, review questions, questions for discussion, and a listing of important resources. These pedagogical features are now accompanied by a list of key terms.

- URLs of important or interesting Web sites are placed in page margins near concepts they are designed to support.

- Boxes have been updated to cover current topics and issues. The coverage of international news, book censorship, the erosion of the firewall between newspapers' sales and news departments, the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Influence, mandatory cable access for Internet service providers, and changes in the way we think about copyright are a few examples.

- All statistical entries have been updated. These changes include new information on Internet demographics, new media consumption statistics, and new statistics for all media sales and circulation figures.

- Coverage of media ownership has been updated to the extent possible. Although it is challenging to keep up with changes in media ownership, we have made a diligent effort to provide the most recent information on mergers and acquisitions in media conglomerate ownership.

Learning Aids

Several types of learning aids are included in the book to support student learning and to enhance media literacy skills.

- World Wide Web URLs in the margins of every chapter enable students to locate additional resources and encourage students to practice using the Internet.

- Photo essays raise provocative questions, encouraging students to further develop their critical thinking and analytical skills.

- Important Resources, an annotated listing of books and articles for further reading, provides additional information for students.

- Chapter Reviews allow students to make sure they have focused on each chapter's most important material.

- Questions for Review further highlight important content and provide a review of key points.

- 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.

- Margin icons throughout the text direct students to view the CD-ROM *Media Tours* and *NBC* video clips.

- Historical timelines, chapter learning objectives, and chapter-ending lists of key terms guide and focus student learning.

- An exhaustive list of references is provided at the end of the book.

Organization

Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture is divided into four parts. Part One, Laying the Groundwork, as its name implies, provides the foundation for the study of mass communication. Chapter 1, Mass Communication, Culture, and Mass Media, defines important concepts and establishes the basic premises of the cultural perspective on mass communication with its focus on media literacy. Chapter 2, Media Literacy and Culture, provides an overview of the development of mass communication and the media and elaborates on the meaning and implications of media literacy.

Part Two, Media, Media Industries, and Media Audiences, includes chapters on the individual mass media technologies and the industries that have grown up around them—books (Chapter 3), newspapers (Chapter 4), magazines (Chapter 5), film (Chapter 6), radio and sound recording (Chapter 7), television (Chapter 8), cable and other multichannel services (Chapter 9) and the Internet and the World Wide Web (Chapter 10). All of these chapters open with a short history of the medium and continue with discussions of the medium and its audiences, the scope and nature of the medium, and current trends and convergence in the industry and technology. Each chapter concludes with a section on developing a media literacy skill specifically related to that medium and a call to action in the form of the Living Media Literacy essays. Throughout each chapter there is a focus not just on the industry and technology but also on cultural issues and the interaction of culture, medium, and audience. For example, in Chapter 10, advances in digital technology and computer networking are discussed in terms of our ability to maintain control of our personal data

and our privacy. Chapter 3's examination of book censorship asks students to challenge their personal commitment to free expression and to reflect on how that commitment speaks to their belief in democracy. Radio and rock 'n' roll are connected to a discussion of race relations in America in Chapter 7.

Part Three, Supporting Industries, carries this same approach into two related areas—public relations (Chapter 11) and advertising (Chapter 12). As in the medium-specific chapters, each of these chapters begins with a brief history, continues with a discussion of audience, the scope of the industry, and current trends and convergence, and concludes with guidelines on developing relevant media literacy skills.

Part Four, Mass-Mediated Culture in the Information Age, tackles several important areas. Chapter 13, Theories and Effects of Mass Communication, provides a short history of mass communication theory and compares and evaluates the field's major theories. It then explores the ongoing debate over media effects. The chapter considers such topics as media and violence, media and gender and racial/ethnic stereotyping, and media and the electoral process. Chapter 14, Media Freedom, Regulation, and Ethics, provides a detailed discussion of the First Amendment, focusing on refinements in interpretation and application made over the years in response to changes in technology and culture. The chapter analyzes such topics and issues as privacy, the use of cameras in the courtroom, and changing definitions of indecency. The chapter concludes with an extended discussion of media ethics and professionalism. Chapter 15, Global Media, looks at media systems in other parts of the world and concludes with a discussion of local cultural integrity versus cultural imperialism.

New and Updated Supplements

The supplements package available with the text includes a full array of tools designed to facilitate both teaching and learning.

- An *Instructor's Resource Guide*, available on the Online Learning Center, provides teaching aids for each chapter, including learning objectives, key terms and concepts, lecture ideas, video suggestions, a guide to using the Media Literacy Worksheets, and a test bank of more than 1,000 test items.

- Questions in a computerized test bank can be edited and new questions can be added.

- The *Introduction to Mass Communication* Student CD-ROM offers students interactive quizzes, summaries, key terms flash cards, activity worksheets, Web links, and *NBC* and *Media Tours* video clips.

- Two new video tapes feature brief clips that bring to life the concepts discussed in the text. Clips are from *NBC News* and *The*

Today Show, and McGraw-Hill's *Media Tours* of a television station and *Vibe* magazine. An instructor's guide is packaged with the videos.

- The Online Learning Center (www.mhhe.com/baran3) has been thoroughly updated. The new site includes Media Literacy worksheets, PowerPoint® slides, a Web tutorial, a bulletin board, a syllabus builder for the instructor, an online study guide, chapter self-quizzes with feedback, hot links to media resources for the student, and more.

- *PowerWeb: Mass Communication* is a password-protected Web site that includes current articles from *Annual Editions: Mass Media*, curriculum-based materials, weekly updates with assessment, informative and timely world news, Web links, research tools, student study tools, interactive exercises, and much more.

- An *Instructor's CD-ROM* (compatible with both Macintosh and IBM computers) offers electronic versions of the *Instructor's Resource Guide*, PowerPoint® slides, electronic transparencies, and worksheets.

- *Media Literacy Worksheets and Journal*, now online (www.mhhe.com/baran3), has been revised to include worksheets for each chapter. Activities direct students to selected Web sites, suggest topics for entries in an ongoing Media Journal, and further explore the media literacy skills highlighted in each chapter. There are more than 75 worksheets in total.

- *PageOut: The Course Web Site Development Center*. All online content for this text is supported by WebCT, eCollege.com, Blackboard, and other course management systems. Additionally, McGraw-Hill's PageOut service is available to get you and your course up and running online in a matter of hours, at no cost. PageOut was designed for instructors just beginning to explore Web options. Even the novice computer user can create a course Web site with a template provided by McGraw-Hill (no programming knowledge necessary). To learn more about PageOut, ask your McGraw-Hill representative for details, or fill out the form at www.mhhe.com/pageout.

Acknowledgments

Any project of this magnitude requires the assistance of many people. My colleague Bob Mendenhall of Southwestern Adventist University was particularly helpful with his sharp eyes and good suggestions.

Reviewers are an indispensable part of the creation of a good textbook. In preparing for this third 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. **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. Slaugher, 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.

This edition is the first I have written with the support of my new team at McGraw-Hill. My development editor, Jennie Katsaros, proved to be as polished a professional as she is a lunchtime conversationalist. She intuitively understood the soul of this text and encouraged me to write in its spirit. My editor, Phil Butcher, was questioning and imaginative. Confident in me, he let me write *my* book. I also want to acknowledge my original editor, Holly Allen. She waited for me to *want* to write this book. If I had known how skilled a colleague and delightful a friend she would have become, I would have been ready years sooner.

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 was invaluable; her love in my life is sustaining. My children—Jordan, Matthew, and Simmony—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.

A Visual Preview

A s we travel through the twenty-first century, Media Literacy is an essential survival skill for everyone in our society.

> **Media Literacy: the ability to effectively and efficiently comprehend and use mass media**

The focus on media literacy grows out of a **cultural perspective** on mass communication. Through this cultural perspective, students learn that audience members are as much a part of the mass communication process as are the media producers, technologies, and industries.

Cultural Forum: Defining Media Literacy

Developing Media Skills: Recognizing Staged News

for viewer feedback. Fiber optic cable is making **broadband** (channels with broad information-carrying capacity) access more of a reality, and industry experts estimate that by 2005, 30 million Americans will have sufficient bandwidth for full interactivity (Amdur, 2003). Still, this is only a fraction of the total Web and television audience. Another problem potentially limiting the fuller diffusion of interactive television is that many people simply may not want it. As technology writer Bill Syken observed, "Television and work do not go together as naturally as, say, television and beer" (2000, p. 27). See Chapter 9 for more on broadband and interactive television.

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS
Recognizing Staged News

For years studies have shown that a majority of the American public turns to television as the ... of most of its news and that viewers rank it as the most believ... dramatic, espec... images. But wh... news is also a ... vision newspeo... the public, but ... people so their...

Even the b... not tune in, an... als, driven to g... that is, re-creat... Sometimes new... narrate an acc... that event is pla... scene. What ha... U.S. television ... ABC's 1994 bro... ter clothes, see... night when she ... "presence" at t...

The broadc... *event* was stage...

the spot? What was reported actually did happen." If you accept this view (the event *did* happen, therefore it's not news staging), how would you evaluate Fox News's Geraldo Rivera's reporting from "sacred ground," the scene of a battle in Afghanistan in which U.S. forces suffered heavy losses, even though he was miles from the actual spot? And if you accept digital alteration of news scenes to place network reporters "at the scene," how would you evaluate CBS's common practice of digitally inserting its network logo on billboards and buildings that appear behind its reporters and anchors (Poniewozik, 2000)? If this staging is acceptable to you, why not OK the digital enhancement of fires and explosions in the news?

Some media literate viewers may accept the-event-did-happen argument, but another form of news staging exists that is potentially more troublesome—re-creation. In 1992 the producers of *Dateline NBC* re-created the explosion of a GMC truck, justifying the move with the argument that similar explosions "had happened" (Chapter 14). In the mid-1990s a Denver news show ran footage of a pit bull fight it had arranged and defended its action on the ground that these things "do happen." *ABC Evening News* simulated surveillance camera recordings of U.S. diplomat Felix Bloch handing ... on the street to accompany ...

Did Geraldo Rivera engage in permissible or impermissible news staging when he reported from "sacred ground" although he was miles from the actual spot?

Cultural Forum

Defining Media Literacy

Media literacy takes on slightly different meanings depending on the orientation of the person or organization doing the defining. In a special issue of the *Journal of Communication* dedicated to media literacy, media researcher Alan Rubin cited these definitions of media literacy.

From the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy: *the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages* (1998, p. 3).

From media scholar Paul Messaris: *knowledge about how media function in society* (1998, p. 3).

From mass communication researchers Justin Lewis and Sut Jhally: *understanding cultural, economic, political, and technological constraints on the creation, production, and transmission of messages* (1998, p. 3).

Rubin went on to provide his own definition of media literacy:

... ut understanding the sources ... unication, the codes that are ... produced, and the selection, ... f those messages. (p. 3)

... ation scholars William Christ ... their view of media literacy:

... media literacy) include the fol- ... re constructed and construct ... rcial implications; media have

... *he impact of media*. Writing and the printing ... world and the people in it. Mass media do the ... mpact of media on our lives, we run the risk of ... along by that change rather than control...

ideological and political implications; form and content are related in each medium, each of which has a unique aesthetic, codes, and conventions; and receivers negotiate meaning in media. (1998, pp. 7–8)

The Cultural Environment Movement ("The People's Communication Charter," 1996), a public interest group devoted to increasing literacy as a way to combat corporate takeover of media, suggests this definition:

The right to acquire information and skills necessary to participate fully in public deliberation and communication. This requires facility in reading, writing, and storytelling; critical media awareness; computer literacy; and education about the role of communication in society. (p. 1)

The National Communication Association (1996), a professional scholarly organization composed largely of university academics, offers this description of media literacy:
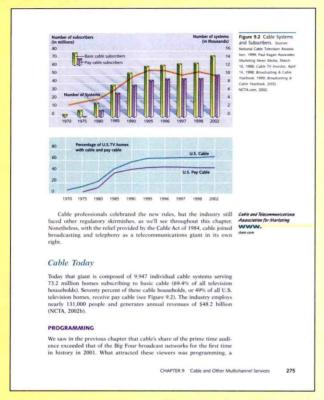
Being a critical and reflective consumer of communication requires an understanding of how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in ways that are both subtle and profound. Mass media such as radio, television, and film and electronic media such as the telephone, the Internet, and computer conferencing influence the way meanings are created and shared in contemporary society. So great is this impact that in choosing how to send a message and evaluate its effect, communicators need to be aware of the distinctive characteristics of each medium. (p. 2)

These definitions are currently in play in the cultural forum. How would you assess the worth of each? Identify the one most useful for you and defend your choice.

For more information on this topic, see NBC Video Clip #2 on the CD—*Author James Steyer Discusses His Book*

Introduction to Mass Communication offers a rich selection of examples and features that increase students' knowledge and understanding of the mass communication process and mass media industries.
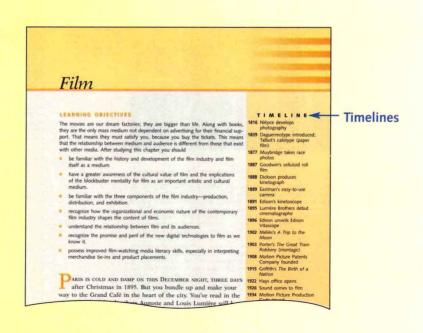

Figure 9.2 Cable Systems and Subscribers. *Source: National Cable Television Association, 1999; Paul Kagan Associates, Marketing News Media, March 16, 1998; Cable TV Investor, April 14, 1998; Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook, 1999; Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook, 2000; NCTA.com, 2002.*

Cable professionals celebrated the new rules, but the industry still faced other regulatory skirmishes, as we'll see throughout this chapter. Nonetheless, with the relief provided by the Cable Act of 1984, cable joined broadcasting and telephony as a telecommunications giant in its own right.

Cable and Telecommunications Association for Marketing
www.
ctam.com

Cable Today

Today that giant is composed of 9,947 individual cable systems serving 73.2 million homes subscribing to basic cable (69.4% of all television households). Seventy percent of these cable households, or 49% of all U.S. television homes, receive pay cable (see Figure 9.2). The industry employs nearly 131,000 people and generates annual revenues of $48.2 billion (NCTA, 2002b).

PROGRAMMING

We saw in the previous chapter that cable's share of the prime time audience exceeded that of the Big Four broadcast networks for the first time in history in 2001. What attracted these viewers was programming, a

CHAPTER 9 Cable and Other Multichannel Services   275

Revenues of cable shopping networks such as QVC exceed those of the traditional television networks.

Women in Cable & Telecommunications
www.
wict.org

fact highlighted by the tens of millions of viewers who tuned in to cable network CNN as the drama of the terrorist attacks unfolded on September 11, 2001, and the 45% of all Americans who turned first to cable news, rather than other media, for information on the 2003 war with Iraq (Getting, 2003). But news is not cable's only programming success. Even home-shopping channels such as QVC (2001 revenues of $3.92 billion, exceeding that of traditional networks CBS and ABC) and HSN ($1.93 billion) have made their mark (Moss, 2002).

As we've seen, cable operators attract viewers through a combination of basic and pay channels, as well as with some programming of local origin. There are 287 national cable networks and scores of regional cable networks. We all know national networks such as CNN, Lifetime, HBO, and the History Channel. Regional network NorthWest Cable News serves Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, northern California, and parts of Alaska; New England Cable News serves the states that give it its name; and several regional sports-oriented channels, including YES from the opening vignette, serve different parts of the country. The financial support and targeted audiences for these program providers differ, as does their place on a system's **tiers,** groupings of channels made available to subscribers at varying prices.

Basic Cable Programming In recognition of the growing dependence of the public on cable delivery of broadcast service as cable penetration increased, Congress passed the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992. This law requires operators to offer a truly basic service composed of the broadcast stations in their area and their access channels. Cable operators also offer another form of basic service, **expanded basic cable,** composed primarily of local broadcast stations and services with broad appeal such as TBS, TNT, the USA Network, and the Family Channel. These networks offer a wide array of programming not

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New Chapter: Cable and Other Multichannel Services

Film

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The movies are our dream factories; they are bigger than life. Along with books, they are the only mass medium not dependent on advertising for their financial support. That means they must satisfy you, because you buy the tickets. This means that the relationship between medium and audience is different from those that exist with other media. After studying this chapter you should

- be familiar with the history and development of the film industry and film itself as a medium.
- have a greater awareness of the cultural value of film and the implications of the blockbuster mentality for film as an important artistic and cultural medium.
- be familiar with the three components of the film industry—production, distribution, and exhibition.
- recognize how the organizational and economic nature of the contemporary film industry shapes the content of films.
- understand the relationship between film and its audiences.
- recognize the promise and peril of the new digital technologies to film as we know it.
- possess improved film-watching media literacy skills, especially in interpreting merchandise tie-ins and product placements.

Paris is cold and damp on this December night, three days after Christmas in 1895. But you bundle up and make your way to the Grand Café in the heart of the city. You've read in the ... Auguste and Louis Lumière will ...

TIMELINE ← **Timelines**

1816 Niépce develops photography
1839 Daguerreotype introduced; Talbot's calotype (paper film)
1877 Muybridge takes race photos
1887 Goodwin's celluloid roll film
1888 Dickson produces kinetograph
1889 Eastman's easy-to-use camera
1891 Edison's kinetoscope
1895 Lumière Brothers debut cinematographe
1896 Edison unveils Edison Vitascope
1902 Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon*
1903 Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (montage)
1908 Motion Picture Patents Company founded
1915 Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*
1922 Hays office opens
1926 Sound comes to film
1934 Motion Picture Production

Rock 'N' Roll and Radio →

Rock 'N' Roll, Radio, and Race Relations

After World War II African Americans in the United States refused to remain invisible. Having fought in segregated units in Europe and proven their willingness to fight and die for freedom abroad, they openly demanded freedom at home. Some Whites began to listen. President Harry Truman, recognizing the absurdity of racial separation in the self-proclaimed "greatest democracy on earth," desegregated the armed forces by executive order in 1948. These early stirrings of equality led to a sense among African Americans that anything was possible, and that feeling seeped into their music. What had been called *cat*, *sepia*, or *race music* took on a new tone. While this new sound borrowed from traditional Black music—gospel, blues, and sad laments over slavery and racial injustice—it was different, much different. Rock historian Ian Whitcomb called it music about "gettin' loaded, wantin' a bow-legged woman, and rockin' all night long" (1972, p. 212). Music historian Ed Ward said that this bolder, more aggressive music "spoke to a shared experience, not just to Black (usually rural Black) life," and it would become the "truly biracial popular music in this country" (Ward, Stokes, & Tucker, 1986, p. 83).

But before this new music could begin its assault on the cultural walls that divided Americans, it needed a new name (so as to differentiate itself from older forms of race music and to appear "less Black" to White listeners). Hundreds of small independent record companies sprang up to produce this newly labeled rhythm and blues (R&B), music focusing on Americans' shared experience, and sex and alcohol were part of life for people of all colors. Songs such as Wynonie Harris's "Good Rockin' Tonight," Amos Milburn's "Chicken Shack Boogie," Stick McGhee's "Drinkin' Wine, Spo-De-O-Dee," and Wild Bill [...] Gonna Rock, We're Gonna Roll" (a song [...]ing) were, for their time, startlingly ope[...] tion of sex (not to be confused with love[...] its earthy lyrics and thumping dance beat[...] found an audience in the 1950s, one co[...] urban Blacks (growing in number as A[...] increasingly fled the South) and White t[...]

The major record companies took n[...] than sign already successful R&B artist[...] White artists cover the Black hits. The [...] Angel" was covered by the reassurin[...] Cuts, who also covered the Chords' [...] McGuire Sisters covered the Spaniels' "[...] heart, Well It's Time to Go." Chuck Ber[...] was covered by both the Johnny Long a[...] Orchestras. Even Bill Haley and the Com[...] "Shake, Rattle and Roll" was a cover of [...]

But these covers actually served to int[...] White teens to the new music, and the[...]

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the original versions. This did not escape the attention of Sam Phillips, who in 1952 founded Sun Records in an effort to bring Black music to White kids ("If I could find a White man who had the Negro sound, I could make a billion dollars," he is reported to have mused; "Why Elvis," 2002, p. 9). In 1954 he found that man: Elvis Presley.

The situation also caught the attention of Cleveland DJ Alan Freed, whose nationally distributed radio (and later television) show featured Black R&B tunes, never covers. Freed began calling the music he played rock 'n' roll (to signify that it was Black *and* White youth music), and by 1955, when Freed took his show to New York, the cover business was dead. Black performers were recording and releasing their own music to a national audience, and people of all colors were tuning in.

Now that the kids had a music of their own, and now that a growing number of radio stations were willing to program it, a youth culture began to develop, one that was antagonistic toward their parents' culture. The music was central to this antagonism, not only because it was gritty and nasty but also because it exposed the hypocrisy of adult culture. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Freed's 1953 rock 'n' roll concert at the Cleveland Arena. Although Cleveland was a segregated city, Freed opened the 9,000-seat venue to all the fans of his *Moondog's Rock and Roll Party* radio show. A racially mixed crowd of more than 18,000 teens showed up, forcing the cancellation of the concert. But the kids partied. They sang. They cheered. Not a single one asked for a refund. They had come—Black kids and White kids—to celebrate *their* music, *their* culture.

The Television Industry →

NYPD Blue *and* Buffy the Vampire Slayer *are only two of the many television shows that use government-approved antidrug messages in their stories.*

would agree that it is unseemly for the government to be involved in a secret proceeding to insert anti-drug messages into programming eve[...]ing the public about"[...]

But not everyone [...] General Barry McCaff[...] program would contin[...] be evaluated only afte[...] ducer of NBC's *Law &*[...] ics saw a mountain. "I[...] "a boondoggle" (quo[...]

(Males, 2002)? Thu[...] 152 pounds (Irving[...] conversely, that on[...] you develop your [...] building blocks to [...]

POLITICAL CAM[...]

Media impact on p[...] of mass communi[...] example, was the [...]

This debate was in the public forum for months; what do you think? What is the difference between embed-

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Newspapers: Convergence with the Internet →

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Two of the more successful online newspapers.

drive to strengthen the identity of the paper as an indispensable local medium, thereby attracting readers and boosting revenues. This activism further differentiates newspapers from other media in the chase for advertising dollars. But papers are also trying civic journalism specifically to do good for the communities of which they themselves are members.

Civic journalism happens in a number of ways. Some newspapers devote significant resources to in-depth and long-running coverage of crucial community issues, interviewing citizens as subjects of the stories and inviting comment and debate through various "Hotline" or "Open Forum" sections of their papers. Other newspapers establish citizen councils to advise them on missed opportunities for coverage. Others assemble citizen panels that meet at regular intervals throughout a political campaign or other ongoing story. Citizen reaction to developments in those events is reported as news. Still others establish citizen roundtables to provide insight on crucial issues, for example, race and education. In these discussions people from different constituencies in the community—often holding quite conflicting perceptions of the problem—come together to talk out their differences. This interaction is reported as news, and the papers' editorial writers offer commentary and suggestions for solution.

As we also saw in the vignette, civic journalism is not universally embraced by the newspaper community. Critics contend that too much professional journalistic judgment is given away to people whose interests and concerns are too personal and too narrow. Others claim that the heavy focus on a particular issue in civic journalism distorts the public agenda (see the box "Covering the Issue of Race"). Still, the civic journalism "experiment" continues.
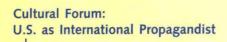
CONVERGENCE WITH THE INTERNET

Technology has been both ally and enemy to newspapers. Television forced newspapers to change the way they did business and served their readers.

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