

# THE MEDIA OF MASS COMMUNICATION

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# the media of mass communication


..... fifth edition

**John Vivian**

WINONA STATE UNIVERSITY

**Allyn and Bacon**

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## to Harold Vivian, my father.

who sparked my curiosity about the mass media at age  
five by asking what was black and white and read all over.

and

## to Elaine Vivian, my mother.

who nurtured this curiosity by keeping the house stocked  
with books, magazines and reading material of every sort.



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# preface

How did you keep up to date on the drama over Iraq's weapons of mass destruction? Or the Monica Lewinsky allegations? Why did you choose one brand of athletic shoes over another? Do you trust Al Gore? Newt Gingrich? Saddam Hussein? David Letterman? If you saw the movie *Titanic* but not *Scream 2*, why? How did you learn about the existence of the latest CD you purchased? Would you agree if your local library removed *Playboy* magazine from the shelves? Should *In the Night Kitchen* be banned? *Grapes of Wrath*? *Huckleberry Finn*? Who decides what music gets played on the radio? Who chooses news stories? Can you trust the *New York Times*? *Rolling Stone*? CNN? The *National Enquirer*? Should you worry about little children imitating Rambo? Barbie? Cartman and Stan? Is there too much sex on television?

Everybody faces these kinds of questions in this age of mass communication. The media are everywhere, and they affect almost every aspect of our lives, including the values we embrace. This fifth edition of *The Media of Mass Communication* is designed to help you become more informed and discerning as a consumer of mass media. It also is designed to provide a comprehensive foundation for further studies in mass communication.

This edition is thoroughly revised to keep you current on the mass media, but the most significant changes are in the chapter on the World Wide Web. In only a few years the web has emerged as a powerful new mass medium that will change how we think of the media and how we use them. You will learn, for example, that the next generation of college students probably won't be learning from a textbook like this one. What will replace it? Read on.

## how this book is organized

- **Overview.** Chapter 1 orients you to the mass media. You will learn some of the themes that come up in later chapters.
- **The Media.** Separate chapters deal with each major mass medium in the sequence they developed: books, magazines, newspapers, sound recordings, movies, radio, television and the web.
- **Media Issues.** The remaining nine chapters focus on the process of mass communication, media research, theories, effects, law and ethics.
- **Questions for Review.** These questions are keyed to the major topics and themes in the chapter. Use them for a quick assessment of whether you caught the major points.



- **Questions for Critical Thinking.** These questions ask you both to recall specific information and to use your imagination and critical thinking abilities to restructure the material.
- **For Further Learning.** If you have a special interest in the material introduced in a chapter, you can use the end-of-chapter bibliographies to identify more detailed examinations in other sources. The notes can help orient you to the perspective of the authors of these sources, as well as to the level at which they are written. The sources range from easily digested articles in popular magazines to scholarly works that press the boundaries of human knowledge and understanding.
- **For Keeping Up to Date.** These sections list professional and trade journals, magazines, newspapers and other periodical references to help you keep current on media developments and issues. Most of these periodicals are available in college libraries.
- **Boxes.** Throughout the book, you will find four kinds of boxes that illustrate significant points. *Media People* boxes introduce personalities who have had a major impact on the media or whose story illustrates a major point of media history. *Media Abroad* boxes tell about practices in other countries to help you assess your own media's performance. The *Media Databank* boxes contain tables to help you see certain facts about the mass media at a glance. The *Media Timeline* boxes will help you see the sequence of media at a glance.

## using this book

*The Media of Mass Communication*, fifth edition, contains many tools to help you master the material:

- **Introductory Vignettes.** Chapters open with colorful descriptions of major mass media traditions or issues. These are stories about people who contributed significantly to the mass media or who exemplify important aspects of media operations.
- **Learning Goals.** Chapters begin with learning goals to help you guide your thoughts as you read through the chapters.
- **Study Previews.** Chapters include frequent summaries of the material in subsequent paragraphs. These study previews can help prepare you for the material ahead.
- **Running Glossary.** You will find glossary definitions in the margins, on the same page as the name or concept is introduced in the text.
- **Media Online.** The margins also contain hundreds of World Wide Web addresses to guide your learning about the mass media beyond the textbook and the classroom.
- **Web Site.** You can go online for a great array of material designed especially to augment this edition. The MMC web site includes review questions, glossaries, information on key media personalities, media abroad vignettes and much more: [www.abacon.com/vivian](http://www.abacon.com/vivian).

## acknowledgments

This book represents many new approaches for introducing students to the media of mass communication. The imaginative and far-sighted team at Allyn and Bacon deserves much of the credit for these innovations. When Bill Barke was editorial director, he chose to make this the most colorful and visually oriented text available for mass communication survey courses. Communication editor Steve Hull, who has a passion for the mass media, especially movies, and who shared Bill's commitment to make this book as colorful and interesting as the media themselves, organized the people and resources to see the project to completion. Joe Opiela, humanities editor, shepherded innovations that kept *The Media of Mass Communication* at the head of its field, including the accompanying web site ([www.abacon.com/vivian](http://www.abacon.com/vivian)). This edition reflects the marketing background of Karon Bowers, now Allyn and Bacon's mass communication editor, who has worked with mass communication professors throughout the country to identify their ever-changing needs.

The greatest ongoing contributions have been those of Carol Alper, developmental editor for three editions. She not only has applied her lively imagination and good sense to the book's content but also has coordinated all the complexities of moving the manuscript to production.

With this level of support from the publisher, it's no wonder that almost 400 colleges and universities have adopted *The Media of Mass Communication*. Nor is it any wonder that the new Canadian edition, with my co-author Pete Maurin, has been well received.

In this edition, several researchers and writers have added sparkle with chapter-opening vignettes. Letha Dawson Scanzoni did the introductions for Chapter 3, on Bonnie Fuller; Chapter 10, on Christiane Amanpour; Chapter 12, on Volkswagen ads; Chapter 16, on Timothy Harris; Chapter 17, on Mary Matalin and James Carville; Chapter 18, on Oprah Winfrey; and Chapter 19, on Nike and CBS. Carolyn Smith did the opening vignettes for Chapter 1, on Chris Berman, and Chapter 8, on Jerry Seinfeld. Allen Workman did the vignette for Chapter 5, on Bob Dylan and Jakob Dylan.

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Appreciation goes also to Sue C. Howard, whose zest and energy as a photo researcher have contributed to this book's becoming a leader among mass communication textbooks in showing, not just telling, the story of mass media. I am also indebted to the copyeditor, Elisabeth Lehr, whose eagle eyes headed off a great many gremlins that inevitably creep into a manuscript.

While a tremendous amount of talent has gone into *The Media of Mass Communication*, fifth edition, a book like this is never finished. The media are rapidly changing, and the next edition will continue to reflect that. You as a student using this textbook can be the most significant contributor the next time. Please let me know how this book has helped you through your course and, also, how I can improve the next edition. My address is Route 1, Box 32, Lewiston, MN 55952-9706. You can also call or fax me at (507) 523-2294. On email, I'm at

jvivian@vax2.winona.msus.edu

May your experience with *The Media of Mass Communication*, fifth edition, be a good one.

John Vivian  
Lewiston, Minnesota



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