

MASS COMMUNICATION

PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS



Todd Hunt

Brent D. Ruben

MASS COMMUNICATION Producers and Consumers

Todd Hunt
Brent D. Ruben

Rutgers University

 HarperCollinsCollegePublishers

Acquisitions Editor: Daniel F. Pipp
Developmental Editor: Anne Boynton-Trigg
Project Editor: Diane Williams
Text and Cover Designer: Wendy Ann Fredericks
Cover Photos: *Left to right*: © Lawrence Migdale/Photo Researchers, Inc.; © Art Stein/Photo Researchers, Inc.; © Jeff Isaac/Photo Researchers, Inc.
Photo Researcher: Mira Schachne
Text Illustrations: Latoya Wigfall
Production Manager/Assistant: Willie Lane/Sunaina Sehwan
Compositor: Waldman Graphics, Inc.
Printer and Binder: R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company
Cover Printer: The Lehigh Press, Inc.

For permission to use copyrighted material, grateful acknowledgment is made to the copyright holders on pp. 492–493, which are hereby made part of this copyright page.

Mass Communications: Producers and Consumers
Copyright © 1993 by HarperCollins College Publishers

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information address HarperCollins College Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hunt, Todd, 1938–

Mass communication : producers and consumers / Todd Hunt and Brent

D. Ruben.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-06-500052-8

I. Mass media. II. Ruben, Brent D. III. Title.

P90.H83 1993

302.23—dc20

92-31642

CIP

92 93 94 95 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

MASS COMMUNICATION

Preface

In the 30 years that introductory mass communication textbooks have been available, the definition of what constitutes mass communication has been expanding with each passing decade. Just a generation ago the study of mass communication was thought to encompass mainly the major news media: newspapers, magazines, radio, and television, along with books. Eventually the entertainment media—music and movies—were accorded space in textbooks. Then sections, and finally full chapters, were added to discuss advertising and public relations.

Today we need a still broader understanding of the concept of mass communication. First we must expand the catalog of mass communication instruments and institutions to include **any carrier of information that goes “from one to many.”** In this volume you will find treatment of the following mass communication media and institutions not covered in most texts:

- **Audiovisual systems**—including teleconferencing and corporate video—that enable large numbers of people to receive information through a variety of electronic systems.
- **Popular culture institutions that transmit information about society**—not just movies and music, but also theater, sports events, theme parks, expositions, and architecture.
- **Libraries and museums**, which store information and display or retrieve it for individual consumers and mass audiences.
- **Home and office technologies** increasingly used for disseminating mass messages: facsimile machines, databases, telephones, and computer networking systems.

Because most mass communication texts assume an audience comprised mainly of students who intend to seek jobs in the mass media, their primary focus has been on explaining the structure and workings of the media in terms of the **production** of information. Enrollment in mass communication courses now overwhelmingly includes many nonmajors, and even the majors are a heterogeneous group with diverse career goals. It makes sense today to discuss institutions of mass communication equally in terms of the **consumption**. This text, with its **Production-Information-Consumption** (P↔I↔C) model, consistently demonstrates

the role of the consumer in shaping the media and the messages of mass communication, along with the role of the producers in figuring out what the consumers want, need, and will buy.

The ideal mass communication text is based in theory. This volume reviews important historical events, describes the models of mass communication that have shaped our thinking about the media in the past, and acknowledges the contribution of many great thinkers in the field. But, as one reviewer of the manuscript noted, the “practical approach to theory” found on every page helps the student to understand how and why things work.

Throughout the development of the manuscript, reviewers have lauded the examples and illustrations—many of them included in boxes accompanying the text—that bring home concepts, arouse the interest of the reader, and challenge students to think about the messages and media that shape their daily lives in so many ways. Similarly, the authors have selected photographs and tables that do not merely decorate the text; each illustration telegraphs its special point briefly and efficiently.

MAJOR FEATURES

Evolutionary and in some ways revolutionary because of its expanded horizons, this new look at the world of mass communication offers the following features that will enliven and enrich the introductory course:

- *Balanced orientation toward producer and consumer.* The roles of the audience and the individual are as central to this text as the traditional perspective on the emergence and growth of the mass media. All major developments are put in the perspective of how information-seeking individuals help shape the media of mass communication.
- *The P↔I↔C model.* To illustrate the role of the consumer, the authors have formulated a straightforward Production-Information-Consumption model that evolves from the earlier models familiar to instructors. The text articulates the P↔I↔C model in many interesting variations to account for the mutual influence of producers and consumers.
- *Innovative boxes.* Boxed items are provocative discussion starters as well as interesting sidelights to and highlights of concepts found in the main text. See the Instructor’s Manual for exciting ways to use the boxed material to stimulate class discussion and to make writing assignments relevant and enjoyable for students.
- *Historical perspectives.* The history of the development of each type of mass communication is presented in a lively and efficient manner, alerting students to the reasons for development of the media and issues surrounding the acceptance of various forms of mass communication. The “Timetable” graphics found in the section of each chapter summarizing the development of a medium or institution of mass communication show students at a glance the important events in the history of that sector of mass communication.
- *Chapter openers.* The “At a Glance” section preceding each chapter alerts students to the main concepts covered in the chapter and helps them to focus their reading as well as their preparations for papers and exams.

- *Chapter closers.* The "Future File" section ending each chapter poses three questions that will challenge students to think about the next phase of development for the media or institutions they have just been reading about. Future File items lend themselves well to essays and class discussion starters.
- *Guest essays.* Five experts provide brief essays on important social issues: the role and portrayal of minorities in the media, women in mass communication, ethics, First Amendment issues, and public broadcasting. Each brings a special perspective that will generate class discussion.
- *Crisp writing.* More than 25 reviewers and consultants helped the authors to sharpen the text and associated materials to pack the most ideas and information into one volume serving the introductory course. Students and teachers alike will appreciate that the breadth of this most up-to-date treatment of the fields of mass communication has been achieved at no expense of readability and completeness.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

- *Student Workbook and Study Guide:* Learning is enhanced, student participation is increased, and instructor workload is lightened by the availability of a student study guide/workbook keyed to all the major concepts in the text.
- *Instructor's Manual/Test Bank:* Includes true/false questions, multiple choice questions, suggestions for classroom activities, and suggestions on how to organize lectures and class modules around the parent text.
- *TestMaster—IBM:* The complete test bank is contained on diskette for IBM PC and compatibles. TestMaster comes with a word processing program that allows complete customizing capabilities.
- *HarperCollins Communication Video Library:* Numerous videos available to qualified users. Contact your local HarperCollins sales representative.
- *Grades:* A grade-keeping and classroom management software program for IBM PC and compatibles that can maintain data for up to 200 students.

ORGANIZATION

Part One—A theoretical framework should precede any discussion of how the media of mass communication evolved and how they operate. Part One of the book reviews the development of theories to explain the role of communication and mass communication in everyday life. A major concern is the effects that mass communication institutions—and the messages they disseminate—have on individuals and on society.

Part Two—How and why do the media of mass communication decide what information to disseminate to consumers? To what extent do societies attempt to regulate those decisions? Part Two of the book examines the influences individuals, groups, and government bodies have on mass communication.

Part Three—The examination of individual media and channels of communications is presented in order of historical development, beginning with the print media in order of appearance, the broadcast media similarly in order of appearance, and the auxiliary mass communication services that have developed in recent times.

Each unit and each chapter of the book can be appreciated individually, but a cumulative understanding of the development of mass communication media is obtained by following the chronology of the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Like all Americans, the authors have sighed and moaned as an Academy Award, Tony, or Emmy recipient stood at the microphone endlessly naming the many people who have made a moment of glory possible. Nonetheless, the simple task of recording what we know and think about the role of mass communication in our lives depends, as it turns out, on the efforts and interests of many of our friends and colleagues, to whom we now express our heartfelt thanks.

The idea for the book was originally proposed to the authors by Lloyd Chilton, then Executive Editor of Macmillan Publishing Company. Subsequently, Julie Alexander and Johnna Barto of Macmillan assisted us in developing the project.

Barbara Cinquegrani of HarperCollins convinced us that her company was willing to help launch this fresh approach to mass communications, and her insights were aided by those of Susan Katz and Marianne Russell at critical points in the book's development. Anne Smith, Jane Kinney, and Melissa Rosati prodded us through the difficult middle period of developing the manuscript.

It remained for Anne Boynton-Trigg to work laboriously over the too-long manuscript and pare it down to the essentials—what she thought the student could and should retain from our huge trove of information about mass communication. Her questioning and prodding shaped the final product.

In the production stages, Editor Dan Pipp, Production Supervisor Donna DeBenedictis, Project Editor Diane Williams, Photo Editor Mira Schachne, and Copy Editor Kathy Hieatt cheerfully attended to thousands of details that helped shape the book.

Rutgers colleagues Richard Hixson, Bob Kubey, David Carr, and Gordon Miller helped fill in the gaps in our knowledge, as did Fred Williams of Texas and Michael Cheney of Drake. We turned to Cheney along with Elizabeth Toth, Deni Elliott, Catherine Pratt, and Marilyn Kern-Foxworth to describe their special interest areas of mass communication far better than we could, and we thank them for their contributions to this volume.

Traditionally, reviewers' names are unknown to the authors, but we are indebted to those who provided valuable criticism in the final stage of manuscript preparation: Samuel A. Andrews, Texas Southern University; Eldean Bennett, Arizona State University; George Bradley, Sul Ross State University; Dean Michael Cheney, Drake University; Patrick Collins, John Jay College; Jack Haberstroh, Virginia Commonwealth University; Michael Hesse, University of Alabama; Gwenyth Jackaway, Fordham University; Val E. Limburg, Washington State University; Robert McGaughey, Murray State University; Thomas McPhail, University of Cal-

gary; Timothy Meyer, University of Wisconsin; Gary Morgan, Oxnard College; Catherine A. Pratt, Ohio State University; Susanne Roschwalb, American University; Leonard Sellers, San Francisco State University; Joseph Turow, University of Pennsylvania; and Linda Zeigler, Tyler Junior College.

Our wives have long since come to think of themselves as widows, the result of the time we spent on this project. We can only ask that Karli Jo Hunt and Jann Ruben welcome us back with no regrets.

Three Rutgers secretaries had their lives made infinitely more interesting owing to the myriad telephone calls and faxes they handled for the authors. We thank Alma Blount, Joan Chabrak, and Angela DiMartini for assuring that all messages got through in timely and accurate fashion.

Most important, we wish to thank the many students at Rutgers University from whom we have learned so much as we discussed and argued in the classroom about the role of mass communication in society. Professors may know it all, but students ask the perceptive questions that force us to think some more.

Todd Hunt
Brent D. Ruben

Brief Contents

CONTENTS vii

PREFACE xvii

PART ONE Understanding Mass Communication: The P↔I↔C Framework 1

Chapter 1 The Impact of the Information Age on Everyday Life 3

Chapter 2 Communication and Information Consumption 33

Chapter 3 Mass Communication Effects 61

PART TWO Influences on Mass Communication, Media, and Messages 95

Chapter 4 The Selection and Packaging of News 97

Chapter 5 Regulation of the Mass Media 129

PART THREE The Production of Information: Print and Broadcast Media 153

Chapter 6 Books 155

Chapter 7 Newspapers 177

Chapter 8 Magazines 205

Chapter 9 Radio 227

Chapter 10 Television 255

Chapter 11 Cable and Video 301

Chapter 12 Public Relations 335

Chapter 13 Advertising 363

Chapter 14 Music, Movies, Theater 399

Chapter 15 Libraries and Museums 443

Chapter 16 New Electronic Services 465

CREDITS 492

NAME INDEX 494

SUBJECT INDEX 498

Contents

PREFACE xvii

PART ONE

Understanding Mass Communication: The P \leftrightarrow I \leftrightarrow C Framework 1

Chapter 1

The Impact of the Information Age on Everyday Life 3

At a Glance 3

Technological Convergence 5

The International Scene 7

Culture: Society's Information Base 10

The Role of Mass Communication 10

Packaging and Distribution of Culture, 10 / Popularizing and Validating Function, 11 / Commercializing Function, 15

Origins of the Concept of Mass Communication 16

A Foundation in Public Speaking, 16 / The Beginnings of Journalism, 17

The Concept Evolves: The Impact of Mass Media 17

The S \rightarrow M \rightarrow C \rightarrow R Perspective, 17 / Deficiencies of the S \rightarrow M \rightarrow C \rightarrow R Perspective, 18

A Framework for Understanding Mass Communication in the Information Age:

The P \leftrightarrow I \leftrightarrow C Model 23

The Process: Production, Distribution, and Consumption, 24 /
Mass Communication Organizations, 25 / Information Products
and Services, 26 / The Audience, 27

vii

The P↔I↔C Perspective	29
<i>Future File</i>	29
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	30

Chapter 2

Communication and Information Consumption 33

<i>At a Glance</i>	33
Understanding Human Communication	34
Signals, Symbols, and Meaning, 34 / Communication Modes and Contexts, 36 / Dynamics of the Communication Process, 38	
Human Information Consumption	38
Information Selection, 38 / Information Interpretation, 41 / Retention-Memory, 43	
Factors That Influence Information Consumption	45
Characteristics of Information Producers That Influence Consumption, 45 /	
Characteristics of Information Products That Influence Consumption, 48 /	
Characteristics of Information Consumers That Influence Consumption, 50	
Mass Communication: A Mixed Blessing	53
Limited Communication Modes, 54 / Decreased Control, 55 /	
Anonymity, 56 / Blending of Work and Leisure Activities, 56	
<i>Future File</i>	57
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	58

Chapter 3

Mass Communication Effects 61

<i>At a Glance</i>	61
The Concept of Audience	62
Audience Access, 62 / Audience Exposure, 62 / Audience Awareness, Attitude, Opinion, Knowledge, and Behavior, 62	
Characteristics of Audiences	63
Size, 64 / Demographics and Psychographics, 64 / Audience Type, 65	
Audience Feedback Systems	65
Market-Based Feedback Systems, 66 / Research-Based Feedback Systems, 70	
The Effects of Mass Communication on Audience Members	73
The Producer Perspective, 74 / The Consumer Perspective, 80 / Reconciling Producer and Consumer Perspectives, 83 / Additional Concerns About Mass Communication Effects, 85	
<i>Future File</i>	91
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	93

PART TWO

Influences on Mass Communication, Media, and Messages 96

Chapter 4

The Selection and Packaging of News 96

At a Glance 97

News Producers 98

Structure of the Newsroom, 98 / The Production Component, 101 / Relationship with Business and Advertising, 101 / The Journalist as "Gatekeeper", 102 / Events or Process?, 103 / The Role of Press Associations and Syndicates, 104 / The Myth of Objectivity, 106

Packaging the News 107

Characteristics of News 109

Categories of News 111

Pressures on the News Media 113

Manipulation of Information, 113 / Commercial Control, 115 / Legal and Political Threats, 118 / Conflicts of Interest, 119 / Consumer Action, 120

Criticisms of the News Media 123

Future File 127

Suggested Readings 127

Chapter 5

Regulation of the Mass Media 129

At a Glance 129

Regulation: How Much? What Kind? By Whom? 130

Freedom of Information and Privacy 132

The Freedom of Information Act: A Continuing Saga, 134 / Impact of the Information Age, 135

Ethics Codes and Self-Regulating Organizations 135

The Legal Matrix 136

Libel and Slander, 137 / Copyright, 137 / Implied Endorsement, 137 / Hate Speech, 138 / Shield Laws for Reporters, 138 / Gag Rules, 139 / Cameras in the Court, 139 / Coverage of Legislative Bodies, 139 / Antitrust Legislation, 139

Who Owns the Media of Mass Communication? 140

New Ownership Patterns, 140 / Pressures of the Marketplace, 141

Future File 143

Suggested Readings 143

Guest Essay: Freedom of Speech and Freedom of the Press, by Catherine Pratt 145

Guest Essay: Ethics and Mass Communication, by Deni Elliott 148

PART THREE

The Production of Information: Print and Broadcast Media 153

Chapter 6

Books 155

At a Glance 155

The Development of a Permanent Record 156

From Clay to Paper, 156 / Gutenberg's Contribution, 156 / The Printing "Revolution", 157 / Books Spread to England, 158

Publishing in the New World 159

Early Hybrid Forms of Books, 159 / Books in the Colonies and Early America, 160 / The Literate Society, 161

The Book Industry Restructures Itself 162

Hardcover or Paperback?, 162 / Big Business Means Big Publishers, 163 / Bookselling: Personalized Services or Mass Marketing Chains?, 165 / Textbooks: An Important Sector, 166

Catering to the Consumer's Interests 168

The Marketing Mentality, 168 / General versus Specialized Publishers, 168 / "Vanity Press" Offers Self-Publishing, 169 / Marketing Calls for Innovation, 169 / Where Do Books Originate?, 171 / New Strategies for Reaching Readers, 171 / Why Buy a Book? Why Read a Book?, 172 / Illiteracy Poses a Threat, 173

Future File 174

Suggested Readings 174

Chapter 7

Newspapers 177

At a Glance 177

The Evolution of the American Newspaper 178

Broadsheets: A Profitable Sideline, 178 / Early Colonial Newspapers, 180 / The 1800s: Development of the Popular Press, 181 / Photography Illustrates the Stories, 182 / Yellow Journalism, 183

Newspapers in the Twentieth Century 184

Newspapers of Record, 184 / The Opinion Function, 185 / Journalism as a Profession, 185 / A Medium at the Crossroads, 186 / Sunday Papers Show Growth, 186 / The Shrinking Newspaper, 187 / More Casualties: Extras and "PMs", 188 / The "Metro" versus the Suburban Newspaper, 188 / Television Changes Newspapers' Focus, 190 / *USA Today*: Prototype of the New Newspaper?, 191

Computers Change Newspapers . . . and the News 192

Pagination: From Computer Screen to Printing Press, 194 / "Paperless, Interactive Newspapers", 194

Is the Newspaper Doomed?	195
Reasons for Optimism, 195 / Newspapers Seek to Adapt and Innovate, 196 /	
Speed Is the Key, 197	
Changing Patterns of Ownership	198
The Roles of Women and Minorities	200
<i>Future File</i>	201
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	203

Chapter 8

Magazines 205

<i>At a Glance</i>	205
Magazines: The Development of Specialized Publishing	206
Storehouses of Information, 206 / Providing Food for Thought, 207 /	
Beginnings of the Mass Audience Magazine, 208 / <i>Time</i> Begets the Modern	
Newsweekly, 209 / The Impact of Television on Magazines, 210	
Magazine Publishing: Matching Today's Life-styles	211
Special-Interest Magazines Target Audiences for Advertisers, 211 / Does	
Your Magazine Know Who You Are?, 212 / Categorizing Magazines, 214 /	
Trade Magazines, 216 / Seeking the College Audience, 218 / Targeting	
Women, 218 / Creating a New Magazine, 220	
Ensuring the Future of the Magazine	220
Reader Loyalty Concerns Magazines, 221 / Shifting Economic	
Realities, 222 / Controlled Circulation Accounts for Success, 223	
<i>Future File</i>	224
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	225

Chapter 9

Radio 227

<i>At a Glance</i>	227
Using the Airwaves to Communicate	228
The Beginnings of the Network, 230 / Radio's Emergence as a News	
Medium, 232	
The Need for Regulation	233
Radio's Golden Age	236
Involving the Consumer, 239	
Television and FM Change AM Radio's Role	239
Competition Leads to New Formats, 240 / Talk Show Hosts Wield	
Power, 240 / New Hope for AM, 241	
The Radio Spectrum	242
Radio Is "Transnational"	243
Finding the Right Format	243
Network Affiliation: Changing Realities	246
Public Radio Provides Alternative Choice	246
Measuring the Audience	248
Deciphering the Data, 249	

Making a Profit in Radio	250
Small Field, Low Pay,	252
<i>Future File</i>	252
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	253

Chapter 10

Television 255

<i>At a Glance</i>	255
The Advent of Television	256
A Freeze on Station Applications,	256 / Allocating the Spectrum,
257	
Discovering the Programming Formula	257
Early Television Invents Itself,	259 / Developing Durable Products,
260 / The	
Game Shows: Made for TV,	261 / The Soaps: Escaping Worldly Cares,
262	
Television Renews Itself	263
A Hybrid Format: The Docudrama,	264 / Blending Formats: “Infotainment”
and “Infomercials”,	265
Who Pays for Television Programming?	266
Public Broadcasting’s Role	268
Finding Financial Support,	268 / The Challenge for Public Broadcasting,
270	
The Rise and Decline of the Television Networks	271
FCC Eyes the Role of Networks,	272 / Networks Lose Viewers and
Advertising Revenue,	273 / Stopping the Slide,
273 / The Networks Fight	
Back,	273
Developing the News Function	274
Political Conventions Launch New Careers,	275
How TV News Differs from Print News	276
How Does TV Programming Take Shape . . . and Why?	278
Pressures on the Networks,	278 / Figuring Out the Viewers,
280	
What Does the Consumer Make of TV?	282
TV “Immediacy” Can Be Real or Manufactured,	284 / The Medium of
Confrontation,	285
Living or Dying by the Ratings	285
What Is a “Rating”?,	285 / Development of the Ratings System,
286 / The	
“People Meters” Experiment,	288 / What’s Wrong with the Ratings System?,
290 / Measuring Likability: The Q-Rating,	292
Technology and Expansion Are Keys to the Future	293
Low-Power Television,	293 / High-Definition Television,
293	
<i>Future File</i>	296
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	297
<i>Guest Essay: Questions for Public Broadcasting, by Michael Cheney</i>	298

Chapter 11

Cable and Video 301

<i>At a Glance</i>	301
Cable: Connecting Your Home to the World	302
How Cable Works,	303 / Cable Begins as CATV,
303 / Regulating	

- Cable, 304 / Cable Matures as a Business, 310 / What Is Cable Offering Consumers?, 314 / Will the Consumer Pay for More?, 316
- The Video Explosion 318
 - Market Battle: Betamax versus VHS, 318 / Changing Movie Habits, 320 / Nielsen Tracks Videocassette Viewing, 322 / Specialized Uses of Video, 322 / Innovation Continues, 328
- Future File* 331
- Suggested Readings* 333

Chapter 12

Public Relations 335

- At a Glance* 335
- Facilitating the Flow of Information 336
- The Origins of Public Relations 338
 - From Press Agency to Public Policy, 338 / Ivy Lee: Informing the Public, 340 / Edward Bernays: Shaper of the Profession, 341 / Development of PR Models, 342
- Identifying Publics 343
- Implementing the PR Program 346
 - Setting Objectives, 346 / Planning the Program, 346
- Examples of Public Relations Programs 347
 - The Tylenol Tragedy, 348 / Cabbage Patch Dolls, 348 / Selling Kitchens . . . and Nixon, 349 / Overcoming Consumer Reluctance, 349 / The Employee Video Magazine, 350
- Relations with the News Media 350
 - Two-Way Benefits, 351
- The Profession Gains Recognition 352
 - Management by Objectives, 353 / Research Applications, 353 / Writing: The Basic Skill, 354 / Crisis Management, 354 / Types of Organizations Using PR, 355 / The Role of the Agency, 356 / Should Practitioners Be Accredited?, 357
- Future File* 358
- Suggested Readings* 358
- Guest Essay: Women in Media Industries: The Issues*, by Elizabeth L. Toth 360

Chapter 13

Advertising 363

- At a Glance* 363
- A Natural Adjunct to Commerce 364
 - Early Forms of Advertising, 364 / America and Advertising Grow Together, 364 / A Fancy for Patent Medicines, 366
- Development of the Advertising Industry 368
 - The Modern Advertising Agency, 369 / Advertising's World Gets Smaller, 370
- How Advertising Works 372
 - Advertising Is Not "All-Powerful", 373 / Advertising Performs Many