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Media Now

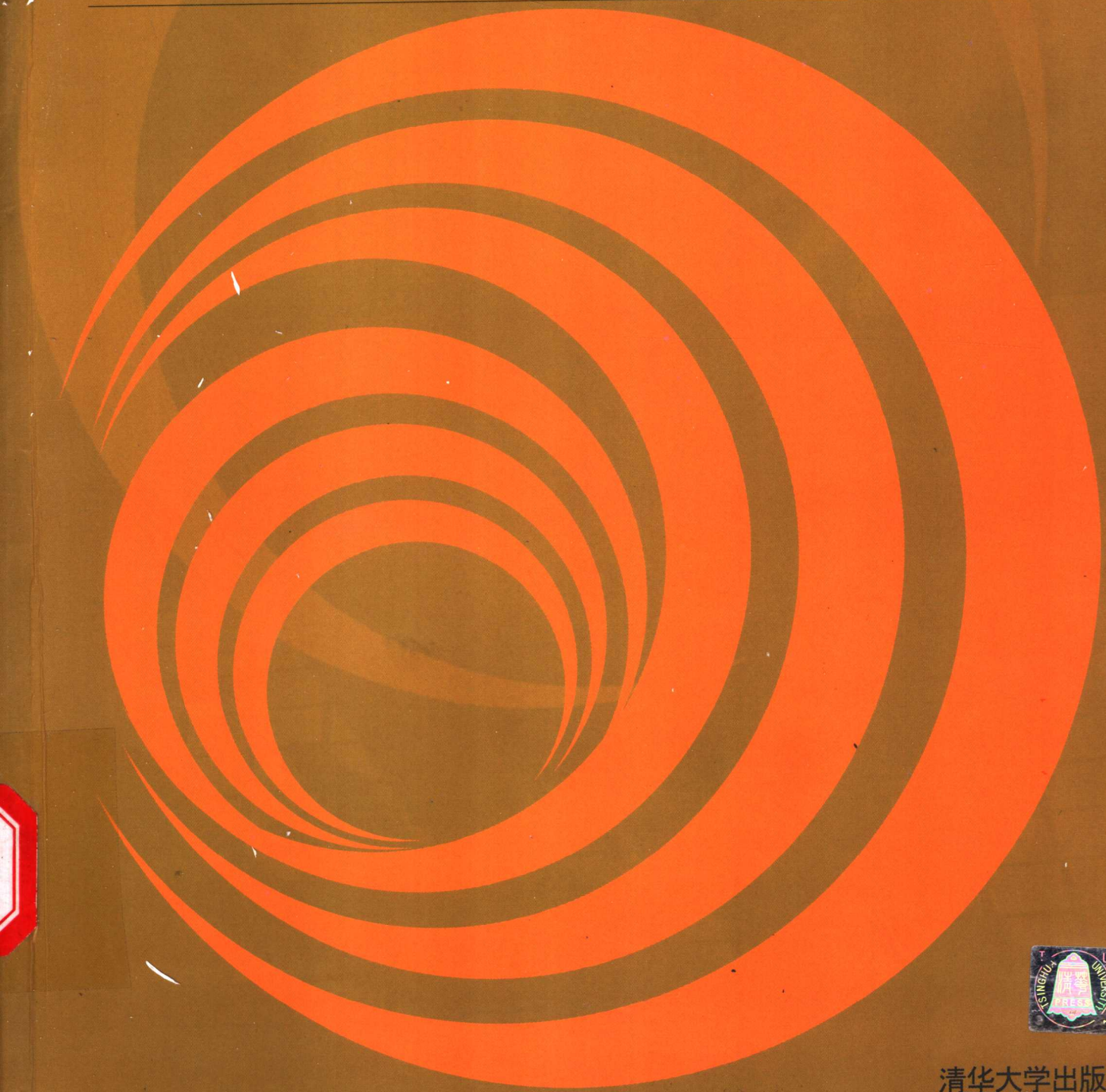
今日媒介：理解媒介、文化与技术

Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology

[影印]

Joseph Straubhaar Robert LaRose

（第四版）Fourth Edition



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导　读

郭镇之

2001年，一位在美国教书的朋友送了我一本出版不久的Media Now（第二版，2000年），他说，这是美国最畅销的媒介教科书。我发现，其中的第一作者（Joseph Straubhaar）所在的得克萨斯州大学奥斯汀学校恰好是我曾经访问过半年的地方，虽然我并不认识这位教授，但仍然感觉亲切。2002年，又一位美国教授带领纽约大学一个跨文化交流的学生暑期研修团来访，谈到当时“双语教学”的热门话题时，他也推荐了Media Now。其后，得知清华大学出版了熊澄宇教授等翻译的Media Now第三版（《今日媒介》），我曾推荐给学生阅读。等到这次清华大学引进这本Media Now的英文原版教材时，赫然已是第四版了。一两年出一个新的版本，更新得这么快，而且，在此书中，已经涵盖了“9·11”后的部分变化（第一章开宗明义就是——9·11后的媒介世界），让人惊奇。于是我仔细地读了这本书。

虽然我并非英语专业出身，但长期以来，我教的最多的一门课却是“专业外语”，主要内容是教研究生学习和翻译用英语写的专业文章。老实说，我不太喜欢教外语，因为英语并非我之专长，我是学新闻出身的；于是，我把“专业外语”变成了以英语为工具的讲授媒介知识的专业基础课。而我用的教材呢？也有其他许多，但最重要的一本就是原版的Media Now。

在使用这本教材中，我逐渐体会到这本书的许多优点，我猜想，这些也是它受到广泛欢迎的原因吧。

一、本书的一些特点和优势

首先，这本书的内容非常广泛，例如媒介涉及报纸、广播、电视、书籍、杂志、音像制品、电影、互联网；学科涉及新闻、传播、公共关系、广告、媒介政策和法规、媒介伦理；研究方法涉及历史和理论，具体到政治经济学派、批判和文化研究学派、社会功能和行为理论等偏近传统的学派等；领域涉及技术、政治、经济、文化、社会，包括当前热门的全球化与传播话题。可以说，举凡与当今大众传播有关的各个方面的问题都有所涉及。当然，在学科知识的整个结构中，Media Now只是一本浅显易读的入门书，但它是一张很好的地图，从中可以让学生获得对整个领域的全面印象。

其次，与这种浅显的内容相互配合的，是本书非常活泼的编排特色，非常适合在“读图”时代长大的学生阅读。此书众多的图表，有实景、照片，也有图形和表格；有报纸版面，也有互联网的页面。除了分门别类的内容——对技术概念和文化现象的解释（有继承有更新）之外，还有对当时媒介的突出表现（每版随时更新）和风云人物介绍（每一版本也会有不同，因为风

云人物也是“你方唱罢我登场”。例如，“AOL 先生” Steve Case 在第二版中作为全球最大媒介公司兼并事件的代表人物，而在第四版中已经不再是风光人物，因为他创办的“美国在线”陷入了经济困境）等。作者还体贴周到地为学生在每一章的结尾处准备了“小结与回顾”、“关键术语（帮助学生掌握重点）”。详细的目录指引着读者的选择——学生既可以通读，也可以挑选相关的内容阅读。这样活泼的书，对于中国学生来说，至少会减少一点阅读英文时的畏惧感吧！

最后、也最重要的一点是，这本英文教材的文字是比较易读好懂的，对于中国学生来说，是“界面友好”的；同时，其中的英文词汇量也是相对较大的。又是“易读好懂的”，又是“词汇量大的”，这是不是矛盾呢？我想不是的。第一是书中句子的含义明白晓畅，个别生词不构成理解上的大障碍；第二是作者体贴地在书页两侧置入了许多名词解释，术语解释，学生不用时时查字典，便可以顺利地阅读下去。因为最重要的新闻传播专业词汇都在这些作了解释的术语里了。其他的生词，可以暂且搁置，以备后查。

其实，这最后一点（英文的词汇和术语）是特别值得提出来讨论的。我们知道，许多中国学生是从中文学习专业词汇的。经常发生的情况是，一个英文词，被中文作者译为汉语在书中使用并广泛传播后，等到中国学者需要在英文中使用，或者用英语表达时，有时会从中文再翻译出另外一个英文的词——可能完全不同的词。结果，在国际交流的场合往往出现障碍。有时，从海外学习新闻传播的学者会说，他们之所以宁愿写英文，是因为不会使用中文相应的术语；在国内学习新闻传播的学生则往往踟躇于用英文表达自己如此熟悉的知识内容。阅读英文教科书，用英文学习专业知识，至少可以部分地解决这种交流的障碍。这样，我们就可以用国外学者，包括华人学者能够听懂的术语向他们解释中国的新闻传播和媒介研究问题了，我们可以顺畅地讨论学术，交流共通的心得。这是中国学生和学者国际化的一条语言路径。

二、对本书内容的简要介绍

在我的印象里，Wadsworth 是一家以出版高等院校教材为重要特色的商业出版社。在此，我必须赶紧解释，“商业”在这里的意思是说面向社会（而不是面向少量专业学者和知识精英）、发行量大（读者广泛，因此通常可以创造较大利润）的意思。较之 Sage、Routledge 等专业性更强的学术出版社，它的书籍发行量大，用途广泛。而 Media Now 是一本常用常新的教材。无论是从出版社、还是从本书来看，都意味着 Media Now 代表的是主流的观点。所谓“主流”的观点，在美国，就是中产阶级大多数人认同的观点，也是既不偏左、也不偏右、比较稳健的、力求避免争议的、“集体的”、“正确的”观点。我们可以发现，这本书中有对人对事的赞扬，但决不火爆肉麻；有对人对事的批评，但决不疾言厉色。“客观叙述”是本书的行文特点。它代表的是多数人群的立场，表达的是主流学术的观点。

这种多数立场和主流观点对各家各派都采取了一种兼容并包的中庸态度。特别是在理论问题上，基本采取了一视同仁的介绍方法。但是，我们从中也可以发现作者隐约的批评语调。例如，在第二章“媒介理论”中，作者介绍了“媒介经济学”、“批判和文化研究”、“媒介的社会功能”、“行为理论”等几个大的理论流派，作为趋新的作者，书中对比较传统的学派介绍得比较简略，对“媒介的社会功能”和“行为理论”只用了 2～3 页的篇幅；而对经济学派和文化学

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派则花费了更多的笔墨。其实这种厚此薄彼的编排不仅仅反映了作者的偏好，实际也显示了社会性的潮流。正如我们所知，在传统学派普及了对媒介的“常识”之后，现在是批判学者在致力于揭示“常识”后面的制度原因了。

这种略略偏向媒介批评的态度是整个美国的主流意识形态。作者在对媒介垄断的批评中，虽然温和地指出“大，不一定是坏”，因为“规模经济”的效应；但紧接着指出“但不幸的是，大公司在垄断了市场之后，可能表现恶劣。它们可能以欺骗的手段滥用市场权力”，一种是压制创新，一种是垄断价格（第38页）。在其后关于“利润动机”的讨论中，作者首先以较大篇幅肯定了追求利润动机的合理性，然后轻轻一两句带过：“但是利润并不总是极为重要的。公共服务媒介系统传送教育、文化艺术和政府信息。”接着举美国公共电视网（PBS）的例子，说明它“并不期待利润”（第39页）。这是典型的主流意见！

在介绍各种大众传播媒介的第3～8章，作者大致是按照历史的顺序逐一展示的。先是印刷媒介，再是电子媒介。通常，我们将报刊（报纸和杂志）归入一类（连续的定期出版物）；而将书籍专门辟为一类。但在本书中，却是将书刊（书籍和杂志）归入一类；而将报纸单独辟出。仔细一想，这也很有道理，因为在当今，书籍和杂志的出版过程和消费过程都在逐渐接近，而它们都具有文学艺术，亦即狭义的文化等共同的特征。而报纸的出版周期比较独特，是以“新鲜”的信息为主的。此外，报纸横向的“信息传播”特征超过了纵向的“文化传承”特征。总之，这种分类方式也算是一种思路吧。

与此类似的，是声频广播与音乐产品、电影与视像产品的合并分类。以往，我们通常是按照“广播与电视”、“音像制品”和“电影”的方法分类的。仔细分析，这里面体现了隐约的“机构主体”思路、“产品生产主体”思路，亦即媒介本位的思路。而本书的分类侧重于接受，强调了视听感官，似乎了凸显出“受众”主体的无意识。这种发现对我们“习以为常”的观念是有启示作用的，大约是在“媒介本位”的文化中浸淫日久吧，以往我们已经习焉不察地接受了特定的框架呢。

在本书中，“互联网”与“传播基础设施”是分开进行的，也就是说，作者把“网络服务”与“网络设施”区分开来了。在中国，在整个世界，都存在对“网络”身份的怀疑：它是大众传播媒介吗？或者，它算媒体吗？它究竟属于技术呢，还是属于文化？对身份的认定涉及对“网络”的管理。如果用操控技术的方式放任文化，固然会留下种种漏洞；而如果用管理文化的方式去限制技术，又难免裹足不前。本书作者的分类显示了在国外，至少是在美国的占主流地位的认识：那就是将经济和技术择出来，个案处理，加大推进的力度。

不过，在客观上，这种分法却可以使我们将经济、技术与文化、社会适当地区分开来。对于经济和技术我们固然可以取市场竞争的政策；对涉及文化的服务，我们却仍然有以往媒介管理的经验可资借鉴。与初创时期无政府主义的技术社群对网络传播的民主概念显著不同的是，如今商业化的互联网在所有经营机制方面都越来越像它的大众传媒前辈们了。利润动机也在甚嚣尘上，所以我们今天有那么多的垃圾邮件、病毒邮件（谁能不猜想背后的利润趋动因素呢）。尽管互联网是新事物，但文化的传播却不是新现象。

“传播基础设施”一章（第9章）可能是技术问题最集中的一章了。虽然大多数章节都涉及

技术问题，而在每一涉及技术的章节，作者几乎都用简明扼要的语言“解密”了技术的奥妙；但在这一部分，特别集中地介绍了数字化的原理，要言不烦。我在讲课中遇到这一章时，总是让学生自己阅读。我相信，不懂技术的人只会越讲越乱，不如让大家潜心阅读，反倒可能心领神会。

广告和公共关系是我不太喜欢的两章，这里有我自己的偏颇。但在公共关系的起源部分，作者“客观”介绍了这种宣传活动的“私人利益”动机，并且指出了“强盗富豪”对“专业公共关系”的利用。（第303页）我必须承认，这比严厉的批评更具有批判的效果。

在第12章“媒介的冲击”中，作者在介绍了比较传统的研究方法（内容分析、实验研究、调查研究、民族志学）后，介绍了一些研究思路，例如“皮下注射法”、“多级流动传播”、“选择性过程”、“社会学习理论”、“教化”理论、“铺垫”、“议程设置”、“宣泄”等似乎尽人皆知的理论之后，也以综述的方式介绍了质疑传统理论和传统方法的“批判理论”，可惜的是相当简略。在“信息媒介与亲社会行为”一节强调了信息的作用。与媒介冲击相关的话题是，在许多章，都设置了“媒介素养教育”的部分，旨在对学生进行“解读媒介”的普及教育。正视媒介影响，提高对媒介传播的免疫能力正在成为值得人们注意的社会话题。

“媒介政策和法规”（第13章）以及“媒介伦理”（第14章）对中国媒介工作者而言应该是有比较大的启示作用的。与人们通常的见解很不相同的是，倡导“自由”的美国其实并不是媒介“无法无天”的乐土。美国有一把大大的保护伞——“宪法第一条修正案”——作为“尚方宝剑”，捍卫着媒介的传播自由，从而给人“政治文明”的印象。这种印象非常重要，它使美国在道义上占据上风，似乎获得了在世界上批判他人、“免责自己”的权利。但是，美国的“新闻自由”也是有限的，从此次伊拉克战争中媒介的众口一词便可见一斑。当时，美国社会包括美国媒体“舆论一律”的态势令世界上的学者普遍震惊。其实，美国的意识形态严格尺度传统上便超过欧洲，因而始终保持着比较“狂热”的思想一致性。在实际的传播操作过程中，媒介控制社会和政府控制媒介的手法均精细而老练。不过，美国法规的优越之处是立法重程序，司法有制约，履行辩论和申诉的规矩。“法规政策”一章的介绍虽然比较简略，但概括了最基本的法制问题。

与政策法规相比，媒介的伦理问题近年来得到了更多的关注。在此，应该简单地说几句与“社会责任”有关的话。一般国内学者说到媒介的“社会责任”时，总是容易联想起中国传统的“经世济国”、“治国平天下”的士大夫理想。这种“责任”是外向型的，是高高在上的；而西方的社会责任理论从哈钦斯委员会的主张开始，都是内敛的，是投向媒介自身的，意指媒介应约束自己过于“自由”的行为。实际上，在美国受到批评的许多伦理缺失，目前在中国也已经一一显现了，例如“耸人听闻”式的新闻、广告的夸大不实、传播娱乐化和行贿受贿现象等。我相信，这本教科书在培养新闻专业主义方面也会是有益的。

在最后的“传播媒介全球化”的第15章，作者在历数了跨界数据传播、信息不均衡流通、媒介与后进国家发展的诸多问题之后，提出了“这是谁的世界?”的问题。客观叙述争议问题的本书没有直接回答这个问题，但正在走向全球化的中国人却不能不思考这样一个严肃的问题——这是谁的全球化？——并做出自己的回答。

Preface

We wrote this book to lead a new generation of textbooks about mass communication. Our focus is on all types of communication that are mediated by technology. We expanded the traditional focus to include new media that are rapidly changing our conceptions of "mass" media—and even blurring the meaning of that term—such as computers, the Internet, and the digital telecommunications infrastructure that underlies all the media. Our theme is that the convergence of these technologies is creating a new communications environment and is impacting the culture we all share. Our goal is to prepare students to thrive in that environment. Our approach is to provide an integrated treatment of traditional media and new media.

The specific reason we wrote this book is that we could not find an existing introductory mass communications textbook that adequately prepares our students for the real world as it stands today. Our title, *Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology,* reflects our desire to focus on the cutting edge of both the traditional mass media (magazines, books, newspapers, radio, film, and television), the new media (cable, satellite, computer media, interactive television, the Internet, and digital telecommunications), and the culture that surrounds them.

We saw too many students diligently studying mass media in the traditional way, only to discover after graduation that the vast majority of today's real jobs require skills and a knowledge base that their textbooks had barely touched on. Students in media, advertising, journalism, and public relations now find jobs faster if they also know how to design and construct a Web page and how to find information on the Web. Many students find their first jobs in innovative places—with phone companies and Internet service providers, in corporate telecommunications departments and Web design firms, and so on—but discover they do not always know enough to succeed in these new environments.

Since our first edition was published, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 changed the rules to further encourage convergence and competition across media industries. That has led to fairly traditional combinations, such as the merging of movie studios, television networks, and cable operations, but also to new alliances such as AOL Time Warner. And despite the recent downturn in the fortunes of Internet companies, the Web seemingly pervades all aspects of the daily lives of our students, from how they research their course papers to how they listen to music, to how they experience their own cultures.

This book shows where today's communications industries came from and how they got to where they are. But more importantly, it also seriously assesses their trajectories into the future. It helps students understand how mass media are being transformed as they converge with technologies such as the computer, Internet, and telephone. It helps them create a vision of their future in the information society and information economy.

Our purpose is not to be cheerleaders for communication technology. In fact, we raise critical and ethical issues about the implications of information technologies, parallel to our discussion of the implications of mass media. However, we have seen the lights turn on behind our students' eyes when we begin a class discussion with a headline from the morning paper. They realize that the convergence of technologies we are talking about is not dry history or mere speculation, but is really happening right now and affects them directly. It is important to expose them to—and to demystify—communications technologies and the economic and social forces that shape technology. This book is designed to help both professor and student do that.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

In this fourth edition, our goal is to widen our book's innovative coverage of the technology and the social and cultural implications of convergence. We have continued our in-depth coverage of traditional media, with full chapters for magazine and book publishing, newspapers, audio and radio, film, and TV. We have expanded and updated coverage of computer media, communications infrastructure, and the relationship between media and society, and media and the individual. We have also expanded our coverage of ethical issues and updated and revised information on policy and law.

Media Literacy

We have expanded our critical coverage and commentary on the communication industries. Students must gain both professional knowledge and critical appreciation of the changing communication media in order to understand media and prepare for careers in the area. Each media chapter now contains specific issue attention to political economy and to cultural impacts of the media. We focus throughout these chapters and in the law and policy chapter on changes in the concentration of ownership resulting from both industry imperatives and the deregulation in the 1996 Telecommunications Act. We also focus on the implications of many changes for the diversity of content and the quality of the information created. Our chapters have Media Literacy sections in which we focus on the key media issues that confront each sector of the media industry.

Media Ethics

We have added a chapter highlighting the ethical dilemmas that media professionals face. In an era of scandals that have touched all sectors of the communications industry, this topic deserves greater emphasis. Unlike other approaches to media ethics, ours places the issue in the broader context of corporate ethical practices. It also provides a focus on the ethical decisions of the media consumer, decisions that our students face every day as they consider whether to download a pirated movie or impersonate someone else in an Inernet chat room.

Updated Features

This book comes with a rich set of features to aid in learning:

- ***Glossary*** Key terms are defined in the margins, and a complete glossary is included in the back of the book.
- ***Time Lines*** Major events in each media industry are summarized in chart form.
- ***Boxed Features*** Boxed features are designed to target specific issues:
  - **MEDIA & CULTURE** highlights cultural issues in the media.
  - **PROFILE** focuses on key media figures.
  - **MEDIA IMPACT** examines the impact of some key aspect of media on the individual and society.
  - **TECHNOLOGY DEMYSTIFIED** explains technological background information simply.
  - **TECHNOLOGY TRENDS** (in select chapters) focuses on technological changes in the various media.
- ***Electronic Resources*** Many of the boxes and sources cited contain electronic resources—places to look on the Internet or in InfoTrac College Edition for further information. (See next page for more information about this resource.)

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

For this edition, important resources have been enhanced:

- ***Media Connection CD-ROM*** This fourth edition of Media Now is created to work in concert with the newly created Media Connection CD-ROM—free to students when purchasing a new text. The CD-ROM immediately connects students with the media they're studying, and through it they can connect to the Media Now Web Site. These powerful resources enhance every chapter of the text by providing students with a large section of interactive and engaging resources.
  - **Chapter ending screen grabs** prompt students to link to the Media Connection CD-ROM.
  - **Media in Motion** concept animations help clarify hard-to-understand technical concepts. Taken from many of the text's illustrations, these animations allow students to view and interact with the material.
  - **Chapter-related Critical View** news clips from CNN® bring to life media concepts and theories through real news accounts.
  - **Career Profiles** with media professionals open students' eyes to the variety of media opportunities that are out there and show students how they can get their start. These short clips inform students how professionals got their starts in the media and what career opportunities are available.
  - **Media Now Web Site.** See next page for further details.
  - **InfoTrac® College Edition.** See next page for further details.
- ***Media Now Web Site:*** **http://communication.wadsworth.com/media_now4** The Media Now Web Site can be accessed through the Media Connection CD-ROM providing students with essential chapter-by-chapter resources, including interactive chapter outlines, Web links, quizzes, exercises, InfoTrac College Edition activities, and more. The book's Stop and Review feature is enhanced by an on-line tutorial (with answers) at this Web site. Students also now have access to News Edge—an authoritative news service that delivers customized news feeds daily.

- ***InfoTrac College Edition*** Automatically packaged free with each new copy of the book, this world-class on-line university library offers the full text of nearly 10 million articles from almost 4,000 scholarly and popular publications, which include *Advertising Age, American Journalism Review, Broadcasting and Cable, Communicaiton World, Digital Media, New Media Age, Telecommunications,* and thousands more! Both adopters and their students receive unlimited access for four months.
- ***Instructor's Resource Manual*** This essential manual includes chapter objectives, lecture outlines, suggested student assignments, InfoTrac College Edition exercises, worksheets for in-class discussion, test bank questions, sample syllabi, and a *CNN Today* video correlation guide for classroom use.
- ***WebTutor ToolBox for Blackboard or WebCT*** Preloaded with content and available free via pincode when packaged with this text, **WebTutor ToolBox for Blackboard or WebCT** pairs all the content of this text's rich Book Companion Web Site with all the sophisticated course management functionality of a Blackboard or WebCT product. You can assign materials (including online quizzes) and have the results flow automatically to your gradebook. **ToolBox** is ready to use as soon as you log on—or, you can customize its preloaded content by uploading images and other resources, adding Web links, or creating your own practice materials. Students have access only to student resources on the Web site. Instructors can enter a pincode for access to password-protected Instructor Resources. *Contact your Thomson representative for information on packaging* ***WebTutor ToolBox*** *with this text.*
- ***ExamView Computerized Testing*** Create, deliver and customize tests and study guides (both print and on-line) in minutes with this easy-to-use assessment and tutorial system. ExamView offers both a Quick Test Wizard and an Online Test Wizard that guided you step-by-step through the process of creating tests, while its uinque "what-you-see-is-what-you-get" capability allows you to see the test you are creating on the screen exactly as it will print out or display on-line.
- ***Multimedia Manager for Media Now: A Microsoft® PowerPoint® Link Tool*** Invigorate your lectures with predesigned Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, containing hundreds of images, text, and cued CNN and student speech videos. The unique Media in Motion concept animations are also included in this dynamic tool.
- ***CNN TodayVideos: Mass Communication*** A Wadsworth exclusive, these videos allow professors to integrate the newsgathering and programming power of CNN into the classroom to show students the relevance of media issues to their everyday lives and possible future careers. Each video in the series consists of approximagely 45 minutes of footage originally broadcast on CNN within the last several years. The videos are broken into short, one- to five-minute segments that are perfect for classroom use as lecture launchers or to illustrate key concepts.
- ***Media Literacy in Mass Communication: A Workbook*** This workbook encourages students to think critically about media with 45 engaging exercises.
- ***InfoTrac College Edition Student Activities Workbook for Mass Communication 2.0*** Become a better on-line researcher with this helpful workbook containing numerous activities that can be completed using InfoTrac College Edition.

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