

Broadcasting in America

Eighth Edition

A Survey
of Electronic
Media

Head
Sterling
Schofield
Spann
McGregor

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Eighth Edition

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Preface



Broadcasting in America, Eighth Edition retains the vision of founding author Sydney Head, who viewed electronic media in a broad academic perspective—a vision carried on by Chris Sterling and Lem Schofield in several editions. We continue that tradition, treating media in context, both as products of contemporary social forces and as social forces in their own right.

This eighth edition of *Broadcasting in America*, however, differs from previous editions in several ways. In response to a changing market and concerns expressed about the size of this text, we have attempted in this edition to “split the difference” between previous editions of the full text and the streamlined brief versions. We have reduced the text to fourteen chapters, which better suits classes taught on the quarter system and those in which supplementary readings are assigned. However, the breadth of content more closely parallels previous full-size editions than the brief versions.



Coverage of Recent Developments

This edition continues the ongoing process of updating the reader about the never-ending changes in electronic media. Such changes seemingly occur with greater rapidity every year: Congress enacts new legislation, the FCC is charged with implementing it, industries react and reconfigure themselves, and consumers face a constant need to reassess their telecommunications needs in an ever-changing environment. We have covered de-

velopments that occurred in the four years between publication of the seventh edition and the production of this text, including the following:

- Passage and implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which fundamentally changed the electronic media landscape
- Mergers and acquisitions of electronic media companies, including the Cap Cities/ABC merger with Disney, the Westinghouse acquisition of CBS, and the increased consolidation of media ownership, especially in radio
- The demise of the 25-year-old Prime Time Access Rule and the Syndication and Financial Interest rules
- The establishment of an advanced digital television standard and the FCC's efforts to implement the transition to digital broadcasting
- The roll out of DBS and its effects on existing broadband delivery services such as cable television
- The O.J. Simpson trial, whose many facets and ramifications dictate its inclusion in several sections of the book



Changes in the Eighth Edition

Broadcasting in America, Eighth Edition continues coverage of all electronic media, some of which have only recently emerged as *mass* media. Many chapters, for example, contain expanded consideration of the Internet and telephone networks. We have also provided updates on broadband delivery

systems, such as DBS and MMDS, plus covered newer systems, such as DARS. Specific changes in this edition include the following:

- A new Chapter 1, modified from parts of Chapter 16 of the seventh edition and Chapter 1 of the Brief Version, examines the emerging information infrastructure and the accelerating convergence of various electronic media forms. The chapter also introduces students to some of the vocabulary of electronic media in the United States.
- Chapter 2 combines Chapters 1 and 2 of the seventh edition into one chapter that covers the history of traditional broadcasting. Chapter 3 addresses the history and increasing importance of other electronic media, including telephony and the Internet.
- New technical material in Chapters 4 and 5 explores the developing digital revolution, high-definition television, and the complexities of sophisticated networking and switching, while retaining traditional coverage of electronic media basics.
- A revised Chapter 6 blends information from the seventh edition's Chapters 6 and 7 into one chapter on the basics of commercial electronic media organization and economics.
- An updated Chapter 7, "Noncommercial Services," which corresponds to Chapter 8 in the seventh edition, integrates program and audience material previously scattered throughout the book.
- Revised Chapters 8 and 9 describe how media mergers and acquisitions as well as technological developments such as DBS and the Internet affect programming and program production. These chapters place special emphasis on the emergence of cable television as a major player in electronic media programming.
- New information in Chapter 10 treats the increasingly complex problem of measuring electronic media audiences; and an updated Chapter 11 discusses our understanding of how the electronic media affect us as individuals and as a society.
- Extensive revision of information is provided in chapters dealing with the legal arena. Much of

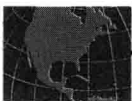
this results from major modifications in the law brought about by the Telecommunications Act of 1996. These changes and their effects are detailed in Chapter 12, which deals primarily with licensing and noncontent regulation, and Chapter 13, which treats constitutional and content-related issues.

- A concluding Chapter 14, "Global View," reviews the rapid and radical changes in electronic media in other countries.



Ancillary Support

We fortunately retained the services of Dr. Louise Benjamin of the University of Georgia to prepare a new *Instructor's Resource Manual* for this eighth edition. Professor Benjamin prepared similar materials for earlier editions of the full text and the brief versions and brings with her invaluable experience. The *Manual* presents chapter analyses and summaries, reviews learning objectives and key concepts, provides lecture and project sections, and includes a test bank. As always, the publisher makes these materials available to adopters and provides the test items to instructors on computer disk in IBM or Macintosh formats. Also, frequent "newsletter" updates will be available on the Houghton Mifflin Web site (<http://www.hmco.com/>), offering the latest developments in an ever-changing field.



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