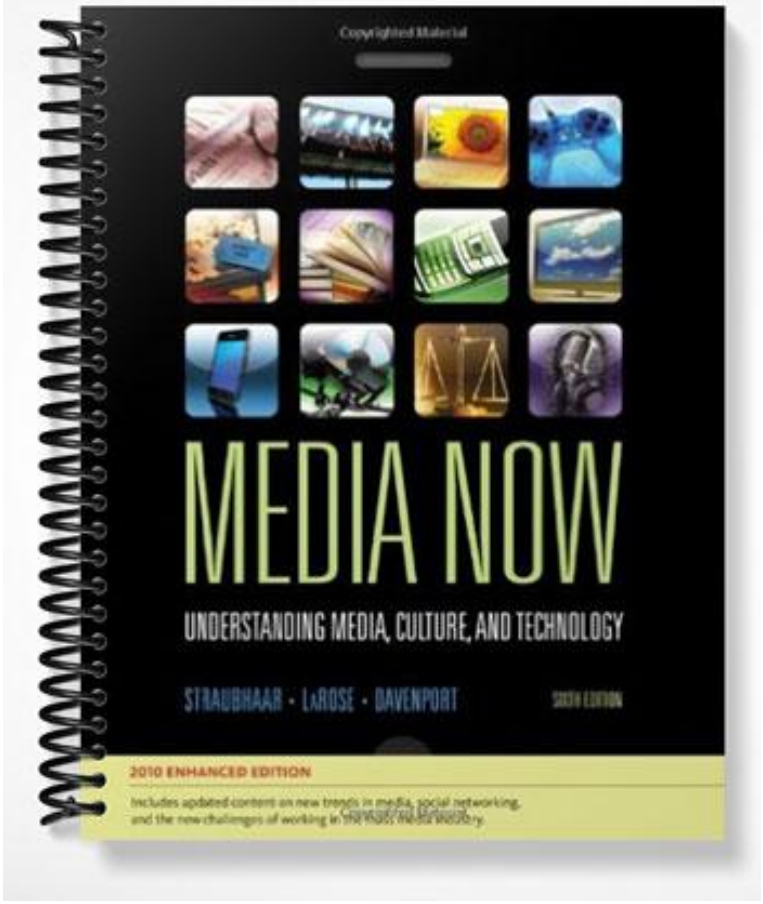
SOLUTIONS MANUAL



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Preface

These are heady times for teaching an introductory course about the media. So much is in flux: content, ownership, technology, regulatory oversight, audience demographics and other issues. Those changes can make it difficult to see where the media are now, much less where they are headed. As Marshall McLuhan once said, "We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future."

The fifth edition, 2008 update, of *Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology* provides an excellent primer on the history, development and impact of the media – and an insightful window into the future of digital and interactive communications. This text will help educators and students parse the past, present and future of communications. In so doing, students will be better prepared for their roles in the information society – as consumers, content creators and media professionals.

We hope that the Instructor's Resource Manual will give you ideas and inspiration on how to use the textbook in your course. The manual includes suggested discussion questions, websites, assignments and other activities that complement and reinforce the exciting content in *Media Now*.

We wish to thank Jeff South at Virginia Commonwealth University, who revised this manual for the fifth edition of *Media Now*, as well as his students, particularly Rachel Gruner, Katie Gantt and Annie McCallum, for their assistance in brainstorming material for the manual. We'd also like to thank Kelli Strieby, assistant editor at Thomson Wadsworth, and Rebecca Hendricks, development editor at Southern Editorial, for their work on this manual.

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Teaching a Course with *Media Now*

The communications media environment is changing rapidly with developments in technology, ownership patterns, consumer usage and media research. The Internet and other new media have redefined mass media; globalization and changes in regulations, lifestyles and social issues have reshaped the communications landscape.

College students also have changed. It's likely that your students have always lived in an age of personal computers and CNN. They've never bought a vinyl album; they might scratch their heads over the phrase, "You sound like a broken record." Surveys show that young Americans generally spend more time with video games than with print media.

Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology addresses the challenge of teaching today's students about the development, impact and future of communications media. It covers the spectrum of communications mediated by technology. The theme is that these technologies are converging to create a new communications environment. Mass communication continues, but it is frequently more focused, segmented and integrated with forms of communication that permit more interaction and personalization. The goal of this exciting text is to prepare students to thrive in that brave new media world.

Just as the communications environment continues to change, so has *Media Now*. The fifth edition, 2008 update, of the textbook has updated content to reflect recent developments, including the ever-growing popularity and influence of podcasting and satellite radio, how news is defined in today's journalistic environment, the media's role in covering the war in Iraq, the growing impact of the Internet and other new forms of digital distribution for movies and television, and the importance of online sites like MySpace, YouTube, and Google Video in providing alternative ways to get music and music videos promoted, distributed, and played.

This edition of the Instructor's Resource Manual reflects all of these changes in the *Media Now* textbook. The manual offers overarching ideas and specific tips to help you integrate the book into your lectures, class discussions, homework assignments, online activities, tests and other aspects of your course. For each chapter of the textbook, the Instructor's Resource Manual provides:

- An outline, so you can see at a glance how the chapter is organized.
- An extensive set of "Active Learning Activities." These activities include survey questions that can serve as a springboard for discussions; class discussion questions and critical-thinking exercises; questions and exercises focused especially on media literacy; "opposing viewpoints" with a flipside perspective of issues; and a set of written discussion questions and online activities that you can assign students in class or as homework.
- Video resources, a list of DVDs, videotapes and films that can supplement the chapter. The manual also shows where you can find or order the videos. As noted, many are available as streaming video.
- Suggested websites. The manual has expanded and updated all website references for each chapter.
- At least 15 true/false test items that can be used as a written quiz or test.
- At least 15 multiple-choice test items that can be used a written quiz or test.

- At least 10 short-answer test items that can be used as a written quiz or test.
- At least 20 multiple-choice items that also are included in the "Tutorial Quiz Questions and Answers" area of the companion website for the *Media Now* textbook.
- At least 10 true/false items that also are included in the "Tutorial Quiz Questions and Answers" area of the companion website.
- At least five online homework questions that also are included in the "Tutorial Quiz Questions and Answers" area of the companion website.

All of these suggested exercises, questions and other activities and resources can help you engage students and prompt them to think critically about media issues – both in history and in the information age.

Media Now is aimed at a very broad audience. Some users of the textbook will earn their living in the field of communications media. Others will relate to the media primarily as consumers of entertainment, news, advertising and other information. As technology blurs the lines between media producers and consumers, many students will find themselves as at least occasional creators of media content – generating websites and podcasts, making fliers, and communicating with groups of people in myriad ways for both personal and professional reasons. The *Media Now* text, along with the accompanying courseware and website, will be an indispensable tool for all of those students. The better they understand how the media work, the better decisions they can make as students, citizens, consumers and future members of the workforce. The book's readers can begin to think about not only how the new communications environment affects them, but also how they might affect it.

This book is designed to give students a solid grounding in the knowledge base, skills and perspective that will generalize across careers and help young adults navigate the changing workplace. It also will inspire them to think about the implications of the changing communications environment on society at large. The book teaches students not only about traditional mass media but also about digital and interactive media. Importantly, it equips students to not take "wired" life for granted but instead to think analytically and critically about their own practices of media production and consumption in the context of everyday life.

In years past, many students diligently studied mass media in the traditional way – only to discover after graduation that the vast majority of today's jobs required skills and a knowledge base that their textbooks had barely touched on. Students went on to find jobs in new places – at phone companies or in corporate communications divisions – but discovered that they didn't always know enough to succeed in these environments. Other students were eager to take advantage of newly acquired skills in digital technology, but they did not have the background to understand the role of communications media in society. Although progress is being made, many introductory communications textbooks still fail to integrate the full impact of technological changes, giving only lip service to new media and relegating the subject to a single chapter.

As an instructor for a mass communications course, you are in a position with privileged access to topics that increasingly cause concern among young people today: personal privacy in cyberspace, disparities in access to information, momentous changes in the workplace, the aftermath of the "dot com" boom, new careers in new media and the effects of social stratification. These are topics that most students have not explicitly addressed in other courses or lifetime learning experiences – but topics to which most students will respond enthusiastically.

As more and more students enter communication programs having grown up with high-speed Internet access and media saturation, more and more of them will have already encountered technologies and practices that you will want to highlight and emphasize. We have anticipated this need and addressed it in this Instructor's Resource Manual. We hope that you will use these "hooks" to hang your own arguments, illustrations and probing questions, or that you will feel free to adopt some of ours.

Introductory books for broadcasting, cable and electronic media typically have an introduction; several historical chapters; and an overview of the technologies, economic bases, programming trends and strategies, ratings and research, effects, regulation and policy issues. *Media Now* integrates the ideas of technological and strategic convergence, and the underlying techniques of digitization, throughout the text, emphasizing the links among technologies, social organization and functions, and communication patterns throughout history. The text thus is the ideal book for an introductory course that covers interactive as well as mass media.

Some instructors may find it difficult to integrate an emphasis on technology and on unfamiliar media and industries like telephony, computers and information services into an introductory communications course. The *Media Now* textbook, this instructor's manual and the companion website and other resources are specifically designed to help instructors get up to speed on the new technologies and to feel comfortable teaching about them.

The book is geared for both prospective media professionals and general students in introductory-level courses about mass media. This is the only mass media class many of them will ever take. That is precisely why it is so important to expose them to – and to demystify – communications technologies. No particular technical sophistication is needed to use this book. Although we recognize that many students may bring technological expertise or industry savvy to your class, we do not assume that readers will be familiar with specific technologies. We keep our explanations of technology simple, using broad analogies and illustrations to help students see how technologies function in their everyday lives. We focus on concepts that have substance and will endure – not "buttonology" and cool-website-of-the-day fads. We also include a great deal of anecdotal material to bring the subject to life. We begin the historical treatments with the earliest forms of each technology or medium, since these are the easiest starting points for non-technical readers. In every chapter, we have taken care to emphasize the social impacts and policy issues raised by the uses of communications media.

Be sure to check out the helpful resources on the textbook's accompanying technology resources, including ABC News videos, Career Profile videos, Media in Motion animations, test questions, discussion topics, an e-book with web links, and other student resources. You can find information about these resources at **Thomson Wadsworth's website for its mass communication titles** at:

www.thomsonedu.com/masscomm

This website describes new textbooks and other products available from Thomson Wadsworth. Those products include the **Thomson Audio Study Product for *Media Now,*** audio files of text-specific chapter summaries that help students review important concepts just in time for exams; **InfoTrac® College Edition,** a database of more than 4,000 periodicals that supplement *Media Now* for you and your students; and **vMentor™**, an online tutoring service that offers live, one-on-one assistance in understanding the concepts covered in your course. You might also consider the recently updated ***Media Literacy Workbook,*** Second Edition, by Kimb Massey. It takes

students step by step through the main technologies reviewed in the *Media Now* textbook, reinforcing key concepts with additional exercises. Through processes such as journaling, doing fieldwork and writing short answers to thought-provoking questions, students evaluate their own media consumption, try new models of interpretation and investigate issues regarding the impact of the media on culture and society. The *Media Literacy Workbook* is an excellent tool for training your students to think critically about the media.

For Blackboard and WebCT users, the technology resources for *Media Now* include **ThomsonNOW™**, an online assessment and course management system. ThomsonNOW allows you to import a full array of ready-to-use *Media Now* content and study tools: syllabi, chapter outlines, summaries, learning objectives, threaded discussions, animations, glossary flashcards (with audio), practice quizzes, web links and InfoTrac College Edition exercises. For students, ThomsonNOW tests their comprehension of chapter material with a web-based pre-test. After students have taken the test, which is graded automatically, they are given a personalized study plan that will reinforce key concepts from the text using ABC News videos, Media in Motion simulations, the text's podcasts, and much more. Students work can be graded and saved within the NOW product's gradebook function.

Teaching an Introductory Communications Course Online

A communications course is an opportunity to teach about media technology by using media technology – notably the Internet. The *Media Now* textbook helps you and your students seize that opportunity: The book, its companion website and the Instructor's Resource Manual all contain ideas for online learning and teaching. This manual, for example, offers exercises in which students must participate in **blogs** or **wikis** (collaborative web-based documents) – and then must discuss the activity's relationship to gatekeeping or other media concepts.

Perhaps the best way to promote online learning is for you to teach part of your communications course via the web. You can do that by setting up a stand-alone website or by using a course management system such as ThomsonNOW, powered by Blackboard or WebCT. *Media Now* and other Thomson Wadsworth products can help you take advantage of the Internet in teaching students. With ThomsonNOW or your own website, you can draw from and go beyond *Media Now*'s companion website by customizing content for your students. For example, you can:

- Post handouts and abbreviated lecture notes online. That way, students can print them out and bring them to class for discussion and easier note-taking. We don't recommend that you post the full text of your exact notes; you don't want to spoon-feed students or present a substitute for attending class. However, it can be helpful to post an outline of your notes, perhaps interspersed with questions or with key words deleted. Many instructors use PowerPoint in their lectures; that's especially easy with the ***Multimedia Manager with Instructor's Resource CD-ROM for*** **Media Now**, a CD that includes **PowerPoint presentations,** videos and animations available from Thomson Wadsworth. If you use PowerPoint, you can post the "handout" version of your presentation (with three or six slides to a page); you might include only the most important slides, and you might delete certain words, forcing students to fill in the blanks during the lecture. You might post your notes in several different ways: as a PowerPoint file, as an Adobe Acrobat document, as a Microsoft Word document and as a plain text file. That helps ensure that all students will be able to access the material. Posting material in various formats is a principle of "universal design," a key tenet in serving students with disabilities. For example, students who are blind use special "text to voice" software that can "read" certain kinds of documents. The software typically cannot process PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat files, but it can read Word and plain text files. All students, not just those with disabilities, can benefit from universal design: Not every student has the Adobe Acrobat Reader, for instance – and so it's a good idea to post documents in alternative formats. Posting your notes and handouts online has another big advantage: You won't have to photocopy materials for students!
- Use the web to ask students survey questions before class to set up your lectures and discussions. Before Chapter 4: Newspapers, it would be important to know how many students subscribe to a daily newspaper, and which one. Before Chapter 5: The Recording Industry, you can ask how many students have downloaded music with a file-sharing service. Before Chapter 12: The Communications Infrastructure (with expanded content on cell phones), you can ask how many students have camera phones or routinely use text-messaging.

- Continue the discussions after class, using online forums and discussion boards. This can be especially effective with large classes. You might consider setting up online groups of about a dozen students each and posing three or four questions for them to discuss. The online discussions can pick up where your lectures leave off. You can set deadlines for students to answer the questions; require answers to be a minimum length; and require students to reply to a certain number of postings by their group-mates.
- Have online groups collaborate on research projects. Students can work together over the Internet (using e-mail and their online discussion boards) and in person. You can have each group research a particular topic and make a presentation to the full class.
- Link to online readings, both on the "free" part of the Internet and in full-text databases such as InfoTrac College Edition. This allows you to supplement *Media Now* with even more dynamic content and up-to-the-minute news about media issues.
- Customize online exercises and activities for your students. For instance, you could have them evaluate the reliability of certain websites – some real, some hoaxes. Or you could have them use the Internet to compare newspapers in the United States with newspapers in another country.
- Have students post research papers online and do a peer review. We recommend in this Instructor's Resource Manual that you require students to write papers about media issues, media technology and other topics. You could have your students share their papers over a discussion board – and read and critique each other's papers.
- Put quizzes, practice tests and perhaps even real tests online. ThomsonNOW on Blackboard and WebCT make it easy to create assessments; you can use the questions in the Instructor's Resource Manual, on ThomsonNOW, or on the *Media Now* companion website. You also can use ExamView, available on the *Multimedia Manager with Instructor's Resource CD-ROM for Media Now*, with a rich test bank of questions drawn from the textbook. With ExamView, you can customize a quiz or test and save it in a format that can be imported directly into Blackboard or WebCT. Your online course management system can grade the test for you and, if you want, show students the correct answers or where to find the correct answers. These system also automatically record grades in an online gradebook. You can use online assessments to test comprehension before students come to class or after they have attended class. You also can post mock tests to help students study for an exam. (In Blackboard and WebCT, you can have a test randomly draw a certain number of questions from a large test bank. That way, it behooves students to take such a practice test several times – so that they will encounter different questions each time.)

There are many other advantages to having a course website or using an online course management system. One involves simply communicating with students: You can create a web-based course calendar and go online to broadcast announcements about assignments, school news, developments in the media, upcoming tests and other matters.

Sample Syllabi

Semester-Length Sample Syllabus

This course is designed to acquaint you with the field of communications – both the mass media of newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television, films and cable, and the new interactive media of the Internet, wireless telephony, computers and information services. We will introduce these as increasingly integrated and converging elements of a global information society.

This course will help students to:

- learn about the concept of information society and its economic, political and social implications.
- understand the essentials of communications media and information technologies and industries.
- understand the process and effects of media convergence and be a critical consumer of media.
- understand and be critically aware of the effects of communications media on yourself, other individuals, social institutions and societies.
- anticipate how communications media will affect your career in media or in other fields.
- learn about possible careers in communications.

Readings Required:

Straubhaar and LaRose, *Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture and Technology* (fifth edition, 2008 update), Thomson Wadsworth, 2008.

Media Now website.

Selected readings on reserve at the university library.

In addition, every day students must read a major online news source such as Wired News [www.wired.com], *The New York Times* [www.nytimes.com], CNET [www.cnet.com] or CNN [www.cnn.com].

How final grades will be calculated:

First exam	20%
Second exam	20%
Book and film reports, media diary, research papers and lab work	20%
Discussion and participation (including online activities)	15%
Final exam	25%

The exams will draw from lectures, readings, in-class discussions, online discussions and all other material and activities used in the course. The exams and the course will be graded on a curve. The final exam will be cumulative: It will cover some material from the first two-thirds of the course but focus on the final third. Make-up exams will be given only for documented emergencies with the approval of the instructor.

Various written work will supplement the exams. You will be required to write:

- A two-page report about a book involving the media. See instructions below.
- Short analyses of five films (three American and two foreign). See instructions below.
- A diary or journal for one week, in which you record and reflect upon your media usage. Instructions will be provided in class.
- A three-page paper discussing whether traditional mass communications theories (such as the SMCR model and gatekeeping) apply to the Internet and other new media. See instructions below.
- A three-page paper about a media policy issue. See instructions below.
- A three-page paper about a media technology. See instructions below.

In addition, there will be two activities in the computer lab: You must take your media usage diary and your media technology paper and turn them into web pages, with hyperlinks to your online sources. More specific instructions will be provided in class and by the lab monitors.

You also will be graded on informed participation in class discussion and online. You will be expected to contribute to class discussions based on based on the text, assigned readings, newspapers and other information sources, as well as your own thoughts. We will regularly discuss issues in an online forum, and you will be graded on your postings. You also will be graded on attendance, which we will take periodically.

The topic and reading schedule follows. We will spend roughly one week per topic/chapter. We will assign supplemental readings in class as the semester progresses. Read the material before coming to class; the grade on your informed participation will depend considerably on that.

Course Outline: Topics and Readings:

Week 1 – The Changing Media (*Media Now,* Chapter 1)

Suggested assignment: Have students take a media/technology inventory. Have them assess their ownership and use of communications devices. How does their experience compare to that of their parents and grandparents, or to that of students living in other countries?

Week 2 – Media and Society (*Media Now,* Chapter 2)

Suggested assignment: For one week, have students keep a diary of their communications activities and their use of communications media use. They must record every time they watch television, read a book, surf the Internet, listen to music, play a video game or consume other media. The diary must show the type of media the student used, for how long and why.

Students also might record unintended or unwanted media exposure. Have students analyze the results: How many hours do they spend consuming media? How do different media rank on the consumption meter? Have students turn their diaries into web pages, post them on the class website and discuss them.

Week 3 – Books and Magazines (*Media Now*, Chapter 3)

Suggested assignment: Have students work in groups or individually to analyze a variety of books and magazines in both paper and electronic form. Ask them to report on the differences in content and their experiences in reading "texts" or listening to audio books. (See the suggested "Online magazine and newspaper assignment" below.) They may compare magazines aimed at different audiences – male/female, black/white – to determine if content and ads are presented differently.

Week 4 – Newspapers (*Media Now*, Chapter 4)

Suggested assignment: Have student analyze the front pages of various U.S. and international newspapers, as posted daily on the Newseum website [www.newseum.org]. Each student should choose five papers to analyze; at least one must be a tabloid, and at least two must be from outside the United States. Students must analyze the number of stories, the story selection, the story placement, the size of headlines, the use of color and other aspects of the front pages. What makes a tabloid different from a broadsheet? A national newspaper different from a local paper? A paper in another country different from a U.S. newspaper? Why are the newspapers different or similar? How do front-page decisions reflect news values?

Week 5 – Recorded Music (*Media Now*, Chapter 5)
and Radio (*Media Now*, Chapter 6)

[Note to instructors: Because the *Media Now* textbook now includes 16 chapters, there will be one week during a 15-week semester when you must cover two chapters. You might consider pairing chapters 5 and 6, as recommended above; or you might cover Chapter 9: Public Relations and Chapter 10: Advertising during a single week.]

Suggested assignment: Have students analyze the FM and AM stations available in their market. Who owns the stations? (Students may be surprised that ownership is concentrated in the hands of just a few companies, such as Clear Channel Communications.) What formats have the stations adopted, and what musical genres do they primarily play? Which stations are broadcasting over the Internet?

Week 6 – Film and Home Video (*Media Now*, Chapter 7)

First exam

Suggested assignment: Have students view several classic American and foreign films (utilizing videos or campus film series) and write short reviews focusing on what genre the film represented, what the director's intentions were and how well it succeeded as a film. Have students compare older films (film noir works well) with recent films for pacing, effects and story lines.

Week 7 – Television (*Media Now*, Chapter 8)

Suggested assignment: Have students characterize the various broadcast and cable channels according to their target audiences. Who is CBS or WB aiming for, as opposed to ESPN, BET or the Discovery Channel? How does audience segmentation affect both programming and advertising?

Week 8 – The Internet (*Media Now*, Chapter 9)

Suggested assignment: Have students go to Wikipedia, the free "open-content" online encyclopedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia]. Students must find an entry about a subject they know. They must read the entry, then edit it – adding a fact or new section. Then students must reflect on Wikipedia's approach to gatekeeping: How reliable is Wikipedia?

Week 9 – Public Relations (*Media Now*, Chapter 10)

Suggested assignment: Have students do a brief analysis of local media (newspapers and television) to see what kinds of materials are supplied by public relations efforts. Approximately what percentage of news comes from press releases, press conferences and other PR operations? Have a public relations professional visit the class to explain how PR works to get a particular story or viewpoint into the media.

Week 10 – Advertising (*Media Now*, Chapter 11)

Suggested assignment: Hold a "logo day." Have students wear or bring to class as many items bearing advertising logos as possible. Have students record and reflect upon how often they are exposed to advertising and other commercial messages. What areas of our lives, if any, are off limits to advertising? Discuss the ubiquity of ads. Are advertisements intrusive? Are they effective?

Week 11 – The Communications Infrastructure (*Media Now*, Chapter 12)

Second exam

Suggested assignment: Have students investigate various advertising claims made for broadband, or high-speed, Internet access. Which claims seem credible? What differences do various technologies (DSL vs. cable) make? Have students compare pricing and reliability of wired and wireless phone systems. What are some advantages and disadvantages?

Week 12 – Media Uses and Effects (*Media Now*, Chapter 13)

Suggested assignment: Have students visit the online version of TV Guide [www.tvguide.com] to look up the ratings of television shows. Have them make lists of shows with ratings of TVM, TV14, TVPG and so forth. Are shows rated accurately on the parental advisory scale? Have students compose their own "ratings" for TV shows, with age cutoffs and explicit guidelines for violence, sex and other controversial content.

Week 13 – Media Policy and Law (*Media Now*, Chapter 14)

Suggested assignment: Have students surf the Internet using an "anonymizer" service such as Megaproxy [www.megaproxy.com] or Anonymouse [http://anonymouse.org/anonwww.html]. Some U.S. government officials would like to set up such proxy servers to help people in China, Saudi Arabia and other repressive countries circumvent government control of the Internet. Have students discuss the pros and cons of such proposals. Is that a legitimate role for the U.S. government? Hold a class debate on the issue.

Week 14 – Media Ethics (*Media Now*, Chapter 15)

Suggested assignment: Have students work in groups to determine a new universal service policy, including who should get access to broadband and other new technologies and who must pay for any programs to guarantee access. Should every U.S. resident have a right to high-speed Internet access? Should the government require cell phone companies to offer a basic plan that almost anybody can afford?

Week 15 – Global Communications Media (*Media Now*, Chapter 16)

Suggested assignment: Have students imagine that they lived in a country where their only impression of life in the United States was from reruns of Baywatch [www.baywatch.com]. What would they expect to find when you visited America for the first time? What would they expect the people in the United States to be like?

Final exam

Quarter-Length Sample Syllabus

This course is designed to acquaint you with the field of communications – both the mass media of newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television, films and cable, and the new interactive media of the Internet, wireless telephony, computers and information services. We will introduce these as increasingly integrated and converging elements of a global information society.

This course will help students to:

- learn about the concept of information society and its economic, political and social implications.
- understand the essentials of communications media and information technologies and industries.
- understand the process and effects of media convergence and be a critical consumer of media.
- understand and be critically aware of the effects of communications media on yourself, other individuals, social institutions and societies.
- anticipate how communications media will affect your career in media or in other fields.
- learn about possible careers in communications.

Readings Required:

Straubhaar and LaRose, *Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture and Technology* (fifth edition, 2008 update), Thomson Wadsworth, 2008.

Media Now website.

Selected readings on reserve at the university library.

In addition, every day students must read a major online news source such as Wired News [www.wired.com], *The New York Times* [www.nytimes.com], CNET [www.cnet.com] or CNN [www.cnn.com].

How final grades will be calculated:

First exam	20%
Second exam	20%
Book and film reports, media diary, research papers and lab work	20%
Discussion and participation (including online activities)	15%
Final exam	25%

The exams will draw from lectures, readings, in-class discussions, online discussions and all other material and activities used in the course. The exams and the course will be graded on a curve. The final exam will be cumulative: It will cover some material from the first two-thirds of the course but focus on the final third. Make-up exams will be given only for documented emergencies with the approval of the instructor.

Various written work will supplement exams. You will be required to write:

- A two-page report about a book involving the media. See instructions below.
- Short analyses of five films (three American and two foreign). See instructions below.
- A diary or journal for one week, in which you record and reflect upon your media usage. Instructions will be provided in class.
- A three-page paper discussing whether traditional mass communications theories (such as the SMCR model and gatekeeping) apply to the Internet and other new media. See instructions below.
- A three-page paper about a media policy issue. See instructions below.
- A three-page paper about a media technology. See instructions below.

In addition, there will be two activities in the computer lab: You must take your media usage diary and your media technology paper and turn them into web pages, with hyperlinks to your online sources. More specific instructions will be provided in class and by the lab monitors.

You also will be graded on informed participation in class discussion and online. You will be expected to contribute to class discussions based on based on the text, assigned readings, newspapers and other information sources, as well as your own thoughts. We will regularly discuss issues in an online forum, and you will be graded on your postings. You also will be graded on attendance, which we will take periodically.

The topic and reading schedule follows. We will spend roughly one week per topic/chapter. We will assign supplemental readings in class as the semester progresses. Read the material before coming to class; the grade on your informed participation will depend considerably on that.

Course Outline: Topics and Readings:

Week 1

The Changing Media (*Media Now*, Chapter 1)

Suggested assignment: Have students take a media/technology inventory. Have them assess their ownership and use of communications devices. How does their experience compare to that of their parents and grandparents, or to that of students living in other countries?

Media and Society (*Media Now*, Chapter 2)

Suggested assignment: For one week, have students keep a diary of their communications activities and their use of communications media use. They must record every time they watch television, read a book, surf the Internet, listen to music, play a video game or consume other media. The diary must show the type of media the student used, for how long and why. Students also might record unintended or unwanted media exposure. Have students analyze the results: How many hours do they spend consuming media? How do different media rank on the consumption meter? Have students turn their diaries into web pages, post them on the class website and discuss them.

Week 2

Books and Magazines (*Media Now*, Chapter 3)

Suggested assignment: Have students work in groups or individually to analyze a variety of books and magazines in both paper and electronic form. Ask them to report on the differences in content and their experiences in reading "texts" or listening to audio books. (See the suggested "Online magazine and newspaper assignment" below.) They may compare magazines aimed at different audiences – male/female, black/white – to determine if content and ads are presented differently.

Newspapers (*Media Now*, Chapter 4)

Suggested assignment: Have student analyze the front pages of various U.S. and international newspapers, as posted daily on the Newseum website [www.newseum.org]. Each student should choose five papers to analyze; at least one must be a tabloid, and at least two must be from outside the United States. Students must analyze the number of stories, the story selection, the story placement, the size of headlines, the use of color and other aspects of the front pages. What makes a tabloid different from a broadsheet? A national newspaper different from a local paper? A paper in another country different from a U.S. newspaper? Why are the newspapers different or similar? How do front-page decisions reflect news values?

Week 3

First exam

Recorded Music (*Media Now*, Chapter 5) and Radio (*Media Now*, Chapter 6)

Suggested assignment: Have students analyze the FM and AM stations available in their market. Who owns the stations? (Students may be surprised that ownership is concentrated in the hands of just a few companies, such as Clear Channel Communications.) What formats have the stations adopted, and what musical genres do they primarily play? Which stations are broadcasting over the Internet?

Week 4

Film and Home Video (*Media Now*, Chapter 7)

Suggested assignment: Have students view several classic American and foreign films (utilizing videos or campus film series) and write short reviews focusing on what genre the film represented, what the director's intentions were and how well it succeeded as a film. Have students compare older films (film noir works well) with recent films for pacing, effects and story lines.

Television (*Media Now*, Chapter 8)

Suggested assignment: Have students characterize the various broadcast and cable channels according to their target audiences. Who is CBS or WB aiming for, as opposed to ESPN, BET or the Discovery Channel? How does audience segmentation affect both programming and advertising?

Week 5

The Internet (*Media Now*, Chapter 9)

Suggested assignment: Have students go to Wikipedia, the free "open-content" online encyclopedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia]. Students must find an entry about a subject they know. They must read the entry, then edit it – adding a fact or new section. Then students must reflect on Wikipedia's approach to gatekeeping: How reliable is Wikipedia?

Week 6

Second exam

Public Relations (*Media Now*, Chapter 10)

Suggested assignment: Have students do a brief analysis of local media (newspapers and television) to see what kinds of materials are supplied by public relations efforts. Approximately what percentage of news comes from press releases, press conferences and other PR operations? Have a public relations professional visit the class to explain how PR works to get a particular story or viewpoint into the media.

Advertising (*Media Now*, Chapter 11)

Suggested assignment: Hold a "logo day." Have students wear or bring to class as many items bearing advertising logos as possible. Have students record and reflect upon how often they are exposed to advertising and other commercial messages. What areas of our lives, if any, are off limits to advertising? Discuss the ubiquity of ads. Are advertisements intrusive? Are they effective?

Week 7

The Communications Infrastructure (*Media Now*, Chapter 12)

Suggested assignment: Have students investigate various advertising claims made for broadband, or high-speed, Internet access. Which claims seem credible? What differences do various technologies (DSL vs. cable) make? Have students compare pricing and reliability of wired and wireless phone systems. What are some advantages and disadvantages?

Week 8

Media Uses and Effects (*Media Now*, Chapter 13)

Suggested assignment: Have students visit the online version of TV Guide [www.tvguide.com] to look up the ratings of television shows. Have them make lists of shows with ratings of TVM, TV14, TVPG and so forth. Are shows rated accurately on the parental advisory scale? Have students compose their own "ratings" for TV shows, with age cutoffs and explicit guidelines for violence, sex and other controversial content.

Week 9

Media Policy and Law (*Media Now*, Chapter 14)

Suggested assignment: Have students surf the Internet using an "anonymizer" service such as Megaproxy [www.megaproxy.com] or Anonymouse [http://anonymouse.org/anonwww.html]. Some U.S. government officials would like to set up such proxy servers to help people in China, Saudi Arabia and other repressive countries circumvent government control of the Internet. Have students discuss the pros and cons of such proposals. Is that a legitimate role for the U.S. government? Hold a class debate on the issue.

Media Ethics (*Media Now*, Chapter 15)

Suggested assignment: Have students work in groups to determine a new universal service policy, including who should get access to broadband and other new technologies and who must pay for any programs to guarantee access. Should every U.S. resident have a right to high-speed Internet access? Should the government require cell phone companies to offer a basic plan that almost anybody can afford?

Week 10

Global Communications Media (*Media Now*, Chapter 16)

Suggested assignment: Have students imagine that they lived in a country where their only impression of life in the United States was from reruns of Baywatch [www.baywatch.com]. What would they expect to find when you visited America for the first time? What would they expect the people in the United States to be like?

Final exam

Suggested Assignments

Book Report Assignment

Choose one of the following books. Or you can propose an alternative to the instructor, but you must get approval for it in advance. The books are available in bookstores, and the library has most of them. (If you are counting on getting a book from the university library, start early. Check local public libraries, as well.)

Abbate, Janet. *Inventing the Internet (Inside Technology)*. 2000.

Bagdikian, Ben. *The New Media Monopoly*. 2004.

Berners-Lee, Tim. *Weaving the Web: The Original Design and Ultimate Destiny of the World Wide Web*. 2000.

Birkerts, Sven. *The Gutenberg Elegies : The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Culture*. 1994.

Castells, Manuel. *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. 2003.

Castells, Manuel. *The Power of Identity (The Information Age)*. 2003.

Dyson, Esther. *Release 2.1*. 1998.

Gates, Bill; Myhrvold, Nathan; and Rinearson, Peter. *The Road Ahead*. 1996.

Hiltzik, Michael. *Dealers of Lightning: Xerox PARC and the Dawn of the Computer Age*. 2000.

Hafner, Katie. *Where Wizards Stay Up Late*. 1998.

Hafner, Katie. *Cyberpunk: Outlaws and Hackers on the Computer Frontier*. 1995.

Kidder, Tracy. *Soul of a New Machine*. 2000.

Lanham, Richard. *The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts*. 1995.

Lessig, Lawrence. *Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity*. 2004.

Lessig, Lawrence. *The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World*. 2002.

Lessig, Lawrence. *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace*. 1998.

Levy, Steven. *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*. 2001.

McChesney, Robert. *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. 2004.

McChesney, Robert. *Rich Media, Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times*. 2000.

McLuhan, Marshall; and Gordon, W. Terrence. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (critical edition)*. 2003.

McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. 1962.

Negroponte, Nicholas. *Being Digital*. 1996.

Nunberg, Geoffrey. *The Future of the Book*. 1996.

Postman, Neil. *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. 1993.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. 1986.

Rheingold, Howard. *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*. 2002.

Rheingold, Howard. *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*. 2000.

Rushkoff, Douglas. *Cyberia: Life in the Trenches of Cyberspace*. 2002.

Rushkoff, Douglas. *Media Virus!* 1996.

Shenk, David. *Data Smog: Surviving the Information Glut*. 1998.

Starr, Paul. *The Creation of the Media*. 2004.

Stross, Randall. *The Microsoft Way: The Real Story of How the Company Outsmarts Its Competition*. 1997.

The following options are science fiction novels – dystopias, which show negative futures stemming from current trends. These novels raise relevant questions about where information and media technologies may take us. However, several of them contain sex and violence, so we want you to consider whether that will bother you before you decide to read them.

Brunner, John. *Shockwave Rider*. 1995.

Gibson, William. *Neuromancer (Remembering Tomorrow)*. 1995.

Gibson, William; and Sterling, Bruce. *The Difference Engine*. 1992.

Kunzru, Hari. *Transmission*. 2004.

Orwell, George. *1984*. 1948.

Stephenson, Neal. *Snow Crash*. 2000.

Stephenson, Neal. *Cryptonomicon*. 2002.

Sterling, Bruce. *The Zenith Angle*. 2004.

Sterling, Bruce. *Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology*. 1988.

Sterling, Bruce. *The Hacker Crackdown: Law And Disorder On The Electronic Frontier*. 1993.

Vinge, Vernor; and Frenkel, James. *True Names: And the Opening of the Cyberspace Frontier*. 2001.

Write a two-page report that addresses:

- The main issues raised by the book that are relevant to the class
- Examples of the those issues (but don't reiterate the book's plot)
- How the book applies to what you see in media and society.

- Your personal reaction to the book, including whether you agree with the author's predictions or analysis and why.

Film Viewing Assignment

Choose five of the following films (or you can propose others to the instructor for approval). You must select three U.S. and two foreign films. The films should be available at video rental stores; some may be shown as part of a campus film series. You also might try the university library or local public libraries, which often have classic and foreign films.

U.S. films (pick three)

The Great Train Robbery

The Keystone Cops

Singing in the Rain

Little Caesar

Red River, She Wore a Yellow Ribbon, Stagecoach, The Searchers

It Happened One Night, Bringing Up Baby, The Philadelphia Story

Citizen Kane, The Third Man

The Maltese Falcon, Key Largo

Vertigo, Rear Window, North by Northwest

King Kong (original version), Dracula

The Matrix, The Matrix Reloaded, The Matrix Revolution

Time Code

Cellular

Titanic, Independence Day, Battlestar Galactica

Gattaca

The Minority Report

Foreign films (pick two)

Anything by the following directors, including the following suggestions:

Almodovar: *All About My Mother, Kika*

Bergman: *Wild Strawberries, Smiles of a Summer Night, Fanny and Alexander*

Branaugh: *Henry the Fifth, Much Ado About Nothing*

Bunuel: *The Young and the Damned, Tristana*

Costa-Gavras: *Z, Missing*

Fellini: *8½, Amarcord, Juliet of the Spirits*

Herzog: *Aguirre, Heart of Glass*

Kurosawa: *Yojimbo, Ran, The Samurai Trilogy, Rashomon*

Lang: *Metropolis, M*

Ritchie: *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*

Renoir: *Rules of the Game, Grand Illusion*

Truffaut: *Jules and Jim, The 400 Blows, Fahrenheit 451, Small Change*

Visconti: *Death in Venice, Ludwig II*

Weir: *The Last Wave, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Gallipoli*

For each film, write a report of two-three paragraphs, approximately one double-spaced page. Answer the following questions:

- What was the film trying to say or portray? What was the director's intention?
- How well did the film succeed as a film? (Evaluate the story line, the acting, the photography, the special effects, etc.)
- What was your personal reaction to the film? Why did you like or dislike it? How did it affect you?

In your brief report, do not reiterate the plot. But use examples to support what you have to say.

Print out each report on a separate sheet of paper. Staple all five reports together, and hand them in together. Give yourself at least a few days between films, spreading them over the semester.

Research Paper on Media Theories

Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Media Now* textbook introduce several media theories – ideas that help explain the way the media work. Chapter 1, for example, talks about the SMCR Model; and Chapter 2 discusses such concepts as mass markets, gatekeeping and economies of scale.

These theories were largely based on traditional media such as newspapers and television networks. They don't apply in quite the same way to new media such as the Internet and cable TV.

In this research paper, you must discuss at least two theories that apply well to traditional media but not so well to new media. Explain why these concepts don't apply so neatly to new media. Give some examples (websites, cable TV shows or new-media products) that support your explanations.

Your paper should be at least three pages, double spaced. Divide your paper into three sections, each with a section heading:

- Introduction – In one paragraph, briefly explain what your paper is about.
- Media theories – This section is the "guts" of your report. State one theory or concept from Chapters 1–2; explain how it applies to traditional media; then discuss why it doesn't apply so well to new media, with an example or two. Then do this for at least one other theory or concept.
- Summary – What can you conclude from your analysis? Is there something about new media, or about the way people use media today, that helps explain why "traditional media" theories don't apply so well to new media?

In your paper, you must cite at least three different sources. The *Media Now* textbook can be one source. Your other sources may include articles from newspapers, magazines, academic journals and reliable websites. You can find authoritative full-text articles by using InfoTrac College Edition.

Paper about a Media Policy Issue

Choose one of the following policy issues:

Control of pornography and other controversial content on the Internet

Legal action against Napster, Grokster and other file-sharing services

Protection of privacy on the Internet

Security for economic transactions on the Internet

Universal service and whether it should apply to new communication technologies

The digital divide, both within the United States and between countries of the world

Regulation of and competition between telephony and cable TV

Copyright in the 21st century

Concentration of ownership in communications media (national or global)

Hate speech and First Amendment issues online (and the differences between the United States and other countries)

Monopoly and abuse of economic power (including the charges against Microsoft)

Concerns about violence and sexual content in movies, music, video games, television programming and other media

Whether certain kinds of advertising (tobacco, alcohol, political commercials or ads aimed at children) should be regulated

Control over media debates and agenda setting in presidential campaigns

Write a paper of at least three pages, double spaced. Address these questions:

- What are the main aspects or points of view regarding the issue?
- Who are the interested parties or stakeholders?
- Who might gain or lose from which outcome, and why?
- How could the issue be resolved?
- Which governmental unit, court, company or other party will or might take action to resolve the issue?

In your paper, you must use at least five sources reflecting different points of view and interests. You must use at least two newspaper articles, two online sources (other than newspaper websites) and one alternative (not mainstream) source. Cite the sources in your paper, and attach a bibliography. For each article used, provide the title, author, date, publication and page number; for online information, provide the website address and the date you accessed it.

You can find material for your research paper from InfoTrac College Edition or other full-text database available through the university library system. You also can use Internet search tools such as Google [www.google.com], Yahoo! [www.yahoo.com] or AltaVista [www.altavista.com], but make sure you carefully evaluate the search results.

Here are some other online sources to help you with your research:

General-interest news websites

The New York Times: www.nytimes.com

The Washington Post: www.washingtonpost.com

The Los Angeles Times: www.latimes.com

The Christian Science Monitor: www.csmonitor.com

USA Today: www.usatoday.com

CNN: www.cnn.com

Technology news and information websites

Wired News: www.wired.com

CNET: www.cnet.com

TechWeb: www.techweb.com

ZDnet: www.zdnet.com

InfoWorld: www.infoworld.com

How Stuff Works: www.howstuffworks.com

Webopedia: www.webopedia.com

Government websites

U.S. Government's Official Web Portal: www.usa.gov

U.S. Congress on the Internet: http://thomas.loc.gov

Congressional Internet Caucus: www.netcaucus.org/advisory

The Library of Congress: www.loc.gov

Federal Communications Commission: www.fcc.gov

Law and policy sources

Journal of Technology Law & Policy: http://journal.law.ufl.edu/~techlaw

FindLaw: www.findlaw.com

Telecommunications and Information Policy Institute: www.utexas.edu/research/tipi

Interest groups

American Civil Liberties Union: www.aclu.org

Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility: www.cpsr.org

Electronic Frontier Foundation: www.eff.org

Electronic Privacy Information Center: www.epic.org

Essential Information Encouraging Activism: www.essential.org

Internet Law and Policy Forum: www.ilpf.org

Markle Foundation: www.markle.org

Progress and Freedom Foundation: www.pff.org

United States Telecom Association: www.usta.org

Journalism and television news

American Journalism Review: www.ajr.org

Columbia Journalism Review: www.cjr.org

Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting: www.fair.org

Media Research Center: www.mrc.org

Media Channel: www.mediachannel.org

Vanderbilt Television News Archive: http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu

Information Society issues

Information Society Journal: www.indiana.edu/~tisj

Benton Foundation: www.benton.org

Pew Internet and American Life Project: www.pewinternet.org

Moving Ideas Network: www.movingideas.org

Digital divide issues

National Telecommunications and Information Administration: www.ntia.doc.gov

Digital Divide Network: www.digitaldivide.net

International issues

World Summit on the Information Society: www.itu.int/wsis

International Telecommunications Union: www.itu.int

One World Net: www.oneworld.net/us/front.shtml

Bridges: www.bridges.org

V-Chip, Children and TV Violence

FCC V-Chip Homepage: www.fcc.gov/vchip

Family Safe Media: www.familysafemedia.com

Media Visions: www.media-visions.com/itv-vchip.html

National Association of Broadcasting: www.nab.org

Internet Filtering

American Library Association: www.ala.org

American Family Association: www.afa.net

Article 19, Global Campaign for Free Expression: www.article19.org

Berkman Center for Internet & Society: http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/home

Peacefire: www.peacefire.org

Online Magazine and Newspaper Assignment

Choose a newspaper or magazine from the list below.

Newspapers

The local daily newspaper

The New York Times: www.nytimes.com

The Washington Post: www.washingtonpost.com

USA Today: www.usatoday.com

Magazines

Time Magazine: www.time.com

The Atlantic Monthly: www.theatlantic.com

Sports Illustrated: www.si.com

Rolling Stone: www.rollingstone.com

Write a two-page paper that compares the publication's print edition with its online version. Address these points:

- Whether or how the print content is enhanced online (with multimedia, hyperlinks and the like)
- Ease of use
- Visual appeal and interest value
- Advantages and disadvantages of each format
- Interactivity or lack of interactivity

Research Paper about a Media Technology

For this paper, you must choose a digital communications technology. Possibilities include e-books, satellite radio, satellite television, videophones, broadband, high-definition television, music CDs, personal digital assistants, MP3 players, nonlinear video editing systems, digital video recorders (like TiVo) – any digital technology mentioned in the *Media Now* textbook or during our class discussions. Do not choose an overly broad topic, such as the Internet. However, you could select a specific way people use the Internet – such as blogging or file-sharing.

Write a paper of at least four pages, double spaced, that addresses the following questions:

- What is the history of the technology? (Perhaps explain who invented the technology, how it evolved and how its use spread. Apply the Diffusion of Innovations theory to the technology.)
- What preceded this digital technology? What was its analog predecessor?
- How does the technology work? What does it allow you to do? Is it better than its analog predecessor? How? Does the technology have flaws or drawbacks? Are there legal and/or ethical problems associated with the technology?
- Who is using the technology? What do people use it for? How is it being used in other countries around the world?
- What is the future outlook for the technology? Do you expect use to grow? Or will another technology overtake this one?

In your paper, you must cite at least four different sources. The *Media Now* textbook can be one source. Your other sources may include articles from newspapers, magazines, academic journals and reliable websites. You can find authoritative full-text articles by using InfoTrac College Edition.

Write your paper in Microsoft Word, turn in a printout and save the electronic copy (the computer file) on a floppy disk or flash drive. Later in the semester, as part of a computer lab assignment, you must turn your research paper into a web page and post it in your online discussion group.

Contact Information for Video Resources

For each chapter of *Media Now*, we have suggested videos that could complement your lectures and discussions. Check with your school's library to see whether it already has some of these videos or suitable alternatives. Excellent videos also may be available at local video rental stores. PBS and cable channels often air programs relevant to the *Media Now* content, so monitor the TV program listings – or better yet, use TiVo!

Here is the contact information for the companies that distribute most of the videos mentioned in the Instructor's Resource Manual. Some organizations – such as PBS, the Media Education Foundation, and Films for the Humanities and Sciences – have put video clips online. PBS also often provides extensive supplementary resources on its Web site.

Filmakers Library
124 East 40th St.
New York, NY 10016
Phone: (212) 808-4980
Fax: (212) 808-4983
http://www.filmakers.com
E-mail: info@filmakers.com

Films for the Humanities and Sciences
P.O. Box 2053
Princeton, NJ 08453-2053
Phone: (800) 257-5126
Fax: (609) 671-0266
http://www.films.com/
E-mail: custserv@filmsmediagroup.com

First Run / Icarus Films
32 Court St., 21st Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Phone: (718) 488-8900
Fax: (718) 488-8642
http://www.frif.com/
E-mail: mailroom@frif.com

Insight Media Inc.
2162 Broadway
New York, NY 10024-0621
Phone: (800) 233-9910 or (212) 721-6316
Fax: (212) 799-5309
http://www.insight-media.com
E-mail: custserv@insight-media.com

Media Education Foundation
60 Masonic St.
Northampton, MA 01060
Phone: (800) 897-0089 or (413) 584-8500
Fax: (800) 659-6882 or (413) 586-8398
http://www.mediaed.org
E-mail: info@mediaed.org

PBS Video
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA 22314-1698
Phone: (800) 424-7963
http://teacher.shop.pbs.org

Chapter 1: The Changing Media

Chapter Outline

I. The media in our lives
II. Media in a changing world
    A. Merging technologies
    B. Merging industries
    C. Changing lifestyles
    D. Challenging careers
    E. Shifting regulations
    F. Rising social issues
III. Changing media throughout history
    A. Preagricultural society
    B. Agricultural society
    C. Industrial society
    D. Information society
        1. Telephone
        2. Print media
        3. Film
        4. Recordings
        5. Cable and satellite television
        6. Broadcasting
IV. Changing conceptions of the media
    A. Source-Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) model
    B. Types of communication
    C. What are the media *now*?
        1. Digital
        2. Interactivity
        3. Audience generated
        4. Asynchronous communication
        5. Narrowcasting
        6. Multimedia forms

Active Learning Activities

Survey Questions

Survey students using an online course management system such as Blackboard or an audience-response system such as the Classroom Performance System Online. (As a low-tech alternative, you could use a written survey before class or have students raise their hands in class.) Ask students the following questions, and use their responses as a springboard for discussion.

- How many hours a week do students spend watching television, watching movies, going online, playing video games, listening to music, reading books, reading newspapers and using other media? What are the media consumption habits for the typical (median) student? How do students compare with the general population? What do the numbers say about students' lifestyles? How have the numbers changed over the years?
- Beloit University issues an annual "Mindset List" [www.beloit.edu/~pubaff/mindset] describing that year's freshman class of college students. Many of the items on these lists deal with communications technology. For example, members of the Class of 2007 (born in 1985) have always been able to fit their computers into their backpacks and have always had Fox as a TV network choice. You can fashion survey questions from the Mindset Lists to illustrate how today's students differ from their predecessors. How many students have ever seen a black-and-white TV set? How many have ever played a vinyl album – or understand the expression, "You sound like a broken record"?

Class Discussion Questions and Critical-Thinking Exercises

- Divide the class up into groups of six and have students identify the most important change that convergence has brought to their life, and why. Then each group elects a group leader who presents to the class.
- Stage a "bafflegab bee" – like a spelling bee, but using only obscure "techie" acronyms (e.g., T1) and terms (e.g., packet switching) from the *Media Now* textbook.
- As the text says, communications media are "constantly evolving." Ask students how the traditional mass media (newspapers, television, radio and books) have changed and how they have stayed the same.
- Discuss the various meanings of convergence. Ask students what devices are converging (such as cell phones and cameras, or computers and televisions). Ask them what media companies are converging. Ask them what media functions are converging (such as information and advertising on some websites, or news and entertainment on TV's late shows).
- Do a show-and-tell with a range of communications media and devices, and have students identify whether the products are analog or digital. Bring to class, or show pictures of, such devices as: vinyl records (including a 45-rpm record), a cassette tape, an eight-track tape, a CD, a minidisk, a DVD, an e-book reader, the *Media Now* textbook and so forth.

Media Literacy

From the standpoint of media literacy, why is it important to know about merging industries and "who owns whom" in the media? To television viewers and the general public, what difference does it make that Disney owns ABC or that General Electric owns NBC?

Written Discussion Questions and Online Activities

- Browse the *Columbia Journalism Review*'s website about media-ownership ["Who owns what?" at www.cjr.org/tools/owners/]. What are the pros and cons of media consolidation?

- Chapter 1 discusses the difficulty of defining interactivity; to some extent, it's in the eye of the beholder. Give examples of websites you consider interactive. Provide the site's name and address (the URL – Uniform Resource Locator – such as "www.helpself.com/freud.htm"), and explain what makes it interactive.
- Read the epilogue of Nicholas Negroponte's book *Being Digital* [http://archives.obs-us.com/obs/english/books/nn/ch19epi.htm]. What advantages and disadvantages does Negroponte see in the digitization of media content? Do you feel that the good outweighs the bad or that the bad outweighs the good?
- Visit Wikipedia, the free "open-content" online encyclopedia at:

  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia

  Find an entry in Wikipedia about a subject in which you have expertise. Then edit the entry, amending or adding facts. What is Wikipedia's approach to gatekeeping? How does this affect the reliability of the information in Wikipedia?
- Because of digital technology, devices are converging: You can buy sunglasses with a built-in MP3 player or a refrigerator with an Internet connection. Brainstorm other products – items that haven't been invented or marketed yet – that would involve convergence with digital technology. This exercise is like a joke children tell: *What would you get if you crossed a ---------- with a ----------?*

Video Resources

Communication, 2001, Insight Media. "Highlighting the basics of communication, this program considers how rapidly communication has changed – and continues to change – the world, allowing individuals to send messages to friends across the globe and access news from other countries."

Digital Divide: Technology and Our Future, 2001, Films for the Humanities and Sciences. Narrated by Queen Latifah. The first part of this video examines whether computers detract from other important school programs. "The second part studies how much computer technology will benefit America's youth in the coming digital age."

Media Convergence, 1997, Films for the Humanities and Sciences. "This program examines the growing convergence of phones, TVs, and computers in Cyberspace and the radical impact on businesses, homes, and schools in this 'many-to-many' communications model."

Media History, 1997, Films for the Humanities and Sciences. "Academic and industry experts discuss the invention and impact of the printing press, telegraph, and telephone." This video also discusses broadcasting trends (including narrowcasting), globalization and convergence.

The History of Mass Media, 1997, Insight Media. "This program traces the history of mass media from their roots in oral history to the rise of the Internet, explaining how communication revolutions transformed societies." It discusses the printing press, telegraph, telephone, radio, television, and VCR, and considers the growth of cable television and the Internet.

Suggested Websites

Wired News [www.wired.com] is a daily e-mail that "covers the latest developments in technology, how the forces of politics and business react to those developments, and how mass culture and various subcultures respond."

HowStuffWorks [www.howstuffworks.com] is a searchable encyclopedia that can explain the inner workings of HDTV, MP3 players and other technologies.

Hobbes' Internet Timeline [www.zakon.org/robert/internet/timeline/] traces the development of the Internet from the 1950s to 2003.

The Poynter Institute's Convergence Chaser [www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=56] is an online column and newsletter. It discusses technology, media ownership and other issues.

Rich Gordon, who chairs the New Media Department at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, has posted an essay on "The Meanings and Implications of Convergence" [www.medill.northwestern.edu/alumni/medillian/fallwinter02/meaningsofconvergence.pdf].

The Digital Divide Network [www.digitaldivide.net], created by the Benton Foundation and the National Urban League, is a clearinghouse for information and strategies about expanding access to the Internet and information technology in underserved communities.

Test Questions

True/False

1. T F Digital communication uses continuously varying signals corresponding to the light or sounds originated by the source.

Answer: False Reference: pp. 5–6, 8

2. T F On average, people spend as much time watching TV and listening to radio as they would devote to a full-time job.

Answer: True Reference: p. 3

3. T F Feedback plays a bigger role in interactive systems than it does in the conventional SMCR model of mass communication.

Answer: True Reference: pp. 17–18

4. T F The digital divide describes the gap between electronic impulses in computer media.

Answer: False Reference: pp. 5, 13

5. T F Technological convergence is based on the fact that the same basic technologies can be used to transmit all forms of communication.

Answer: True Reference: pp. 5–6

6. T F It would be correct to say that there is less gatekeeping in new media than old media.

Answer: True Reference: p. 18

7. T F Talking to a friend with Instant Messenger would be asynchronous communication.

Answer: False Reference: p. 24

8. T F In today's world of digital communications, media messages must be converted to analog form for transmission and then back to digital form for reception.

Answer: False Reference: p. 6

9. T F AOL Time Warner exemplifies the success of the business strategy of convergence.

Answer: False Reference: p. 7

10. T F Blogs are an example of the audience-generated nature of new media.

Answer: True Reference: p. 22

11. T F The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was the most sweeping re-regulation of media industries in U.S. history.

Answer: False Reference: p. 11

12. T F Over the next decade, information-sector jobs are expected to grow a lot faster than jobs in the overall economy.

Answer: False Reference: pp. 9–10

13. T F A 1998 law broadened the copyright protection enjoyed by writers, performers and songwriters.

Answer: True Reference: p. 11

14. T F After cable television started going digital, direct broadcast satellite operations scrambled to do the same.

Answer: False Reference: p. 16

15. T F A digital transmission can be "cleaned" of any noise that may creep in during transmission or recording.

Answer: True Reference: p. 21

16. T F Job offshoring is a long-term trend in manufacturing industries, but most information sector jobs are too difficult to offshore.

Answer: False Reference: p. 12

17. T F When communication is said to be mediated, it relies on one-to-one or face-to-face communication.

Answer: False Reference: p. 19

Multiple Choice

18. In which historical period did written communications emerge as a specialized function controlled by the ruling classes?
    a) Pre-agricultural society
    b) Industrial society
    c) Agricultural society
    d) Information society

Answer: C Reference: p. 14

19. An answering machine is an example of _____.
    a) asynchronous interpersonal communication
    b) asynchronous intrapersonal communication
    c) synchronous interpersonal communication
    d) synchronous intrapersonal communication

Answer: A Reference: p. 24

20. The "digital divide" refers to _____.
    a) the way digital technologies process information in terms of 1's and 0's
    b) the gap between people who have access to digital technology and those who don't
    c) the use of digital technology in a variety of media such as digital TV and DVD
    d) the difference in quality between analog and digital technology

Answer: B Reference: pp. 5, 13

21. Wilbur Schramm's SMCR model can be best applied to ________.
    a) mass communication
    b) online communication
    c) interactive communication
    d) interpersonal communication

Answer: A Reference: pp. 17–18

22. All of the following are characteristics that distinguish new media from traditional mass media except _____.
    a) real-time interactions
    b) capacities for desktop publishing
    c) simultaneous communication
    d) many-to-many communication

Answer: C Reference: pp. 21–25

23. In Hollywood, the computer movement started with the special effects in _____.
    a) *Star Wars*
    b) *Toy Story*
    c) *American Idol*
    d) *60 Minutes*

Answer: A Reference: p. 16

24. In a broader sense, interactive communication is characterized by the ability of the user to _____ media messages.
    a) understand
    b) enjoy
    c) customize
    d) disagree with

Answer: C Reference: pp. 21–22

25. Consider a moviegoer viewing the film *8 Mile*. In this communications setting, who (or what) is the "S" in the S-M-C-R communications model?
    a) The theater owner
    b) Eminem
    c) The film studio
    d) The movie-goer

Answer: C Reference: pp. 17–18

26. Information workers make up about _____ of the U.S. workforce.
    a) a quarter
    b) a third
    c) half
    d) three-fourths

Answer: C Reference: p. 15

27. Narrowcasting means _____.
    a) transmitting signals in the upper reaches of the broadcast spectrum
    b) targeting content toward smaller and smaller audiences
    c) merging a variety of media into one distribution channel
    d) utilizing feedback and time-shifting devices together

Answer: B Reference: p. 24

28. The beginning of the Industrial Society is associated with _____.
    a) the television
    b) the telephone
    c) the printing press
    d) the computer

Answer: C Reference: p. 15

29. Which of the following is characteristic of analog signals?
    a) Computer-readable
    b) Continuous signal
    c) Already compressed
    d) Less noise than digital

Answer: B Reference: p. 6

30. The primary mass medium that evolved in early agricultural societies was the _____.
    a) hand-copied book
    b) ritual chant
    c) radio
    d) None of the choices

Answer: A Reference: pp. 14–15

31. At about what time did the United States become an industrial society?
    a) 1860
    b) 1910
    c) 1940
    d) 1960

Answer: B Reference: p. 15

32. Which of the following is an example of "time shifting"?
    a) Participating in a talk-radio show
    b) Watching a program recorded on a TiVo
    c) Conversing with friends in an Internet chat room
    d) Engaging in an interpersonal conversation

Answer: B Reference: p. 24

33. Writing a letter to a friend is an example of which type of communication?
    a) Small-group communication
    b) Intrapersonal communication
    c) Interpersonal communication
    d) None of the choices

Answer: C Reference: p. 19

34. Which of the following is an example of interactivity?
    a) Selecting a channel using a TV remote control
    b) Choosing a plot for an online novel
    c) Using an index to find content in a book
    d) All of the choices

Answer: B Reference: p. 22

Short Answer

35. Describe media convergence.
Reference: pp. 4–7

36. How does the television show *American Idol* depart from the SMCR model of mass communication?
Reference: pp. 20–21

37. What are some of the forces driving narrowcasting?
Reference: pp. 24–25

38. What is packet switching?
Reference: p. 21

39. How is the information society different from previous eras?
Reference: pp. 13–15

40. What did Terry Semel do before joining Yahoo!?
Reference: p. 11

41. Why do broadcasters see digital video recorders as a threat?
Reference: p. 16

42. How has technology affected the number of people required to produce a media product?
Reference: pp. 9–10

43. What proportion of the U.S. population is now on the web?
Reference: p. 5

44. What is the Turing test?
Reference: p. 21

45. In what way have audience generated media such as blogs affected old mass media sources?
Reference: p. 22

46. How can cell phones be used both for digital interpersonal communication and for digital small group communication?
Reference: p. 21

Student Website Tutorial Quiz Questions & Answers

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following would be considered convergence?

a. A website with text, audio and video
b. A newspaper that has a partnership with a local TV station
c. A cable-television provider that also provides Internet access and phone service
d. All of these would be considered convergence.

ANS: D

2. According to the Pew Research Center, how many Internet visitors download music?

a. One out of 10
b. One-third
c. Half
d. Three-fourths

ANS: B

3. The exporting of jobs to other countries is called _____.

a. offshoring
b. disinvestment
c. media substitution
d. mainstreaming

ANS: A

4. What did the Telecommunications Act of 1996 do?

a. It increased the regulations on media companies.
b. It reduced the regulations on media companies.
c. It protected media companies from competing with one another.
d. None of the choices

ANS: B

5. Which of the following is an example of "old media"?

a. Radio
b. Television
c. Film
d. All of the choices

ANS: D

6. The letters SMCR stand for Source, Message, Channel and Receiver.

a. True
b. False; “S” stands for Sender
c. False; “M” stands for Meaning
d. False; “R” stands for Responder

ANS: A

7. You might apply the Turing test to determine whether a particular device is truly:

a. digital.
b. asynchronous.
c. multimedia.
d. interactive.

ANS: D

8. Typing information into a Palm Pilot or other computerized organizer is an example of _____.

a. intrapersonal communication
b. interpersonal communication
c. organizational communication
d. None of the choices

ANS: A

9. In the SMCR model, _____ would be an example of a channel.

a. the number that you enter on your remote to get a particular station
b. the TV network (i.e., NBC, CBS, ABC, Fox or PBS)
c. the television set in your living room
d. the transmitters, satellite links and other equipment that bring the signal to your home

ANS: D

10. What does the V-Chip do?

a. It aids in the manufacturing of personal computers.
b. It powers the graphics cards in video game consoles.
c. It allows for parental filtering of TV programming.
d. It receives Global Position Satellite signals.

ANS: C

11. Which society depended exclusively on oral traditions for communication?

a. Preagricultural Society
b. Agricultural Society
c. Industrial Society
d. Information Society

ANS: A

12. At its peak, about how many people were sharing digital music files over the original Napster?

a. 1 million
b. 10 million
c. 20 million
d. More than 50 million

ANS: D

13. At which point in history is an economy said to support an “information society”?

a. When a country has more information than it needs to support itself
b. When a country has identified information as a valuable commodity for processing
c. When information work dominates the workforce
d. None of the choices

ANS: C

14. Why did the recording industry go to court to shut down Napster?

a. Napster was selling more music than the major labels.
b. Napster enabled file-sharing of copyrighted music.
c. Napster was owned by artists promoting direct sales to consumers.
d. None of the choices

ANS: B

15. Going digital in communication has several advantages except _____.

a. transmission quality is improved
b. users have more interaction via digital complexity
c. social stratification or the information gap decreases
d. users have more choices and control

ANS: C

16. According to the textbook, what happens in an Information Society?

a. Information is important in our everyday life, although the main economic and social activities are related to traditional industries.
b. Every person has access to computers, the Internet and media equipment.
c. Production, processing and distribution of information are the primary economic and social activities.
d. Information technology is necessarily the only determinant phenomenon in social development.

ANS: C

17. According to the textbook, the primary meaning of convergence is _____.
a. the integration of various forms of communication technologies
b. media programming adapting to audience demands
c. various genres merging to form one hybrid genre
d. narrowcasting
ANS: A

18. Which is not a significant advantage of digital technology over analog technology?
a. Channel abundance
b. Quality
c. User control
d. Ease of use
ANS: D

19. Nowadays, the economy in the United States is focused on _____.
a. agriculture
b. information and media
c. traditional industries
d. mass production
ANS: B

20. Which of the following is an example of a "sender" in the SMCR model?
a. The producer of NBC's *Tonight Show*
b. RCA radio transmitters
c. The *Tomb Raider* video game
d. A television viewer
ANS: A

True/False

21. On average, people spend more time using media than they spend on anything else, including working or sleeping.
ANS: T

22. Advances in computers and telecommunications networks have led to the merging, or convergence, of conventional mass media with new ones.
ANS: T

23. The V-Chip allows parents to shield children from pornographic websites.
ANS: F

24. If "digital robber barons" have their way, consumers might pay more and have fewer content choices.
ANS: T

25. The first consumer communications medium to be digitized was the computer.

ANS: F

26. The advantages of going digital include better quality, channel abundance and improved user control.

ANS: T

27. The music industry is still trying to put Napster out of business.

ANS: F

28. E-books are the most popular digital print product.

ANS: F

29. HDTV transmits a wider picture than a standard TV signal.

ANS: T

30. Thanks to the Internet, the traditional mass media are more powerful than ever.

ANS: F

Online Homework Questions and Answers

1. What does the term "information society" mean?

ANS: It's a society in which the production, processing, distribution and consumption of information are the primary economic and social activities. In such a society, information work dominates the workforce. The dominant medium in an information society is the computer.

2. Use the SMCR model to describe what happens when you watch TV.

ANS: The source is the network or show producer. The message is the content of the show, which is encoded by the microphones and television cameras in the television studio. The channel is the chain of transmitters, satellite links and other equipment that convey the message to your home. Your television set is the decoder, and you – the viewer – are the receiver. If a TV ratings service is tracking your viewing habits, that's feedback. And noise could be bad weather or a neighbor's barking dog.

3. What's the difference between broadcasting and narrowcasting?

ANS: Broadcasting tries to reach the largest possible audience. Narrowcasting means targeting content toward smaller and smaller audiences. It involves dedicating communication channels to specific audience subgroups, or market segments. Advanced audience research methods have helped the media cater to these smaller audiences by enhancing the richness and speed of audience feedback.

4. Imagine you're the editor of the online edition of your campus newspaper, and your school has just won the national championship in women's soccer. Assuming you have adequate staffing and technical support, what would you put on your newspaper's website to take advantage of the Internet?

ANS: You could post not only one or more text stories, but also a gallery of still photos, video from the game and background about the players and their championship season. You could host an interactive chat with the coach and the players and have a discussion board where fans can post comments. You also could send breaking news about the event to your readers via e-mail and cell-phone text-messaging.

5. Why do advertisers want to use the web?

ANS: Advertisers can complete sales transactions at their websites and gather valuable information about consumer habits from web visits.