



## The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media

By John B. Thompson

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What role have communication media played in the formation of modern societies? How should we understand the social impact of new forms of communication and information diffusion, from the advent of printing in fifteenth-century Europe to the expansion of global communication networks today? In this major new work, Thompson addresses these and other questions by elaborating a distinctive social theory of communication media and their impact. He argues that the development of communication media has transformed the spatial and temporal constitution of social life, creating new forms of action and interaction which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale. The consequences of this transformation are far-reaching and impinge on many aspects of our lives, from the most intimate aspects of personal experience and self-formation to the changing nature of power and visibility in the public domain. Combining breadth of vision with sensitivity to detail, this book situates the study of the media where it belongs: among a set of disciplines concerned with the emergence, development and structural characteristics of modern societies and their futures.

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#### Review

“Thompson is foremost among sociologists to grasp and assess the importance of the mass media in modern social theory. He does so in this . . . fresh and compelling story of modernity. Thompson writes with tremendous scope, insight, and precision.”?James Lull, San Jose State University

#### From the Back Cover

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#### About the Author

John B. Thompson is Reader in Sociology at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge.

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