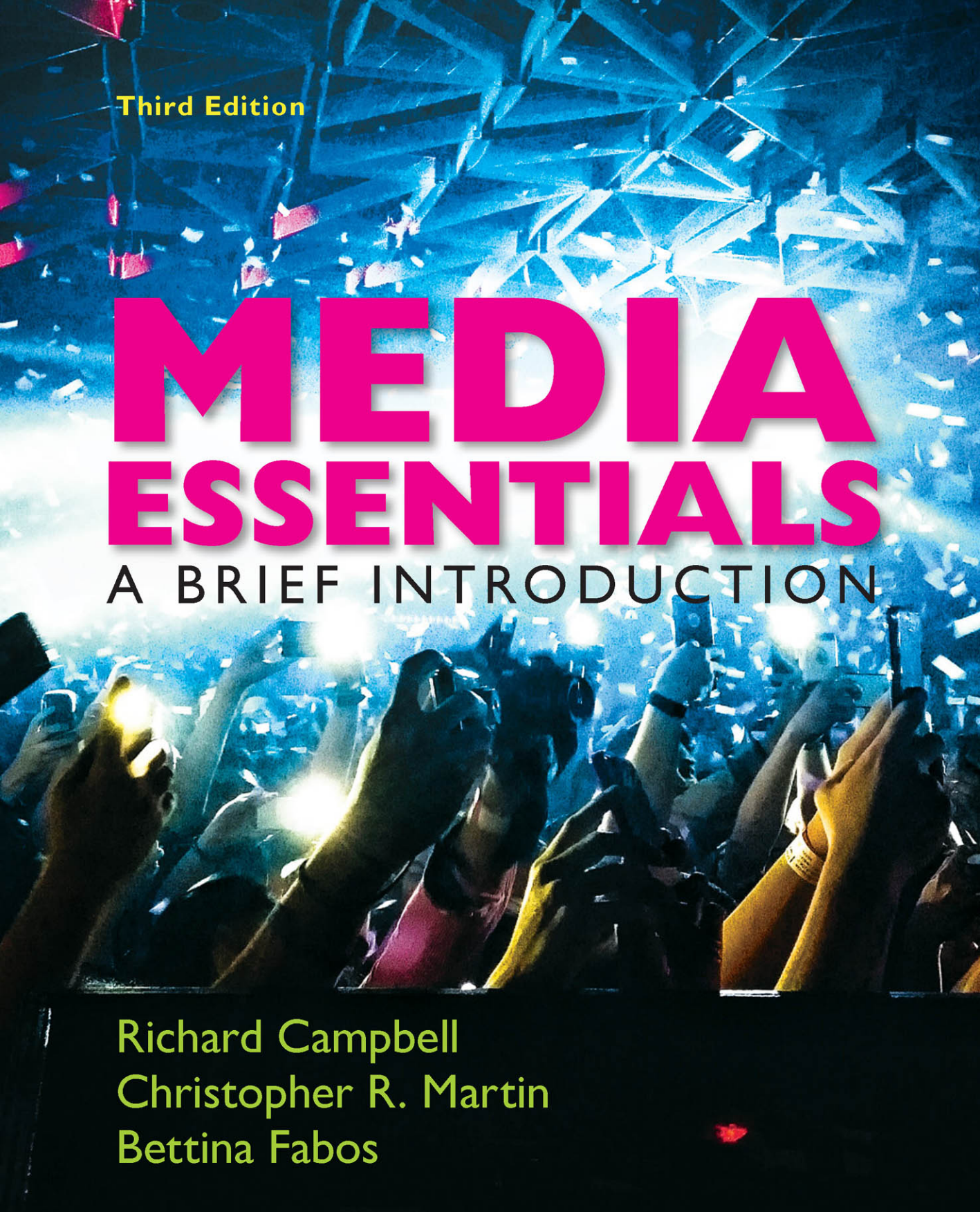
Third Edition
MEDIA ESSENTIALS
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION
Richard Campbell
Christopher R. Martin
Bettina Fabos

Everything you need to know about the media

The third edition of *Media Essentials* helps you focus on the fundamentals of media studies using current, historical, and accessible examples to tell the story of mass media.

U2 (featuring Bono, left) and Beyoncé (right) have both tried out new digital album-release strategies in recent years.

© Dave Benett / Getty Images

The most current and accessible coverage of the media industries

More compact and streamlined than other mass media texts, *Media Essentials* offers just the right amount of detail about the media industries and other key concepts such as convergence, media literacy, legal controls, and media effects. The revised journalism chapter integrates the industry's history, from print to television to the Internet, into a single, compelling narrative.

Expanded coverage of convergence and media literacy

The popular **Converging Media** and **Media Literacy** Case Study boxes have been expanded and cover topics like race in Hollywood, net neutrality, binge-viewing habits, self-publishing success stories, harassment campaigns on social media, and stereotypes in advertising. Each is accompanied by a video on LaunchPad for *Media Essentials*, bringing the discussions to life.

CONVERGING MEDIA

Case Study

Movie Theaters and Live Exhibition

Adaptation or extinction: This Darwinian law has helped the business of movie exhibition survive into the twenty-first century. Since the arrival of the nickelodeon—the first permanent locations devoted to screening motion pictures—the exhibition branch has witnessed several profound transformations, from the development of drive-ins in the 1950s to the proliferation of multiplex screens in the 1970s and 1980s. As home viewing becomes an increasingly viable option, movie theaters are still on the lookout for opportunities to fill seats—especially on weeknights, when business is slow.

Media convergence has provided just such an opportunity. In 2011, the transition to digital cinema reached what industry analysts consider a tipping point. With more than sixty thousand screens converted to digital projection technology (roughly half the exhibition facilities worldwide), movie exhibition is taking the next step in its technological evolution: the addition of live programming. Until recently, the use of theaters for the presentation of live events was limited but not unheard of. According to legend, the *Amos 'n' Andy* radio show was so popular in the 1930s that many theaters halted their screenings for fifteen minutes to play the program over loudspeakers to the gathered audience.[1] But until recently, television and radio have been the media devoted to the presentation of live events.

The repurposing of movie theaters, enabled by the conversion to digital projection, began as early as 2002, but it did not attract national attention until December 2006, when National CineMedia's programming division, NCM Fathom, presented *The Magic Flute*, the first installment of its *Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD* series.[2] Fathom now boasts a network of five hundred screens. Cinedigm, another player in this fledgling field, specializes in distributing live 3-D sporting events to its eighty-eight-theater network.[3] Cinedigm's 3-D presentation of the 2009 BCS National Championship football game sold out nineteen of the eighty theaters then in its network and generated four times the per-screen revenue of any film that night. And in 2010, more than a hundred thousand people paid $20 a ticket to

LaunchPad
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Visit LaunchPad to watch a clip from one of Peter Jackson's *Hobbit* films. How might theatrical exhibition change this experience?

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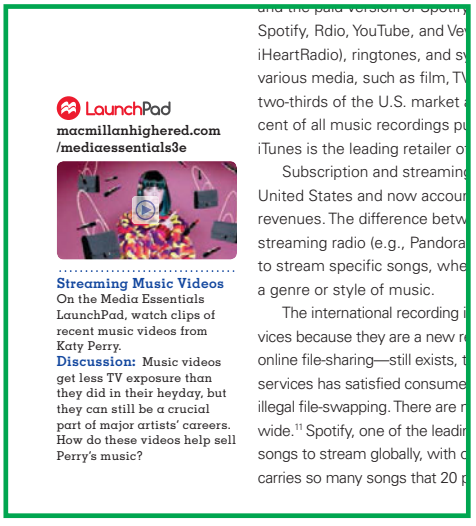

LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* goes beyond the printed textbook

Media Essentials emphasizes convergence and practices it, too. Callouts in the boxes and margins throughout the book direct students to the wealth of video clips available on LaunchPad for *Media Essentials*.

We've added clips from movies, TV shows, and other media texts to the site's array of interviews, diversifying the book's extensive video program.

Videos are accompanied by critical thinking questions that invite students to offer their own analysis and reactions—perfect for media response papers and class discussions. For a complete list of available clips, see the last book page.

LearningCurve

LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* also includes LearningCurve, a game-like adaptive quizzing system designed to help students review. Each chapter's LearningCurve uses a wealth of review questions and adaptive technology that analyzes student answers, helping them to figure out what they already know and master the concepts they still need to learn.

LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* can be packaged with the book or purchased on its own. To learn more, see the inside back cover or visit **launchpadworks.com**.

For more information about *Media Essentials*, please visit **macmillanhighered.com/mediaessentials3e.**

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MEDIA ESSENTIALS

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MEDIA ESSENTIALS

A Brief Introduction

Third Edition

Richard Campbell
MIAMI UNIVERSITY

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

with

Shawn Harmsen
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

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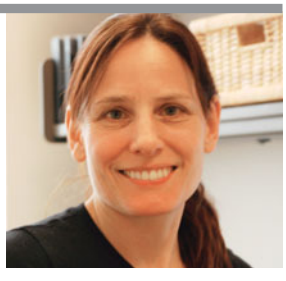
About the Authors

Richard Campbell, director of the journalism program at Miami University, is the author of *"60 Minutes" and the News: A Mythology for Middle America* (1991) and coauthor of *Cracked Coverage: Television News, the Anti-Cocaine Crusade, and the Reagan Legacy* (1994). Campbell has written for numerous publications, including *Columbia Journalism Review, Journal of Communication,* and *Media Studies Journal*, and he has served on the editorial boards of *Critical Studies in Mass Communication and Television Quarterly*. He holds a PhD from Northwestern University.

Christopher R. Martin is a professor of journalism at the University of Northern Iowa and author of *Framed! Labor and the Corporate Media* (2003). He has written articles and reviews on journalism, televised sports, the Internet, and labor for several publications, including *Communication Research, Journal of Communication, Journal of Communication Inquiry, Labor Studies Journal,* and *Culture, Sport, and Society*. He is also on the editorial board of the *Journal of Communication Inquiry*. Martin holds a PhD from the University of Michigan and has also taught at Miami University.



Bettina Fabos, an award-winning video maker and former print reporter, is an associate professor of visual communication and interactive media studies at the University of Northern Iowa. She is the author of *Wrong Turn on the Information Superhighway: Education and the Commercialized Internet* (2003). Her areas of expertise include critical media literacy, Internet commercialization and education, and media representations of popular culture. Her work has been published in *Library Trends, Review of Educational Research,* and *Harvard Educational Review*. Fabos has a PhD from the University of Iowa.

Shawn Harmsen straddles the line between the professional and academic worlds. His journalism career has, since 1995, spanned radio, television, and newsroom jobs, including reporter, anchor, photojournalist, and news director. After getting his MA in communication education from the University of Northern Iowa in 2005, he continued to work in television news as a freelancer while also serving as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Wisconsin–Superior. He is set to receive his PhD from the University of Iowa's School of Journalism and Mass Communication in 2016. While at Iowa, Shawn edited the *Journal of Communication Inquiry* and coauthored work published in *Journalism Practice* and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. His research interests involve the intersection of journalism, politics, and social justice issues.

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Preface

THE DIGITAL FUTURE OF MASS MEDIA HAS ARRIVED, and we're experiencing it firsthand. Not only has there been a fundamental change in the ways we use and consume media, but also in the many ways that media messages saturate our lives. As media industries continue to evolve and converge, we want students to have the critical tools they need to understand the media-saturated world around them. These tools, and an understanding of the fundamentals of media studies, are exactly what we had in mind when we wrote *Media Essentials*.

Media Essentials distills media industries and major concepts like digital convergence and legal controls down to their essence. Each chapter offers incisive historical context, frames key concepts up front, and uses pivotal examples to tell the broader story of how different forms of media have developed, how they work, and how they connect to us today. For example, Chapter 10, "Digital Gaming and the Media Playground," explores the roots of electronic gaming in early twentieth-century penny arcades, then goes on to explain how new technologies facilitated the medium's evolution into computer and console games played in arcades and at home and its eventual development into a socially driven mass medium. It then follows the money through an in-depth section on the economics of the video game industry, moves into discussions of regulation and its implications for democracy, and, in a new Converging Media Case Study box, discusses the ways game criticism has affected harassment on social media.

In addition to a wealth of content offered in every chapter, *Media Essentials* continues to be 30 percent briefer than competing books. In the third edition we've combined the chapters on newspapers and journalism into a single, streamlined chapter that better reflects the way journalism has changed and converged over the years. Throughout the book, our coverage is succinct, accessible, and peppered with memorable examples, and the book's unique approach—distilling media information to its core—gives instructors the space to add in personal research or social perspectives.

We've also further emphasized the importance of convergence by expanding our Converging Media boxes and our Media Literacy boxes, going in depth on timely issues like self-publishing, binge-watching, net neutrality, race in Hollywood, social media marketing, online activism, and more. Because the book also practices convergence, *Media Essentials* has an expanded online video program in LaunchPad, with clips that offer students firsthand experience with important (and attention-grabbing) media texts, covering everything from modern television drama to music videos, from groundbreaking films like *12 Years a Slave* to vintage Saturday-morning cartoons like *Transformers*. LaunchPad also includes

access to LearningCurve, an adaptive quizzing system that helps students figure out what they know—and what material they need to review. LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* can be packaged with the book at a deep discount.

Hallmark Features of *Media Essentials*, Third Edition

Clear, streamlined, and accessible. Thirty percent briefer than competing texts, *Media Essentials* addresses all the topics typically covered in introductory mass communication books. From the media industries to legal controls, it offers just the right amount of detail, ensuring that students have enough information to make connections and develop media literacy.

An organization that supports learning. *Media Essentials* offers a chronological table of contents and consistent organization. Each chapter includes a brief history of the topic, a discussion of the evolution of the medium, a look at media economics, and coverage of the medium's relationship to democracy, media literacy, and convergence. This consistent organization and focus helps students make their way through the material while they grasp themes both big and small. Under each major heading, a preview paragraph highlights key ideas and contextualizes them, guiding students through the material.

Learning tools help students master the material. Each chapter opens with a bulleted list of objectives highlighting what students should expect to learn, while timelines preview important historical events necessary for understanding the chapter's theme. Converging Media and Media Literacy Case Study boxes address relevant topics in greater detail and help students think critically about them. Finally, each chapter concludes with Chapter Essentials, a useful study guide that helps students review material and prepares them for quizzes and exams.

New to This Edition

Expanded video clips. Call-outs in the boxes and margins throughout the book direct students to the wealth of video clips available on LaunchPad for *Media Essentials*. We've added clips from movies, TV shows, and other media texts like *Breaking Bad*, *Gravity*, *2 Broke Girls*, *Frozen*, *30 Rock*, *Real Housewives*, and more to the site's array of interviews, diversifying the book's impressive video program by providing extensive examples of the book's core concepts. Videos are accompanied by thoughtful questions that invite students to offer their own analysis and reactions—perfect for media response papers and class discussions. For a complete list of available clips, see the inside back cover. LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* can be purchased on its own or packaged with the text.

Expanded media literacy and convergence coverage. The Converging Media Case Study and Media Literacy Case Study boxes have been expanded and updated to accommodate more examples, visuals, and video. These boxes now go even more in depth on topics like race in Hollywood, investigative reporting, binge-viewing habits, magazines on social media, net neutrality, harassment among gaming fans, and stereotypes in advertising.

A newly revised journalism chapter. The newly revised Chapter 3, "Newspapers to Digital Frontiers: Journalism's Journey," merges chapters on newspapers and journalism into one comprehensive, streamlined, and forward-looking profile of journalism's future and past.

The most current and engaging examples. More than a dozen new chapter openers bring students into the stories of the media with current and attention-grabbing coverage of recent events, like the rise of GoPro cameras, threats over the Sony e-mail hacks and *The Interview*, the popularity of cord-cutting, surprise album releases, success in self-publishing, and more.

Updated industry coverage. *Media Essentials* keeps pace with all of the latest developments in the world of mass media, like Amazon's price wars, the boom in satirical fake news, the shifting economics of streaming music and video content, public relations failures on social media, the rise of the digital conglomerates, and more.

LaunchPad: Where Students Learn

Digital tools for *Media Essentials,* Third Edition, are available on LaunchPad, a dynamic new platform that combines a curated collection of videos, homework assignments, e-book content, and the LearningCurve adaptive quizzing program, organized for easy assignability, in a simple user interface. LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* features:

- **An easy-to-use interface.** Ready-made interactive LaunchPad units give you the building blocks to assign instantly as is, or customize to fit your course. A unit's worth of work can be assigned in seconds, significantly decreasing the amount of time it takes for you to get your course up and running.
- **Intuitive and useful analytics.** The Gradebook allows you to quickly review progress at the class and individual level, providing useful information to help you make the most of the teaching and learning experience.
- **Fully interactive e-book.** Every LaunchPad e-book comes with powerful study tools, multimedia content, and easy customization for instructors.

- **LearningCurve offers adaptive quizzing and a personalized learning program.** In every chapter, call-outs prompt students to tackle the game-like LearningCurve quizzes to test their knowledge and reinforce learning of the material. Based on research as to how students learn, LearningCurve motivates students to engage with course materials, while the reporting tools let you see what content students have mastered, allowing you to adapt your teaching plan to their needs.
- **Integrated video clips that extend and complement the book.** A rich library of videos offers easy access to clips from movies, TV shows, music videos, interviews, and more, along with thought-provoking discussion questions that can be assigned in or out of class.
- **Video tools let you create video assignments for the class, individuals, and groups.** Instructors and students can upload their own videos, embed from sites like YouTube, and use publisher-provided videos in assignments and then analyze and assess them using time-based commenting features and rubrics.
- **The newest edition of our *Media Career Guide.*** LaunchPad includes a digital version of this practical, student-friendly guide to media jobs, featuring tips and career guidance for students considering a major in the media industries.

Find out more at **www.launchpadworks.com.** LaunchPad is available to purchase on its own, or at a discount when packaged with the print book. Contact your Bedford/St. Martin's sales representative for more details.

Digital and Print Formats

For more information on these formats and packaging information, please visit the online catalog at **macmillanhighered.com/catalog/mediaessentials3e**.

LaunchPad for *Media Essentials* at macmillanhighered.com/mediaessentials3e
Packaged at a discount with *Media Essentials* or available for purchase separately, LaunchPad features an array of video clips, homework assignments, e-book content, and the LearningCurve adaptive quizzing program, organized for easy assignability in a simple user interface. To order LaunchPad packaged with the print book, use ISBN 978-1-319-05550-9. To order LaunchPad on its own, use ISBN 978-1-319-02789-6.

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Student and Instructor Resources

For more information or to order or download the instructor resources, please visit the online catalog at **macmillanhighered.com/catalog/mediaessentials3e.**

***Media Career Guide: Preparing for Jobs in the 21st Century,* Tenth Edition**
Sherri Hope Culver; ISBN 978-1-319-01953-2

Practical, student-friendly, and revised to include recent statistics on the job market, this guide includes a comprehensive directory of media jobs, practical tips, and career guidance for students considering a major in the media industries. The *Media Career Guide* can also be packaged for free with the print text. An electronic version comes integrated in LaunchPad for *Media Essentials*.

Instructor's Resource Manual
James E. Mueller, Christopher R. Martin, Bettina Fabos, and Richard Campbell; ISBN 978-1-319-02792-6

This downloadable manual provides instructors with a comprehensive teaching tool for the introduction to mass communication course. Every chapter offers teaching tips and activities culled from dozens of instructors who teach thousands of students. In addition, this extensive resource provides a range of teaching approaches, tips for facilitating in-class discussions, suggestions for using LaunchPad in and out of class, sample answers for LaunchPad's video discussion questions, writing assignments, outlines, lecture topics, lecture spin-offs, critical-process exercises, classroom media resources, and an annotated list of more than two hundred video resources.

Lecture Slides
Lecture slide presentations to help guide each chapter's lecture are available for download at **macmillanhighered.com/catalog/mediaessentials3e** on the instructor side and exist within LaunchPad.

Test Bank
James E. Mueller, Christopher R. Martin, Bettina Fabos, and Richard Campbell; ISBN 978-1-319-02793-3

Available as software formatted for Windows and Mac, the Test Bank includes multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short and long essay questions for every chapter in *Media Essentials*. The Test Bank is also available within LaunchPad.

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We wish every textbook author could have the kind of experience we've had while working on *Media Essentials* and would like to thank everyone at Bedford/St. Martin's who supported this project through its editions and stages, including

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Please feel free to e-mail us at **mediaessentials@bedfordstmartins.com** with any comments, concerns, or suggestions!

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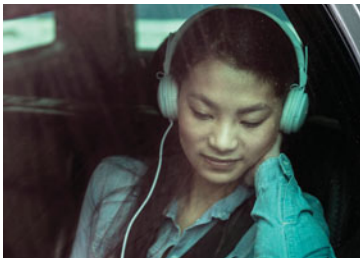

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LaunchPad For videos, review quizzing, and more, visit **macmillanhighered.com/mediaessentials3e.**

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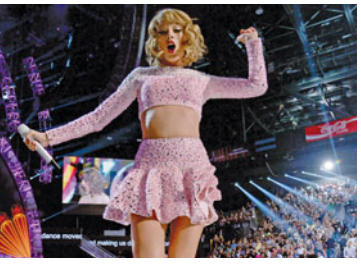

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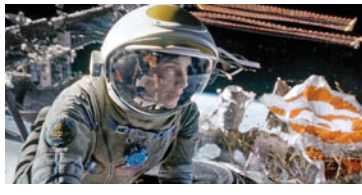

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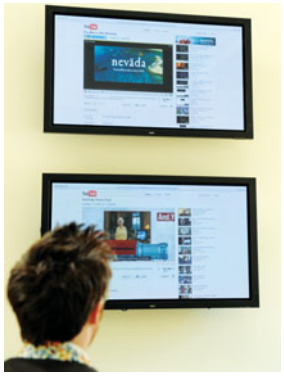

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Prior to the 1980s, the vast majority of people watched video content (television programs) on their television sets from three or four broadcasters over the local airwaves. Then cable television exploded; currently, an estimated 85 percent of homes with a television pay for some kind of cable or satellite television.[1] The still-increasing numbers of channels include networks and local affiliates as well as cable-only channels and premium offerings, such as HBO. At the same time, a growing number of consumers are finding ways to watch their favorite programs without signing up for traditional cable service.

The process is called *cord cutting*, a term created to describe people who cancel their cable or satellite-television subscriptions in favor of watching similar content streamed online. Industry researchers estimate that by the end of 2013, about 7.6 million homes had "cut" their cable cords, up from about 5 million homes in 2010. Although that represents only about 6.5 percent of all U.S. households, a closer look at the numbers reveals some interesting details about this trend. Customers under the age of thirty-five are twice as likely to cut the cord as older users, and customers who have a Hulu or Netflix account or own a smartphone or digital tablet are also much more likely to ditch their cable subscriptions.[2] The ability to watch streaming

video using mobile devices is a major driving force in changing viewing and cable-purchasing habits. Researchers have also found that not only are younger users more likely to cut the cord, but more and more of them go straight to online streaming and never bother getting hooked up to cable in the first place.

Though this is a significant change, it doesn't exactly liberate consumers from the major cable companies. Consider, for example, the cable company Comcast. Its recent purchase of entertainment conglomerate NBC Universal means that it still produces content, for which it still gets paid through services like Hulu and Netflix, which license TV shows and stream them for their users. Comcast and other cable providers often provide the same broadband Internet services being used by cord cutters. That means cable companies can structure prices and bundle services like cable, Internet, and even telephone landlines in such a way as to encourage users to keep all three. They have also been pushing for regulators at the FCC to allow them to charge companies such as Netflix more money to get faster Internet service, although the FCC has so far decided against the tiered pricing schemes favored by large Internet providers. Such a tiered service would mean that only large, well-established companies would be able to pay for this faster Internet, stifling the innovation of small Internet start-ups. These regulatory, legislative, and judicial battles over net neutrality, technological innovation, and multiplatform corporations will continue to shape our digital media world for years to come. The tensions between innovation, control, consumer interests, and commercial profits will be a recurring theme throughout this book.

THINKING ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP—with all the small, medium, and large screens in our world generates many compelling questions. For example, what does research tell us about how media both reflect and shape our world? What roles and responsibilities do mass media have? What is our role in media processes, such as the development and distribution of content? And how (if at all) should these processes be changed? In this book, we take up such questions by examining the history and business of mass media as well as scholarly research into how media and people interact. We take stock of the media's positive and negative aspects, seeking ideas for ways to use media to improve the quality of our lives.

At their best, media, in all their forms, try to help us understand the events and trends affecting us. At their worst, they can erode the quality of our lives in numerous ways. For one thing, media's appetite for telling and selling stories can lead them to misrepresent those events or exploit them (and the people they most affect) for profit. Many critics disapprove of how media—particularly TV, cable, and tabloid magazines—seem to hurtle from one event to another, often dwelling on trivial, celebrity-driven content rather than meaningful analysis of more important events. Critics also fault media for failing to fulfill their responsibility as a watchdog for democracy—which sometimes calls for challenging our leaders and questioning their actions. Finally, the formation and growth of media industries, commercial culture, and new converging technologies—smartphones, laptop computers, digital television—have some critics worrying that we are now spending more time consuming media than interacting with one another.

Like anything else, mass media have their good sides and bad, their useful effects and destructive ones. And that's why it is so important for us to acquire media literacy—an understanding of the media that are powerfully shaping our world (and being shaped by it). Only by being media literate can we have a say in the roles that media play around us.

In this chapter, we will take steps to strengthen that literacy by:

- tracing the evolution of mass communication—from oral and written forms to print and electronic incarnations
- examining mass media and the process of communication, including the steps a new medium travels on its journey to mass medium status, and the role that mass media play in our everyday lives
- considering two main models of media literacy—cultural and social scientific—which reflect different approaches to understanding how mass communication works and how media affect us
- taking a closer look at cultural approaches to media literacy
- taking a closer look at social scientific approaches to media literacy
- exploring ways of critiquing the mass media, and reflecting on the importance of doing so

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macmillanhighered.com/mediaessentials3e
Use **LearningCurve** to review concepts from this chapter.

The Evolution of Mass Communication

The mass media surrounding us have their roots in mass communication. **Mass media** are the industries that create and distribute songs, novels, newspapers, movies, Internet services, TV shows, magazines, and other products to large numbers of people. The word *media* is a Latin plural form of the singular noun *medium*, meaning an intervening material or substance through which something else is conveyed or distributed.

We can trace the historical development of media through several eras, all of which still operate to varying degrees. These eras are oral, written, print, electronic, and digital. In the first two eras (oral and written), media existed only in tribal or feudal communities and agricultural economies. In the last three eras (print, electronic, and digital), media became vehicles for **mass communication**: the creation and use of symbols (e.g., languages, Morse code, motion pictures, and binary computer codes) that convey information and meaning to large and diverse audiences through all manner of channels.

Although the telegraph meant that by the middle of the 1800s reporters could almost instantly send a report to their newspaper across the country, getting that news out to a mass audience still had to wait on printing and delivery of a physical object. But with the start of the electronic age in the early twentieth century, radio and then television made mass communication even more widely, and instantly, accessible. If a person were in range of a transmitter, news and entertainment now came at the flick of a switch. By the end of the twentieth century, the Internet revolutionized the entire field of mass communication, and continues to change it today. Consider, for example, that a smartphone that fits into the palm of a person's hand offers every earlier form of communication anywhere there is a Wi-Fi or cellular signal. One could use the phone to make a call or video chat (oral communication), send a text or an e-mail (written communication), read a book (print communication), listen to an online radio station or watch a television program on a service like Hulu

(electronic communication), and then send a tweet about the movie they watched on Netflix (digital communication). As shown throughout this book, older forms of communication don't go away but are adapted and converged with newer forms and technologies.

The Oral and Written Eras

In most early societies, information and knowledge first circulated slowly through oral (spoken) traditions passed on by poets, teachers, and tribal storytellers. However, as alphabets and the written word emerged, a manuscript (written) culture developed and eventually overshadowed oral communication. Painstakingly documented and transcribed by philosophers, monks, and stenographers, manuscripts were commissioned by members of the ruling classes, who used them to record religious works and prayers, literature, and personal chronicles. Working people, most of whom were illiterate, rarely saw manuscripts. The shift from oral to written communication created a wide gap between rulers and the ruled in terms of the two groups' education levels and economic welfare.

AP Photo/U.S. Army Signal Corps

These army cadets from the 1940s train in sending and receiving Morse code, one of the earliest mass communication technologies.

These trends in oral and written communication unfolded slowly over many centuries. Although exact time frames are disputed, historians generally date the oral and written eras as ranging from 1000 BCE to the mid-fifteenth century. Moreover, the transition from oral to written communication wasn't necessarily smooth. For example, some philosophers saw oral traditions (including exploration of questions and answers through dialogue between teachers and students) as superior. They feared that the written word would hamper conversation between people.

The Print Era

What we recognize as modern printing—the wide dissemination of many copies of particular manuscripts—became practical in Europe around the middle of the fifteenth century. At this time, Johannes Gutenberg's invention of movable metallic type and the printing press in Germany ushered in the modern print era. Printing presses—and the publications they enabled—spread rapidly across Europe in the late 1400s and early 1500s. But early on, many books were large, elaborate, and expensive. It took months to illustrate and publish these volumes,

which were typically purchased by wealthy aristocrats, royal families, church leaders, prominent merchants, and powerful politicians.

In the following centuries, printers reduced the size and cost of books, making them available and affordable to more people. Books were then being mass-produced, making them the first mass-marketed products in history. This development spurred four significant changes: an increasing resistance to authority, the rise of new socioeconomic classes, the spread of literacy, and a focus on individualism.

Resistance to Authority

Since mass-produced printed materials could spread information and ideas faster and farther than ever before, writers could use print to disseminate views that challenged traditional civic doctrine and religious authority. This paved the way for major social and cultural changes, such as the Protestant Reformation and the rise of modern nationalism. People who read contradictory views began resisting traditional clerical authority. With easier access to information about events in nearby places, people also started seeing themselves not merely as members of families, isolated communities, or tribes, but as participants in larger social units—nation-states—whose interests were broader than local or regional concerns.

Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris/Scala-Art Resource

Before the invention of the printing press, books were copied by hand in a labor-intensive process. This beautifully illuminated page is from an Italian Bible from the early 1300s.

New Socioeconomic Classes

Eventually, mass production of books inspired mass production of other goods. This development led to the Industrial Revolution and modern capitalism in the mid-nineteenth century. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the rise of a consumer culture, which encouraged mass consumption to match the output of mass production. The revolution in industry also sparked the emergence of a middle class. This class was composed of people who were neither poor laborers nor wealthy political or religious leaders, but who made modest livings as merchants, artisans, and service professionals, such as lawyers and doctors.

In addition to a middle class, the Industrial Revolution also gave rise to an elite class of business owners and managers who acquired the kind of influence once held only by the nobility or the clergy. These groups soon discovered that they could use print media to distribute information and maintain social order.

Spreading Literacy

Although print media secured authority figures' power, the mass publication of pamphlets, magazines, and books also began democratizing knowledge—making it available to more and more people. Literacy rates rose among the working and middle classes, and some rulers fought back. In England, for instance, the monarchy controlled printing press licenses until the early nineteenth century to constrain literacy and therefore sustain the Crown's power over the populace. Even today, governments in many countries worldwide control presses, access to paper, and advertising and distribution channels for the same reason. In most industrialized countries, such efforts at control have met with only limited success. After all, building an industrialized economy requires a more educated workforce, and printed literature and textbooks support that education.

Focus on Individualism

The print revolution also nourished the idea of individualism. People came to rely less on their local community and their commercial, religious, and political leaders for guidance on how to live their lives. Instead, they read various ideas and arguments, and came up with their own answers to life's great questions. By the mid-nineteenth century, individualism had spread into the realm of commerce. There, it took the form of increased resistance to government interference in the affairs of self-reliant entrepreneurs. Over the next century, individualism became a fundamental value in American society.

The Electronic and Digital Eras

In Europe and America, the rise of industry completely transformed everyday life, with factories replacing farms as the main centers of work and production. During the 1880s, roughly 80 percent of Americans lived on farms and in small towns; by the 1920s and 1930s, most had moved to urban areas, where new industries and economic opportunities beckoned. This shift set the stage for the final two eras in mass communication: the electronic era (whose key innovations included the telegraph, radio, and television) and the digital era (whose flagship invention is the Internet).

The Electronic Era

In America, the gradual transformation from an industrial, print-based society to one fueled by electronic innovation began with the development of the telegraph in the 1840s. Featuring dot-dash electronic signals, the telegraph made media messages instantaneous, no longer reliant on stagecoaches, ships, or the pony express. It also enabled military, business, and political leaders to coordinate commercial and military operations more easily than ever. And it laid the