

McQuail, D. & Deuze, M. (2020). *McQuail's Media & Mass Communication Theory* (seventh edition). London: SAGE. 672 pp.

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With a first edition dating back to 1983, *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* has offered numerous scholars and students a clear and comprehensive introduction to the scholarly field of media and communication. Over the past four decades, the book has acquired a seminal status, close to being the ultimate 'go-to'-book or bible for junior and senior scholars alike. With its newest edition – the first one authored without the late Denis McQuail who sadly passed away in 2017 – the book catches up with the latest developments in the new (digital) era of media and communication, both on a scholarly level as well as with attention to contemporary daily life practices. Mark Deuze continues this legacy with a lot of respect, valuing and sincerely paying tribute to the outstanding work by Denis McQuail. Additionally, Deuze taps into his own impressive academic track record and inserts the book with new insights, topical cases and relevant perspectives, making this new edition not only an update but even so an expansion of the book's initial scope – perfectly captured, for one, by adding 'media' to the original title. Praiseworthy is also the successful effort done to further diversify and particularly de-westernize the source materials on which the book is based, incorporating new voices and ideas. In the same vein lies the authors' ambition to further embrace the interdisciplinary nature of the field by dwelling more heavily on theories of both social sciences and humanities. Finally, in terms of content, the attention towards and the profound acknowledgement of the impact of meta-processes such as digitalization and globalization on existing and recently developing theory, research and practices of media and communication are clearly visible in the new volume.

While several things have been changed, updated or tweaked, Deuze has opted to stay true to the basic idea and design of the book and continues to follow up on the dual structure or intent of the original. On the one hand, *McQuail's Media & Mass Communication Theory* reads like a thorough chronological overview of how media and communication have developed, both in terms of theoretical traditions as well as in a material sense with a sound discussion of the historical milestones and (technological) innovations. At the same time, the almost encyclopedic outset of the book allows readers to 'hop on and hop off' when in search for a particular concept, theory, scholar or (sub)domain of the broad and diverse or, arguably, fragmented field of study on media and communication. Particularly helpful in this regard is the exhaustive glossary and the comprehensive author and subject indexes at the end of the book. It almost goes without saying, but *McQuail's Media & Mass Communication Theory* does cover a lot of ground, ranging from the diverse forms of mass communication today, their broader relation with culture and society, the theoretical underpinnings to well-developed overviews of established and emerging methods, approaches to communication and basic definitions of many key concepts. Easy to get lost or overwhelmed by the amount of information provided, were it not that the authors offer the reader a clear and thought-out structure, following an overarching "'grand narrative' (Lyotard, [1979] 1984), providing connections between the various themes, issues and approaches that are brought into conversation with each other" (p. 19). In a practical way, the eighteen chapters are logically grouped in eight parts, each focusing on a key element of the (mass) communication process or on broader issues related to scholarly reflections: preliminaries (historically overviewing the field and mass media), theories, structures, organizations, content, audiences, effects, and, finally, an epilogue where the book explores possible futures of media and mass communication theory in a critical, open and insightful manner, offering the reader a lot of food for further thought.

To conclude this brief review, in the book's preface it is stated that "any phenomenon 'in the world' is also, to some extent, mediated" (p. ix), hinting at the inherently ambitious nature of the book to capture and discuss the widest possible scope of theories on (mass) media and communication in relation to culture and society. While these ambitions are certainly met to a large extent, the authors are, however, very much aware of the remaining ground to be covered and the inevitable biases - such as the acknowledged dominant western view or the unequal space and attention devoted to the many different topics - which tend to mold a project of such scope and size. Nevertheless, it is fair to state that *McQuail's Media & Mass Communication Theory* will rightfully remain the internationally acclaimed benchmark in the field, ready to inspire and enlighten many new generations of media and communication scholars and students to come.