



# Analyzing Media: Communication Technologies as Symbolic and Cognitive Systems

*James W. Chesebro PhD, Dale A. Bertelsen*

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For the past 25 years, critics of communication have focused on the content and form of verbal and nonverbal communication, while for the most part neglecting what traditionally has been considered a technical rather than a critical issue--the impact of how messages are produced or formatted in the various media. Topics such as the sexual and violent content of television and films, the meaning of pornography, and the persuasive efforts of advertisers largely have been examined with the use of social science methodologies that ignore the behavioral and message-generating implications of specific media systems themselves. Filling a significant void in the literature, this volume eschews the notion of communication technologies as neutral conduits, and instead depicts them as active and creative determinants of meaning. In doing so, it offers an illuminating examination of the dynamic relationships among communication, cognition, and social organization.

Winner of the Eastern Communication Association's 1997 Everett Lee Hunt Award for Outstanding Scholarship

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