



Beyond the Mass Media Age

Or

“this time it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone.”

Historical technologies of Communication

- Age of Oral cultures
- Age of Iconology
- Age of Paper
- Is computer age the next?

Differences between Public and Mass Communication

Public Communication

- Givers of Opinion nearly as numerous as receivers
- Ability to answer & respond
- Power permits opinion to impact decision
- Opinion influences power

Mass Communication

- Few have access to give opinion; many receive
- Communication is one way
- Power with opinion giver only
- Powerful set the opinion of the less powerful

20th Century: Age of Mass Media

- Historically
 - National propaganda
 - Rhetorical Presidency
 - Marketing and Advertising
 - Entertainment
- Heart of Rhetorical Theory
 - Theory of the speaker
 - Fixed and passive audience
 - Demographic targeting

Impact of MM on 20th C

- Politically: Mass nationalism
- Materially: Mass production
- Medically: Generalized medicine
- Socially: Demographic identification

At century end: MM diminished

- Fragmentation of MM audience
- Pull technology
- Time shifting
- Constructive r/t passive reception
- Changes in marketing strategies

Signs of post-MM age

- Economic collapse of press
- Increased electronic commerce
- Growth of social networking

Challenges of Post-MM Age

1. Culturally: anomy
2. Politically: democratic discourse
3. Socially: Loss of identities
4. Security: Controlling deviants
5. Privacy: Anonymity in mass

Post-MM Agenda

- Theorists of Rhetoric
 - How do we constitute audiences?
 - How do we develop enthymatic strategies
 - What is a message?
 - Increasing importance of constitutive rhetoric
- Politically
 - Common basis of political motivation?
 - How do political messages penetrate diffusion?

Post-MM Agenda

- **Socially**
 - How do we achieve diversity r/t dispersion?
 - How do we manage conflicts from multiple identities?
 - How do we adjust to different cues?
- **Materially**
 - How do we free ourselves from control by comm technologies?
 - How do we protect ourselves from commodified communitation?

In the post-MM age

- MM dying fast
- Govt struggles to control our society
- We transition to post-MM world