The Mediatization of Society

A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change

STIG HJARVARD

Abstract

Using mediatization as the key concept, this article presents a theory of the influence media exert on society and culture. After reviewing existing discussions of mediatization by Krotz (2007), Schulz (2004), Thompson (1995), and others, an institutional approach to the mediatization process is suggested. Mediatization is to be considered a double-sided process of high modernity in which the media on the one hand emerge as an independent institution with a logic of its own that other social institutions have to accommodate to. On the other hand, media simultaneously become an integrated part of other institutions like politics, work, family, and religion as more and more of these institutional activities are performed through both interactive and mass media. The logic of the media refers to the institutional and technological modus operandi of the media, including the ways in which media distribute material and symbolic resources and make use of formal and informal rules.

Keywords: mediatization, media logic, social interaction, modernity, virtualization

Introduction

This article presents a theory of the influence media exert on society and culture. It attempts to answer the question: What are the consequences of the gradual and increasing adaptation of central societal institutions, and the culture in which we live to the presence of intervening media? Thus, the article takes its point of departure in a classical question in the sociology of the media, namely, how the media affect society and culture. Answers to the question, however, are sought in a new social condition which we will label the mediatization of culture and society. Traditionally, the media have been conceived of as separate from society and culture; consequently, researchers tended to focus on the effect certain mediated messages had on individuals and institutions. For example: front-page headlines during an election campaign might be thought to exert influence on people's voting behavior, advertisements to affect consumers' shopping preferences, and film content to affect the viewer's morals or to distract attention from matters of greater urgency or significance.

Contemporary society is permeated by the media, to an extent that the media may no longer be conceived of as being separate from cultural and other social institutions. Under these circumstances, the task before us is instead to try to gain an understanding

of the ways in which social institutions and cultural processes have changed character, function and structure in response to the omnipresence of media. This altered understanding of media's importance does not mean that traditional questions regarding aspects like the effects of mediated messages on public opinion or the purposes to which people use media, are no longer relevant. But it does mean that an understanding of the importance of media in modern society and culture can no longer rely on models that conceive of media as being separate from society and culture.

Media are not simply technologies that organizations, parties or individuals can choose to use – or not use – as they see fit. A significant share of the influence media exert arises out of the fact that they have become an integral part of other institutions' operations, while they also have achieved a degree of self-determination and authority that forces other institutions, to greater or lesser degrees, to submit to their logic. The media are at once part of the fabric of society and culture and an independent institution that stands between other cultural and social institutions and coordinates their mutual interaction. The duality of this structural relationship sets a number of preconditions for how media messages in given situations are used and perceived by senders and receivers, thereby affecting relations between people. Thus, traditional questions about media use and media effects need to take account of the circumstance that society and culture have become mediatized.

The Concept of Mediatization

The concept most central to an understanding of the importance of media to culture and society is mediatization. The term has been used in numerous contexts to characterize the influence media exert on a variety of phenomena, but rather little work has been done to define or specify the concept itself. Only very recently have media researchers sought to develop the concept toward a more coherent and precise understanding of mediatization as a social and cultural process (Krotz, 2007; Schulz, 2004). Therefore, let us start by examining the various meanings the concept has been given in earlier work.

Mediatization was first applied to media's impact on political communication and other effects on politics. Swedish media researcher Kent Asp was the first to speak of the mediatization of political life, by which he meant a process whereby "a political system to a high degree is influenced by and adjusted to the demands of the mass media in their coverage of politics" (Asp, 1986:359). One form this adaptation takes is when politicians phrase their public statements in terms that personalize and polarize the issues so that the messages will have a better chance of gaining media coverage. Asp sees media's growing independence of political sources as yet another sign of mediatization in that the media thereby gain even more control over media content. Asp acknowledges a debt to the Norwegian sociologist, Gudmund Hernes' expression, 'media-twisted society' (Hernes, 1978), albeit Hernes' perspective was broader. He argued that media had a fundamental impact on all social institutions and their relations with one another. Although Hernes did not actually use the term mediatization, his concept of 'media-twisted society' and the holistic perspective on society he applies is consonant in many respects with the conception of mediatization put forward here. Hernes urges us to

> to ask what consequences media have for institutions as well as for individuals: the ways public administration, organizations, parties, schools and business function and how they relate to one another. In what ways do media redistribute power in

society? [...] In short, from an institutional point of view the key question is, how media change both the inner workings of other social entities and their mutual relationships (Hernes, 1978: 181)

Hernes develops this perspective only in a relatively brief analysis of media influence over politics and the education sector, respectively, where he points out that media challenge both the authority and the ability of the schools and political institutions to regulate access to knowledge and to set political agendas. One main point Hernes makes is that the media have transformed society from of a situation of information scarcity to one of information abundance, which has rendered attention a strategic resource, for which anyone with a message must compete.

One finds a contemporary and fairly parallel notion in the work of Altheide and Snow (1979, 1988), who call for an "analysis of social institutions-transformed-through-media" (Altheide & Snow, 1979:7). Whereas traditional sociological approaches to the media try to isolate certain 'variables' for media influence, ignoring how media affect the overall premises for cultural life, Altheide and Snow want to show how the logic of the media forms the fund of knowledge that is generated and circulated in society. Although they time and again make reference to 'media logic', form and format are their principal concepts drawing on one of the 'classics' of sociology, Georg Simmel. Thus they posit the "primacy of form over content" (Altheide & Snow, 1988:206), where media logic for the most part appears to consist of a formatting logic that determines how material is categorized, the choice of mode of presentation, and the selection and portrayal of social experience in the media. In their analyses they mention other aspects of media logic, including technological and organizational aspects more or less incidentally, and because Altheide and Snow (1979, 1984) are working with North American material, the logic at play is essentially a commercial one. Their prime interest with regard to in these 'other aspects', is a desire to explore the extent to which and how technology affects communication formats, so that broader institutional change remains little more than an incidental interest. They devote some attention to social institutions like sports and religion, but their prime focus, quantitatively and qualitatively, rests on the format media give political communication.

Like Asp (1986, 1990), Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) apply the concept of mediatization to media's influence on politics. Considering the cases of Fernando Collar de Mello's use of television in the Brazilian election campaign of 1989, Silvio Berlusconi's use of the media on his way to power in Italy, and Tony Blair's use of 'spin' in England, they demonstrate the increasing influence of mass media on the exercise of political power. They characterize mediatization as "the problematic concomitants or consequences of the development of modern mass media". As to its effects, they comment that "mediatized politics is politics that has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media" (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999:249f). But they also stress that it is not a question of the media having arrogated political power from the political institutions; political institutions like parliaments, parties, etc., continue in good measure to control politics, but they have become increasingly dependent on the media and have had to adapt to the logic of the media.

In addition to these attempts to specify the meaning of mediatization in the political sphere there are a number of studies where the concept is used as a conceptual framework for the growing influence exerted by the media over political processes.

We have, for example, the work of Jensen and Aalberg (2007), Strömbäck (2007), and Cottle (2006), the latter of whom considers the mediatization of conflicts as the "active *performative* involvement and *constitutive* role" of the media in a variety of political and military conflicts (Cottle, 2006:9, original emphasis). We might also mention the work of a government-funded Swedish study of democratic processes, that published an entire book on the "Mediatization of Politics" (Amnå & Berglez, 1999). Aside from a reference to Asp's use of the concept in the authors' introduction, however, the concept is not applied in the individual analyses.

The concept of Mediatization has also been used to cast light on the growing role played by marketing and consumer culture. Jansson (2002) takes his starting point in the general mediatization of contemporary culture, which he describes as "the process through which mediated cultural products have gained importance as cultural referents and hence contribute to the development and maintenance of cultural communities. In other words, the mediatization of culture is the process that reinforces and expands the realm of media culture". (Jansson, 2002:14f). Whereas culture once was either imbued with the hierarchy of taste that prevailed in cultural institutions or, in the case of trivial culture, was linked to local ways of life, the media today occupy a dominant position as providers of cultural products and beliefs.

In other cases the concept of mediatization has been used to describe media's influence over research. Väliverronen (2001) does not consider mediatization "a strict analytic concept, but rather an ambiguous term which refers to the increasing cultural and social significance of the mass media and other forms of technically mediated communication" (Väliverronen, 2001:159). Seen in this light, the media play an important role in the production and circulation of knowledge and interpretations of science. Consider, for example, the number of people whose knowledge of various phases in the history of evolution has been formed, not so much in the classroom as by Steven Spielberg's films on Jurassic Park or the BBC documentary series, *Walking with Dinosaurs*. Moreover, the media also are an arena for public discussion and the legitimation of science. Peter Weingart (1998) sees this as a decisive element in the linkage between media and science:

> It is the basis for the thesis of the *medialization* of science: With the growing importance of the media in shaping public opinion, conscience and perception on the one hand and a growing dependence of science on scarce resources and thus on public acceptance on the other, science will become increasingly media-oriented (Weingart, 1998:872, original emphasis).

Beyond using the concept to describe the media's influence over areas like politics, consumer culture or science, some researchers have also related it to a broader theory of modernity. Sociologist John B. Thompson (1990, 1995) sees the media's development as an integral part of the development of modern society. Thompson speaks of a "mediazation of modern culture" that is, not least, a consequence of media influence. The invention of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century saw the birth of a technology that made it possible to circulate information in society to an unprecedented extent. This revolutionary technological event institutionalized the mass media (books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) as a significant force in society and enabled communication and interaction over long distances and among larger numbers of people, while it also made it possible as never before to store and accumulate information over time. As a consequence, mass media helped to transform an agrarian and feudal society and to

create modern institutions such as the state, the public sphere and science. The subsequent development of other media, like radio, television and the internet, have further accentuated this modernization process. Communication, once bound to the physical meeting of individuals, face-to-face, has been succeeded by mediated communication, where the relationship between sender and receiver is altered in decisive respects. In the case of mass communication, senders typically retain control over the content of the message, but have very little influence over how the receiver makes use of it; in the case of interactive media, both sender and receiver can influence the content of communication, but still, the situation is not quite like that in physical, face-to-face communication. Thompson (1995) sees a strong connection between mediatization and its cultural consequences and the emergence of very large media organizations on national and global levels. These corporations' production and distribution of symbolic products has changed communication flows in society, both between institutions and between institutions and individuals.

Schulz (2004) and Krotz (2007), too, use the mediatization concept to specify the role of the media in social change in a broader sense. Winfried Schulz (2004) identifies four kinds of processes whereby the media change human communication and interaction. First, they *extend* human communication abilities in both time and space; second, the media *substitute* social activities that previously took place face-to-face. For example, for many, internet banking has replaced the physical meeting between banks and their clients. Third, media instigate an *amalgamation* of activities; face-to-face communication combines with mediated communication, and media infiltrate into everyday life. Finally, actors in many different sectors have to adapt their behavior to *accommodate* the media's valuations, formats and routines. For example, politicians learn to express themselves in 'sound-bites' in inpromptu exchanges with reporters. Krotz (2007) treats mediatization as a *metaprocess* on a par with individualization and globalization, but refrains from offering a more detailed formal definition, for, he writes, "mediatization, by its very definition, is always bound in time and to cultural context" (Krotz, 2007:39). In other words, Krotz conceives of mediatization as an ongoing process whereby the media change human relations and behavior and thus change society and culture. That is, he sees it as an ongoing process that has followed human activity ever since the dawn of literacy.

Both Schulz and Krotz point out some similarities between mediatization theory and so-called medium theory, the well-known proponents of which include Walter Ong (1982), Marshall McLuhan (1964) and Joshua Meyrowitz (1986). The two theories both choose to view the impact of media in an overall perspective and focus on other aspects than media content and media use, which has occupied so much of mass communication research otherwise. Mediatization theory is thus consonant with medium theory with respect to taking note of the different media's particular formatting of communication and the impacts on interpersonal relations it gives rise to. Krotz (2007) also points out a number of shortcomings in medium theory, among them a tendency toward technological determinism. Medium theorists typically focus on some intrinsic logics of individual media's technology, so that either printing technology or television is seen to be the key factor to bring about a new kind of society. The interaction between technology and culture and the circumstance that culture also forms technology are neglected, and the medium is reduced to its technological 'nature'. Krotz warns against decontextualizing the mediatization concept; medium theory is seldom interested in specific historical, cultural or social relations, but is mainly oriented toward changes on the macro level.

By contrast, mediatization theory should be much more committed to empirical analysis, including the study of specific mediatization processes among different groups within the population, Krotz (2007) stresses.

The mediatization concept proposed in this article shares several of Schulz' (2004) and Krotz' (2007) perspectives. Extension, substitution, amalgamation and accommodation are important processes in mediatization; moreover, empirical validation through historical, cultural and sociological analysis is required. But the theory also deviates from these perspectives in two principal respects. First, the present theory applies an *institutional* perspective to the media and their interaction with culture and society. This means that a set of sociological concepts is applied, which makes it possible to specify the elements comprising 'media logic' and to better analyze the interplay between media and other social spheres (institutions). An institutional perspective by no means precludes a consideration of culture, technology or psychology, but provides a framework within which the interplay between these aspects can be studied. Secondly, the mediatization concept is applied exclusively to the *historical* situation in which the media *at once* have attained autonomy as a social institution and are crucially interwoven with the functioning of other institutions. In this perspective, mediatization does not refer to each process by which the media exert influence on society and culture. The invention of the printing press revolutionized individuals' relationship to the written language and had palpable impacts on both religion and knowledge, but it did not imply a mediatization of either religion or knowledge. That is to say, here we use the concept to characterize *a given phase or situation* in the overall development of society and culture in which the logic of the media exerts a particularly predominant influence on other social institutions

Mediatization in Postmodern Theory

Some see mediatization as an expression of the postmodern condition, in which media give rise to a new consciousness and cultural order. In his discussion of tendencies in the postmodern art world Fredric Jameson posits that mediatization creates a system that imposes a hierarchy of artistic media and ascribes new self-reflective properties to them: " [...] the traditional fine arts are *mediatized:* that is, they now come to consciousness of themselves as various media within a mediatic system in which their own internal production also constitutes a symbolic message and the taking of a position on the status of the medium in question" (Jameson, 1991:162, original emphasis). Although Jameson does not develop his concept of 'mediatization' any further, and while he remains skeptical as to whether 'postmodernism' is an adequate description of the changes he notes, his analysis indicates that the expansion of the media system has had some very palpable impacts on artistic institutions' forms of expression and has made self-reflective commentary and positioning vis-à-vis the media a significant element in the arts.

The most radical linkage between mediatization and postmodernism is found in the work of Baudrillard (1994), who perceives the symbols or signs of media culture – images, sound, advertisements, etc. – to form simulacra, semblances of reality that not only seem more real than the physical and social reality, but also replace it. It is like a map of the world that has become so vivid, so detailed and comprehensive that it appears more real than the world it was created to represent. In Baudrillard's own words, the media constitute a 'hyperreality'. The media are guided by a kind of semiotic logic, and their central influence consists in that they subject all communication and every discourse to

one dominant code: "What is mediatized is not what comes off the daily press, out of the tube, or on the radio: it is what is reinterpreted by the sign form, articulated into models, and administered by the 'code'" (Baudrillard, 1994:175f). This simulacrum theory leads Baudrillard to conclude that the symbolic world of media has replaced the 'real' world. He goes so far as to state that the Gulf War of 1990-1991 did not take place, but was rather a figment of media simulacra. In Baudrillard's own words: "It is a masquerade of information: branded faces delivered over to the prostitution of the image, the image of an unintelligible distress. No images of the field of battle, but images of masks, of blind or defeated faces, images of falsification" (Baudrillard, 1995:40). We should not take Baudrillard's statement or his theory at face value, i.e., as a denial that physical and social reality exists outside the media, even though some of his formulations may invite such an interpretation. His point is that media representations of reality have assumed such dominance in our society that both our perceptions and constructions of reality and our behavior take their point of departure in mediated representations and are steered by the media, so that phenomena like war are no longer what they once were. Thus, the media-orchestrated Gulf War was not a war as we once knew war to be because our perception of the war was steered by the images and symbols the media presented to us. Sheila Brown (2003) seconds Baudrillard's postmodernist view of mediatization and its consequences, describing a new social situation in which a number of traditional distinctions have disintegrated: "Above all, mediatization in the contemporary sense refers to a universe in which the meaning of *ontological divisions* is collapsing: divisions between fact and fiction, nature and culture, global and local, science and art, technology and humanity" (Brown, 2003:22, original emphasis).

There is no doubt that mediatization has complicated and blurred the distinctions between reality and media representations of reality, and between fact and fiction, but I find the postmodernist understanding of mediatization at once too simple and too grand. Too simple, because it implies one single transformation, whereby mediated reality supplants experiential reality, and traditional distinctions quite simply dissolve. The concept of mediatization proposed in the present article does not embrace the notion that mediated reality reigns supreme, or the contention that conventional ontological distinctions have 'collapsed'. The prime characteristic of the process of mediatization, as conceived of here, is rather an *expansion* of the opportunities for interaction in virtual spaces and a *differentiation* of what people perceive to be real. By the same token, distinctions like that between global and local become much more differentiated as the media expand our contact with events and phenomena in what were once 'faraway places'.

The postmodern concept is too grand in that it proclaims the disappearance of reality and the disintegration of distinctions, categorizations, that are fundamental in society and social cognition. It is difficult to imagine how social institutions would be able to continue to function were fact and fiction, nature and culture, art and science no longer separate entities. In contrast, we posit that society and culture have not changed in any of these respects as a consequence of media intervention. In science, in the media, in everyday life people still distinguish between fact and fiction, and vital institutions like the family, politics and the nation continue to be focal points in social life, for individuals and for society at large. Furthermore, Baudrillard's reference to an overall and dominant 'code' that 'administers' the circulation of symbols and signs in society, remains unclear. On the whole, his claims regarding media simulacra, hyperreality and the disappearance of reality seem exaggerated; at the least, they lack empirical confirmation. Ironically,

they seem to rest on an antiquated assumption that prior to the postmodern epoch, physical and social reality was a straightforward and concrete entity.

The media's construction of a new reality and its relation to the old non-mediated reality is more complicated and nuanced than Baudrillard and Brown suggest, but that hardly makes it less important to discuss and specify that relationship. One example from the music industry may help. Philip Auslander (1999) traces changes in the relationship between live and mediated musical performance over time. Earlier, mediated versions of music took their starting point in non-mediated performance: radio transmissions of music and recorded music emulated concert performances. Over the years, mediated versions have come into their own, in the sense that film soundtracks, CDs, music videos and so forth have each developed their own forms of expression and assumed positions of their own in the circulation of cultural artifacts. With increasing media influence the relationship between mediated and live music gradually reversed; concert performances have come to emulate mediated ones. Many road-show concerts clearly have the character of (re)presentations of a newly released CD or video, and rock concerts, musicals and sporting events all are orchestrated to fit the formats of broadcast transmission and/or recording media (Auslander 1999; Middleton, 1990). Traditionally, the live performance has been considered more authentic than mediated performance, but as Auslander points out, the increasing interchangeability of the two challenges this perception. The issue of authenticity has hardly been rendered irrelevant, but authenticity has become conditional on an *interaction* between mediated and live performance:

> The primary experience of the music is as a recording; the function of the live performance is to authenticate the sound on the recording. In rock culture, live performance is a secondary experience of the music but is nevertheless indispensable, since the primary experience cannot be validated without it (Auslander, 1999:160).

The growing interdependence of mediated and live performance means that one cannot say that the one form is more authentic than the other. In a sociological perspective, mediated forms of interaction are neither more nor less real than non-mediated interaction. From a physical or sensual point of view, there may be differences in the degree of reality of mediated and face-to-face interaction in the sense that studio announcers, etc., are not actually physically present in our home, even though we see and hear them as though they stood before us. Still, from a sociological point of view there is no point in trying to differentiate the reality status of the respective forms of interaction. Non-mediated reality and forms of interaction still exist, but mediatization means that they, too, are affected by the presence of media. For example, personal, face-to-face communication assumes a new cultural value in a mediatized society by virtue of the fact that non-mediated interaction tends to be reserved for certain purposes and is assigned special cultural significance. Also, mediated forms of interaction tend to simulate aspects of face-to-face interaction; thus they represent not only alternatives to face-to-face interaction, but also extensions of the arena in which face-to-face interaction can take place (Hjarvard 2002a).

Definition

The uses of the concept 'mediatization' in the research cited above point to a number of central aspects of the interaction between media and society, which also form a part of

the definition of 'mediatization' proposed here. Previous uses of the concept, however, lack an articulated or even common definition; in addition, there are a number of aspects that have yet to be spelled out. In some cases (e.g., Väliverronen, 2001) 'mediatization' has been used loosely to refer more generally to the successive growth in media's influence in contemporary society; in other cases, the intention has been to develop a proper theory of the ways media relate to politics (e.g., Asp, 1986, 1990). Another fuzzy spot is on what level or to which spheres the concept is applied. Some use 'mediatization' to describe developments in a given sector (politics, science, or consumer culture), whereas others use it as an overarching characteristic of a new situation in society, whether under modernity (Thompson, 1995) or postmodernity (Baudrillard, 1981).

Here, 'mediatization' is used as the central concept in a theory of the both intensified and changing importance of the media in culture and society. Thus, the concept is more than a label for a set of phenomena that bear witness to increased media influence and it should also relate to other, central sociological theories. Mediatization theory not only needs to be well-specified, comprehensive and coherent, but it must also prove its usefulness as an analytical tool and its empirical validity through concrete studies of mediatization in selected areas. Thus, a theory of mediatization has to be able to describe overall developmental trends in society across different contexts and, by means of concrete analysis, demonstrate the impacts of media on various institutions and spheres of human activity. This latter task falls outside the scope of the present article, but for empirical analyses of the mediatization of toys and children's play, language, and religion, see Hjarvard (2004, 2007, 2008).

By the mediatization of society, we understand the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic. This process is characterized by a duality in that the media have become *integrated* into the operations of other social institutions, while they also have acquired the status of social institutions *in their own right*. As a consequence, social interaction – within the respective institutions, between institutions, and in society at large – take place via the media. The term 'media logic' refers to the institutional and technological modus operandi of the media, including the ways in which media distribute material and symbolic resources and operate with the help of formal and informal rules. The logic of the media influences the form communication takes, such as how politics is described in media texts (Altheide & Snow, 1979); media logic also influences the nature and function of social relations as well as the sender, the content and the receivers of the communication. The extent to which the situation amounts to actual submission or only greater dependence on media will vary between institutions and sectors of society.

Mediatization is no universal process that characterizes all societies. It is primarily a development that has accelerated particularly in the *last years of the twentieth century* in *modern, highly industrialized, and chiefly western societies,* i.e., Europe, USA, Japan, Australia and so forth. As globalization progresses, more and more regions and cultures will be affected by mediatization, but there may be considerable differences in the influence mediatization exerts. Globalization is related to mediatization in at least two ways: on the one hand, globalization presumes the existence of the technical means to extend communication and interaction over long distances and, on the other hand, it propels the process of mediatization by institutionalizing mediated communication and interaction in many new contexts.

Mediatization, it should be noted, is a *non-normative* concept. As noted earlier, Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) associate mediatization directly with more problematic aspects

of media influence on politics. Indeed, there is a general tendency in both research and public discussion to presume that institutions' dependence on the media is essentially questionable. But to presume a priori that mediatization is negative poses something of a problem. At worst such a normative judgment can lead to a general narrative of decline, in which media influence becomes synonymous with a decline in the political public sphere or the disintegration of civil society. Habermas' (1989) theory of structural change in the public sphere is a paradigmatic example of such a normative approach to media influence, and Habermas has since explained that his earlier views on the subject were too pessimistic (Habermas, 1990). Whether mediatization has positive or negative consequences cannot be determined in general terms; it is a concrete, analytical question that needs to be addressed in terms of specific contexts, where the influence of specific media over certain institutions is gauged. The question also requires an examination of the normative points of departure if we are to be able to speak of positive or negative consequences.

Mediatization is not be confused with the broader concept of *mediation*. Mediation refers to communication via a medium, the intervention of which can affect both the message and the relationship between sender and receiver. For example, if a politician chooses to use a blog instead of a newspaper to communicate with his constituency, the choice may well influence the form and content of his or her communication, while the communicative relationship between the politicians and the electorate will be altered. However, the use of a medium, whether blog or newspaper, will not necessarily have any notable effect on politics as a social institution. Mediation describes the concrete act of communication by means of a medium in a specific social context. By contrast, mediatization refers to a more long-lasting process, whereby social and cultural institutions and modes of interaction are changed as a consequence of the growth of the media's influence. It should be noted, however, that some scholars – e.g., Altheide and Snow (1988:195) – use the term, 'mediation' in the sense 'mediatization' is used here.

In sociological theory, meanwhile, one finds a more general use of the term, 'medium'. Money can, for example, be described as a medium of exchange. Similarly, in linguistic or psychological contexts speech may be considered a medium of expression. Although useful in their respective contexts, these meanings of the term 'medium' are not relevant here, where the term, 'media' draw upon media and communication studies. As such it is used to designate technologies that allow people to communicate over space and/or time. Furthermore, we use the plural form. Media are not a uniform phenomenon; each medium has its own characteristics, and they vary in both use and content between cultures and societies. The consequences of mediatization, then, depend on both the context and the characteristics of the medium or media in question.

Within the process of mediatization, we may distinguish between a *direct* (strong) and an *indirect* (weak) form of mediatization (Hjarvard, 2004). Direct mediatization refers to situations where formerly non-mediated activity converts to a mediated form, i.e., the activity is performed through interaction with a medium. A simple example of direct mediatization is the successive transformation of chess from physical chessboard to computer game. Formerly dependent on the players' physical presence around a chess board, chess is increasingly played with the help of software on a computer. In many ways, the game remains the same: the rules are the same, the chess board has the same appearance, and so forth. But use of a computer opens up numerous new options: you can play against a computer instead of another person; you can play with distant opponents via internet; you can store and consult earlier matches, etc., and these new options gradually

influence the experience of playing chess as well as the cultural context in which the game is played. A more complicated example of direct mediatization is 'on-line banking' via internet. All kinds of banking tasks and services (payments, loans, trade in currency and stocks, financial analysis) can be undertaken through interaction with a computer linked to internet, and the medium has palpably expanded the options available to both banks and their customers; meanwhile, the behavior of both parties has changed.

Indirect mediatization is when a given activity is increasingly influenced with respect to form, content, or organization by mediagenic symbols or mechanisms. Again, let us consider a simple example: the burgeoning merchandising industry that surrounds hamburger restaurants may be taken as an instance of indirect mediatization. A visit to Burger King or McDonald's is no longer simply an eating experience; it now entails a considerable exposure to films and cartoon animations, and as much as the opportunity to eat a hamburger, a visit to one of these restaurants may – especially for the youngest guests – mean an opportunity to collect dolls representing the characters in the films they see. Of course, you can still have your meal and not expose yourself to the media entertainment offered, but the cultural context surrounding the burger, much of the attraction of visiting the restaurant, and so forth have to do with the presence of media, in both symbolic and economic terms. A more complicated example of indirect mediatization is the development of intertextual discourse between media and other institutions in society. For example, Danes' knowledge of the USA is highly indebted to media narratives (fact and fiction) about the country; as a consequence, Danish political discussions regarding the USA are interwoven with media representations of American culture, mores and history.

Direct and indirect forms of mediatization will often operate in combination, so that it is not always easy to distinguish them. The need to distinguish between the two primarily arises in analytical contexts. Direct mediatization makes visible how a given social activity is substituted, i.e., transformed from a non-mediated activity to a mediated form, and in such cases it is rather easy to establish a 'before' and an 'after' and examine the differences. Where the media thereafter serve as a necessary interface for performance of the social activity, we are dealing with a strong form of mediatization. Indirect mediatization does not necessarily affect the ways in which people perform a given activity. Consequently, indirect mediatization of an activity or sphere will be of a more subtle and general character and relate to the general increase in social institutions' reliance on communication resources. This is not to say that indirect mediatization is any less important or that it, viewed from a societal perspective, has less impact. Indirect mediatization is at least as important as the direct forms.

The Media as an Independent Institution

Mediatization, as defined here, means not only that the media play a role of their own determination, but that they at once have attained the status of independent institution and provide the means by which other social institutions and actors communicate. The media intervene into, and influence the activity of other institutions, such as the family, politics, organized religion, etc., while they also provide a 'commons' for society as a whole, that is, virtual shared fora for communication that other institutions and actors increasingly use as arenas for their interaction. In order to treat these social consequences on a theoretical level, we shall first consider mediatization in relation to sociological concepts regarding institutions and interaction.

Institutions stand for the stable, predictable elements in modern society; they constitute the framework for human communication and action in a given sphere of human life at a given time and place. Institutions provide for the reproduction of society within the sphere in question, giving it a certain degree of autonomy and a distinct identity in relation to other spheres. As an institution the family organizes a number of very central aspects of life, such as love, upbringing, rest/recreation and nutrition. Politics, another institution, creates the framework for collective discussion and decision-making concerning shared resources, norms and activities. The more detailed discussion of institutions that follows takes its point of departure in the sociological structuration theory proposed by Anthony Giddens (1984), which in contrast to macro sociological theory (e.g., Parsons' or Luhmann's system theory) or micro-sociological approaches (e.g., symbolic interactionism) affords the possibility to describe the dynamic interaction between institutions and personal interaction. As noted earlier, mediatization itself is characterized by a duality in that it intervenes in human interaction in many different contexts, while it also institutionalizes the media as an autonomous entity with its own logic. A sociological theory of mediatization must therefore be able to give an account of this duality and to describe the linkages between institution and interaction.

According to Giddens, institutions are characterized by two central features: rules and allocations of resources. Together, rules and resource allocations invest the institution with a certain autonomy in relation to the world around it. Rules may be implicit and practical, i.e., outgrowths of so-called tacit knowledge as to proper behavior in a range of situations within the institution in question. Or, they may be explicit and formal; they may be codified in law or take the form of stated objectives or rules of procedure as, for example, in a school or a firm. Institutions in modern, complex societies distinguish themselves by a high degree of steering by rules, both implicit and explicit. The existence of rules implies, furthermore, that the institutions monitor compliance and can apply sanctions, should the rules be broken. Even the sanctions may be of a more or less explicit or formal character, whereas many rules are internalized by individuals and remain for the most part implicit. The sanctions on violations of rules of the latter kind are generally feelings of embarrassment or guilt or perhaps criticism on the part of colleagues or family members. Informal rules often have the character of norms and are maintained and sanctioned by gossip, ridicule and scolding.

By virtue of formalization itself formal rules generally lead to explicit sanctions that are well-defined and known in advance; in some cases breaking such rules may be prosecuted. Like other institutions, media, too, are steered by rules. They are subject to numerous laws and regulations, some of which apply to other institutions, as well, whereas others are specifically tailored to the activity of the medium in question. Examples of the latter include editorial responsibility, freedom of the press legislation, and rules pertaining to libel. Media have also drafted their own codes of good practice and sanctioning systems such as press councils, readers' ombudsmen, and so forth. Some media companies have publicly declared their guiding principles and the public role they strive to play. Concrete praxis in media production is largely steered by informal rules that are expressed in routines, habits and implicit norms of professionalism. Thus, news journalists obey rules when they select their stories (criteria of newsworthiness), when they interact with news sources, while they incorporate norms like objectivity into their news production as a strategic ritual (Tuchman, 1972).

As for the other prime characteristic of an institution, allocation of resources, Giddens distinguishes two kinds of resources: material resources and authority. Institutions can

administer material resources in the form of, for example, raw materials, buildings and facilities, manpower and knowledge; a delegation of authority also takes place within the institution so that it is clear who within the institution is in charge of the material resources, who may speak on behalf of the institution, who may interact with whom, and so forth. If we consider the family, for example: parents generally control the family's material resources, like the home and the car, and the law gives parents authority over, and liability for, the children (under the legal age of adulthood) in the household, as well. (Parental authority may also be regulated in law; some behavior toward children, such as physical and mental abuse, may be prohibited.) Similarly, media, too, are characterized by allocations of resources; in production the individual media company will allocate engineering resources, personnel, travel, etc., to the various departments, while on the reception side, receivers will acquire the necessary hardware and, perhaps not least, devote their time and attention to the media. As shall be elaborated further in the following, mediatization implies that other institutions to an increasing degree become dependent on resources that the media control, and they will have to submit to some of the rules the media operate by in order to gain access to those resources.

The development of the media into independent institutions should be seen as an instance of the increasing differentiation and division of labor that characterizes many spheres and aspects of modern society. Pre-modern, agrarian society was characterized by a low degree of specialization; most people lived in rural villages and one's family and 'birth' largely determined the course of one's life from the cradle to the grave. As nation states emerged, and with industrialization and urbanization, more and more institutions that accommodated different aspects of life split off from the undifferentiated 'whole': science was divorced from religion, and the labor market developed an ever greater number of specialty occupations and professions. Media played an important role in this early modern era inasmuch as they made it possible to detach an activity from its local context and to create a specialized forum on a national or international level. Books and periodicals helped to lay the foundation for the expansion of science and technology; newspapers helped to create a democratic, political public sphere; and literature and popular magazines contributed to the development of a cultural public sphere.

But, in this phase of social development the media were yet to become independent institutions. Instead, they were chiefly *instruments in the hands of other institutions*. As political parties were formed in the late nineteenth century, they began to publish newspapers which gave rise to the system of the party press that characterized Denmark, where each party had its own paper in all the principal towns. Very few of these papers had a journalistic editorial board that operated independent of the party/owner. On the contrary, there were intimate bonds between parties and papers, indeed, editors were generally members of the party leadership. To consider a Danish example: Viggo Hørup, nineteenth-century Social Liberal politician and founder of the Copenhagen daily, *Politiken*. Hørup's political work and his work as editor of *Politiken* were two faces of the same coin. When he spoke to one or another group one day, the text of the speech was very likely to grace the pages of the paper the following day. Similarly, institutions in the fields of science, the Arts, and jurisprudence all had their own channels of publication, over which they exerted editorial control.

The advent of radio in the 1920s marks the point when media started to address a generalized public, whereupon they gradually assumed the character of *cultural institutions*. By this we mean that media are no longer instruments of any given institution or special interest, but keep an arm's length away from the various social institutions.

As public service broadcasting institutions radio and, later, television were to serve the public interest. They should make the work of other public institutions known to the general public and offer a balanced representation of various interests in the fields of politics, the Arts, science and so forth. That radio broadcasting was organized in the form of a monopoly had to do with the nature of the technology and characteristics of the medium itself, which, in the 1920s, meant that it was physically impossible to create the multiplicity of radio channels that characterized the press, for example. But monopoly was also a choice that was well in keeping with other public and national policies; it was also congenial to requirements that the new medium be charged to educate its listeners. At about the same time, the press underwent a development in a similar direction. In Denmark, a process that would lead to the demise of the party press and the birth of independent journalistic media got under way with the reform of *Politiken* under the new Editor-in-Chief Henrik Cavling in 1905. In the interwar period numerous other newspapers followed *Politiken's* lead, loosening their ties to political parties in favor of a more journalistic platform. News reporting predominated, and papers, now less partisan, addressed the entire spectrum of readers. 'News' was distinguished from 'views': opinion-based genres like editorials and debate pages evolved, while the rest of the paper was imbued with new ideals of unbiased, non-partisan treatment of news material. Newspapers also gradually extended the scope of their coverage to include cultural life, 'the home and family' and hobbies and leisure activities.

The decline and ultimate demise of the party press actually extended over most of the twentieth century, but the point in the present context is that the press, once it adopted the 'omnibus' concept, began its development into a cultural institution. No longer an instrument of other institutions, the press began treating various social institutions (politics, the Arts, family, etc.) and special interests from a more general and common perspective. The underlying dynamic in this evolutionary process differed from that behind the development of broadcast media. Whereas radio and television were established as public institutions and given a 'mission' to educate and enlighten, the establishment of the omnibus press was a step in an essentially commercial development, where advertising revenues were a driving force. Be that as it may, in this concrete historical context the outcome was that newspapers became cultural institutions, appealing to all and offering something for everyone.

Attaining the status of cultural institutions was the first step in the media's further move toward independence from other institutions. It implied a gradual professionalization of media practices, in which the establishment of journalism as a profession in its own right, with professional training and the development of ethical codes gave the profession a degree of autonomy (Kristensen, 2000). A key feature of journalists' self-perception is an adversarial stance vis-à-vis political and commercial interests, which is operationalized in the norm of keeping an arm's length distance from one's news sources.

The 1980s witnessed the start of a series of structural changes in the media sector, in Denmark as in many other parts of Western Europe, which presaged the transition from the status of cultural institution to that of media institution. The end of the monopoly position of public service channels on the air waves, and the expansion of broadcasting services via satellite and cable created a more commercial and competitive climate in radio and television, in which market forces challenged television's identity and importance as a cultural institution. The 1990s saw the deregulation of the telecommunications sector, and the rapid expansion of mobile telephony and the internet suddenly rendered the media system much more complex. Many of the newer media are only

loosely regulated, if at all, as to purpose and content. The press, too, has undergone considerable change in response to the introduction of free sheets distributed at mass transit nodes. In Denmark gratis newspapers attained market leadership in the space of no more than a few years, and they have been very successful in many other countries, as well. Subscribed morning and midday papers have suffered a steady decline in circulation, and on the whole the traditional 'hard copy' press is steered by market logic to a much greater extent today than previously.

Thus, as a consequence of the trends of these past two decades, the media are much less cultural institutions, in the sense of institutions that in the public interest represent other institutions. A stronger market orientation has led media to focus more closely on servicing their own readers and audiences. This has been said to imply a greater measure of *receiver steering* of the media, in the sense that attention to receivers has taken precedence over deference to other social institutions. Newspapers, radio, television and internet still devote space and time to politics, the Arts and cultural life, but to a lesser degree on those institutions' terms or from the perspective of 'public enlightenment'. Other institutions have instead become the raw material for the product the media serve to their readers, viewers and listeners. Where media in early days were sender-steered, e.g., steered by particular interests in the days of the party press or by the terms of public service broadcasting concessions, as media institutions they are in large part steered by the interests of their readers, viewers and listeners, their market demand and purchasing power.

This is not to say that the media have become private enterprises like any manufacturer of, say, furniture or bacon; they continue to perform collective functions in society. The media provide the communicative fora, both private and public, that other institutions depend on for their communication with the public and other institutions, and for their internal communication. The duality of having broken away from other institutions' operations, yet still serve collective communication functions in society give the media central importance to society as a whole. Therefore, the logic that guides the media cannot be reduced to a logic of the market alone. Yes, the media sell products to consumers, but they also service their public, which includes other institutions. Thus, families use the media to orient themselves as to norms for their children's upbringing and practical furnishing of children's rooms, and media are used for family members' communication with one another. Political parties use the media to communicate with other parties and the general public, and to communicate within the party, as well.

To be able to serve these collective functions, the media still emphasize the concern for the public interest that imbued them in their roles as cultural institutions, and which continued to imbue the development of journalism as a partly autonomous profession, where the media could make claims of impartiality, objectivity, and so forth. But, whereas in the era when the media were cultural institutions concern for the public interest grew out of the mission to enlighten, a project that engaged the whole of society, the concern today is primarily internalized as part of the sense of *professionalism* shared by journalists and their colleagues in independent media institutions. In sum, the media interact with all other social institutions, but from a position of greater autonomy than a pure market orientation would dictate.

Table 1 summarizes the institutional transformations of the media. It is a highly simplified account and takes no account the variations that individual media display. In all three periods there have been media that operate under the superintendence of other institutions (e.g., scientific journals), just as, ever since the 1880's, some papers offering light entertainment have been primarily market-oriented.

Table 1. *The Institutional Development of Media*

Dominant period	Institutional character	Dominant logic	Media system	Purposes and objectives
- 1920	Media as instruments of other institutions	Steered by particular interests	Party press, scientific journals, religious and arts publications etc.	Persuasion and agitation on the part of specific interests in the specific institution
1920-1980	Media as a cultural institution	Public steering	Public service radio and television (monopoly), omnibus press	Representation of various institutions in a public arena
1980-	Media as an independent media institution	Media professionalism	Commercial and competitive media, satellite tv, Internet, mobile media	Servicing of audiences, sales to target groups in a differentiated media system

Means of Interaction

So far, we have defined what mediatization is and how it came to be; in the following we shall turn to examine *the ways* in which mediatization affects society. Fundamentally, it is a question of the media intervening into the social interaction between individuals *within* a given institution (e.g., between family members via mobile phones), *between* institutions (e.g., through telecommunications media that allow one to work from home), and *in society at large* (e.g., by publicizing and observing events of importance to the community, be they festive, threatening or tragic). In this section we shall consider interaction on the micro-social level; in the next, we will turn to the macro-social level.

Social interaction consists of *communication* and *action*. The media, of course, are means of communication, i.e., an exchange of meaning between two or more parties. As linguistic pragmatics (Austin, 1962; Searle 1969) has shown, communication may be viewed as a form of action: by communicating, people exchange not only information, but they influence one another and their mutual relationship by, for example, promising, confirming, rejecting, deciding, and so forth. In addition to acts of communication, media also permit forms of social action that once required both parties' physical presence: one can buy or sell, work or play. Media may also interact with other actions outside the media, such as elections or acts of terror.

The ways in which media intervene into social interaction depends on the concrete characteristics of the medium in question, that is, both material and technical features and social and aesthetic qualities. A medium's characteristics and its relation to social interaction may be illuminated in terms of perception psychologist James Gibson's (1979) concept of *affordances*. Gibson himself does not apply the concept to media, but uses it in a general theory of how people and animals perceive and interact with the world around them. The idea is that neither human beings nor animals sense their surroundings passively; instead, they approach the world and the objects in it in an action-oriented and practical mode. Any given physical object, by virtue of its material characteristics (shape, size, consistency, etc.), lends itself to a set of uses. According to Gibson, the

'affordances' of an object are these potential uses. For some animals a tree represents shade; others may feed on its leaves, birds may decide to nest in it. Some objects invite certain uses: a flat stone begs to be 'skipped' across still water; a closed door is to be opened. Some uses are practically prescribed, whereas others are ruled out. In sum: the affordances of any given object make certain actions possible, exclude others and, in sum, structure the interaction between actor and object.

Furthermore, whether or not an object's affordances are made use of depends on characteristics of the human or animal that interacts with the object. With the help of a ladder you can climb up or down, but only if you have use of your limbs. Thus, affordances are also defined by the extent to which the characteristics of object and user 'fit'. In his study of human use of technology and other manufactured objects, Norman (1990) points to a third determining factor, besides the material or objective characteristics of object and user. He introduces the concept of 'perceived affordance' in order to incorporate the relational aspect of affordance, where the crucial factor is the user's psychological evaluation of the object in relation to his/her objectives. Thus, an object's affordances are subject to the user's motives/objectives and, in extension, to the cultural conventions that surround the project, as well. In the light of Gibson's (1979) and Norman's (1990) conceptual work, we recognize media as technologies, each of which has a set of affordances that *facilitate, limit and structure communication and action.* For example: Radio made it possible for listeners to experience musical performances to an extent and with a sound quality that was unprecedented. Before radio, concert music was available almost exclusively to a small, urban elite. But organizational factors in the institution of radio also limited the amount of music and the range of genres that were offered, while program schedules, signal range, and the quality of one's loudspeaker gave structure to the listening experience: when one listened, where and how one sat to listen, and so forth.

Perhaps most of all, the media make it possible for people to interact across distances, that is, without their having to be in the same place at the same time. An examination of the differences between interaction via the media and non-mediated interaction face-to-face reveals the ways in which media alter the interaction. Thompson (1995) distinguishes three types of interaction: face-to-face interaction, mediated quasi-interaction, and mediated interaction. In the case of face-to-face interaction, both verbal and non-verbal expressions are available to all parties present. Mass media, like newspapers, radio and television, provide what Thompson calls mediated quasi-interaction, by which he means that the communication addresses an unknown, unspecified group of people who, what is more, are unable to interact with the sender. By contrast, a telephone conversation is an instance of mediated interaction: the conversation takes place between identified individuals, all of whom can interact on an equal footing. Thus, according to Thompson, mediated quasi-interaction is monologic, whereas mediated interaction is dialogic.

This latter distinction is important, but Thompson's choice of the term, "quasi-" (which the dictionary defines as "resembling; seemingly, but not actually") is a bit unfortunate in that it allows the interpretation that a reading a newspaper article or watching a television program only seems like interaction, whereas talking on the phone or face-to-face is true interaction. From a sociological point of view, neither the interaction between reader and article nor that between viewer and television program is any less true or meaningful than a conversation about the article or program over the breakfast table the next day. The circumstance that mass communication does not allow the receiver to respond immediately to the sender does not mean that no action or communication

on the part of the receiver in relation to an article or program takes place. Exposure to a newspaper or a television channel itself represents an act that has social significance for receiver and sender alike. In the latter case, circulation statistics or ratings, which have tangible commercial value. Furthermore, the reader or viewer may very well store the message they have read or seen and relate it to others.

In more general terms: we should bear in mind that social interaction does not necessarily imply that the opportunities to express oneself or to take action be equally distributed among the parties involved. This applies to non-mediated, direct interaction such as that between speaker and participant in a meeting or between participants in a court proceeding, where the opportunities for expression may be very controlled and, indeed, deliberately unequal. Such inequality does not render either the meeting or the proceeding 'quasi'; it simply reflects the fact that in any social interaction, be it mediated or direct, the parties assume social roles that confer different degrees of latitude with regard to personal expression and influence over the course of the interaction or its outcome. The media do, however, have an impact on the social roles in the interaction in that access to the medium itself and the modes of interaction it makes available to the participants, affect the respective participants' ability to communicate and act. Since media play a greater role in an increasing number of contexts, social roles are also evaluated in terms of the access to media coverage they are able to mobilize.

Finally, we should note that Thompson's differentiation of three forms of interaction was inspired by an earlier, now bygone, media landscape. Traditional mass media like newspapers and radio and television channels have developed, and continue to launch, new means by which receivers can respond to, or even participate in, their communication – e.g., via sms, e-mail or blogs, while new interpersonal media like mobile telephones, sms and e-mail also enable one sender to distribute messages to many receivers in a manner analogous to mass media. Rather than adopting Thompson's terminology, then, it seems more satisfactory generally to distinguish between non-mediated (face-to-face) and mediated communication and then to specify the subcategories in terms of parameters like one-way/two-way, interpersonal/mass, text/audio/visual, and so forth.

Media alter Interaction

Mediated interaction is neither more nor less real than non-mediated interaction, but the circumstance that mediated interaction takes place between individuals who do not share the same physical space changes the relations between the participants. If we start with American sociologist Erwin Goffman's (1959) description of social interaction between people who are in physical proximity to one another, what differs in situations of mediated interaction becomes apparent. Goffman uses the metaphor of the theatre and describes the interaction that takes place on the stage as performance. He distinguishes between what takes place on the stage and what goes on backstage, i.e., action and communication that is not open to the participants. In addition to their verbal and non-verbal (facial expressions, gestures, body language, etc.) communication participants will also use various accessories or 'props' (costumes, cigarettes, tables and chairs) and define territories (physical and symbolic) between them and the other participants as part of the interaction. Typically, participants collaborate in the interaction, trying to reach a common definition of the situation at hand in order to achieve a common goal.

In contrast to face-to-face communication, media can extend interaction in time and space: media allow instant communication with individuals anywhere in the world.

Mediated interaction does not require the parties to be in the same space at the same time. Media also change the ability of individual actors to steer how the social situation is defined, to steer the use of verbal and non-verbal communication and accessories, and to define territorial boundaries in the interaction. This has far-reaching consequences, three of which are of interest here: First, media make it considerably easier for individuals to 'act' on several stages simultaneously; second, participants can more easily optimize the social interaction to their personal advantage; and third, the mutual relations between the participants, including norms of acceptable behavior (deference, tone, etc.) change.

As for the first consequence, media not only enable people to interact over long distances, they also make it possible for an individual to *keep several social interactions going at the same time:* one can talk to others in the family while watching television, give advice to one's children by phone from the office, and so forth. Internet has multiplied the possibilities in this regard; given web access, a person can keep windows open to any number of interactions: work, banking transactions, shopping, communicating online with family and friends, etc. In Goffman's terminology, thanks to media, we can switch between stage and backstage in several, parallel situations. It has never been absolutely impossible to take part in more than one face-to-face interaction at the same time. Bringing children to the office is a well-known phenomenon. But it is extremely taxing to carry on several face-to-face interactions simultaneously, and in most cases to do so would violate the norm of collaboration that generally applies. Via media one can more easily divide one's attention between different social scenes, in part because some media are designed to fade into the background while one's attention is directed elsewhere: mobile phones can be made to vibrate instead of ring, you can check for sms at a glance during a meeting, your radio may be playing in the background while you work, drive your car, and so forth.

Media allow actors to optimize social interaction to their own advantage in two principal ways: they lighten the burden of the actor's social relations, and they permit a greater measure of control over the exchange of information. They lighten the burden by making it possible to establish closer contact with less of a personal investment. The popularity of television as a pastime evenings and weekends has to do with the fact that the medium offers entertainment and vicarious company without requiring much in the way of money, attention or effort to make the situation a success. One might instead invite friends over for the evening, but that would require a lot more effort in the form of preparing food, being sociable, etc., whereas the pay-off in terms of sociability and entertainment is less certain. Meeting face-to-face has its perks, of course, but in most other respects television is a much easier and surer way to be entertained. Similarly, sending e-mail messages to one's colleagues at work is often preferable to looking in on them, even though they may be just a few doors away. An e-mail allows you to steer the interaction more than is possible in a conversation, which often takes longer and demands some degree of courtesy, and there is always the risk that your colleague will want to talk about another matter entirely.

Whereas face-to-face interaction gives everyone involved the opportunity to see and hear everything done and said, media make it possible *to manage information to and from the participants.* For example, the sender can decide when it suits him to respond to others' messages, and he has more control over the image of himself that he projects to others. As Goffman points out, there is an essential imbalance between an individual's ability to manage the impression that he makes on other participants, and the others' ability to examine and evaluate the impression conveyed. Goffman makes a

distinction between the impression we *give* and the impression we *give off*. Typically, we will try to give a favorable impression of ourselves when talking to others. But we also give off a number of other impressions, alongside our intended communication, either subconsciously or because we have failed to control our message well enough. Our speech may give one impression, while our body language conveys another, conflicting one. Goffman comments that we need to be very skilled performing artists to be able to manage all aspects of our self-representation. Most receivers, by contrast, are fully equipped to analyze and evaluate others' behavior, to find faults or inconsistencies. It is in this regard that media can help us manage the impressions we project to the world around us and, generally speaking, the narrower the channel of communication a medium offers, the easier it is to manage the communication. As a consequence, we find the paradoxical circumstance that even though media offer increasingly broad channels of communication (high definition visuals, five-channel stereo, etc.) people often choose to communicate through media that afford only a narrow channel of communication, such as sms, e-mail or web messenger.

As for the third area of impact, viz. changes in the relations and norms that prevail in interaction, we need first to consider the norm regulating mechanisms in face-to-face encounters. Goffman points out that during social interaction, the participants invest considerable effort in deferring to one another. When people meet face-to-face, they negotiate to establish the kind of social situation they are party to, whereby certain social roles and behaviors are considered relevant and acceptable to the situation, and others not. In order to avoid embarrassment (due, for example, to having misapprehended the situation and behaving inappropriately, which gives rise to ridicule and/or scolding) the participants engage in a considerable amount of *facework*, which has the purpose of preserving the participants' dignity in the situation at hand. The purpose of facework is to ensure that others avoid losing face, but also, and not least, it is work individuals undertake to preserve their own dignity, as well. Alternatively phrased, social norms are reproduced in the social situation, by participants' helping one another observe them. In face-to-face interactions, then, many actions and reactions only occur under particular circumstances or are tabu. Thus, in social interaction we try to avoid blatant violations of a norm that might result in a loss of face through *ridicule, gossip* or *scolding*. Ridicule is a form of humor that is used to set the bounds of social acceptability and to punish those who transgress those bounds (Billig, 2005), but it cannot be exercised without consequences for the cohesion of the group. To gossip about people when they are present in the room is not acceptable, as to gossip in itself is to challenge the dignity of an individual. It is, however, more acceptable to gossip about people who are not physically present (Bergmann, 1993). Finally, reproof (scolding in its varying degrees) typically represents a threat to the harmony in a group, and for that reason, reprimands, etc., generally take place behind closed doors, unless, of course, the objective is to set an example, to imprint a norm on a larger group.

Mediated interaction extends and complicates the use of territories in the interaction, including the ways in which we define ourselves in relation to the other participants. It also regulates access to information between different territories in the interaction. The medium links different physical localities and social contexts in a single interactive space, but it does not do away with the reality of the separate physical and social contexts. Television, telephones and internet all bridge distances, but the users have hardly left their sofas or desks to enter into the interactive space. Thus, the media both link the participants in the interaction and, at the same time, create a distance between the

virtual 'stage' of the interactive space and the participants' respective place-bound social contexts, of which they remain a part. This phenomenon is particularly apparent in the case of television, where the sender and receiver situation are distinctly separate, but it is also present in interpersonal communication via internet or mobile phones, where lack of access to the fullness of the interpersonal exchange reminds us of the distance between the parties.

The de-linking or distance between place-bound social situations that surround the user and the simultaneous establishment of a mediated situation means that the norm-enforcing mechanisms of ridicule, gossip and scolding can assume new forms. Because participants in a mediated interaction lack full access to the other participants' behavior, the individual's place-bound context may assume the character of 'backstage' in relation to the ongoing mediated interaction. It is not, however, a backstage in Goffman's original sense since it can equally be 'on stage', i.e., the prime focus of the individual's attention, and actually frame how he or she interacts on the virtual media 'stage'. Sms-communication (texting) between a group of teenagers may, for example, be instigated primarily for the entertainment of some of the participants, who, together with friends in their physical social situations, make fun of others' contributions to the 'conversation' behind their backs, without those others knowing that the messages they send are made the butt of derisive comments. Similarly, television viewers can mimic the dialects or make fun of the appearance of people they see on the screen. Internet also lends itself to more insidious forms of ridicule, and even outright mobbing, via websites, sms and telephone cameras.

The distance or de-linking of interaction when it takes place via a medium leads to changes, extension and complications of the relations between the 'stage' and 'backstage' of the interaction and, as a consequence, norm-enforcing mechanisms can develop in ways that would be perceived as illegitimate and, possibly, even gross violations of others' integrity, were they applied in a face-to-face situation. Whereas gossip about a participant in an interaction is not voiced openly in face-to-face encounters, it may be spread behind the person's back 'backstage' (Bergmann, 1993), several media and media genres publish gossip: magazines, reality television and blogs shamelessly spread all kinds of gossip, particularly about celebrities. Moreover, in addition to filling these media's columns and air time, the media's gossip is also a legitimate topic in face-to-face situations, where such subjects normally would not be fitting (Hjarvard, 2002b). Use of norm-enforcing mechanisms in media does not make them any less effective, and in some case they may be even more effective because the media make ridicule, gossip or scolding publicly accessible. But because of the distance or de-linking that characterizes mediated interaction, application of the mechanisms in media seems – from the point of view of the viewer, reader or user, that is – less intrusive and less consequential to the individual than if they had been applied in a face-to-face situation.

The Interfaces between Institutions

Whereas mediatization on the microsocial level is evidenced in its structuring impacts on human interaction, on the macro level we find impacts on how institutions relate to one another due to the intervention of media. In general terms we can distinguish three functions that the media serve in this regard: they constitute *an interface in the relations within and between institutions;* television newscasts bring politics into people's sitting rooms, and advertising is an important platform for private firms' communication with

potential customers. Second, the media constitute a *realm of shared experience*; that is, they offer a continuous presentation and interpretation of 'the way things are' and by doing so, contribute to the development of a sense of identity and of community. Finally, media help to create a *political public sphere*, within which institutions can pursue and defend their own interests and establish their legitimacy. Put another way, the three functions of the media on the macrosocial level are to serve as a *nexus* between institutions, as an *interpretive frame* for understanding society, and as an *arena* in which members of a society can discuss and decide matters of common interest. As a consequence of these functions, the *logic* of the media – that is, the institutional, technological and expressive characteristics of media – will increasingly affect society. The extent to which and how media logic affects any given institution, the mutual interaction of institutions, and society as a whole will vary, but, of course, these are questions for empirical investigation.

As interfaces, the media are a resource that institutions make use of in their mutual interaction; in order to tap this resource the institution has to participate to some extent in a media praxis, which is evidenced by an increasing use of journalists, information officers, PR consultants by private companies, political parties, educational institutions, etc. On a theoretical level one may assess the importance of media as a shared resource or interface by viewing the various social institutions, media included, as fields in a Bourdieuan sense (Bourdieu, 1993, 2005), i.e., as social areas characterized by a certain autonomy and internal structure, according to which agents occupy specific positions vis-à-vis one another. For example, art is a field that has a certain autonomy in relation to other institutions and is imbued with its own, internally defined norms and hierarchies. No field, however, is totally autonomous; all are influenced to greater or lesser degrees by other fields. Art, for example, is influenced by the market, also a field, in that professional artists make their living by dealing in works of art, and by the field of politics, inasmuch as cultural policy affects artists' ability to show their works and is the source of stipends and scholarships. Art is also dependent on the media as a field, since media exposure is the key to publicity and fame, which may be converted into other forms of value on the art market or in culture policy contexts. Bourdieu makes a distinction in this regard between autonomous and heteronomous poles, where the former is the site of the field's immanent logic, where actors act in accordance with the field's own values, as when a work of art is judged on the basis of the medium's or genre's criteria of quality. The heteronomous pole, on the other hand, is the site of other fields' influence, e.g., the market's, politicians' or the media's.

If we examine mediatization in the light of Bourdieu's concepts, we find that the media occupy a prominent place in a growing number of fields' heteronomous pole, thereby challenging those fields' autonomous pole. Thus, the degree of mediatization may be measured according to how much the respective field's autonomous pole has weakened; eventually, some fields will lose their autonomy entirely. Media, too, have autonomous and heteronomous poles, where the autonomous pole is the site of aspects like professionalized journalism and codes of ethics, and the heteronomous pole is the site of, say, the influence exerted by the advertising market. There is a tension between the poles in the media; in news media, for example, journalistic criteria of news value and the ideals of good journalism often compete with the demands of the need to sell copies, the influence exerted by news sources, and so forth (Schultz, 2006). Inasmuch as the media are influenced by other fields or institutions, we cannot always be certain that observed media impacts imply submission to media logic alone. Occasionally, mediatization will

go hand in hand with commercialization or politicization, and whether mediatization is the most dominant force can only be determined by analysis. Any empirical analysis of mediatization should therefore enquire whether, and to what extent, other institutions (conceived of here as fields) stand to win or lose autonomy in relation to other fields.

A Realm of Shared Experience

In a historical perspective, the media's ability to create a common horizon of experience across institutions has mainly acted to dissolve local cultures in favor of shared *national* realms of experience. The British sociologist, Anthony Giddens (1984) describes one aspect of modernity as an ongoing 'disembedding' of societal structures: parochial and traditional cultures are broken up, fall into oblivion, and are transformed through contact with the larger, modern world. Viewed in this light, mediatization has been a social force on a par with urbanization and industrialization. Just as electricity and railroads helped to make people more mobile, the media have contributed to a mental and communicative mobility. Since the mid-1800s newspapers, and later radio and television have helped to undermine local, traditional cultures in favor of a national culture and culture of political unity. Julius Bomholt, the first and very influential Minister of Culture in the Danish welfare state, did not mince his words in describing the modernization 'mission' of the media when he in 1964 summed up the status of Danish broadcast media:

> Engrained, parochial cultural habits are, with the help of broadcasting, being sundered. Isolated and backward cultures have been dissolved. A shared cultural background has put the population on speaking terms. When credit is given for having eradicated the benighted peasantry and ignorant proletariat of yesteryear, Denmark's Radio [Danish public service broadcasting] will have a major share of it (Bomholt, 1964).

Viewed in this light, then, the creation of a common experiential frame of reference is not just a matter of adding something new and shared; it is also a matter of eroding and doing away with previous experience and culture. Media's creation of a new, shared national realm of experience may, to use Giddens' terminology, be conceived of as a 're-embedding' of social interaction on a more a general and abstract level than once characterized erstwhile place-bound cultures.

Benedict Anderson (1991) speaks of national communities as an *imagined community* inasmuch as no one, even in the smallest of nations, can have met all its other members. The media are the symbolic mortar that make the individual components seem to be a cohesive social whole. Thus, as Jeffrey Alexander points out, the mass media are the symbolic equivalent of the judicial system, as they serve to produce "the symbolic patterns that create the invisible tissues of society on the cultural level, just as the legal system creates the community on a more concrete and 'real' one" (Alexander, 1981:18).

There is more to it than creating common experiential frames of reference. The media create a context, which enables the individual to observe and experience the whole of society from a new perspective. As Paddy Scannell (1988) characterizes the accomplishment of radio and television, for example: "Broadcasting brought together for a radically new kind of *general* public the elements of a culture-in-common (national and transnational) for all. In doing so, it redeemed, and continues to redeem, the intelligibility of the world and the communicability of experience in the widest social sense" (Scannell, 1988:29, original emphasis). The world presents itself at once as a

generalized whole (such as 'Denmark' or 'Copenhagen') and as something concrete, tangible and 'at hand'. With access to internet, it has also become possible for individuals to interact with everyone else. Once an abstraction, community has, thanks to media, become concrete experience.

Whereas Paddy Scannell takes a generally positive view of the media as providers of a common frame of experience, Nick Couldry (2003a) is more critical, not least with regard to this very function. Taking his point of departure in Bourdieu's field theory, Couldry points out that a theory of the roles of media in society needs to do more than show how the media intervene into and influence various fields, like cultural life and politics; they need to take account of "the impacts that media might have on all fields simultaneously by legitimating certain categories with not just cognitive, but also social significance" (Couldry, 2003a:665). The influence of the media is, in other words, more than the sum of their influence in the respective fields. In line with Bourdieu's concept of 'metacapital', used to describe the ability of a state to project its power across different fields, Couldry suggests that one may also speak of a 'media's metacapital' inasmuch as the media are able universally, across all fields, to form the categories that everyone uses to interpret the world. That is to say, the media have an essentially ideological power to describe society in a way that seems the only 'natural' way to comprehend it. Couldry (2003b) expands on and exemplifies this idea through a number of analyses, but now using a modified concept of ritual. Media influence on people's experience consists not least of the media's ability to present themselves as the centre of society: they offer an interpretive position that gives the world meaning. Media rituals deliver "formalised actions organised around key media-related categories and boundaries, whose performance frames, and suggests a connection with wider media-related values" (Couldry, 2003b:29). In other words, media not only describe the world, they provide basic categorical frameworks through which we apprehend it.

Couldry makes an important point when he highlights the power inherent in the privilege to define the cognitive, social and lexical categories that organize people's understanding of the world around them. But, he seems not to have any appreciation of the potentially positive aspects that the construction of an experiential commons might have. Secondly, he seems to have an all too monolithic conception of media power, a power so pervasive that no other institution can challenge the descriptions of reality the media provide. Third, Couldry's use of ritual as a concept deviates somewhat from standard usage in communication research (Rothenbuhler, 1998). Actually, the principal focus of Couldry's critique is the ideological impact of the media, albeit he uses this term only sporadically. In this respect his perspective bears a resemblance to that of Olof Petersson's (1994) notion of "journalism as ideology". According to Petersson, a political scientist, journalism is more than a particular profession or craft; by virtue of their status as a social class having its own norms, education and position in society, journalists develop a semi-populistic ideology, according to which the most important division in society runs between holders of power and ordinary people. Journalists conceive of themselves as go-betweens who are able to speak for ordinary people. Journalism uses language in ways designed to catch people's attention, and as other social institutions adopt journalistic functions to help them communicate better with the world around them, they will successively assimilate both the language and ideology of journalism. Regardless of whether one sides more with Scannell's optimistic interpretation regarding a common world created by media, or Couldry's and Petersson's more critical views regarding the ideological consequences of this mediegenic commons, the most

important conclusion for our present purposes is that one of the principal consequences of the mediatization of society is the constitution of a shared experiential world, a world that is regulated by media logic.

Virtualization and a New Social Geography

One general effect of mediatization is a *virtualization* of social institutions. Earlier, the institutions were more bound to specific places: politics took place in the parliament, city hall and meeting halls; education took place in the schools and universities; and art was presented on the stage and in museums and galleries. As a consequence of the intervention of media, individuals can take part in and partake of many different social institutions, irrespective of their physical location. Contact with politics occurs by reading the paper at the breakfast table, listening to one's car radio, or via internet at the office.

Virtualization of social institutions goes hand in hand with a *domestication* of those institutions. Typically, the home and family are increasingly the point around which access to other institutions revolves. Newspapers, radio and television have brought politics and cultural expression into the home; home offices have brought paid employment into family life, and internet has made it possible to interact with entities in both public and private spheres from the comfort of one's home. On the one hand, all this implies an enrichment of home and family as an institution in that other institutions are now accessible. On the other hand, the new accessibility also changes the home and family, as family members may be physically present in the home, yet be mentally attuned to other institutions entirely. The virtualization of institutions implies that the home loses some of its ability to regulate family members' behavior, and it is left to the individual to decide in which institution he or she is taking part, and adjust his/her behavior accordingly. Institutional contexts are no longer defined by their locus, but are a matter of individual choice. Virtualization, however, is seldom total; most institutions still maintain physical-geographical bases as an important framework for social praxis. What is new is that these places and buildings now interplay with virtual places and spaces, and the reality and forms of interaction that take place in the virtual world will also have consequences for social praxis in the physical locality.

As described earlier, ever since the latter half of the nineteenth century, media have removed social interaction from the local level and embedded it in a national context. In the last decade of the twentieth century it became increasingly possible for media to transcend national frontiers, and media supported the globalization process. Thus, Tomlinson (1999) speaks of the role of media in *de-territorializing* cultural experience and social interaction. With internet, satellite-TV and a growing global market for television series, film, music, advertising, etc., human experience is no longer bound to either the local or national context, but takes place in a globalized context. By the same token, media make it possible to interact with others across political and cultural frontiers. As a consequence of the media's growing complexity and encompassing nature, society takes on a *complex connectivity* (Tomlinson, 1999): In the era of globalization the media not only provide channels of communication between nations and peoples, but also establish networks across all manner of geographical areas and actors. This development leads in turn to a greater *cultural reflexivity*. As influxes of media products and communication cross more and more frontiers, virtually no culture will be able to develop in isolation from others. Greater cultural reflexivity does not mean that influences from abroad ne-

cessarily increase or become in any way indispensable; indeed, foreign media cultures may well be rejected and castigated, as some Muslim and Christian fundamentalists have done so emphatically. But greater cultural reflexivity has the consequence that cultural development no longer takes place in naive isolation from other cultures, but will develop with an awareness that alternative courses are available.

The great difficulty in attempting to chart the social geography of contemporary media trends is that they do not describe a development in any single direction. Instead, the trends seem to tend in many directions at once, which results in a social geography that is far more complex than what we have known to date. But, as we survey the new geography that media support, we can distinguish between two sets of opposites: first, homogenization versus differentiation and, second, centrifugal versus centripetal forces. If, in simplified terms, we might say that the media landscape of the twentieth century has revolved around national public spheres, recent years' developments have remolded the communicative spaces of media. On the one hand, one may speak of a centrifugal force that has broadened national public spheres' contact with the outside world. Transnational media like satellite-distributed television (CNN, Al-Jazeera, Cartoon Network, etc.) and internet have helped to bring about a globalized media environment, in which sound, images and texts flow with ease across national boundaries. With internet foreign newspapers and radio stations are seldom more than a click away, and not least young people can play games and chat with each other around the world. Meanwhile, a centripetal force is also at play: the media environment has more 'introvert' communication spaces in the form of neighborhood radio, local newspapers, community websites, etc.

In some respects these developments have a homogenizing effect; in others, differences are accentuated. The ongoing proliferation of radio and television channels means that there will be ever-fewer programs that we all hear and see 'together'. Access to several different interactive media allows us to create different contexts in which we can communicate; typically, in small groups, in chat rooms, blogs, online games, and so forth. But, despite this segmentation, we occasionally encounter media phenomena that momentarily revive the great collective 'we'. Events in the lives of national 'royals' have, in the case of Great Britain and Denmark, become national media events and broken successive ratings records. Reactions to immigration and globalization in general have also revived a nationalistic culture in many countries, and the media may be more or less explicit part of this process. There are also examples of homogenization on global and regional planes. Al-Jazeera has, for example, created supranational political and cultural *public spheres* in the Arab world (Galal, 2002), and best-selling novels and blockbuster films like *Lord of the Rings* and *The DaVinci Code* are the topic of conversation for millions of people.

Figure 1 represents an attempt to summarize the contradictory processes outlined above. The point of this model is to underline the fact that the media environment is expanding and developing in different directions, so that one cannot say that the media are moving society in any particular direction. Media do, however, play a part in the structuring of communication and action in a growing number of contexts: in some cases it means increasing globalization, often by symbolic products of Anglo-American origin, but it can also bring a greater degree of individualization and segmentation, as in the case of use of interactive media by small groups. Meanwhile, media can also facilitate local interaction or call attention to national phenomena. It should be borne in mind that these contradictory processes often are at play simultaneously. A Turkish satellite-TV channel beamed toward Western Europe may help to preserve emigrants' cultural bonds with their homeland, but the channel is also an ingredient in an overall process of glo-
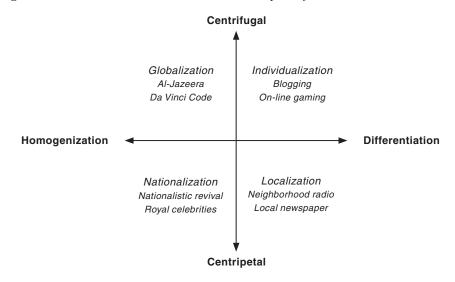
Figure 1. Media Facilitate and Structure Virtual Spaces for Communication and Action

balization, whereby Turkish identity, language and culture are successively transformed and find themselves in a new transnational context (Robins, 2003).

As indicated in Figure 1, mediatization can facilitate quite different societal tendencies on both micro and macro levels. These include globalization, individualization, nationalization and localization. Which tendency predominates will depend on the specific context, i.e., on the institution or social activity in question. The more precise consequences of media intervention will, however, have to be explored empirically, through examination of the interplay of institutions and media in a historical and cultural context.

The expanding geography that media contribute to does not have the same degree of cohesion as the national media systems of the past. The links between local, national, individual-/group-oriented and the global are far less stable and resemble what in modern governance theory are called *loose couplings*. In late-modern, complex societies decision-making processes are not necessarily steered via linear processes with initial problem definition followed by analysis and policy formulation and then decision. Bureaucratic organizations with well-defined hierarchies and decision processes have been replaced in part by network governance, which is of a more fragmentary nature (Bogason, 2001). In like manner, the different social spaces may be more or less loosely coupled. In national media systems of yesteryear, the links between the media and political and cultural institutions were generally rather strong. Topics mentioned in print and broadcast media often had direct consequences in the political system and in cultural and confessional spheres – and vice versa. In globalized media systems the linking mechanism between media representations and social action is less pronounced. Topics discussed in internet chat rooms or blogs, on transnational satellite-TV channels or on local minority radio stations generally have only marginal influence, if any, on policy-making in national spaces; conversely, national policies and restrictions can be contradicted and rather easily circumvented by means of foreign web sites and radio or television channels. In short, the interplay between mediatization and globalization means a more complex social and cultural geography, in which individual, local, national and global entities can be linked in new ways.

Modernity and Mediatization

Mediatization is an important concept in modern sociology as it relates to the overriding process of modernization of society and culture. The discipline of sociology was founded in conjunction with the study of the breakthrough of modern society. Pioneers in the field like Max Weber, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel were not particularly interested in the role or importance of mass media, but focused instead on phenomena like industrialization, urbanization, secularization and individualization. Nor did later sociologists show very much interest in the media. Only late in his career did Pierre Bourdieu, for example, write about the media, and his critique of television journalism (Bourdieu, 1999) appears rather shallow, compared to his earlier published work. Viewed in a historical perspective, the lack of interest in the media among classical sociologists should perhaps not surprise us. Through the nineteenth century 'media' were not visible in their own right; they were specific technologies and separate cultural phenomena – books, newspapers, the telegraph, etc. – each of which were instruments in the hands of other institutions, such as literature, science, politics, commerce, etc.

Only with the expansion of mass media in the twentieth century did the media begin to be perceived as media in their own right, viz., as forms of communication that shared certain constitutive characteristics and were of some consequence. North American sociology emerged in the 1930s, and there the study of mass media – films, radio and newspapers – played a central role for some brief decades. Central figures like Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Robert Merton applied sociological perspectives to the media, but then abandoned media in favor of other objects of study. Instead, in North America and elsewhere specialized disciplines arose – Communication Research and Mass Communication Research or Media Studies – that focused singularly on the media and their role in culture and society. As a consequence of this specialization, the study of media lost contact with broader sociological perspectives. That is part of the reason why medium theory, the theory that most explicitly deals with the roles of media in society, has not been embraced by sociologists, nor have medium theorists shown much interest in using sociological concepts. This should not be taken to imply that media research has been totally isolated from sociology and other core disciplines. On the contrary, media scholars have frequently drawn upon other disciplines in their study of one or another phenomenon. For example, political theory has been used in the study of opinion formation, and anthropological theory has been applied to the study of media use. But when it comes to more fundamental sociological subjects, such as modernization processes, there has been little cross-fertilization.

In recent years, however, we have seen some steps toward rapprochement between the two disciplines. Manuel Castells' (2001) discussion of internet and the network society is an attempt to integrate a media perspective into sociological theory. Likewise, from the Media Studies point of view, studies of globalization have aroused interest in sociological and cultural analysis (Silverstone, 2006). The theory of mediatization is an attempt to bring this rapprochement a step further. Mediatization is at once a societal process that calls for dialogue between media scholars and sociologists, and a theoretical concept that can only be understood through a combination of Sociology and Media Studies. Mediatization should be viewed as a modernization process on a par with urbanization and individualization, whereby the media, in a similar manner, both contribute to disembedding social relations from existing contexts and re-embedding them in new social contexts. Thus mediatization is a distinct late-modern process that is, to quote John B. Thompson, "partially constitutive of modern societies, and are partially constitutive of what is 'mod-

ern' about the societies in which we live in today" (Thompson, 1990:15). When classical sociology was in its formative years, media had not become distinct enough from other institutions, nor were they at all as pervasive as they are today. For contemporary sociological inquiry into late-modern society, a theory of the importance of the media for culture and society is no longer an interesting possibility, but an absolute necessity.

References

Alexander, Jeffrey C. (1981) 'The Mass News Media in Systemic, Historical, and Comparative Perspective', in E. Katz & T. Szecskö, (eds.) *Mass Media and Social Change*. London: Sage (Sage Studies in International Sociology; 22).

Altheide, David L. & Snow, Robert P. (1979) *Media Logic*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Altheide, David L. & Snow, Robert P. (1988) 'Toward a Theory of Mediation', in J.A. Anderson (red.) *Communication Yearbook* 11: 194-223.

Amnå, Erik & Berglez, Peter (red.) (1999) *Politikens medialisering* [The mediatization of politics]. Stockholm: Liber. (SOU 1999: 126, Demokratiutredningens forskarvolym III)

Anderson, Benedict (1991) *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.

Asp, Kent (1986) *Mäktiga massmedier: Studier i politisk opinionsbildning* [Powerful mass media: studies in political opinion-formation]. Stockholm: Akademilitteratur.

Asp, Kent (1990) 'Medialisering, medielogik, mediekrati' [Mediatization, media logic, mediacracy]. *Nordicom Information*, 4. Göteborg: Nordicom.

Auslander, Philip (1999) *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. London: Routledge.

Austin, John L (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Baudrillard, Jean (1994) *Simulacra and Simulations*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Baudrillard, Jean (1995) *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bergmann, Jörg R. (1993) *Discreet Indiscretions: The Social Organisation of Gossip*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Billig, Michael (2005) *Laughter and Ridicule*. London: Sage.

Bogason, Peter (2001) *Fragmenteret forvaltning: demokrati og netværksstyring i decentraliseret lokalstyre* [Fragmented government: democracy and network governance in decentralized local government]. Århus: Forlaget Systime.

Bomholt, Julius (1964) *Stil Ind: DR Årbogen 1963-64* [Tune in: Yearbook 1963-64 (Danmarks Radio)]. København: DR.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1993) *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1999) *On Television and Journalism*. London : Pluto Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2005) 'The Political Field, The Social Science Field, and Journalistic Field', in R. Benson & E. Neveu (eds.) *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Brown, Sheila (2003) *Crime and Law in Media Culture*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Castells, Manuel (2001) *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cottle, Simon (2006) *Mediatized Conflict*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Couldry, Nick (2003a) 'Media Meta-capital: Extending the Range of Bourdieu's Field Theory', *Theory and Society* (32) 653-677.

Couldry, Nick (2003b) *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. London: Routledge.

Galal, Ehab (2002) 'Al-Jazeera – borgerlig offentlighed i den arabiske medieverden [Al-Jazeera: Bourgeois Öffentlichkeit in the Arab media world], in L. Qvortrup (red.) *Mediernes 11. september*. København: Gyldendal.

Gibson, James J (1979) *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Giddens, Anthony (1984) *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Goffman, Erving (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday.

Habermas, Jürgen (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jürgen (1990) 'Vorwort zur Neuauflage 1990', in *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Hernes, Gudmund (1978) 'Det mediavridde samfunn' [The media-twisted society], in G. Hernes (red.) *Forhandlingsekonomi og blandningsadministrasjon*. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.

Hjarvard, Stig (2002a) 'Simulated Conversations: The Simulation of Interpersonal Communication in Electronic Media', in A. Jerslev (red.) *Realism and 'Reality' in Film and Media: Northern Lights 2002*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Hjarvard, Stig (2002b) Seernes reality [The audience's reality], in *MedieKultur* 34: 92-109 (April 2002).

Hjarvard, Stig (2004) 'From Bricks to Bytes: The Mediatization of a Global Toy Industry', in I. Bondebjerg & P. Golding (eds.) *European Culture and the Media*. Bristol: Intellect.

Hjarvard, Stig (2005) 'Medialiseringen af religiøse forestillinger' [The mediatization of religious beliefs], in M.T. Højsgaard & H.R. Iversen (red.) *Gudstro i Danmark*. Frederiksberg: Anis.

Hjarvard, Stig (2007) 'Sprogets medialisering' [The mediatization of language], in *Språk i Norden 2007*. Oslo: Nettverket for språknemndene i Norden.

Hjarvard, Stig (2008) 'The Mediatization of Religion', in *Northern Lights 2008*. Bristol: Intellect Press.

Jameson, Fredric (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso.

Jansson, André (2002) 'The Mediatization of Consumption: Towards an Analytical Framework of Image Culture', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 2(1): 5-31.

Jenssen, Anders T. & Aalberg, Toril (red.) (2007) *Den medialiserte politikken* [Mediatized politics]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Kristensen, Nete Nørgaard (2000) 'Journalistik som profession: Om journalistens rolleplacering i et professionssociologisk perspektiv' [Journalism as a profession: On the role of the journalist in a sociological perspective], in *Sekvens 2000: Årbog for Film- & Medievidenskab*. København: Københavns Universitet.

Krotz, Friedrich (2007) *Mediatisierung: Fallstudien zum Wandel von Kommunikation*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Socialwissenschaften.

Mazzoleni, Gianpietro & Schultz, Winfried (1999) ',Mediatization' of Politics: A Challenge for Democracy?', *Political Communication* 16: 247-261.

McLuhan, Marshall (1964) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Meyrowitz, Joshua (1986) *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Middleton, Richard (1990) *Studying Popular Music*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Norman, Donald (1990) *The Design of Everyday Things*. New York: Doubleday.

Ong, Walter J. (1982) *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Methuen.

Petersson, Olof (1994) 'Journalistene som klass, journalismen som ideology' [Journalists as a class, journalism as ideology]', in T.S. Edvardsen (red.) *Media og samfunnsstyring*. Bergen: Fakbokforlaget.

Robins, Kevin (2003) 'Beyond Imagined Community? Transnational Media and Turkish Migrants in Europe', in S. Hjarvard (ed.) *Media in a Globalized Society*. København: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Rothenbuhler, Eric (1998) *Ritual Communication: From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony*. London: Sage.

Scannell, Paddy (1988) 'Radio Times: The Temporal Arrangements of Broadcasting in the Modern World', in P. Drummond and R. Paterson (eds.) *Television and its Audience*. London: BFI.

Schultz, Ida (2006) *Bagom nyhederne – værdier, idealer og praksis* [Behind the news: values, ideals and praxis]. Frederiksberg: Forlaget Samfundslitteratur.

Schulz, Winfried (2004) 'Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept', *European Journal of Communication* 19(1): 87-101.

Searle, John R. (1969) *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Silverstone, Roger (2006) *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Cambridge: Polity.

Strömbäck Jesper (2007) 'Four Phases of Mediatization. An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics', Paper presented to the ICA Conference in San Francisco May 2007.

Thompson, John B (1990) *Ideology and Modern Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Thompson, John B (1995) *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tomlinson, John (1999) *Globalization and Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tuchman, Gaye (1972) 'Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notion of Objectivity', *American Journal of Sociology* 77(4).

Väliverronen, Esa (2001) 'From Mediation to Mediatization: The New Politics of Communicating Science and Biotechnology', in U. Kivikuru & T. Savolainen (eds.) *The Politics of Public Issues*. Helsinki: Department of Communication, University of Helsinki.

Weingart, Peter (1998) 'Science and the Media', *Research Policy* 27(8): 869-879.