



50 Ways to Understand Communication: A Guided Tour of Key Ideas and Theorists in Communication, Media, and Culture

By Arthur Asa Berger San Francisco State University

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Is consciousness like an iceberg? Does advertising lead to the commodification of humans? What is the hidden meaning of fairy tales? In 50 Ways to Understand Communication, Arthur Asa Berger familiarizes readers with important concepts written by leading communication and cultural theorists, such as Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, de Certeau, Lasswell, McLuhan, Postman, and many others. Organized in fifty short segments, this concise guide covers a wide range of important ideas from psychoanalysis and semiology to humor, "otherness," and nonverbal communication. Berger's clear explanations and examples surround this assortment of influential writing, walking the uninitiated through these sometimes dense theoretical works. His selections and commentary will challenge readers to reconsider the role of communication in our culture. This engaging, accessible book is essential for students of communication and anyone interested in how we communicate in a world of rapidly changing media.

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Editorial Review

Review

Arthur Asa Berger's choice of 50 prominent thinkers about communication is an intellectual journey from Aristotle to McLuhan with stops along the way at such road posts as Freud, Jung, and many of today's eminent communication scholars. Berger has selected a key writing from each and includes his own analysis and perspective of their work. The book includes exercises for students and is a clear requisite for any introductory course on communication. (A. Michael Noll, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California)

I have been waiting for a book like this for eight to ten years! Finally, a text that is accessible to undergraduates who are new to the emerging discipline of culture and communication and yet honors the complexity of that discipline's roots, central questions, and broad reach. (Marie Garland, Ithaca College)

Communication theory is an ideal subject for Arthur Asa Berger, because?as any reader will soon discover?he is a genius at communicating complex ideas simply, directly, and with a unique sense of humor. (Howard Rheingold, author of Smart Mobs)

About the Author

Arthur Asa Berger is professor emeritus of broadcast and electronic communication arts at San Francisco State University.

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Ryan Strausbaugh:

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