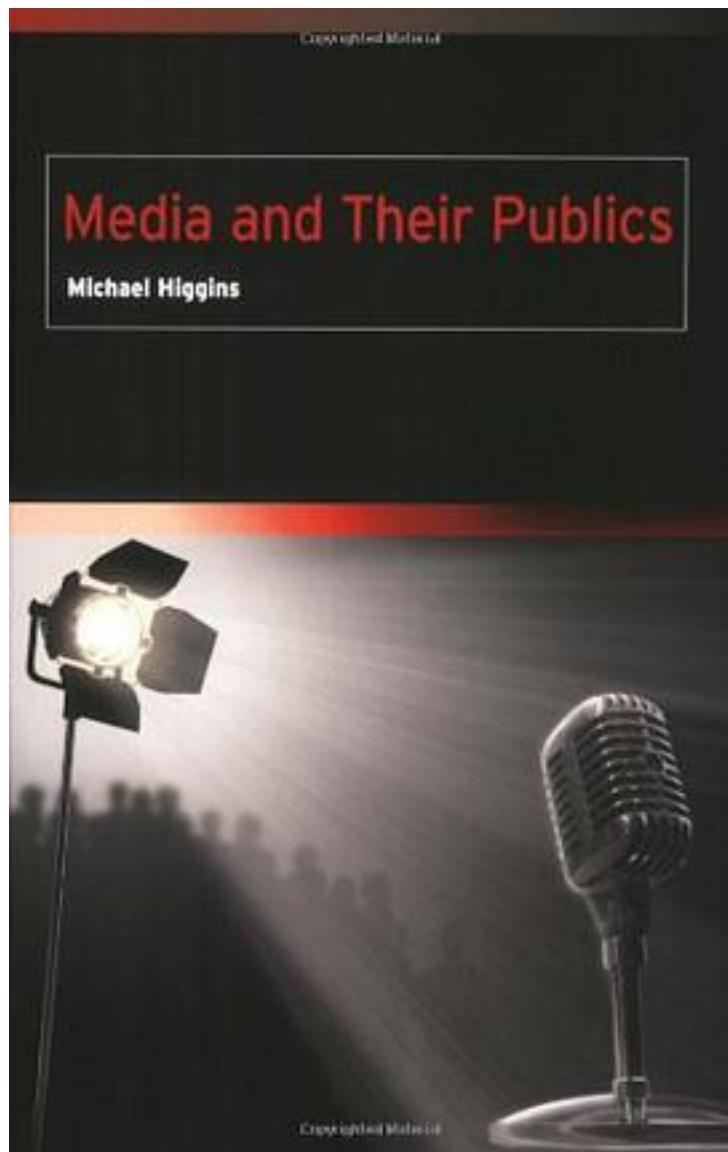


Media and Their Publics



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The public is so central to discussions of the role of broadcasting in civil society that it often passes without comment. "The Media and the Public" offers a critical insight into this key component of media policy and practice. Ideas and activities around public opinion, public interest and public service are introduced and opened to question, as are various practices of framing 'ordinary' voices, representing the polity and the developing role of public advocacy. Areas covered include techniques of political interview and political discussion programmes. Analysis of the construction of the political public also covers the citizenry as interpreted and portrayed in the studio audience and as represented by the professional advocate. The political public is discussed in terms of its shift towards marketisation, with attention given to the place of populist discourses and entertainment in the political public sphere. The parallel development of a cultural media public in the media is seen within context of value judgements and distinctions of taste, and presented as part of a politics of representation. The book scrutinises the norms of public participation programmes, along with techniques of laying claim to public legitimacy and the performance of authenticity as a public attribute. Also examined is the presentation of expertise in relation to the cultural public. Experts from within the media are compared in their relationship with the public with those from outside. The book discusses the relationship between legitimated forms of expertise and wider societal moral frameworks. "The Media and the Public" draws upon and develops a key set of distinctions between political and cultural forms of public, showing that while both draw upon similar sets of assumptions they give rise to quite different issues of civil empowerment. Throughout the book, the relationship between media and the public is shown to be central to wider issues of politics, governance, and cultural influence.

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目录:

[Media and Their Publics 下载链接1](#)

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