

The British Press



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Mick Temple's new book offers an introduction to the history, theory, politics and potential future of British newspapers. The focus of this new book is on the relationship between press and political history, examining the social and political impact of British newspapers. Throughout, the author assesses the press' contribution to enlarging and informing the public sphere. "The British Press" is both a practical introduction to the subject and a theoretically informed critique of press developments. The first half of the book leads the reader through key historical moments from the Civil War to Wapping and beyond, while the second half takes an in-depth look at current empirical and theoretical concerns. Scholarly yet accessible, the book is also not afraid to take a position on today's contentious issues. For example, Mick Temple mounts a defence of 'dumbing down', arguing that the much criticised 'tabloidisation' of newspapers has been an essential development in enabling access to the public sphere for those whose news agenda differs from the traditional template of 'serious' news. The book takes a more positive perspective on the British press than has often been the case, arguing that throughout their history our newspapers have been vital conduits for public opinion and, on occasion, catalysts for social change. Temple is also positive about the future of newspapers, pointing out the online strength of great brand names like the "Telegraph", "Guardian", "Sun" and "Mail".

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