Media Regulation

Governance and the Interests of Citizens and Consumers

Peter Lunt The University of Leicester and Sonia Livingstone London School of Economics and Political Science

‘An exemplary study of how media regulation works (and, by implication, how it could work better) set within a wider discussion of democratic theory and political values. It will be of interest not only to students and scholars but to people around the world grappling with the same problem: the need to regulate markets, and the difficulty of doing this well’
- James Curran, Goldsmiths, University of London

‘Separately and jointly, Lunt and Livingstone have authored many fine writings, but this is arguably the best of the bunch! What makes this research special – even timeless for regulatory ‘theory’ – is its positioning amidst a set of well-defined philosophical and political tensions, especially between the interests of consumers and those of citizens’
- Jay G. Blumler, University of Leeds

In Media Regulation, two leading scholars of the media examine the challenges of regulation in the global mediated sphere. This book explores the way that regulation affects the relations between government, the media and communications market, civil society, citizens and consumers. Drawing on theories of governance and the public sphere, the book critically analyzes issues at the heart of today’s media, from the saturation of advertising to burdens on individuals to control their own media literacy.

Lunt and Livingstone incisively lay bare shifts in governance and the new role of the public sphere which implicate self-regulation, the public interest, the role of civil society and the changing risks and opportunities for citizens and consumers. It is essential reading to understand the forces that are reshaping the media landscape.

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Media and Communications Regulation and the Public Interest: Introduction; Regulation and the Role of the State; Regulation, Civil Society and the Public Sphere; Market Innovation vs. Social Democratic Values; Introducing the Case Studies / Regulation and the Public Interest: From Government to Governance; The Theory of Regulation; Strategies of Regulation; New Labour, Social Democracy and Regulation; The European Context; The UK Context; Regulation and the Public Interest / Ofcom’s Core Purposes: A Discursive Struggle: Media Regulation and the Implied Audience; The Communications Act 2003 – In Whose Interest?; Ofcom’s Remit – Interpreting its Primary Duties; Actions to Further Citizens’ and Consumers’ Interests; Citizen Interests in Wider Perspective / Ofcom as a Regulatory Agency: Ofcom’s Remit and Rationale; From Guiding Principles to Working Practices; Core Business: Telecommunications, Spectrum Management and Media Plurality; Ofcom as an Institution in the Public Sphere; The Content Board and (Communications) Consumer Panel; Defining Citizen and Consumer Interests in Practice; Conclusion / Ofcom’s Review of Public Service Television: Introduction; Public Service Broadcasting in the 1980s and 1990s; Ofcom’s Remit in Reviewing Public Service Television; Ofcom’s First Review of Public Service Television; A Public Service For All; Ofcom’s Second Public Service Television Review; Ofcom’s Consultation on the Second Review; Conclusion / Media Literacy: A New Lease of Life for an Old Policy; A Puzzling Task for the New Regulator; Definitional Diversity in Europe; Media Literacy as a Neoliberal Policy; The Politics of Media Literacy; From Media Literacy to Digital Participation; From Principles to Practice; From Individual Skills to Social Capabilities; Conclusion / Advertising Regulation and Childhood Obesity: Introduction; Regulating Advertising to Children; The Challenges of Evidence-Based Policy; Regulatory Action and Reaction; Regulatory Effectiveness?: Reflections on Evidence-Based Policy; Conclusion / Community Radio: Introduction; The Community Radio Order 2004; Regulating Community Radio; Evaluating Ofcom’s Regulation of Community Radio; Conclusion / Conclusions: A Change of Direction; The Power to Make Policy; On the Value of an Independent Regulator; Conclusions; Afterword

December 2011 • 232 pages
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