

PREFACE.

The present publication deals with problems of modern mass communication. It is the outcome of collaboration between the Institute of Social Research and Columbia University's Office of Radio Research. As a result of frequent exchanges of views between members of the two institutions, many specific questions have arisen concerning the interaction between critical theory and empirical research. It is impossible to do justice to this whole problem within the scope of a single issue. We consider it possible, however, to present examples of an approach especially aware of the necessity to integrate theoretical thinking with empirical analysis. The essays that follow should be read as such examples.

It gives us great satisfaction that for the first time some of our ideas have been applied to specifically American subject matters and introduced into the American methodological debate. We feel particularly indebted to Paul F. Lazarsfeld who has taken categories developed by us in a totally different, highly abstract context, and attempted to present them in terms of the concrete desiderata confronting today's social research.

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