

Promotional Cultures: The Rise and Spread of Advertising, Public Relations, Marketing and Branding

By Aeron Davis

In the twenty-first century, promotion is everywhere and everything has become promotable: everyday goods and organizations, people and ideas, cultures and futures. This engaging book looks at the rise of advertising, public relations, branding, marketing and lobbying, and explores where our promotional times have taken us.

Promotional Cultures documents how the professions and practices of promotion have interacted with and reshaped so much in our world, from commodities, celebrities and popular culture to politics, markets and civil society. It offers a mix of historical accounts, social theory and documented case studies, including haute couture fashion, Apple Inc., Hollywood film, Jennifer Lopez, the Occupy movement, Barack Obama's election campaigns, news production and the 2008 financial crisis. Together, these show how promotional culture may be recorded, understood and interpreted.

Promotional Cultures will appeal to students and scholars of media and culture, sociology, politics, anthropology, social and industrial history.

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Review

'Aeron Davis ranges far and wide in media and cultural studies and beyond to bring us this erudite and thoughtful book on what "promotional culture" means in economics, politics, civil society and celebrity culture. Ecumenical, yet retaining a sharp critical edge, this is the best single account of promotional culture I have seen.'

David Miller, University of Bath

'Drawing on a range of critical intellectual traditions in the study of production, consumption, culture and finance, Davis discusses the rise and penetration of digital-age promotional industries in the service of capitalist commodification. His study will give readers grounding in the theories and debates that dissect the social relations, culture and dialectics of commodity production and the management of consumerism.'

Gerald Sussman, Portland State University

'*Promotional Cultures* is a wide-ranging and accessible examination of the different advertising, ownership synergy, public relations and other marketing and promotional forces in our lives. Aeron Davis usefully examines different intellectual traditions that have sought to understand and critique promotional ethos and practices. He also applies these traditions and his own insights to areas in which large-scale promotion is systemic, including activism, media and finance.'

Matthew P. McAllister, Penn State University

'In another seminal effort to rethink media and communicative power, Aeron Davis dispenses with the idea that the promotional industries are essential to the well-being of markets, democracy, independent media and our own lives.'

Dwayne Winseck, Carleton University

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Aeron Davis is professor of political communication at Goldsmiths, University of London. He has investigated communication at Westminster, the London Stock Exchange, amongst the major political parties and across the trade union movement. Along the way he has interviewed close to 300 high-profile individuals employed in journalism, public relations, politics, business, finance, NGOs and the civil service. He has published on each of these topics in journals and edited collections and is the author of *Public Relations Democracy* (MUP, 2002), *The Mediation of Politics* (Routledge, 2007), and *Political Communication and Social Theory* (Routledge, 2010).

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