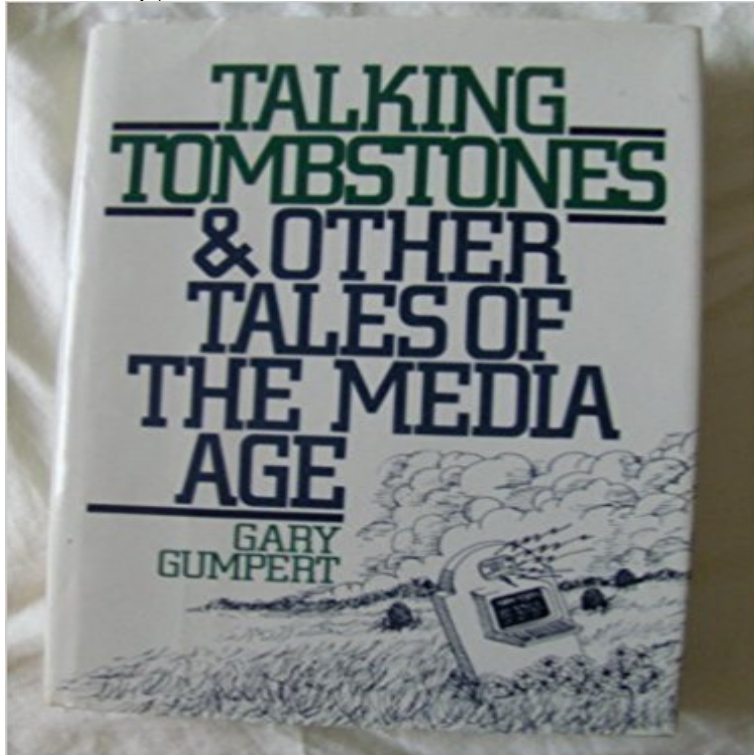


Talking Tombstones and Other Tales of the Media Age



What has the omnipresence of the telephone done to interpersonal communication? How has the portable radio/tape player--whether Walkman or box--challenged our notions of privacy and personal space? What happens to our aesthetic ideals when an ancient art treasure is moved to a pollution-free environment and an exact replica is put in its place at the original site? How has the use of the instant replay in sports broadcasting affected the value of sportsmanship? What are the implications of the fact that a computer engineer has begun to market a tombstone that can deliver a recorded message from the deceased to the survivors? These are but a few of the questions Gary Gumpert asks in this provocative and entertaining assessment of how the communications media and its related technology have altered, reinforced, deemphasized, and redefined our society's values and beliefs. In a world and a society less reliant on the media, values were generally resolved and taught through the traditional institutions of family, school, and church. As Gumpert notes, however, the coming of the electronic age has made us much more reliant on media relationships for support and reaction in defining our values. Uncovering hidden media dependencies we tend to suppress, the book abounds in original insights on topics ranging from the intrusion of Muzak into the doctor-patient relationship to the way new audio technology has transformed our perceptions of a great performance. Although values tend to endure, Gumpert observes, they have never been static or constant. With the advent of the new media, he contends, values are being rocked and tested at a rate that boggles the mind. This book is a lively meditation on where we have been and where we might be going.

We've started our countdown to National Handbag Day on October 10, and that means we'll have special features for you every day, right up to the big event! Today, we're here to talk about the intersection of celebrity and accessories, and more specifically, how the two can become intertwined in public consciousness for years. The kinds of stars who carry a particular bag do a lot to shape the market's perception of it and the designer who created it, which is why so many brands give out free bags to stars now: they're hoping to create positive associations. In the cases you see below, though, things came along a little bit more naturally. You can't rush love, after all. Think of a bag-celeb duo we missed? Let us know in the comments!

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