



Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication

John Durham Peters

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Communication plays a vital and unique role in society-often blamed for problems when it breaks down and at the same time heralded as a panacea for human relations. A sweeping history of communication, *Speaking Into the Air* illuminates our expectations of communication as both historically specific and a fundamental knot in Western thought.

"This is a most interesting and thought-provoking book. . . . Peters maintains that communication is ultimately unthinkable apart from the task of establishing a kingdom in which people can live together peacefully. Given our condition as mortals, communication remains not primarily a problem of technology, but of power, ethics and art." —Antony Anderson, *New Scientist*

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"Peters writes to reclaim the notion of authenticity in a media-saturated world. It's this ultimate concern that renders his book a brave, colorful exploration of the hydra-headed problems presented by a rapid-fire popular culture." —*Publishers Weekly*

What we have here is a failure-to-communicate book. Funny thing is, it communicates beautifully. . . . *Speaking Into the Air* delivers what superb serious books always do-hours of intellectual challenge as one absorbs the gradually unfolding vision of an erudite, creative author." —Carlin Romano, *Philadelphia Inquirer*

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