We live in a revolutionary age of communicative abundance in which many media innovations – from satellite broadcasting to smart glasses and electronic books – spawn great fascination mixed with excitement. In the field of politics, hopeful talk of digital democracy, cybercitizens and e-government has been flourishing. This book admits the many thrilling ways that communicative abundance is fundamentally altering the contours of our lives and of our politics, often for the better. But it asks whether too little attention has been paid to the troubling counter-trends, the decadent media developments that encourage public silence and concentrations of unlimited power, so weakening the spirit and substance of democracy. Exploring examples of clever government surveillance, market censorship, spin tactics and back-channel public relations, John Keane seeks to understand and explain these trends, and how best to deal with them. Tackling some tough but big and fateful questions, Keane argues that ‘media decadence’ is deeply harmful for public life.

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Democracy and Media Decadence

JOHN KEANE
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