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Media Rhetoric
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Seminar Paper – Ong

In his introduction, Ong states that the book will discuss differences between orality and literacy, particularly thought and its expression in oral culture and literate thought and expression in relation to orality.

I feel Ong's distinction between primary orality and secondary orality not only helped to further his aforementioned discussion but also reinforce Jamieson's discussions of media evolution from primarily print and radio into the electronic age of TV and the Web. In relation to the distinction of primary orality and secondary orality, Ong writes that 'the orality of a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print' denotes primary orality, while technologies such as TV, radio and the telephone belong to secondary orality, and in order to be adapted to them, theories must first relate to primary orality.

I found Ong easier to read than Jamieson (perhaps because of the larger font type), though I was grateful for the similarities they presented in relation to media and the electronic age. Ong also discussed media evolution, albeit from a oral and literary standpoint, and how orality and literacy has adapted to the electronic age, which I felt only reinforced his focus of oral and literal distinctions..