# Article information:

Jadaliyya - Andrew Simon, Media of the Masses: Cassette Culture in Modern Egypt (New Texts Out Now)  
<https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/44409>

# Article summary:

1. Andrew Simon's book, "Media of the Masses: Cassette Culture in Modern Egypt," explores how audiocassette technology empowered people to create culture, circulate information, and challenge ruling regimes long before the internet entered our daily lives.

2. The book operates as a mixtape, with each chapter revolving around a particular theme, from consumption, the law, and taste to circulation, history, and archives.

3. The book aims to break ground in Middle East studies by advancing a still nascent “acoustic turn,” centering the archive as an avenue of inquiry, and demonstrating how popular culture may radically deepen our understanding of the past as opposed to merely complementing what we already know.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article provides a detailed overview of Andrew Simon's book, "Media of the Masses: Cassette Culture in Modern Egypt," and its exploration of how audiocassette technology empowered people to create culture, circulate information, and challenge ruling regimes in Egypt. The author explains that the book operates as a mixtape, with each chapter revolving around a particular theme related to consumption, law, taste, circulation, history, and archives.

The article highlights the book's contribution to Middle East studies by reorienting prevailing treatments of mass media and pop culture through an earlier technology and introducing individuals who were popular but not praised by local gatekeepers. It also expands the methodological horizons of Middle East scholarship by inviting readers to think more critically about archives and democratizing historical research at a time when local authorities are eager to monopolize the past.

The author notes that the book is written for anyone interested in music, media or the Middle East and will appeal to scholars working across disciplinary boundaries. However, it is unclear whether there are any potential biases or one-sided reporting in the article or book itself. The author does not provide any evidence for claims made or explore counterarguments.

Additionally, while the article mentions that ʿAdawiya attracted criticism from respected musicians and was denounced outside of the press by other artists, it does not provide any insight into why this might be or whether there were valid criticisms against his work. This lack of exploration may suggest partiality towards ʿAdawiya's work.

Overall, while the article provides an informative overview of Simon's book on cassette culture in modern Egypt, it could benefit from further analysis and exploration of potential biases or missing points of consideration.

# Topics for further research:

* Criticisms of Shaaban ʿAbd al-Raḥīm's music
* Gatekeepers of Egyptian pop culture
* Audiocassette technology in the Middle East
* Democratizing historical research in the Middle East
* Counterarguments to the book's claims
* Local authorities' monopolization of history in Egypt

# Report location:

<https://www.fullpicture.app/item/3e69100b8c27a38915e7a6a9a7d1d600>