



The Emergence of the Public



**History of
Information i103
Geoff Nunberg**

Feb. 11, 2010



Today's Itinerary

From Gutenberg to Samuel Morse: An IT lull?

The birth of the modern informational system

The Interpenetration of the spoken, the written, and print

The salon, the coffee-house & the 'virtuosi'

The spreading use of print

Emergence of the public

"News" and public opinion



Today's Teasers

What was this tree called and why?





Today's Teasers

What vice did Louis XV, Robert Hooke, and Samuel Pepys have in common?



Today's Teasers

What vice did Louis XV, Robert Hooke, and Samuel Pepys have in common?





Today's Teaser

Who is the singer talking about?



That a bastard strumpet
Should get ahead in the court,
That in love and in wine,
Louis should seek some easy glory,
Ah! there he is, ah! there he is
He who doesn't have a care.



Today's Teasers



Mme. de Pompadour

Who is the singer talking about?

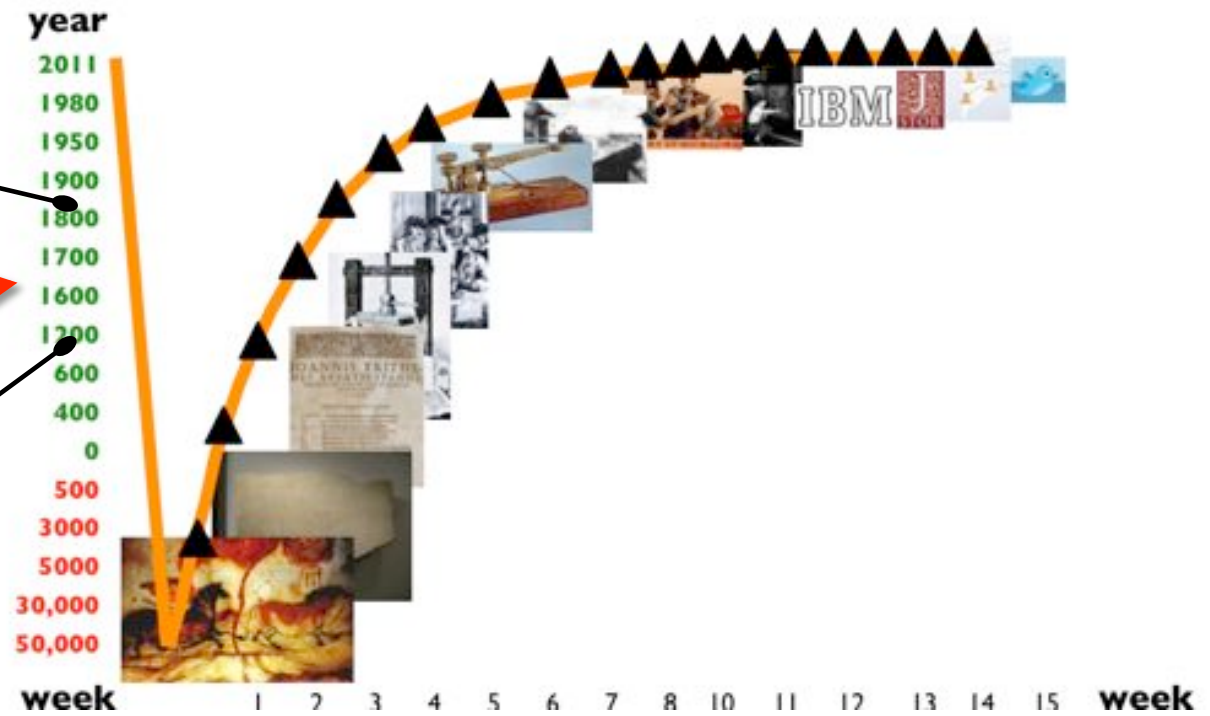
That a bastard strumpet
Should get ahead in the court,
That in love and in wine,
Louis should seek some easy glory,
Ah! there he is, ah! there he is
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Where We Are



an IT lull?



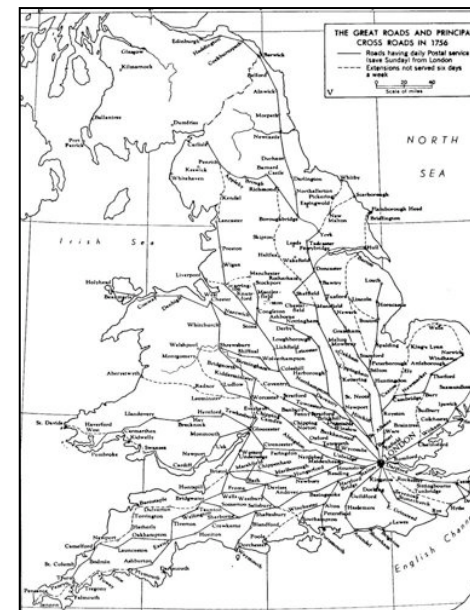


17th-18th c. Technology

Improved means of diffusion of information: Improvements in roads



C. Vernet, Construction of a Great Road, 1782

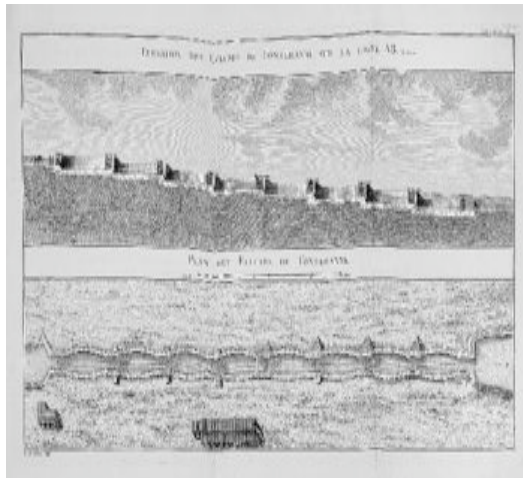


Main English roads, 1756



17th-18th c. Technology

Improved means of diffusion of information: canals



Double lock, Thames and Severn Canal, 1814





17th-18th c. Technology

Improved means of diffusion of information:





The Emergence of the Modern "Informational System"

Many, if not most, of the cultural phenomena of the modern world derive from [the 18th century] -- the periodical, the newspaper, the novel, the journalist, the critic, the public library, the concert, the public museum *[not to mention advertising, intellectual property, propaganda, the scientific society (and science itself), the modern dictionary and encyclopedia, etc.— GN]*. Perhaps most important of all, it was then that 'public opinion' came to be recognized as the ultimate arbiter in matters of taste and politics."--Tim Blanning, *The Culture of Power*

The political & social significance of "information"



"Print culture" – a multimedia society



The doctrine of supercession: "Ceci tuera cela"

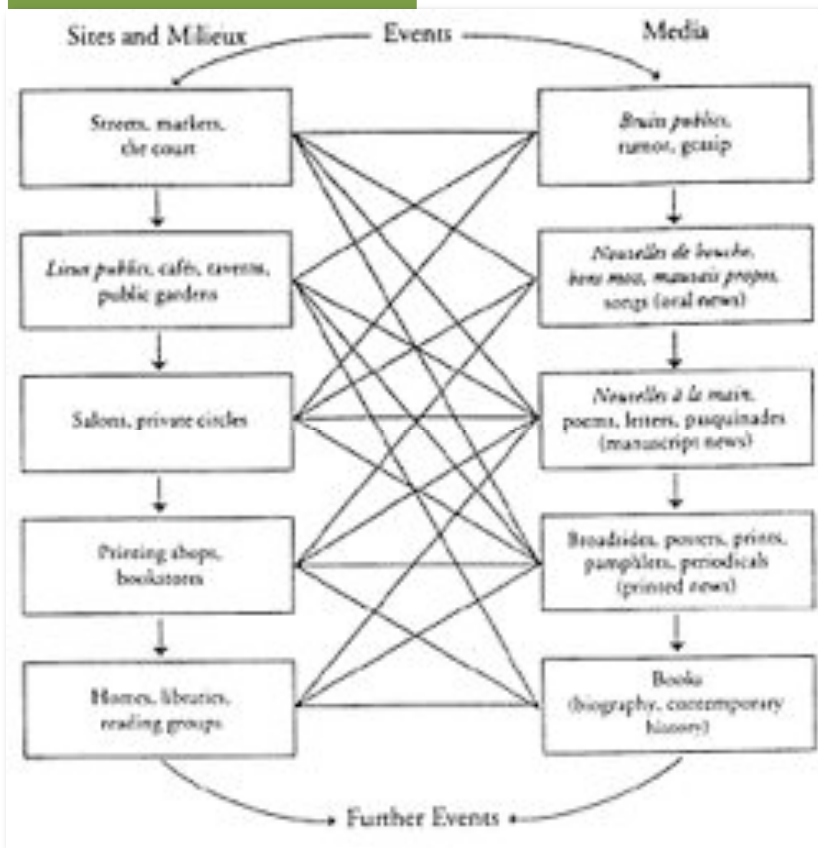
The archdeacon silently considered the giant edifice, then with a sigh extended his right hand toward the book that was open on the table and his left hand toward Notre-Dame, casting a sad look from the book to the church. "Alas," he said, "This will kill that."





Print, Writing, & Orality

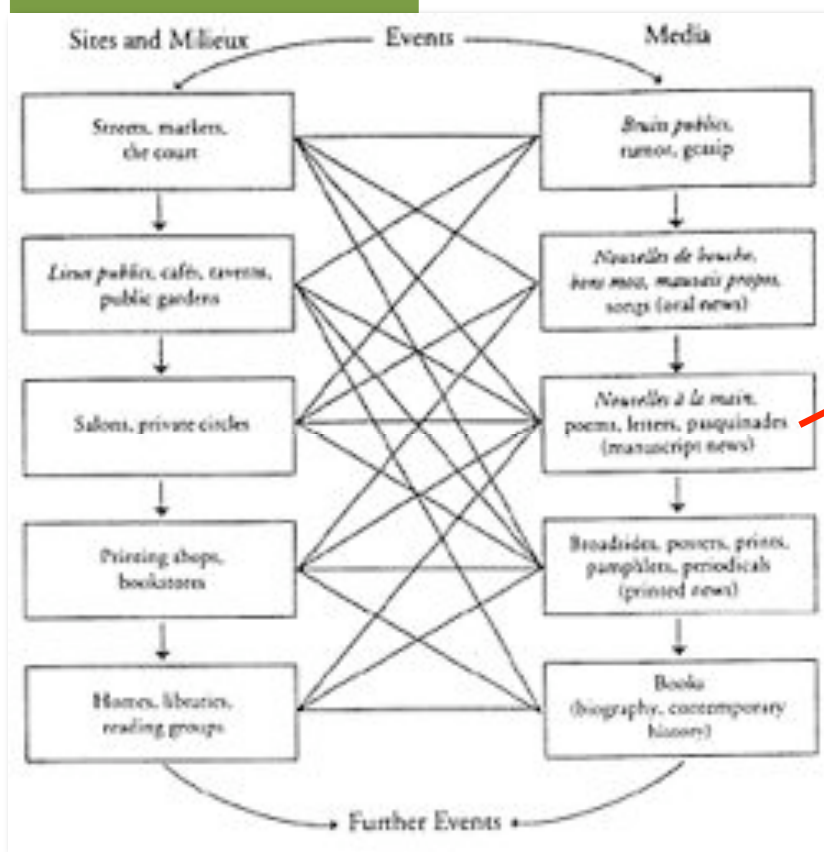
"It makes no sense, I think, to separate printed from oral and written modes of communication, as we casually do when we speak of "print culture," because they were all bound together in a multi-media system." Robert Darnton





Print, Writing, & Orality

The pasquinade

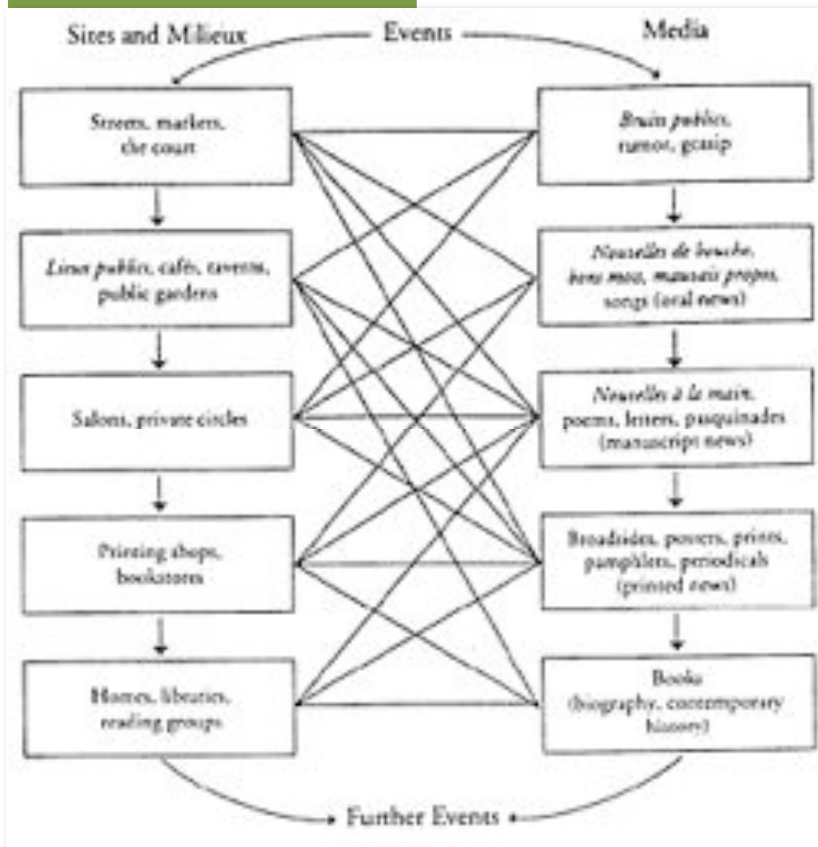


Mò so' ccent'anni e più ch'hanno occupato;
so' ccambiati i governi co' su' capi,
ma anvedi te che cambiamento è stato:
ar posto 'n do' era er Papa ora c'è er papi.





Print, Writing, & Orality



What sources of information did you use to learn about the Berkeley budget crisis?

= ?

Print, Writing, & Orality

Sources of information on the UC budget crisis

TIME ON U.S. SEARCH TIME.COM
Main • The Page • Politics • Swampland • Washington Photo Blog • Intel

California's Crisis Hits Its Prized Universities

By KEVIN O'LEARY / LOS ANGELES Saturday, Jul. 18, 2009

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The Evolution of the College Dorms

Students walk by Sather Tower on the University of California, Berkeley, campus

Justin Sullivan / Getty

Special Report

California's crisis continues while Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

From: Robert J. Birgeneau, Chancellor <CALmessages@berkeley.edu>
Subject: **President Yudof issues an open letter to the people of California and the UC Community**
Date: November 8, 2010 1:18:54 PM PST
To: Academic Senate Faculty, Staff, All Academic Titles, Other Members of the Campus Community,



Dear Campus community:
President Yudof has this morning issued an open letter to the

Cal_Politics Martell Thornton
UC Berkeley could take \$80M hit in Jerry Brown's budget: The University of California, Berkeley, will have to cu...
<http://bit.ly/hqRwj2>
7 Feb

UC Berkeley Budget Crisis

July 3, 2009
UC Berkeley Community
Filed under: admin @ 7:44 pm

Blog for the UC Berkeley community to post recommendations, articles and letters. This blog can be used to share your own ideas and experiences so that we can collectively better understand how different departments are dealing with the budget crisis and see campus-wide patterns. It can be used to post and comment on events. Also see email post for the Faculty Budget Forum. Listserve: <http://facultybudgetforum.berkeley.edu>

Capturing the Campus

YouTube

UC Berkeley Budget Protest. The Wheeler Frontlines

jennasaunts 5 videos

0:03 / 2:42

Like Add to Share Embed

34,424

BREAKING NEWS

STUDENTS TAKE OVER WHEELER HALL UC BERKELEY

-34.76 10,297.70

JOHANNES MEHSERLE MURDER TRIAL WILL GO ON

PLEASANTON Breezy & Rain H:60 L:41 7:54

THE DAILY CLOG
Search

A Cal blog brought to you by The Daily Californian
"You know what they said?"



Print, Writing, & Orality

Sources of information on the UC budget crisis

Oral

- Conversation
- Meetings
- Demonstrations/rallies
- Classes

Print publications (newspapers, magazines)

Broadcast (TV, radio)

Online/Networked

- Videos
- Blogs
- Websites
- Email
- Twitter/texting
- Facebook/Soc. Networking

Other



Networks in the Developing World

Wired and Shrewd, Young Egyptians Guide Revolt



CIRCLE OF DISSENT Protesters holding candles walked around an Egyptian Army tank parked in Cairo on Wednesday. By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK. Published: February 9, 2011

CAIRO — They were born roughly around the time that President Hosni Mubarak first came to power, most earned degrees from their

The day of the protest, the group let it be known that they intended to gather at a mosque in an upscale neighborhood in central Cairo, and the police gathered there in force. But the organizers set out instead for a poor neighborhood nearby.... They divided up into two teams — one coaxing people in cafes to join them, the other chanting to the tenements above.



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We are all Khaled Said + Others Just We are all Khaled

We are all Khaled Said Protest in Sydney
Amnesty International & Human rights wa
on Saturday 12 Feb 2011.

A WAKE UP CALL TO THE H
your rights"
Location: Sydney Town Hall
Time: 12:00PM Saturday, Feb

about an hour ago · Share

89 people like this.

View all 17 comments

Rosalind Izard Here's the link for everyo
Trafalgar Square, London, on Saturday 12
- 2pm. <http://www.facebook.com/shares/33A32F82F8blog.protectthehuman.com%2solidarity-and-defiance-with-those-dem>
4 minutes ago

Charlotte Petri Anything in Washington
11 seconds ago

We are all Khaled Said Plans for tomorrow and Friday: Tomorrow
Thursday there will be national strike all over Egypt. Workers in ma
factories will strike especially workers in Textile industry in Mahall.
Friday will be the "Friday of the Martyrs" honouring all those Mubarak
killed while they were protesting peacefully.

Egypt protesters seek to spread beyond Tahrir Square

Information

About:
<http://elshahheed.co.uk/>
alshahheed@gmail.com

Background story
<http://bit.ly/5YR4LA>

Here is how you can help:
<http://bit.ly/axp6k8>

One paragraph summarizing our
cause and our aims translated to
many languages: <http://bit.ly/cwfwmc>

59,574 People Like This

Subtitled Video of Wael Ghonim's Emotional TV Interview

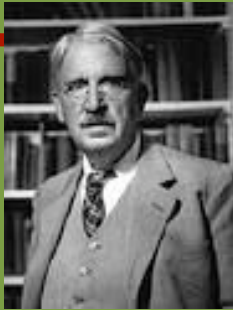


A screenshot of Wael Ghonim crying during an interview on Egypt's Dream TV on Monday, after his release by Egyptian authorities.

Updated | 6:29 p.m. As my colleagues David Kirkpatrick and Anthony Shadid report, tens of thousands of protesters have again packed into Cairo's Tahrir (Liberation) Square on Tuesday.



All technologized cultures are "multi-media"



Cf modern interaction of print/broadcast, intermediate oral forms...

"Vision is a spectator; hearing is a participator. Publication is partial and the public which results is partially informed and formed until the meanings it purveys pass from mouth to mouth." John Dewey

But where is "mouth-to-mouth" in the age of Facebook & Twitter?

Cafe owner asks patrons to log off, talk

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17th-18th century: New contexts of communication



The birth of the salon



The salon (or *conversazione*): gathering held at (usually fashionable) houses with mix of society, artists, writers, scholars & discuss politics, literatures, etc.





Coffeehouse society

"The English have no settled Academies de Beaux-Esprits, as we have in Paris, but instead of such assemblies, the most ingenious persons ... meet either in places of promiscuous company, as coffee-house, or in private clubs, in taverns."--Abel Boyer, *Letters of Wit*, 1701

A loathsome Potion, not yet understood,
Syrrop of soot, or Essence of Old Shooes,
Dasht with Diurnals, and the Books of News?
Broadside poem, 1663





Coffeehouse society



"The coffee-house... admits of no distinction of persons, but gentleman, mechanic, lord, and scoundrel mix." Samuel Butler, 1667

Now being entered, there's no needing
Of compliments or gentle breeding,
For you may seat you any where,
There's no respect of persons there.

A Character of Coffee and Coffee-Houses, 1661





Coffee-House Politics

"there is an incredible degree of liberty in these places, where not only the generals and ministers but even the emperor is torn to shreds"
Visitor to Vienna, 1706

"...loud-mouths sounding forth about the actions and plans of great sovereigns..."

Men condemn, approve, revile, rail with bitter invectives both in speech and in writing without the authorities daring to intervene. The King himself is not secure from censure. Abbe Prévost, 1729, in London



*Établissement de la nouvelle Philosophie
à Notre-Bergerie fut un Caffé.*



Condorcet, Voltaire, Diderot



Coffeehouse, Vienna



Coffee-House Politics



1675: Charles II tries to close "resorts of idle and disaffected persons [who spread] *False, Malicious, and Scandalous Reports*," ... to the defamation of his Majesty's Government."

When they take from the People the freedom of words,
They teach them the sooner to fall to their swords;
Let the City drink coffee, and quietly groan,
They that conquer'd the father won't be slaves to the son.

Andrew Marvell



Coffee-House Politics



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Coffeehouse Society: The "Virtuosi"

"Coffee-houses make all sorts of people sociable, the rich and the poor meet together, as also do the learned and unlearned. ... here an inquisitive man may get more in an evening than he shall by books in a month... I have heard a worthy friend of mine ...who was of good learning ... say, that he did think that coffee-houses had improved useful knowledge, as much as the universities have."-- John Houghton, *Collections*, 1701



Knowledge and the "Virtuosi"



"He Trafficks to all places, and has his Correspondents in every part of the World; yet his Merchandizes serve not to promote our Luxury, nor encrease our Trade, and neither enrich the Nation, nor himself. A Box or two of Pebbles or Shells, and a dozen of Wasps, Spiders and Caterpillars are his Cargoe. He values a Camelon, or Salamander's Egg, above all the Sugars and Spices of the West and East-Indies...." (Mary Astell, "Character of a Virtuoso," 1696)





Knowledge and the "Virtuosi"



"I content myself with the speculative part of swimming; I care not for the practical. I seldom bring anything to use... Knowledge is my ultimate end."

Sir Nicholas Gimcrack, in *The Virtuoso*, by Thomas Shadwell, 1676



The spreading use of print



Growing Use of Print

Size of personal libraries

Personal library of typical French magistrate, 15th c. 60 books

Montaigne, late 16th c. 1000 books

Montesquieu, early 18th 3000 books

Annual sale of newspapers:

1750: 7 million

1810: 24 million

Increase in number of printed genres

Eighteenth Century: Earliest appearance of printed posters, theater bills, newspapers, handbills, labels, tickets, marriage certificates, papers of indenture, receipts, etc.



An Age of Growing Use of Print

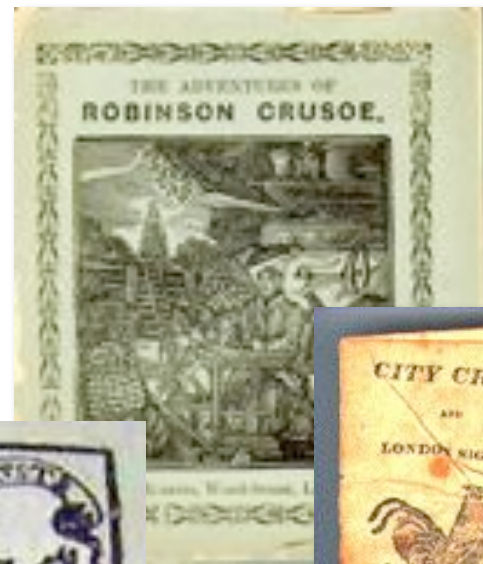
Growing numbers of book titles, though not strictly linear:

Number of titles printed in England: (from Wm. St. Clair, *Reading Nation*)

1630s	600
1640s	1,600
1650s	1,200
1660s	800
1670s	1,000
1680s	1,500
1690s	1,400
1700-50	500
1750-89	600
1790-1800	800
1800-1810	800
By 1827	1,000 ("rising fast")

New & Expanded Print Forms

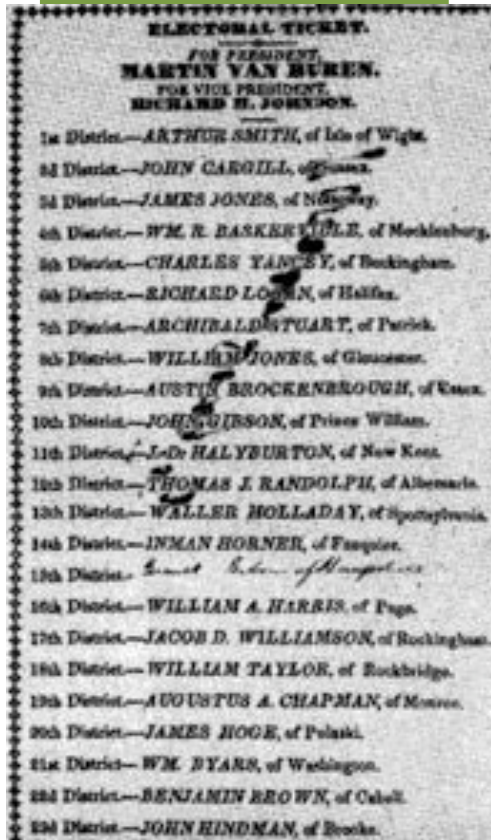
17th-18th c. see rise of chapbooks, broadsides, ballads, almanacs, pamphlets, etc.



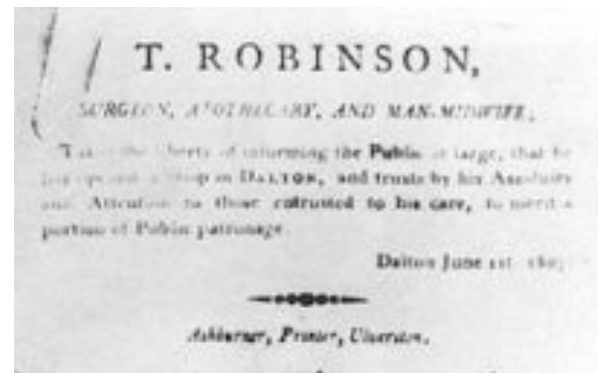


New & Expanded Print Forms

17th-18th c. see rise of chapbooks, broadsides, ballads, almanacs, pamphlets, etc. Also: earliest printed handbills, labels, posters, handbills, forms, indentures, receipts, tickets, ballots, etc.



US Ballot 1840





The Rise of the Periodical Press

Europe, 16-17c

Venice: *Notizie Scritte* [bought for a "gazetto"]

Netherlands: *Nieuwe Tydinghe*, 1605 (weekly from 1617 and thrice weekly from 1621)

Frankfurt: *Frankfurter Postzeitung*, 1615

England: *Coranto or Weekly Newes*, 1622

France: *Gazette de France* 1631

Turin: *Successi del mondo*, 1645

Leipzig: *Einkommendeg Zeitung*, daily 1650

Spain, *Gaceta Nueva*, monthly, daily 1661)

British America: *Publick Occurrences*, 1690

Russia: *Vedomosti*, 35 x per year, 1702



The Rise of the Periodical Press



"All Englishmen are great newsmongers. Workmen habitually begin the day by going to coffee-rooms in order to read the latest news. I have often seen shoeblacks and men of that class club together to purchase a farthing newspaper" --César de Sassure, 1726

"Lackeys, stable lads, odd-job men, gardeners and porters sit together and chatter about the news in the public prints... So they often think themselves better than the town mayor because they think they know a lot more than he does about every matter of state" Steiler, *The Pleasure and Utility of Newspapers*, 1695



The "reading revolution"

"Readers of books...rise and retire to bed with a book in their hand, sit down at table with one, have one lying close by when working, carry one around with them when walking, and who, once they have begun reading a book are unable to stop until they are finished. ... No lover of tobacco or coffee, no wine drinker or lover of games, can be as addicted to their pipe, bottle, games or coffee-table as those many hungry readers are to their reading habit."
Frankfurt 1796



The invention of "news"



"We had no such thing as printed newspapers, in those days, to spread rumours and reports of things.... But such things as those were gathered from letters of merchants, and others, who corresponded abroad, and from them was handed about by word of mouth only; so that things did not spread instantly over the whole nation as they do now."--Daniel Defoe, *Journal of the Plague Years, 1722*, speaking of 1660's

What makes something "news"?



What makes for "news"



Seriality

Periodicity

periodical, journal, daily, weekly, monthly, annual...

Currency

courant, postvoice,

Independence

intelligence(r), informer, observer, spectator, guardian

Source

Lloyd's News, Defoe's Review ...

Completeness

full, complete, entire ("all the news...")



The political role of print

Newspapers, broadsides, etc. rouse popular feeling in periods of crisis...



Mock procession of the Pope during "exclusion crisis" of 1681





The political role of print

18th c. libelles and broadsides



par tes baisers excite mes desirs,
je fus ma bonne, au comble des plaisirs.



Immortel défenseur du Joug et de ses Droits,
à braver les tyrans à reconquerir le Globe,
Jouis, Comte sur la chute des Rois,
de la vaine couronne Offrande à la Couronne!



The Radical's Arms.



The "Age of Authors"



Emergence of modern notions of intellectual property, publishing, authorship, etc.

The present age... may be styled, with great propriety, the Age of Authors; for, perhaps, there was never a time when men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment were posting with ardour so general to the press... Samuel Johnson, 1763

Cf Oliver Goldsmith, 1761, "The Distress of a Hired Writer":

"...that fatal revolution whereby writing is converted to a mechanic trade; and booksellers, instead of the great, become the patrons and paymasters of men of genius... Can any thing more cramp and depress true genius, than to write under the direction of one whose learning does not extend beyond the multiplication-table and the London Evening-post?"



Economic Shifts

But Goldsmith adds:

For my own part, were I to buy an hat, I would not have it from a stocking-maker but an hatter... It is just so with regard to wit; did I for my life desire to be well served, I would apply only to those who made it their trade, and lived by it.





Economic Shifts



Writers (ostensibly) freed from direct dependence on patronage. Lord Chesterfield offers his patronage for Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*:



Good order and authority are now necessary. .. We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and choose a Dictator... I give my vote for Mr. Johnson to fill that great and arduous post. And I hereby declare that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a freeborn British subject, so the said Mr. Johnson...
Lord Chesterfield, 1754



Economic Shifts



Johnson's response:

"Seven years, my lord, have now past since I waited in your outward rooms..., during which time I have ...have it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour..."

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?"

"the Magna Carta of the modern author..." Alvin Kernan





Economic Shifts

"Writing is become a very considerable branch of the English commerce." Defoe, 1725

Samuel Johnson receives £1575 advance for the *Dictionary*; David Hume receives £1400 for one volume of *Hist. of Britain*; £6000 paid for copyright of account of voyages of Captain Cook.

"Sir, if you talk of it as an object of commerce, it will be gainful; if as a book that is to increase human knowledge, I believe there will be not much of that." Johnson to Boswell



Emergence of the Public



Emergence of the Public

"[In the late seventeenth century] . . . a new cultural space developed, ... a 'public sphere' in which private individuals came together to form a whole greater than the sum of the parts. By exchanging information, ideas, and criticism, these individuals created a cultural actor -- the public -- which has dominated European culture ever since."--Tim Blanning, *The Culture of Power*



Emergence of the Public



"A tribunal has arisen independent of all powers and that all powers respect, that appreciates all talents, that appreciates all talents, that pronounces on all people of merit. And in an enlightened century, in a century in which each citizen can speak to the entire nation by way of print, ... men of letters are, amid the public dispersed, what the orators of Rome and Athens were in the middle of the public assembled."

Guillaume-Christien de Malesherbes 1775



Defining "the Public"

public, n.

Am. Her: The community or the people as a whole. **2.** A group of people sharing a common interest: *the reading public*.

OED: The community as an aggregate, but not in its organized capacity



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Ratio of occurrence in major newspapers:

<i>the American people/public</i>	4 to 1
<i>the Egyptian people/public</i>	80 to 1

Goog Scholar hits for *the nineteenth-century public*: 1300; *the medieval public* 128

The reading public vs. the stamp-collecting public



The emergence of a public discourse

"Rank and privilege" in theory set aside, and discourse becomes ostensibly impersonal:

"...when any work is addressed to the public, though I should have a friendship or emnity with the author, I must depart from this situation; and considering myself as a man in general, forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances." David Hume, 1757

"Civility: of conversing in quiet one with another, without being ingag'd in the passions, and madness of that dismal Age."

Sprat, *History of the Royal Society*, 1667



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Cf modern sport-talk radio...



Publics and "Public Opinion"

"By 'the public sphere' we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither like business or professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of a state bureaucracy." Jürgen Habermas



Publics and "Public Opinion"



"It is certainly right and prudent to consult the public opinion. ... If the public opinion did not happen to square with mine; if, after pointing out to them the danger, they did not see it in the same light with me, or if they conceived that another remedy was preferable to mine, I should consider it as my due to my king, due to my Country, due to my honour to retire ... but one thing is clear, that I ought to give the public the means of forming an opinion." Charles James Fox, 1792



Print and the Creation of "Imagined Communities"



[Britain] has become a nation of readers. --Samuel Johnson, 1781

The newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbors, is continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life...creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations. --Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

