the “public sphere”

demarcation and transformation & thoughts about an “age of information”

concepts of information,

agora
polis
oikos
enlightened times

public sphere / private sphere
public opinion
representation
civil society
common sense
news
information
Enlightenment
**public sphere**

*private sphere*

**enlightened times**

public interest / opinion

representation

civil society

common sense

news

information

Enlightenment
"According to Habermas and others, the way the new media have been commoditized through this evolutionary process from hand-printed broadside to telegraph to penny press to mass media has led to the radical deterioration of the public sphere."

— Howard Rheingold, *Virtual Community*, 1993

"The function of [Twitter's] platform as a global opinion machine is hardly novel. Jürgen Habermas (1989) theorized that media channels … constitute a social space through which norms for communication and interaction are produced"

— José Van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity*, 2013
World thinkers 2015: the results

Prospect asked readers to select their favourites from a list of the world’s leading thinkers. The results are in

by Prospect Team / March 25, 2015 / Leave a comment

contemporary placement

Thomas Picketty
Yanis Varoufakis
Naomi Klein
Russel Brand
Paul Krugman
Arundati Roy
Jürgen Habermas
Daniel Kahneman
John Gray
Atul Gawande

Our top ten thinkers
"Stéphane Van Damme has identified at least 12,112 articles concerning the public sphere in the Eighteenth Century alone."

--Jacob Soll, *The Information Master*, 2010
"auctoritas, non veritas facit legem"

a change in representation

"one can properly speak of public opinion ... only with regard to late-seventeenth century Great Britain and eighteenth-century France"

—Habermas, STPS

EEBO hits for "public opinion"

1600-1640, 5
1640-1660, 15

from voluntas to ratio
from auctoritas to veritas
"auctoritas, non veritas facit legem"

**synopsis**

*from* **voluntas to ratio**

*from** **auctoritas to veritas**

*and then* **back again?**

*from* 

formation of *public* opinion 

to 

molding of *mass* opinion
John Locke noted self-deprecatingly that the work was "not meant for those that had already Mastered the Subject ... but for my own Information."

John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690

"Before anything can be reasoned upon to conclusion, certain facts, principles, or data to reason from must be established, admitted, or denied."

-Tom Paine, *Rights of Man*, 1794
"the classical bourgeois public sphere of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was constituted around rational critical argument"

--Calhoun, "Habermas and …"

**contributing factors**

- growth of mercantile class
- rise of overseas trade (and credit)
- traffic in commodities and news
- commodification of news

"indissoluble link between the institutions and practices of mass public communication and the institutions and practices of democratic politics"

— Nicholas Garnham
1603 - Stuart Monarchy (James I)
1641 - end of Star Chamber
1642 - Parliamentary revolt
1649 - Execution of the king (Charles I)

1660 - Restoration (Charles II) — *Hobbes*

1668 - Glorious Revolution /Bill of Rights (William & Mary) — *Locke*

1694 - lapse of licensing
 creation of Bank of England
 cabinet government

1710 - copyright

1776 - American Revolution — *Paine*

1789 - French Revolution

*Hobbes*, 1588-1679

*Locke*, 1632-1704

*Addison*, 1672-1719

*Montesquieu*, 1689-1775

*Reid*, 1710-1796

*Hume*, 1711-1776

*Rousseau*, 1712-1778

*Ferguson*, 1723-1816

*Smith*, 1723-1790

*Paine*, 1737-1809
Printed in the year when men think what they speak and write what they think.

anticipating the public sphere?
"[P]ostal services and the press institutionalized regular contacts and regular communication. [Earlier, merchant networks of news had no] stake in information that was public... there existed a press in the strict sense only once the regular supply of news became public ... at the end of the seventeenth century. Until then the traditional domain of communication in which publicity of representation held sway was not fundamentally threatened by the new domain of the public sphere whose decisive mark was the published word."
"Salvation in Christ is no newes, but a thyng prophecyed" -- Epistle of Peter, *Bible* [Coverdale] 1535

**getting to the news**

**conceptions of new(s)**

from heavenly to earthly

from adjective to substantive

new account to news

from particularistic to general

"these news" to "the news" (cp "these informations")

from spoken or written to printed

"the news" to "the newspaper"

institutionalized

"BBC can report ..."

"what's on the news?"
a matter of action…

**cp information**

"news ... at which

"Upon the news hereof, the Emperor desisted ..."

"Upon the news whereof, the king sends ..."

"Upon news of ... Queen Elizabeth forsaketh the Tower"

"This news being brought ... caused king Henry to..."

"Certain news came...Whereupon, the Queens Army was dismissed..."

"News was brought him...with which he was so moved, that he swore...

--Richard Baker, *Chronicle*, 1643
Edward VI, 1551

A proclamacion, set furth by the Kynges Maiestie, with the advise of His Highnes moste honorable counsail, for the reformation of vagabondes, *tellers of newes*, sowers of sedicious rumours, players, and printers without license & diuers other disordred persons, the xxviii. day of April in the v. yere of His Highnes most prosperous reigne,

[London?] : Richardus Grafton, tpyographus Regius excudebat, M.D. Li.
China  tipao [Han Dynasty, 202 bce]
Rome  Acta Diurna [131 bce]

more telling

Venice: Notizie Scritte [sold for a "gazetto"] 1556

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
(earlier, incidental 16c relaciones, several produced for Americas)

British America: Publick Occurrences, 1690

Russia: Vedomosti, 35 x per year, 1702
distinguishing "news"

truth
fact
speculation
comment
opinion
rumour
gossip
hoax
misinformation (1575)
falsehood

? news & information & data
establishing "the news"

**seriality**

**periodicity**
periodical, journal, daily, weekly, monthly, annual

**currency**
courant, post

**voice, independence**
intelligence(r), informer, observer, spectator, guardian

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

**completeness**
full, complete, entire
Have observed, that a Reader seldom peruses a Book with Pleasure, till he knows whether the Writer of it be a black or a fair Man, of a mild or choleric Disposition, Married or a Batchelor, with other Particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an Author. To gratify this Curiosity, which is so natural to a Reader, I design this Paper, and my next, as Prefatory Discourses to my following Writings, and shall give some Account in them of the several Persons that are engaged in this Work. As the chief Trouble of Compiling, Digesting, and Correcting will fall...
cause and effect

"to publish some [matters] which / may tend to the Information of Mankind ..." [#24]

"the true End of Argument, which is Information" [#197]

" I invite all Persons who have anything to say for the profitable Information of the Publick, to take their Turns in my Paper" [#428:

— Spectator
“Mr. Burke observed, that it was the first Time he ever heard News-paper Information made a Foundation for any solemn Proceedings in that House.” — *St James Chronicle* 1775

“Mr Burke ... believed the letter ... genuine, though founded on news-paper information”

— *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 1779

“If the public suffer their opinions to be at all warped by news-paper information ...”

— *Parker’s General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*, 1785
“You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of parliament. If the local constituent should have an interest, or should form an hasty opinion, evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far, as any other, from any endeavour to give it effect.”

—Edmund Burke, *To the Electors of Bristol*, 1774
Dyer's newsletter 1688

John Dunton 1669-1732

Athenian Gazette; or, Casuistical Mercury, resolving all the most nice and curious questions proposed by the ingenious of either sex 1691-1696

Put an advertisement in the Courant "by that Means, you'll have the Assistance of the most able Men in the Kingdom."

-Susanne Centilivre, Love's Contrivance, 1703
1665: **Oxford** (then) **London Gazette**

“This day the first of the Oxford Gazettes come out, which is very pretty, full of news, and no folly in it, wrote by Williamson.”

--Samuel Pepys, Sept 4, 1663

**in vogue**

“The Parliament being grown to that height of contempt, as to be gazetted among runaway servants, lost dogs, strayed horses, and highway robbers.”

--Andrew Marvell, *Growth of Popery* 1678
free press

1701, *New Observer* (Anne Baldwin)
1702, *Observer* (John Tutchin)
1703, *Daily Courant* (Elizabeth Mallett)
1704, *Review* (Daniel Defoe)
1705, *Post Boy* (Abel Boyer; circulation about 3,000)
1708, *British Apollo*
1709, *Tatler* (Richard Steele; circulation about 3,000)
1710, * Examiner* (Henry St. John, Jonathan Swift)
1711, *Spectator* (Joseph Addison & Richard Steele)
1713, *Guardian, Mercator, British Merchant*
"[in 1709] there were six distinct publications to read .. on Monday, twelve on Tuesday, six on Wednesday, twelve on Thursday, six on Friday, and thirteen on Saturday."

Frank, Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1961

underwriting the public sphere

"Any Londoner who wanted to read his newspaper in English had a dozen to choose from. On Monday he could select A Perfect Diurnall, Certaine Informations, or Aulicus ... Tuesday he had The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer; Wednesday, The Weekly Account or the newly revived A Continuation ... and Thursday a choice between Britanicus and Civicus. Friday brought forth three papers ... On Saturday the reader either acquired The True Informer or went newspaperless. On Sunday he rested."

Fox Bourne, English Newspapers, 1887
"On Saturdays during 1746 at least 45,000 papers were sold .... Allowing for the moderate estimate of ten readers per page ... a de facto readership of not far short of half-a-million." [London pop < 700,000]

"In 1780, estimated that 25,000 papers were produced each day."

— Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole*, 1987
"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

"workmen habitually begin the day by going to coffee-rooms in order to read the latest news"

—César de Saussure, 1726

"the greatest part of the people do not read books, most of them cannot read at all. But they will gather together about one that can read, and listen to an *Obervator* or *Review* ... where the principles of rebellion are instilled into them."

--Leslie, *The Rehearsal*, 1750
national conduct

in time of public danger

"National conduct ought to be the result of national wisdom, a plan formed by mature consideration and diligent selection out of all the schemes which may be offered and all the information which can be procured."

--Samuel Johnson, *Idler* 8, 1758
"[Mr Courtney] said, that in every government of a mixed or popular form, the middle rank of people were those whose voice ought to be more especially attended to. They were the true echo of the nation. This was an observation that indeed carried an appearance of truth and plausibility, but experience proved it to be totally fallacious. The sense of the people, or great body of the nation, was, in HIS [ie CJF's] opinion, the true criterion by which Public Opinion could be fairly determined."

--Charles James Fox, House of Commons, 1781
"The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them."

--Thomas Jefferson to Edward Carrington, 1787. ME 6:57
The newspaper "fulfills in America the cultural function of the drama of Aeschylus. I mean that it is the expression through which a people -- a people numbering many millions -- becomes aware of its spiritual unity. The millions, as they do their careless reading every day at breakfast, in the subway, on the train and the elevated, are performing a horrendous and formless ritual"

death of a nation?
or self-sufficiency?

The era of the self-contained news package ... is coming to an end. News has become disaggregated, and the thing that people share is not the newspaper, but the news story. Which can come from anywhere. A couple of decades ago, readers would read a story and remember which newspaper or magazine they read it in, while paying almost no attention to the byline. Today, readers read a story and while they might remember that they found it on Facebook, or Twitter, they pay almost no attention either to the byline or to the publication. The important thing is the information itself, rather than the place it came from.

“Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough; there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence; and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism. … individual liberty will probably be as much exposed to invasion from the government, as it already is from public opinion. … physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion.”

between auctoritas & veritas

"For the Actions of Men proceed from the Opinions, and in the well-governing of Opinions, consisteth the well-governing of Men's Actions in order to their Peace and Concord"  — Hobbes, Leviathan, 1651

"there would be need of fewer Laws, and less force to govern Men, if their Minds were rightly inform'd, and set strait, while they were yong, and pliable."

—Thomas Sprat, History of the Royal Society, 1667
"the Art of printing will so spread knowledge that the common people, knowing their own rights and liberties, will not be governed by way of oppression"
   —Samuel Hartlib, *A Description of the Famous Kingdome of Macaria* [London, 1641]

**benefit of hindsight?**

"NOTHING appears more surprizing to those, who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and the implicit submission, with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is effected, we shall find, that, as FORCE is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular."

   --Hume, "Of the First Principles of Government," 1741
“a process of decomposition"

"'Public Opinion' takes on a different meaning depending on whether it is brought into play as a critical authority ... or as the object to be molded in connection with a staged display of ... publicity in the service of persons and institutions, consumer goods, and programs ... Both forms ... compete in the public sphere ..."

—JH, STPS
“Structural transformation came about ... as private organizations began increasingly to assume public power on the one hand, while the state penetrated the private realm on the other” - Calhoun

**political transformation**

**cabinet papers**

*London Gazette*

*Review*

*Examiner*

*Post-Boy*

*Mercator*

**in-house journalists**

*Defoe*

*Swift ...*
"[T]he traffic in news developed not only in connection with the needs of commerce; the news itself became a commodity. Commercial news reporting was therefore subject to the laws of the same market to whose rise it owed its existence ... it was therefore natural to increase the profits by selling to more people."

—JH, STPS
June 18

An Advertisement.

Being daily prest to the Publication of Books, Medicines, and other things, not properly the business of a paper of Intelligence. This is to notifie once and for all, that we will not charge the Gazette with Advertisements, unless they be matter of State; but that a Paper of Advertisements will be forthwith Printed apart, and recommended to the Publick by another hand.
"All the public papers now on foot depend on advertisements." -- Defoe, Review, 1705

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**London Gazette 1668**

Mr Whites house at the Cock and Bottle, Aldersgate-street, Egbertus Will, of the City of Utrecht, having, by the blessing of God, and his long experience therin, arrived to a great knowledge in curing many defects of Body; doth hereby give notice, that he is ready to undertake the said Cures of deformed Bodies, crooked Legs and Feet, wry Necks, and whatever of this Nature hath been formerly practiced by one Mr. Scot;
still a suspect relationship?

"In 1993, 1.5% of web servers were on .com domains. This number grew to over 60% in 1997. At the same time, search engines have migrated from the academic domain to the commercial. Up until now most search engine development has gone on at companies with little publication of technical details. This causes search engine technology to remain largely a black art and to be advertising oriented. ... we have a strong goal to push more development and understanding into the academic realm."
“Nothing sells, even in the common Taverns now, but Brook and Hellier. These Wines were Neat and Natural. A Glass of Brook and Hellier is the general Entertainment. If you hear a Drawer call his Wine to be Scor’d, as he comes out of the Cellar, Ten Pints in Eleven shall be Red or White Port; you shall hear them cry — thus, A Quart of Brook and Hellier-Score.”

— Defoe, Review 1711

Several of my Friends were this Morning… in very good Health, though we had celebrated Yesterday with more Glasses than we could have dispensed with, had we not been beholden to Brooke and Hellier.

…I am in the Name of the Company, to accuse you of great Negligence in overlooking their Merit who have imported true and generous Wine, and taken Care that it should not be adulterated by the Retailers.

— Steele, Spectator, Friday April 25, 1712

**ADVERTISEMENTS.**

This Day is Publish’d, THE true State of the Case between the Government and the Creditors of the Navy, &c. As it relates to the South-Sea Trade; and the Injustice of the Transfusions on either Side Impartially enquir’d into. Pr. 2 d. Just Publish’d, an Essay on the South-Sea Trade, by the Author of the Review. Pr. 6 d. High-Church Ephorisms by those Twin Brothers in Scandal, the Examiner and modest Abel. Pr. 6 d. Printed for J. Baker in Pater-Noster Row.

THIS is to give Notice, That Messieurs Brooke and Hellier of London, Merchants, who do now give such general Satisfaction in Retailing their New Natural Portugal Wines in the said City, being the best that have come from Portugal for many Years past, have for the more effectual supplying the other Parts of the Kingdom, caus’d Ships to Sail directly from Portugal to the following Places, where they are Arriv’d with the like Natural Wines, being the only New Wines that are now there, or can Arrive this Season; which Wines are to be sold by the following Persons, in the respective Places, viz. By Mr. Barth. Axen in Plymouth; Messieurs James and John Arnold in Portsmouth; Messieurs James Wakeman, and John Negus in Yarmouth; Mr. Joseph Taylor of Wysbridge in Lynn Regi; Mr. Crowle in Hull; Mr. Jos. Stone in Gainsborough; Mr. William Plott in Newcastle upon Tyne: Note, the Price, viz. The Viana Wines at 14 l. per Hoghead, or at 3 s. 4 d. per Gallon, and the Oporto Wines at 16 l. per Hoghead, or 6 s. per Gallon.

Printed for and sold by John Baker at the Black-Boy Pater-Noster Row. 1711.

—Steele, Spectator, Friday April 25, 1712
"The trade of advertising is now so near perfection that it is not easy to propose any improvement."
—Samuel Johnson, 1759

advertise and inform

1731: Daily Advertiser
1737: London Daily Post
1744: General Advertiser
1751: London Advertiser
1752: Publick Advertiser (Junius)
1756: The Test
   The London Chronicle
1758: Universal Chronicle
1762: North Briton (Wilkes)
1769: Morning Chronicle
1772: Morning Post & Daily Advertiser
1785: Daily Universal Register
selling what to whom?

“We lose money on our circulation by itself considered, but with 20,000 subscribers we can command such Advertising and such prices for it as will render our enterprise a remunerating one.”

—Horace Greeley, (editor of the New York Tribune)
"The man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them, inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors. He who reads nothing will still learn the great facts, and the details are all false."

--Thomas Jefferson to John Norvell, 1807. ME 11:225
"auctoritas, non veritas facit legem"

**Synopsis**

*from* **voluntas** *to* **ratio**

*from* **auctoritas** *to* **veritas**

*and then* **back again?**

*from*

formation of *public* opinion

to

molding of *mass* opinion
Week 12
April 7: From the Bourgeois Public Sphere to the Internet

Reading:


Background: