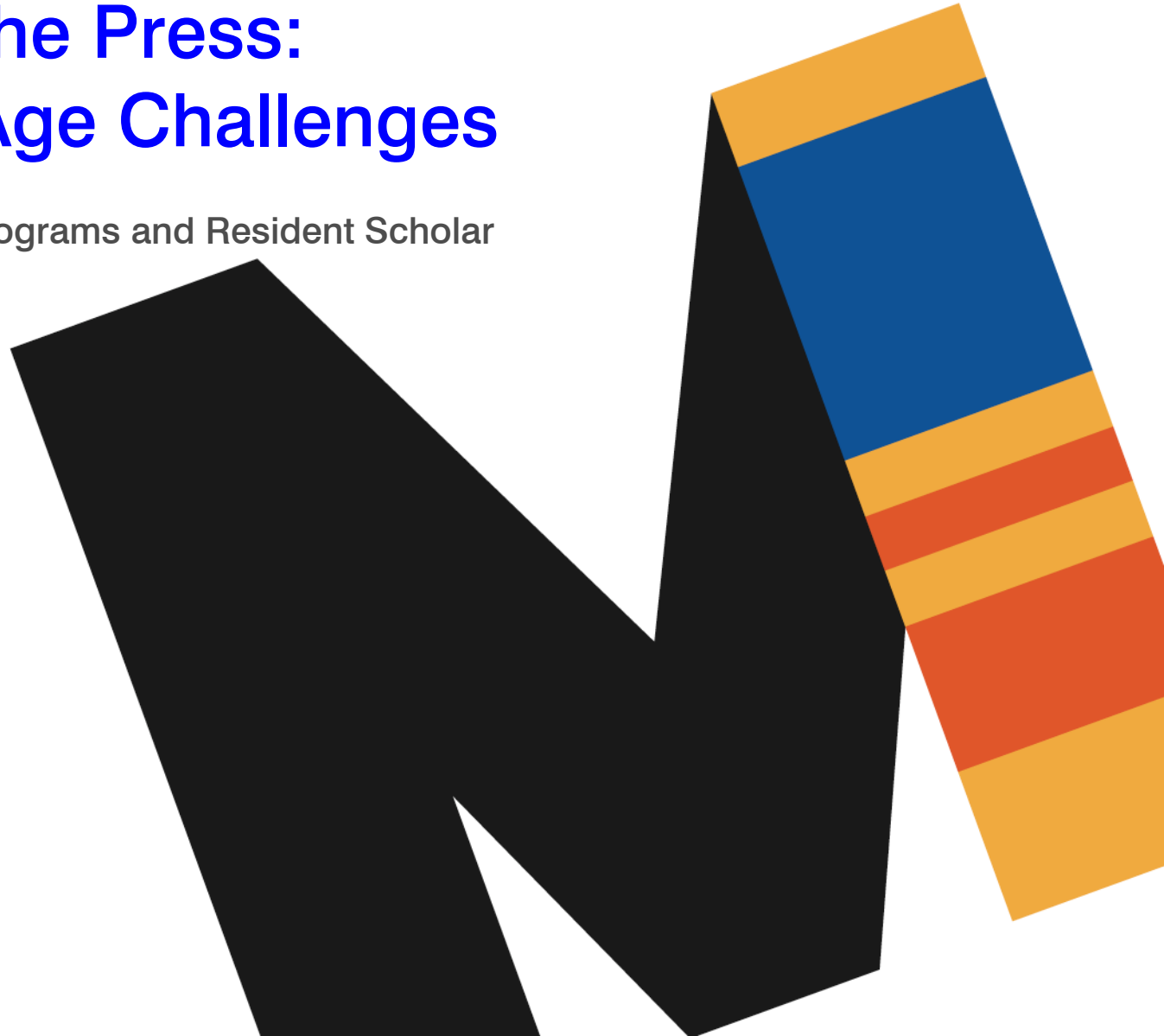


# McCormick Foundation Civics Program

## Freedom of the Press: Information Age Challenges

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# Freedom of the Press

## Information Age Challenges:

1. Historical perspective
2. Broken economic model
3. Fragmented, competitive media environment
4. Altered relationship between media producers and consumers
5. Proliferation of edge and opinion
6. Democratization of media
7. Newspapers' slow death
8. Young people "tuned out"



# Information Age Challenges: Historical Perspective

“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.” --Thomas Jefferson to Edward Carrington, 1787.

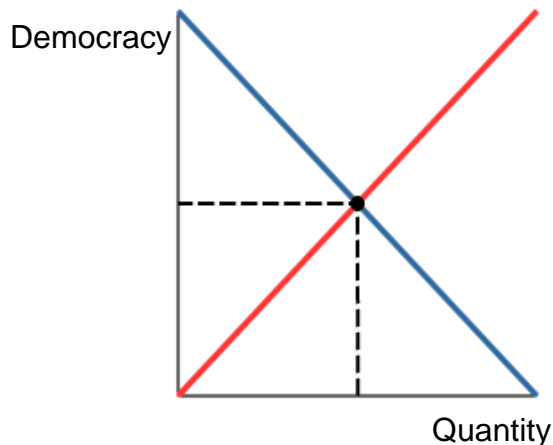


*"The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right, and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should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

# Information Age Challenges: Historical Perspective

## Economics 101

1. Supply: "...Whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government..."
2. Demand: "...Every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them."
3. Equilibrium=Democracy: "The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people..."

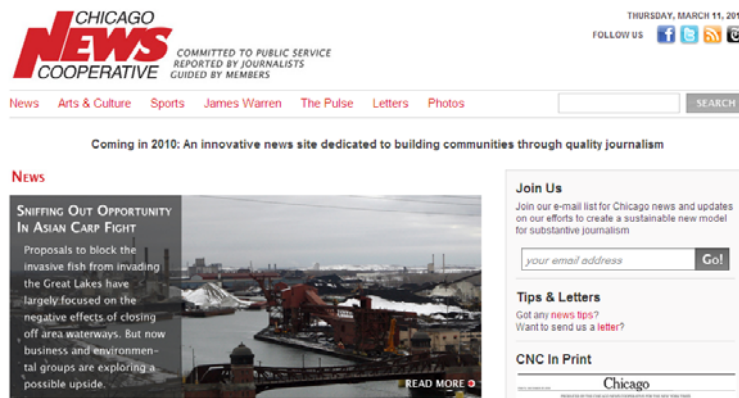


# Information Age Challenges

## Broken Economic Model

The economic model of journalism is arguably broken.

- Advertisers historically subsidized the costs of reporting and printing
- Subscribers merely paid for delivery costs
- The decline of both has fueled a downward spiral
- Who will bear the costs of investigative reporting?
- Many online entities like *Salon* and *Politico* are operating at a loss.
- Thus, the rise of alternative models...
  - Non-profits (Chicago News Cooperative)
  - Online payments
  - Handheld devices (iPad)



# Information Age Challenges

## Fragmented, Competitive Media Environment

Readers and news consumers are now more abundant than ever, but they exist in a fragmented, competitive media environment.

- Decline of network news accompanied by cables news' rise
- Local TV news remains profitable
- "If it bleeds, it leads"
- Corporate ownership and public good in conflict



# Information Age Challenges

## Altered Relationship Between Producers and Consumers



The relationship between news providers and consumers is no longer one-way, but instead reciprocal.

- Reader comments and page clicks enable immediate feedback.
- Packaging less important nowadays than individual stories
- Newsroom hierarchy turned on its head

## ***DRUDGE REPORT***

Journalist Fired for Cemetery Urination -- at Soldier's Funeral...

WAL-MART Fires Employee for 'Tapping' NY TIMES Reporter, Others...

Bloomberg may still run for president...

Journalist Fired for Cemetery Urination -- at Soldier's Funeral...

BATTLE OF BUSH?: NEW MOVIE RAISES EYEBROWS WITH 'POLITICAL OVERTONE'...

British judge sees 'no evidence' Diana was murdered...

'It Is Just Not Walter Reed': Soldiers Share Troubling Stories Of Military Health Care Across USA...

Hill Hearings...

EARLY START TO DAYLIGHT-SAVING TIME CALLED 'MINI-Y2K'...

UPDATE: Kremlin critic shot in front of his Maryland home...

WAL-MART Fires Employee for 'Tapping' NY TIMES Reporter, Others...

Bloomberg may still run for president...

KENTUCKY FIRED HILLARY: NY SENATOR ADOPTS SOUTHERN DRINK IN CHURCH SERVICE...

Stocks Try to Steady, Finish Near Lows...

3630	-50	大和証券
611	-13	日興証券
1400	-20	野村HD
320		新光証券
1248		三住海上
1111		損保JPN
100		アールHD
941		DHD
121		セゾン
126		フジコ

CHINA MILITARY SPENDING BOOM...

Aim for 2008 Space Flight, Space Walk...

Fired Employee Wounds 3 in Long Beach Shooting...

Afghan Media: U.S. Troops Deleted Images...

ASIAN MARKETS ROCKED...

4 HAVE APPED 'HATE' TWEET

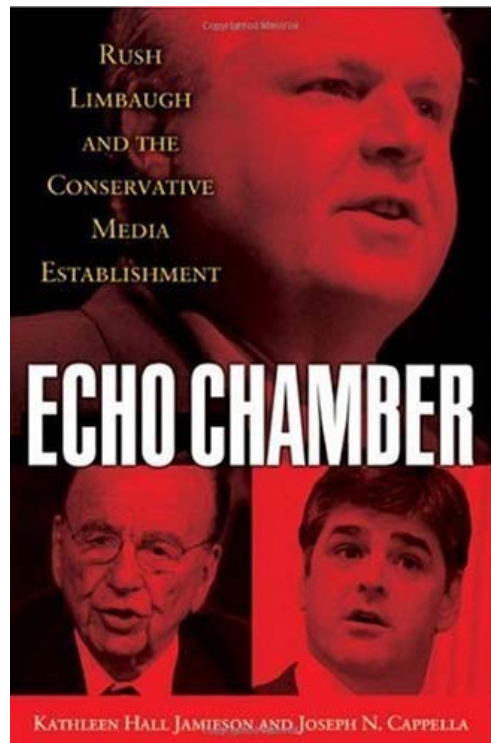


# Information Age Challenges

## Proliferation of Edge and Opinion

News consumers are increasingly interested in edge and opinion.

- Personalities, not the news itself, takes center stage
- This is accompanied by a retreat to partisanship in our press, and...
- A turn to satirical and soft-news programs as a source for political information.



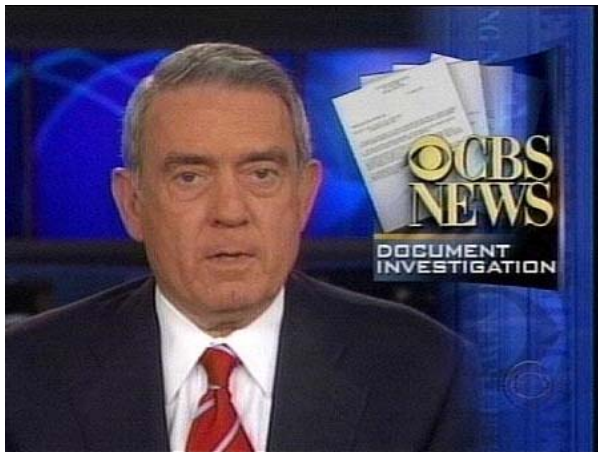


# Information Age Challenges

## Democratization of Media

News is delivered in more viral forms, for we are now all able to publish.

- Stories are forwarded via cyberspace, posted on social networking sites
- Bloggers revealed CBS' use of falsified documents in connection to the Bush National Guard Story in 2004
- YouTube holds political candidates to new levels of accountability
- Rise of citizen journalists
- Return to the First Amendment's original roots?



# Information Age Challenges

## Newspapers Slow Death



### “Do Newspapers Matter?”

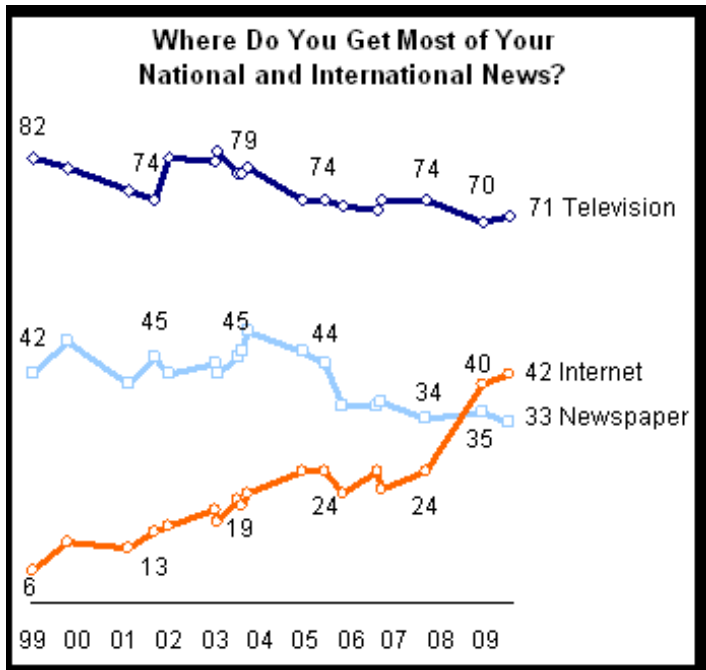
- Study by Princeton economist Sam Schulhofer-Wohl (March 13, 2009)
- Focal point: December 31, 2007 closing of the *Cincinnati Post*, leaving only the larger *Enquirer*
- Search for a “substantial and measurable impact on public life” in surrounding Kentucky counties that represented the *Post*’s readership base
- Past research has shown:
  1. Higher newspaper readership=less corruption
  2. Cities with daily or weekly papers less likely to re-elect incumbents
  3. Editorial endorsements affect ballot box behavior
- Among their findings:
  1. Fewer candidates for municipal office
  2. Incumbents more likely to be re-elected
  3. Lower voter turnout

# Information Age Challenges

## Young People Tuned Out

### “Press Accuracy Rating Hits Two Decade Low”

-Report published by the Pew Center for the People and the Press  
(Sept 13, 2009)



### Newspapers a Major Local News Source – Even for Young People

Main source for...	Total	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
<b>Nat'l &amp; int'l news</b>	%	%	%	%	%
Television	71	70	62	77	81
Internet	42	64	54	29	10
Newspapers	33	21	26	37	55
Radio	21	18	28	19	15
<b>Local news</b>					
Television	64	67	60	63	69
Internet	17	21	24	12	4
Newspapers	41	39	33	45	53
Radio	18	22	21	14	13
N	1506	183	420	478	399

Figures read down. Q6 & Q.A.  
Figures add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

# Information Age Challenges

## Young People Tuned Out (Continued)

### “Young People and the News”

- Report prepared by Thomas Paterson of the Shorenstein Center on the Press (July 2007)
- **Newspapers?** Only 9% of teenagers read a newspaper daily, 46% hardly ever/not at all
- **National television news?** 31% of teenagers watch national TV news daily, 22% several times a week, and 23% once a week. Similar numbers for local news.
- **Radio?** 25% listen to radio news daily, 13% several times a week, and 18% once a week.
- **The Internet?** 20% use the internet as a news source daily, 23% several times a week, and 15% once weekly. A full 32% do not use the internet as a news source.
- Young people watch non-news related programming and read magazines and books in similar numbers with older adults (Source: Pew Research Center Biennial News Consumption Survey, 2004)



# Information Age Challenges

## Young People Tuned Out (Cont.)

Written by Mark Bauerlein (2008), selected excerpts:

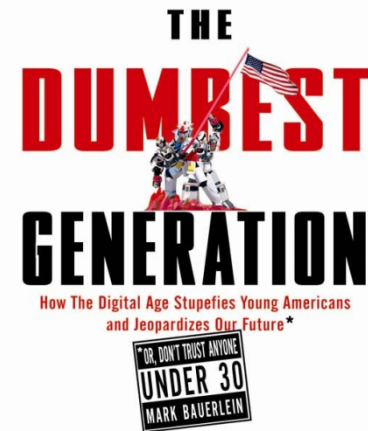
**-Opportunity:** “All the ingredients for making and informed and intelligent citizen are in place. But it hasn’t happened.”

**-Outcome:** “Most young Americans possess little of the knowledge that makes for an informed citizen, and too few of them master the skills needed to negotiate an information-heavy, communication-based society and economy.”

### Paradox of the Dumbest Generation

**-The Problem:** “Uninterested in reading and unworried about the consequences, kids reject books as they do vegetables, and the exhortations of their teachers fall flat. A quick glance at their newspaper once a day would augment their courses in government...But those complements don’t happen.”

**-The Consequences:** “Democracy requires an informed electorate, and knowledge deficits equal civic decay. Individual freedom means the freedom not to vote, not to read the newspaper, not to contemplate the facts of U.S. history, not to frequent the public square—in a word, to opt out of civic life.”



# Information Age Challenges

## Young People Tuned Out (Continued)

### A Potential Solution: News Literacy

- **News literacy defined:** “The ability to determine the credibility of news reports and other information, whether delivered through print, television, radio or the Internet.”
- **Essential Questions:**
  1. How does one define news, opinion, advertising, publicity, entertainment, propaganda, and raw information?
  2. What is the difference between assertion and verification?
  3. What is a source? (Eyewitness/ expert/ independent/ anonymous)
  4. What is bias? (Media and audience)
  5. What is documentation?
  6. What is fairness?
  7. Why does context matter?
  8. Why do mistakes appear in news account? How do journalists learn from them?
  9. What standards or limitations exist for putting information on the Internet?
  10. How does one determine who created a piece of information? Why is it important?



# McCormick Foundation Civics Program

## Freedom of the Press: Information Age Challenges

Questions?

