


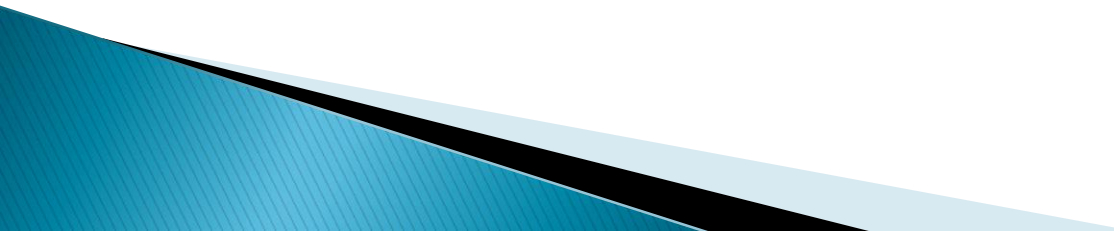
mass communication

a critical approach

CHAPTER 1



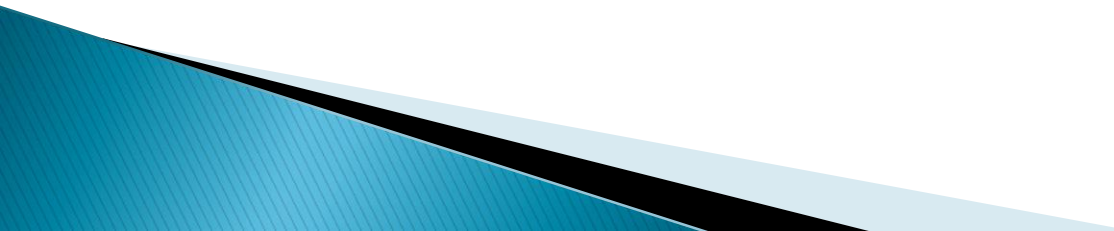
- ▶ One way to understand the role and impact of the media in our lives is to understand the cultural context in which the media operate.
 - ▶ Culture is always changing. It includes a society's art, beliefs, customs, games, technologies, traditions, and institutions.
 - ▶ It also encompasses a society's modes of **communication**:
 - **The** process of creating symbol systems that convey information and meaning (for example, language systems, dot-dash Morse Code, motion pictures, or one-zero binary computer codes – digital).
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- ▶ **Culture may be defined as the symbols of expression** that individuals, groups, and societies use to make sense of daily life and to articulate their values.
 - In other words, we are assigning meaning to the songs, books, TV programs, or Internet sites.
 - Culture, therefore, is a process that delivers the values of a society through products or other meaning-making forms.
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- ▶ The mass media are the cultural industries—the channels of communication—that produce and distribute songs, novels, newspapers, movies, Internet services, and other cultural products to large numbers of people.



Communication Eras

- ▶ Oral
 - ▶ Written
 - ▶ Print
 - ▶ Electronic
 - ▶ Digital
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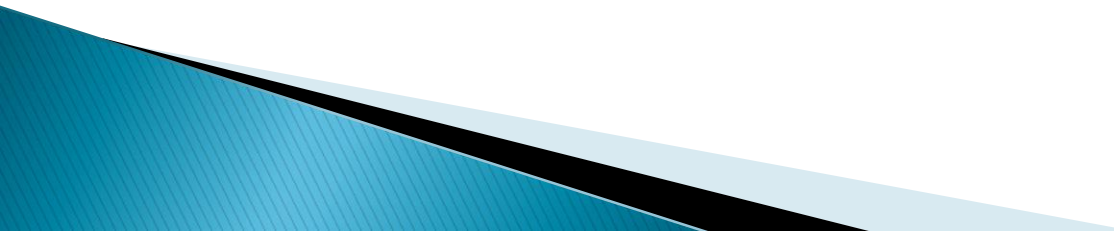
Print, Electronic & Digital Eras

- ▶ The last three phases feature the development of **mass communication**:
 - ▶ The process of designing and delivering cultural messages and stories to large and diverse audiences through media channels as old as the book and as new as the Internet.
 - ▶ Hastened by the growth of industry and modern technology, mass communication accompanied the gradual shift of rural populations to urban settings and the rise of a consumer culture.
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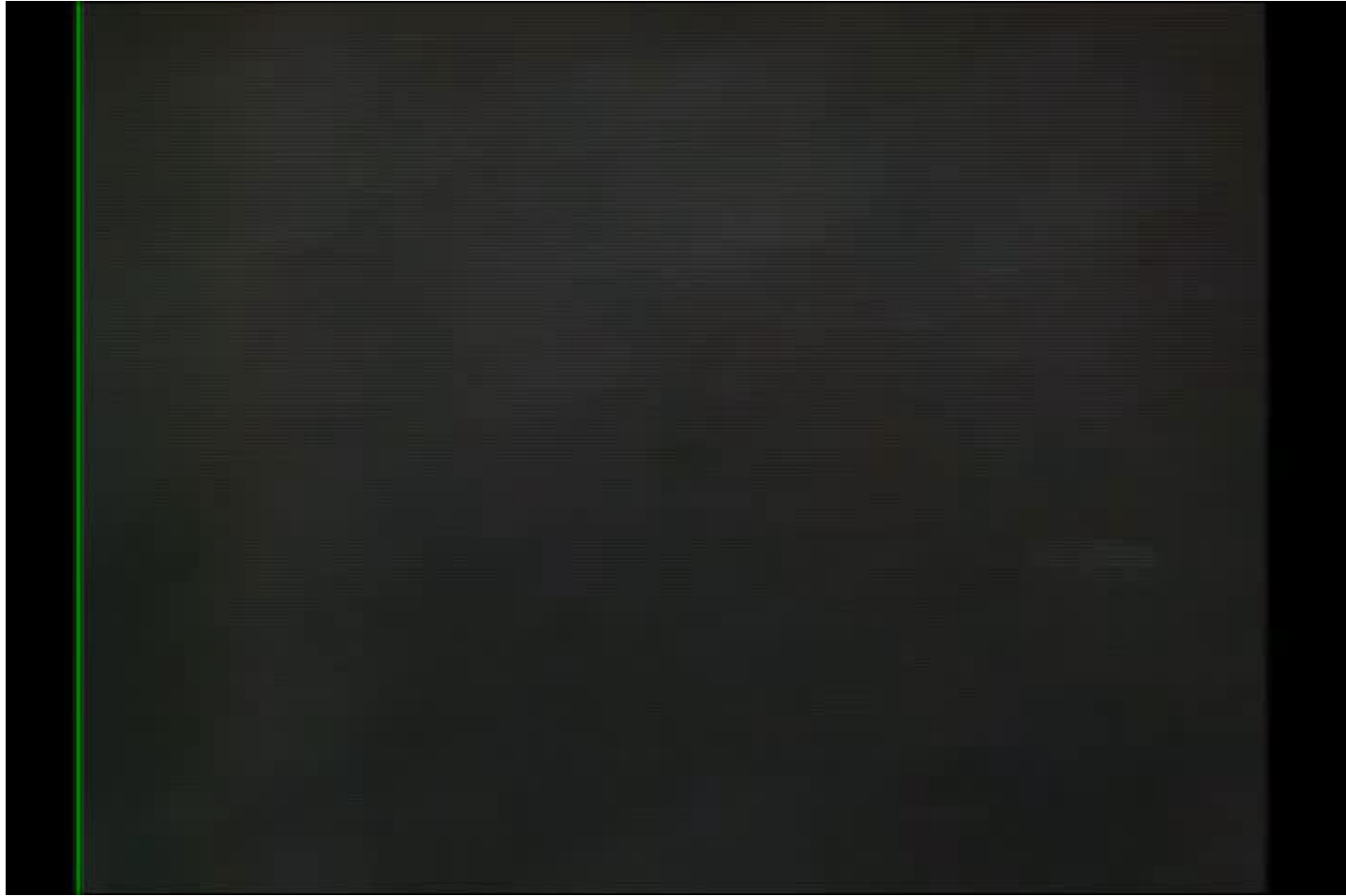
Printed Words Revolutionize Everyday Life



3 Elements for Mass Production

- ▶ First, duplication, or machine copying, replaced the tedious manuscript system in which scribes hand copied a text several times to produce multiple copies.
 - ▶ Second, duplication could be done rapidly, producing mass quantities of the same book.
 - ▶ Third, the faster processing of multiple copies brought down the cost of each unit, making books more affordable to less affluent people.
 - ▶ These three basic elements would provide the impetus for the Industrial Revolution, assembly-line production, modern capitalism, and the rise of consumer culture in the twentieth century.
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Excerpt from Media History



Electronic and Digital Messages Deliver Immediacy

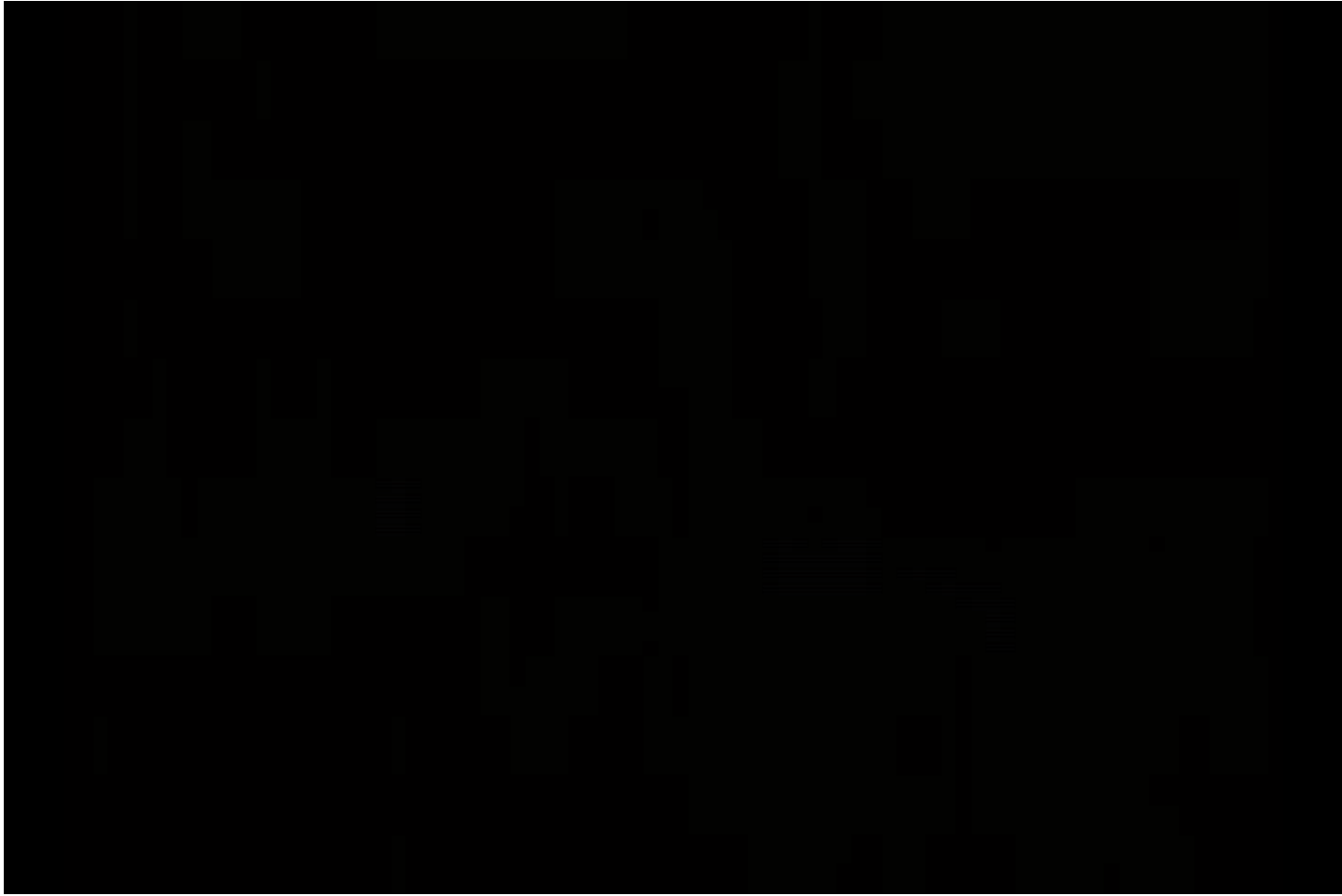
- ▶ In America, the gradual transformation from an industrial, print-based society to an informational era began with the development of the telegraph in the 1840s.



4 Major Contributions of the Telegraph

- ▶ First, it separated communication from transportation, making media messages instantaneous—unencumbered by stagecoaches, ships, or the pony express.
- ▶ Second, the telegraph, in combination with the rise of mass-marketed newspapers, transformed “information into a commodity, a ‘thing’ that could be bought or sold irrespective of its uses or meaning.”
 - By the time of the Civil War, news had become a valuable product.
- ▶ Third, the telegraph made it easier for military, business, and political leaders to coordinate commercial and military operations, especially after the installation of the transatlantic cable in the late 1860s.
- ▶ Fourth, the telegraph foreshadowed future technological developments, such as wireless telegraphy, the fax machine, and the cellular phone.
 - in 2006, the Western Union telegraph offices sent their final message.

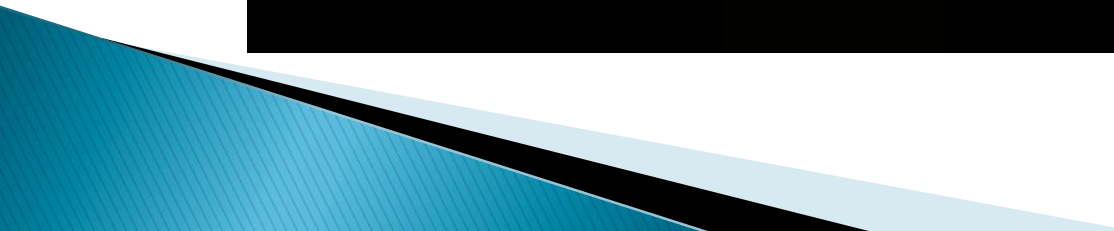
Excerpt from Media History



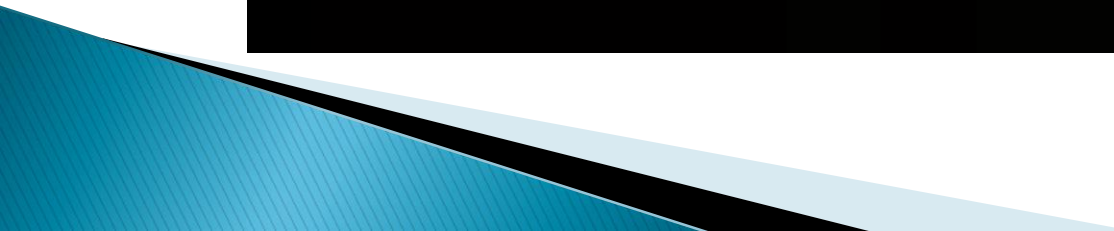
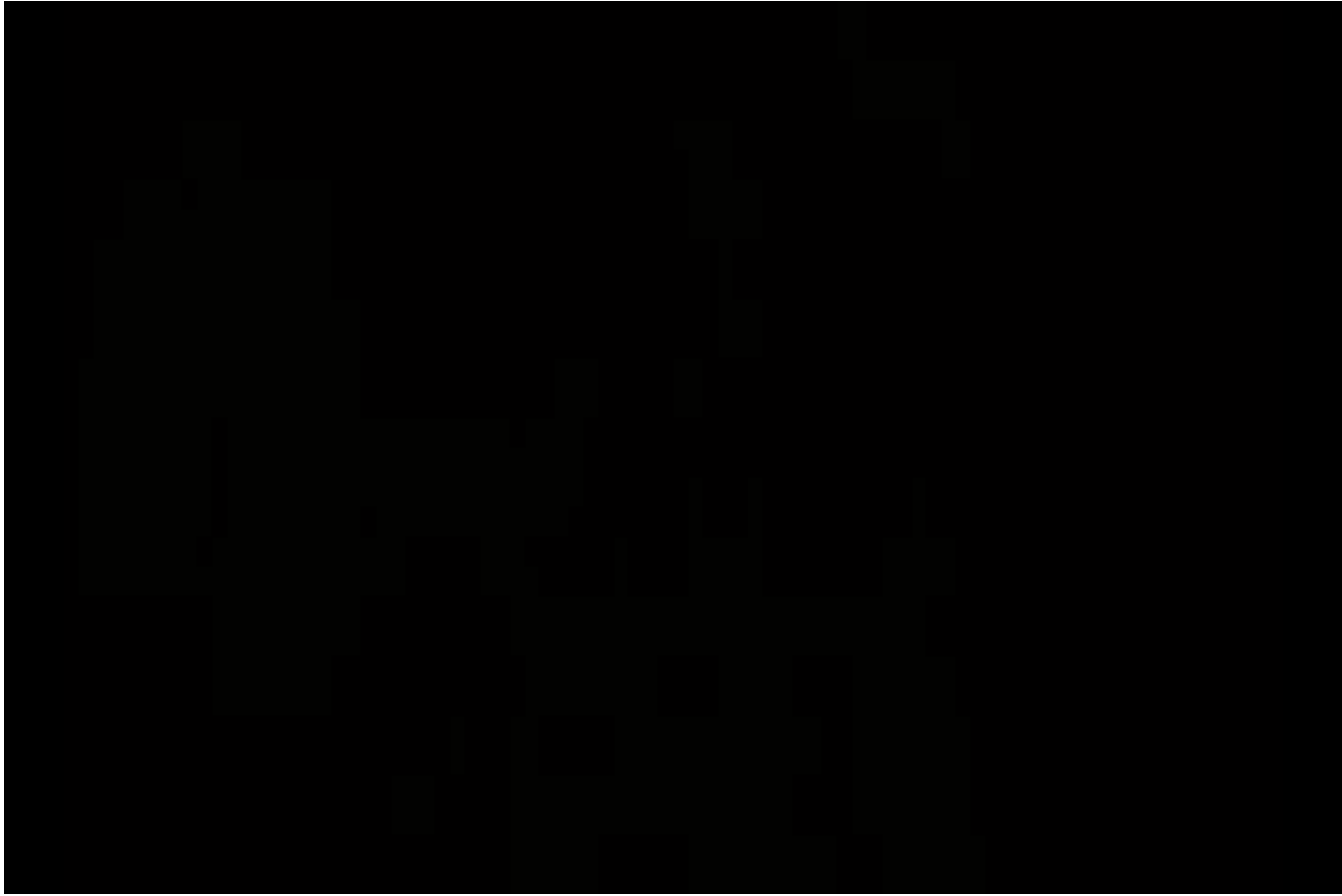
From Electronics to Digital

- ▶ The rise of film at the turn of the twentieth century and the development of radio in the 1920s were early signposts,
 - but the electronic phase of the Information Age really began in the 1950s and 1960s. The dramatic impact of television on daily life marked the arrival of a new visual and electronic era.

Excerpt from Media History



Excerpt from Media History

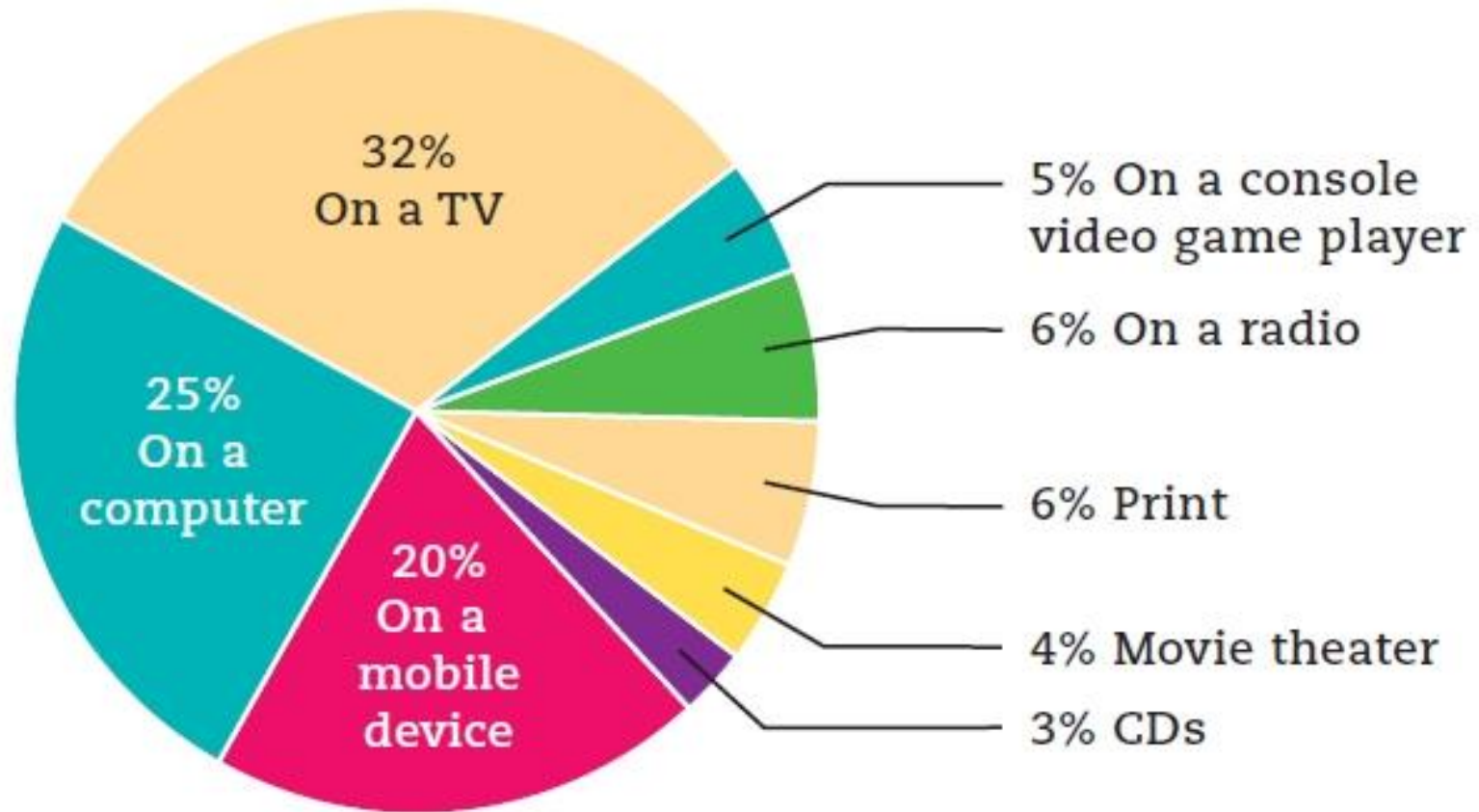


From Electronics to Digital Media Convergence:

- ▶ the Information Age passed into a digital phase – digital communication
- ▶ By 2006, the electronic and digital eras had fully ushered in the age of **media convergence**.



Figure 1.1: Daily Media Consumption by Platform, 2010 (8- to 18-Year-Olds)

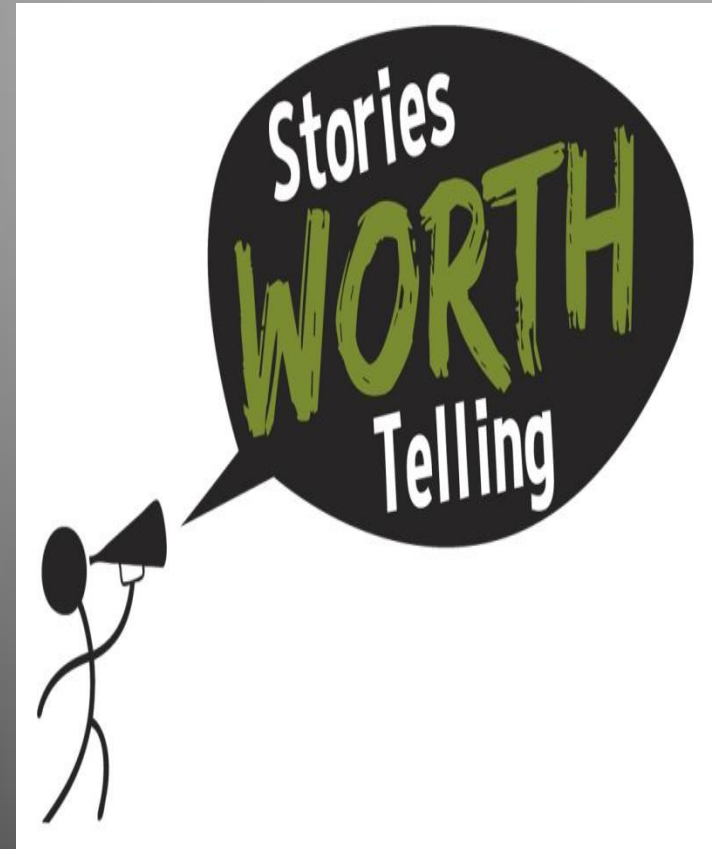


Stories: The Foundation of Media

- Stories: The Foundation of Media.
- **The common denominator between entertainment and information culture is the narrative.**
- Stories we seek and tell are changing in the digital era.
 - Reality TV and social media dominate.
 - Ordinary citizens are able to participate in, and have an effect on, stories told in the media.
 - Media institutions and outlets are in the **narrative** business.

The Power of Media Stories in Everyday Life

- ▶ Euripides
 - Art should imitate life.
- ▶ Plato
 - Art should aim to instruct and uplift.
- ▶ Aristotle
 - Art and stories should provide insight into the human condition, but should entertain as well.



Contemporary Culture

- ▶ Cultural critics are concerned about:
 - The quality of contemporary culture
 - The overwhelming amount of information now available
- ▶ How much the media shape society is still unknown.



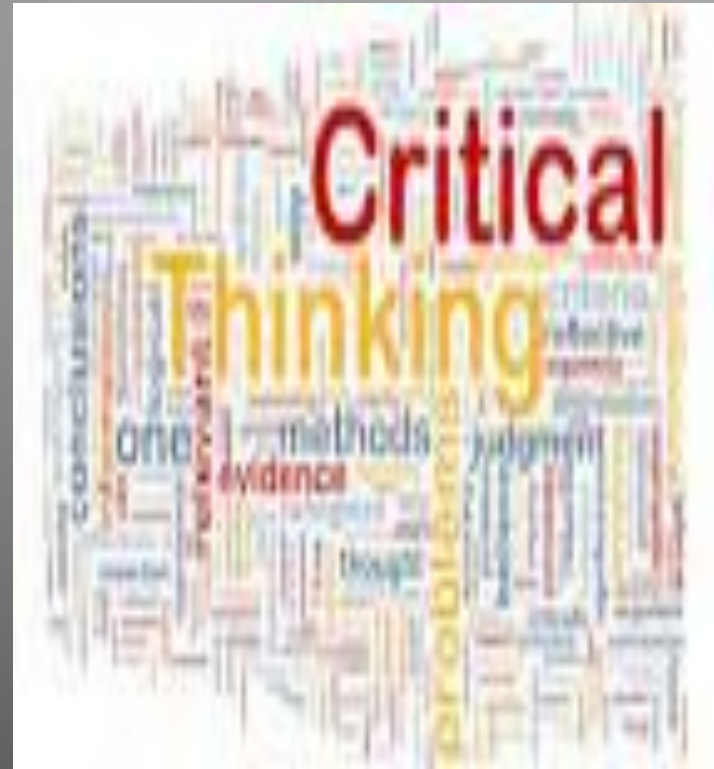
Culture as a Map

- ▶ Culture is an ongoing and complicated process.
- ▶ Forms of culture are judged on a combination of personal taste and the aesthetic judgments a society makes at particular historical times.



Cultural Values of the Modern Period

- Modern period
 - Began with the Industrial Revolution and extended until the mid-twentieth century
- Four key values:
 - Efficiency
 - Individualism
 - Rationalism
 - Progress



Cultural Values of the Modern Period

- ▶ **Efficiency**
- ▶ Printing presses and assembly lines made major contributions in this transformation, and then modern advertising spread the word about new gadgets to consumers.
- ▶ In terms of culture, the modern mantra has been “form follows function.”



Cultural Values of the Modern Period

- ▶ Individualism
- ▶ The values of the pre-modern period (before the Industrial Revolution) were guided by a strong belief in a natural or divine order, **modernization elevated individual self-expression to a more central position.**
- ▶ Progressive thinkers maintained that the printing press, telegraph and the railroad, in combination with a scientific attitude, would foster a new type of informed society.



Cultural Values of the Modern Period

▶ Rationalism

- ▶ A leading champion of an informed rational society was Walter Lippmann – advocated a “machinery of knowledge” that might be established through “intelligence bureaus” staffed by experts.



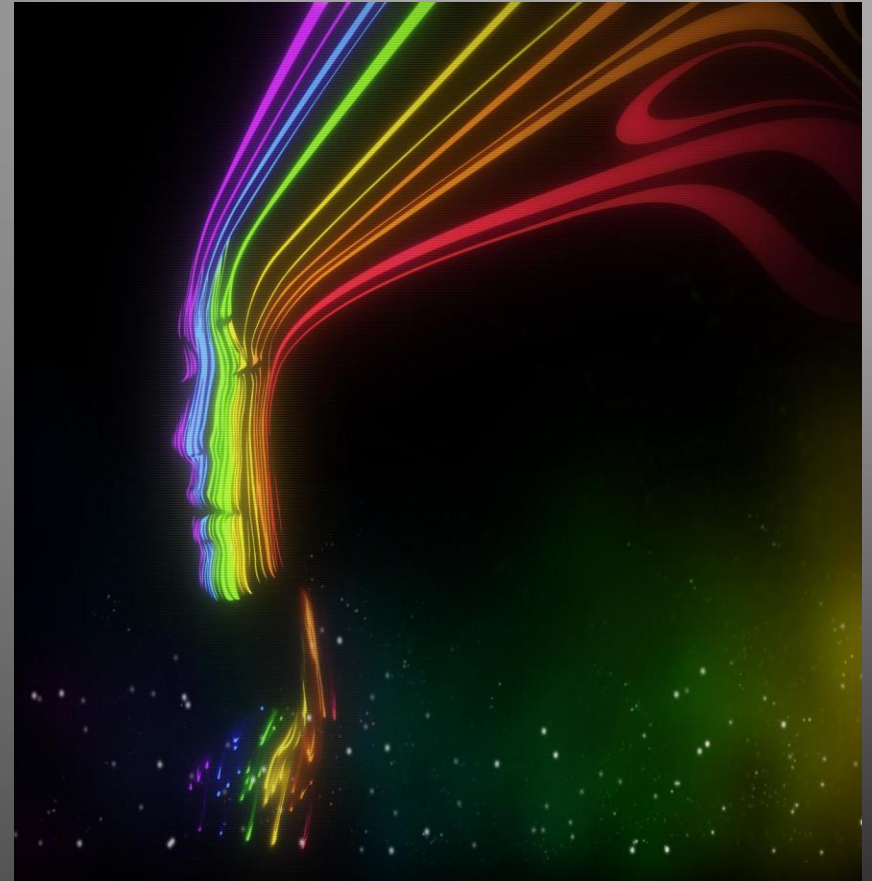
Cultural Values of the Modern Period

- ▶ Progress
- ▶ The notion of being modern in the twentieth century meant throwing off the chains of the past, breaking with tradition, and embracing progress.



Shifting Values in Postmodern Culture

- Postmodern period
 - From the mid-twentieth century to today
- Four features:
 - Populism
 - Diversity
 - Nostalgia
 - Paradox



Shifting Values in Postmodern Culture

- ▶ Populism
- ▶ populism tries to appeal to ordinary people by highlighting or even creating an argument or conflict between “the people” and “the elite.”



Shifting Values in Postmodern Culture

- ▶ Diversity
- ▶ Emphasizes diversity and fragmentation, including the wild juxtaposition of old and new cultural styles.



Shifting Values in Postmodern Culture

- ▶ Paradox
- ▶ stresses integrating—or converging—retro beliefs and contemporary culture.
- ▶ so at the same time that we seem nostalgic for the past, we embrace new technologies with a vengeance.

