

Chapter 8: Newspapers: The Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism



The Future of Newspapers?



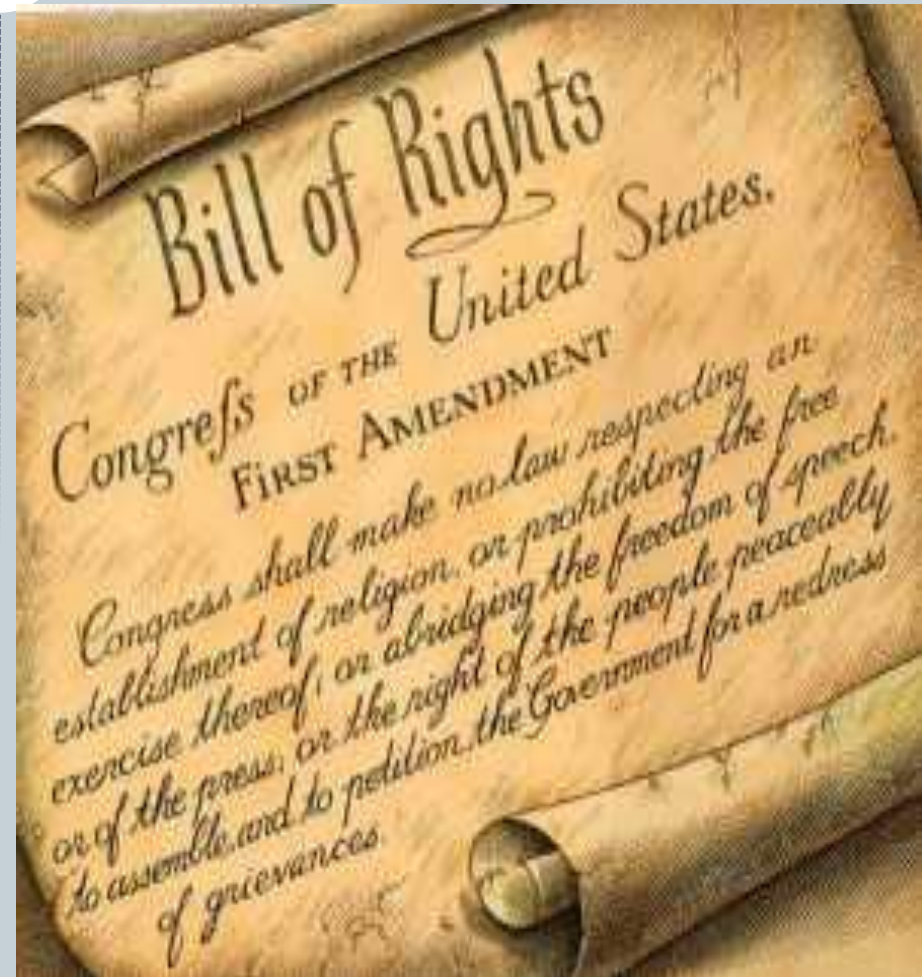
“We will stop printing the
New York Times sometime
in the future, date TBD.”

-Arthur Sulzberger, *New York
Times* publisher, 2010



UPDATE: Richard Holbrooke questions Cheney comments re U.S. less safe

- **First Amendment:**
- Congress shall make no law respecting an [establishment of religion](#), or prohibiting the [free exercise](#) thereof; or abridging the freedom of [speech](#), or of the [press](#); or the right of the people peaceably to [assemble](#), and to [petition](#) the Government for a redress of grievances.



- **Freedom of the Press (1791)**
- The Founders saw the right to publish one's views as a natural right, and considered a free press a means of ensuring justice in government.
- While written to apply to actions of the federal government, the Supreme Court incorporated the amendment into state governments





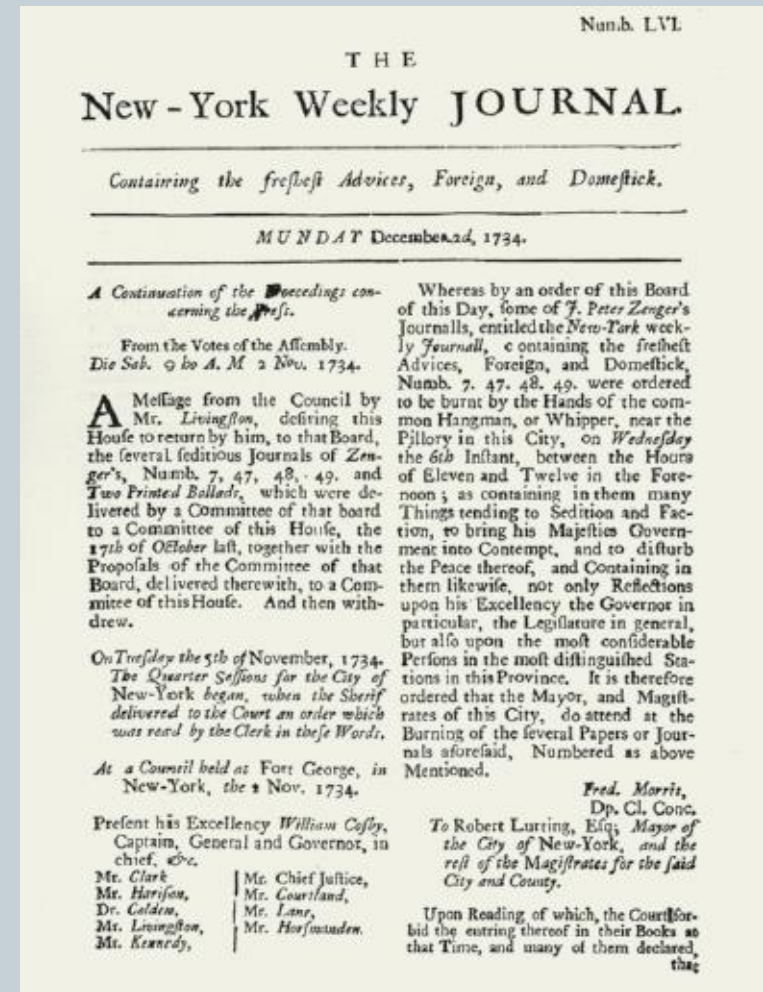
- During the colonial period, New York printer John Peter Zenger was arrested for libel. He eventually won his case, which established the precedent that today allows U.S. journalists and citizens to criticize public officials. In this 1734 issue, Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* reported his own arrest and the burning of the paper by the city's "Common Hangman."
- Zenger ultimately won his case in 1735.
- the colonial government, ruled that newspapers had the right to criticize government leaders as long as the reports were true.
- the Zenger decision would later provide a key foundation for the First Amendment to the Constitution—the right of a democratic press to criticize public officials.



- By 1765, about thirty newspapers operated in the American colonies.
- The first *daily* paper began in 1784. These papers were of two general types: political and commercial.
- partisan press - an early dominant style of American journalism distinguished by opinion newspapers, which generally argued one political point of view or pushed the plan of the particular party that subsidized the paper.
- The commercial press, on the other hand, served the leaders of commerce, who were interested in economic issues.

Colonial Newspapers and the Partisan Press

- *Pennsylvania Gazette* (1729)
 - Operated by Benjamin Franklin
 - Run with subsidies from political parties as well as advertising
- *New-York Weekly Journal* (1733)
 - Owner arrested for seditious libel
 - Jury ruled in his favor, as long as stories were true
 - Decision provided foundation for First Amendment



Colonial Newspapers and the Partisan Press (cont.)



- Two general types of newspapers
 - Political
 - ✦ Partisan press
 - ✦ Pushed the plan of a political group
 - Commercial
 - ✦ Served business leaders
 - Readership primarily confined to educated or wealthy men

The Penny Press Era: Newspapers Become Mass Media



- The Industrial Revolution, spawned the conversion from expensive handmade to inexpensive machine-made paper.
- penny papers - refers to newspapers that, because of technological innovations in printing, were able to drop their price to one cent beginning in the 1830s, thereby making papers affordable to working and emerging middle classes and enabling newspapers to become a genuine mass medium.
- In the 1820s, breakthroughs in technology, particularly steam-powered presses replacing mechanical presses, permitted publishers to produce as many as 4,000 newspapers an hour.

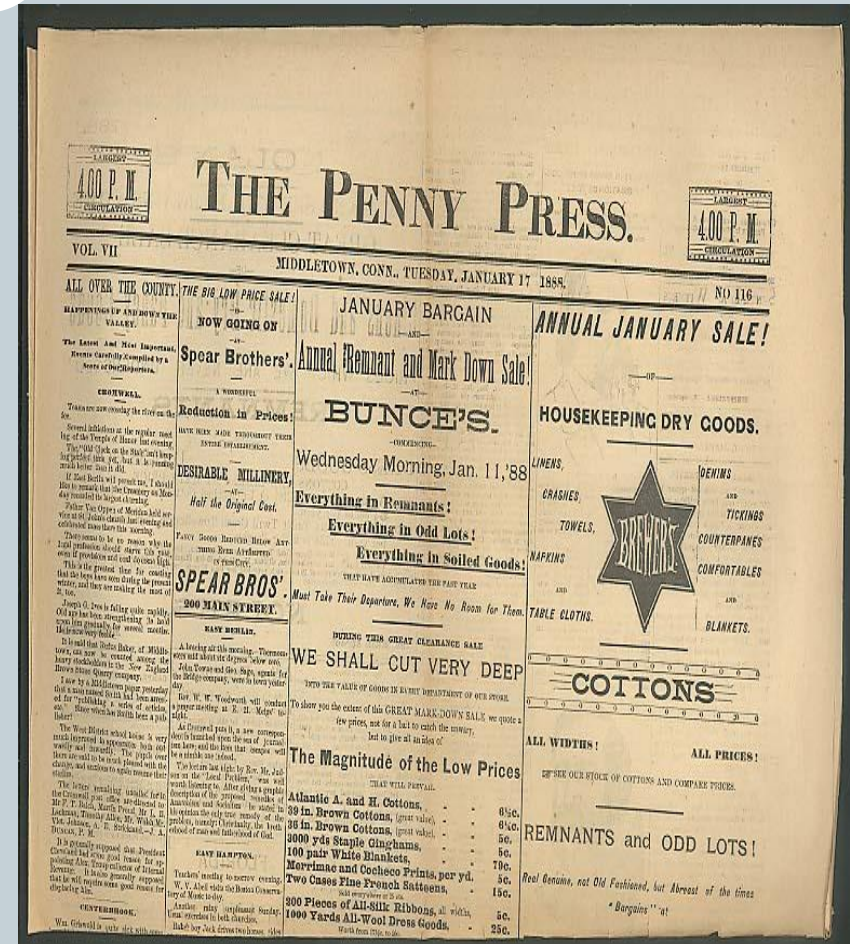
Examples & Characteristics of the Penny Press



- gradually separating daily front–page reporting from overt political viewpoints on an editorial page,
 - New York’s penny papers shifted their economic base from political party subsidies to the market—to advertising revenue, classified ads, and street sales.
 - In 1830, 650 weekly and 65 daily papers operated in the United States, reaching 80,000 readers. By 1840, a total of 1,140 weeklies and 140 dailies attracted 300,000 readers.

The Penny Press Era: Newspapers Become Mass Media

- Penny papers
 - Made possible by technology
 - Sold on the street
 - Cheaper paper and higher literacy rates in the 1820s caused a wave of penny papers, most of which were sold at newsstands instead of by subscription.
- *New York Sun*
 - Favored human-interest stories
- *New York Morning Herald*
 - Independent paper for middle- and working-class readers



The Age of Yellow Journalism: Sensationalism and Investigation

- **yellow journalism** - a newspaper style or era that peaked in the 1890s, it emphasized high-interest stories, sensational crime news, large headlines, and serious reports that exposed corruption, particularly in business and government.



The Age of Yellow Journalism: Sensationalism and Investigation

- *New York World*
 - Joseph Pulitzer encouraged plain writing and the inclusion of illustrations.



- In addition to sensational stories, he instituted advice columns and women's pages, generated a large number of ads, and crusaded for better conditions for women and equitable labor laws.

The Age of Yellow Journalism: Sensationalism and Investigation

- *New York Journal*

- William Randolph Hearst was unscrupulous, but a champion of the underdog.

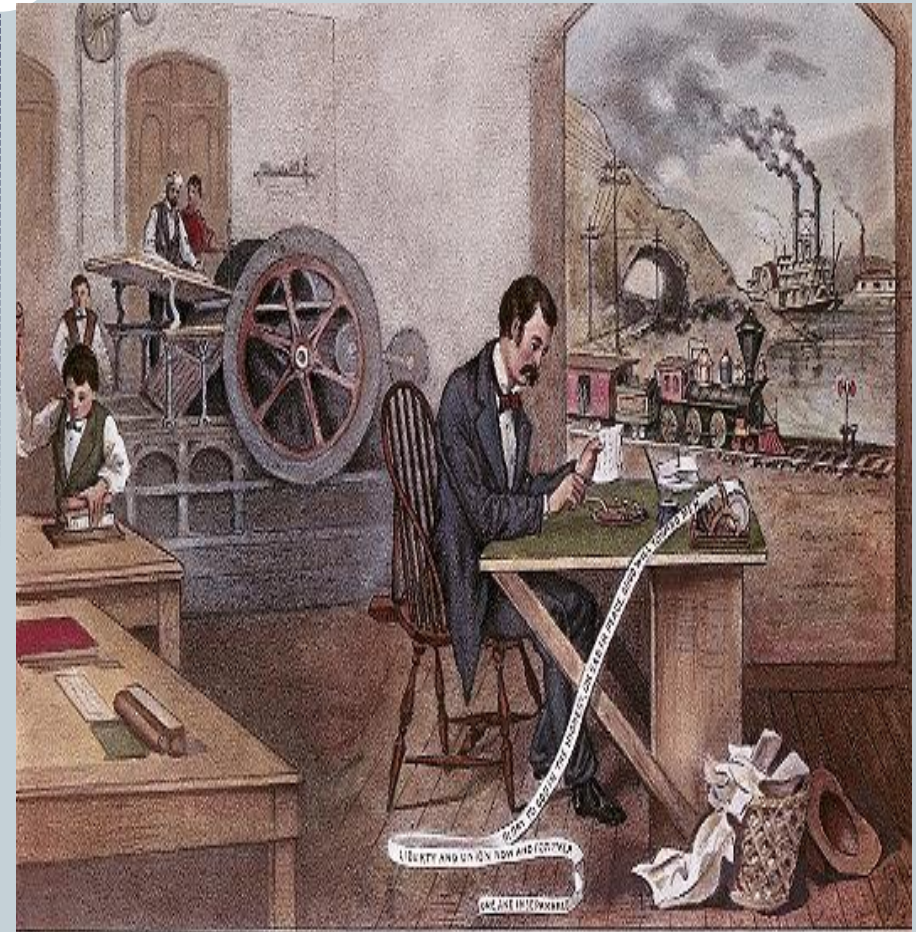


- Hearst focused on lurid, sensational, and exploitative stories, but he also appealed to immigrant readers with large headlines and bold layout

Wire Services



- **Wire services** - commercial organizations, such as the Associated Press, that share news stories and information by relaying them around the country and the world, originally via telegraph and now via satellite transmission.
- In 1848, six New York newspapers formed a cooperative arrangement and founded the Associated Press (AP), the first major news wire service.



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Illustration by J. M. W. Turner

THE PROGRESS OF THE CENTURY.

Wire Services and Feature Syndication



- Major daily papers might have between one hundred and two hundred local reporters and writers, but they still cannot cover the world or produce enough material to fill up the newshole each day.
- For this reason, newspapers rely on wire services and syndicated feature services to supplement local coverage.
- the Associated Press and United Press International (UPI), have hundreds of staffers stationed throughout major U.S. cities and the world capitals.
- They submit stories and photos each day for distribution to newspapers across the country. Some U.S. papers also subscribe to foreign wire services, such as Agence France–Presse in Paris or Reuters in London.

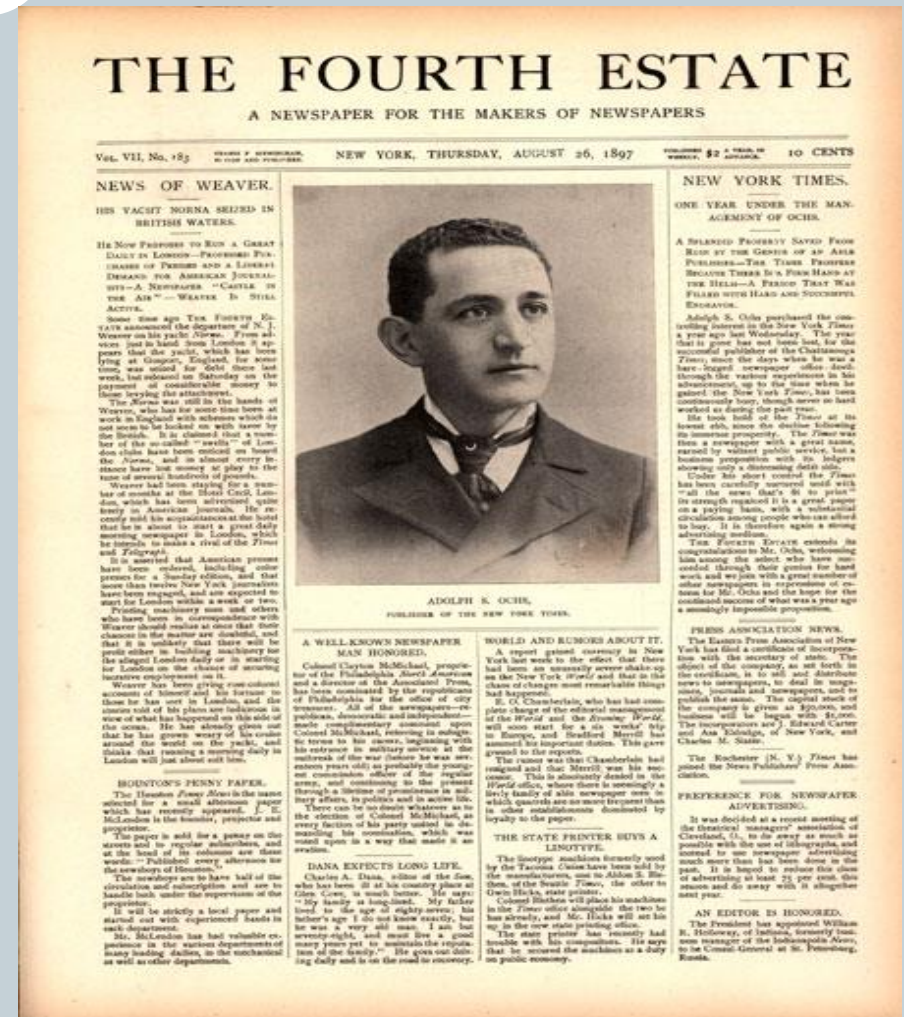
Competing Models of Modern Print Journalism “Objectivity” in Modern Journalism



- **objective journalism** - a modern style of journalism that distinguishes factual reports from opinion columns; reporters strive to remain neutral toward the issue or event they cover, searching out competing points of view among the sources for a story.

Competing Models of Modern Print Journalism “Objectivity” in Modern Journalism

- Ochs and the *New York Times*
 - Distanced itself from yellow journalism
 - Focused on documenting major events
 - More affluent readership
 - Lowered the price to a penny to attract middle-class readers



Competing Models of Modern Print Journalism

“Objectivity” in Modern Journalism

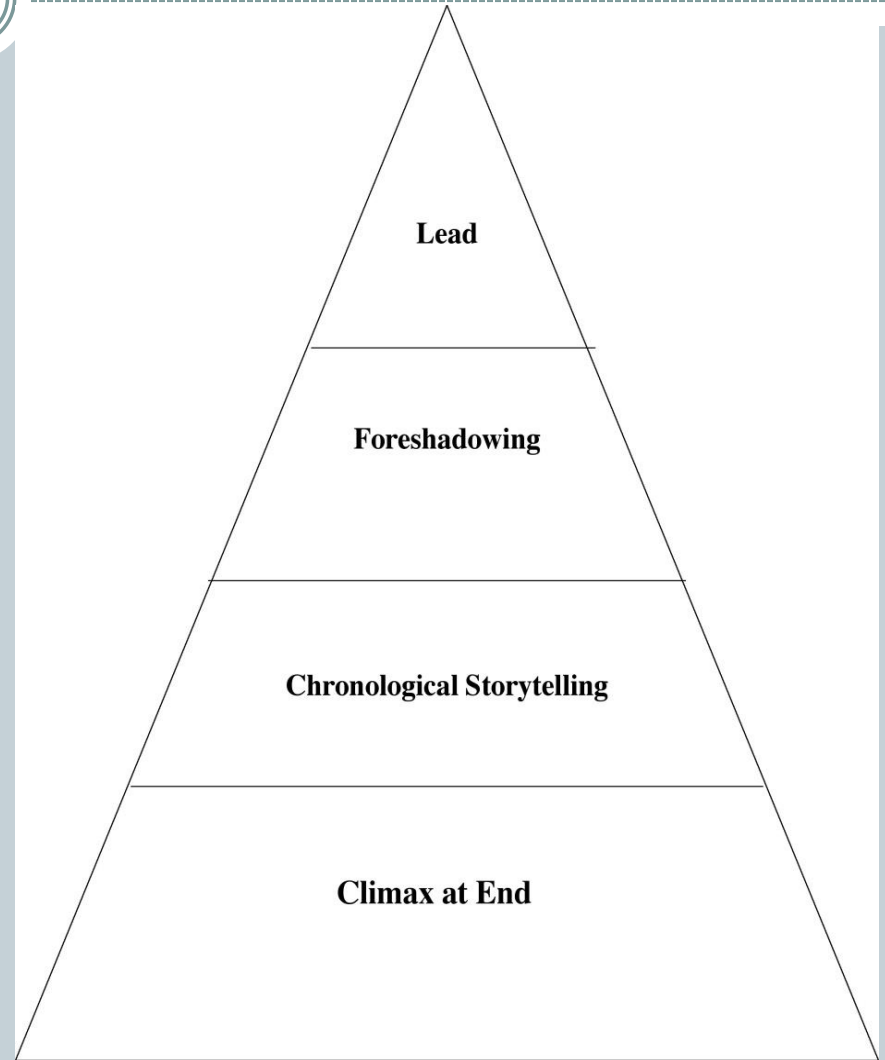
- Objective journalism
 - Distinguishes factual reports from opinion columns
- Inverted-pyramid style
 - Answers who, what, where, when (sometimes why and how) at top
 - Less significant details at bottom
 - Has come under increasing scrutiny



Competing Models of Modern Print Journalism

Interpretive Journalism

- Aims to explain key issues and events, and place them in a broader context
 - Walter Lippmann ranked press responsibilities
 - Supply facts for the record
 - Give analysis
 - Advocate plans
- Embraced by broadcast news



Competing Models of Modern Print Journalism

Literary Forms of Journalism

- Literary journalism
 - Also called “new journalism”
 - Fictional storytelling techniques applied to nonfictional material
- Attack on journalistic objectivity
 - Responses included:
 - Advocacy journalism
 - Precision journalism



Advocacy journalism is a genre of journalism that intentionally and transparently adopts a non-objective viewpoint, usually for some social or political purpose.

THE
Nation.



Mother Jones

Economist.com

the weekly
Standard

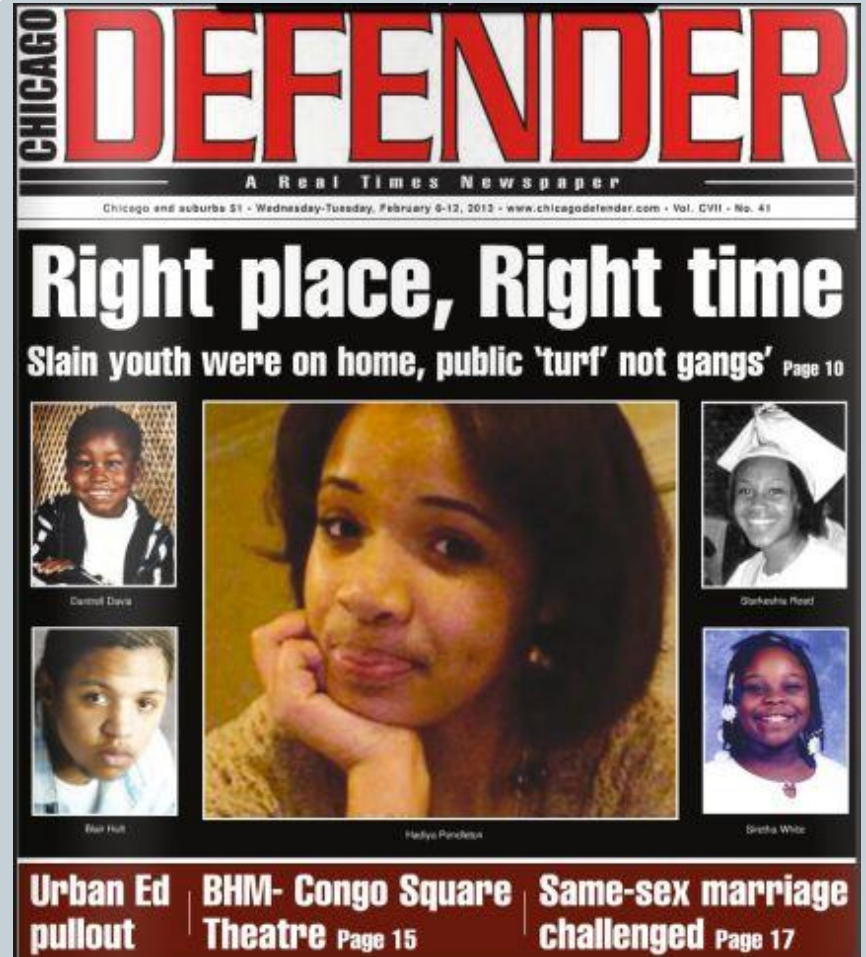
THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts



Newspapers Target Specific Readers

- African American newspapers
 - Faced high illiteracy rates and hostility from white society during the Civil War era
 - Decline of black papers
 - TV and black radio stations
 - Loss of support from advertisers
 - Economic decline reduced ad budgets.
 - Mainstream papers raided black papers to integrate their newsrooms.



Newspapers Target Specific Readers (cont.)

- Spanish-language newspapers
 - Hispanic issues and culture largely ignored until the late 1960s
 - Mainstream papers added supplements, but many folded.
- Asian American newspapers
 - Helped readers adjust to foreign surroundings and retain ties to their traditional heritage



Newspapers Target Specific Readers (cont.)



- **Native American newspapers**
 - Began with *Cherokee Phoenix* (1828)
 - Educated tribes about their heritage and build community solidarity
- **Underground press**
 - Questioned mainstream political policies and conventional values
 - Documented social tension with the voices of students, women, minorities, and gay men and women

Figure 8.1: Selected Alternative Newspapers in the United States



Alternative Voices

- Citizen journalism
 - Also known as citizen media or community journalism
 - Activist amateurs who use the Internet and blogs to disseminate news and information
 - Many news organizations are trying to corral citizen journalists to make up for journalists lost to downsizing.



CITIZEN I REPORT
WITHOUT
FEAR OR
FAVOR.™

JOURNALIST

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Newspapers and Democracy



- Journalism is a vital, yet dangerous profession.
 - Over 900 reporters killed in the line of duty from 1992 to 2012
- Newsroom cutbacks also threatening many reporters
- As digital culture continues to grow, what will become of newspapers?

