

Chapter 8

Newspapers: The Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism



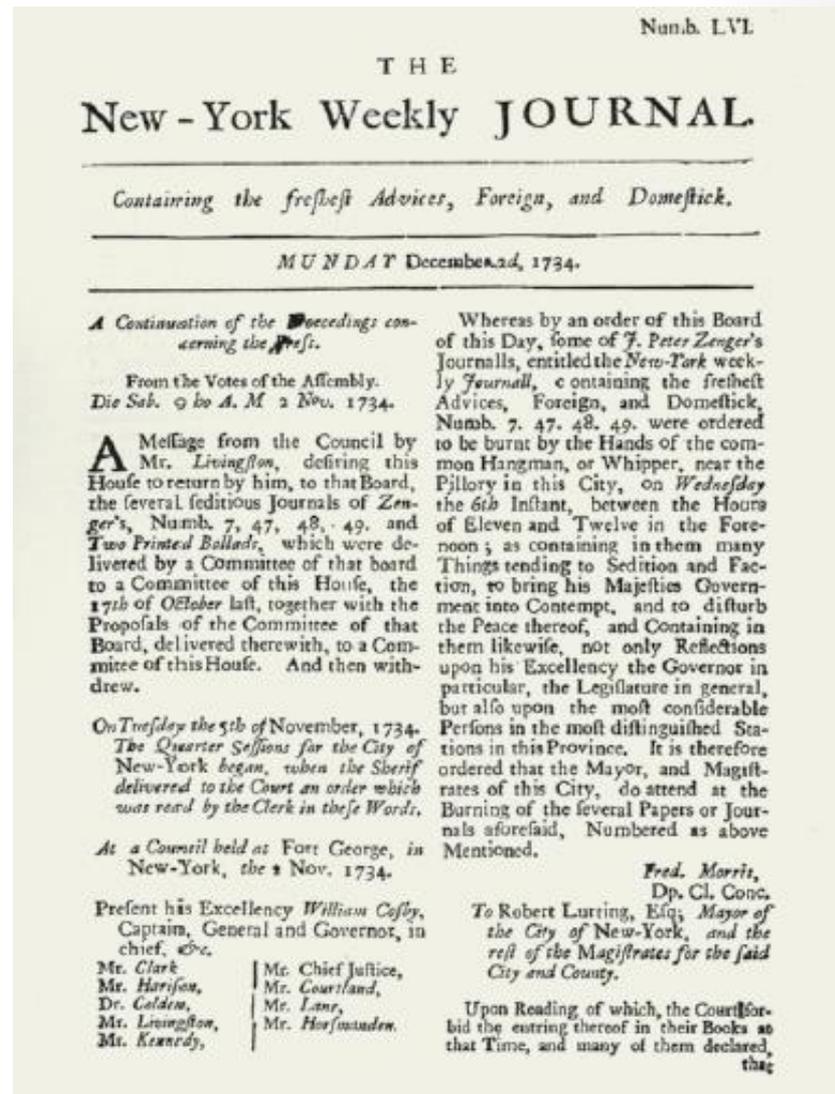
The Future of Newspapers?

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

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

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

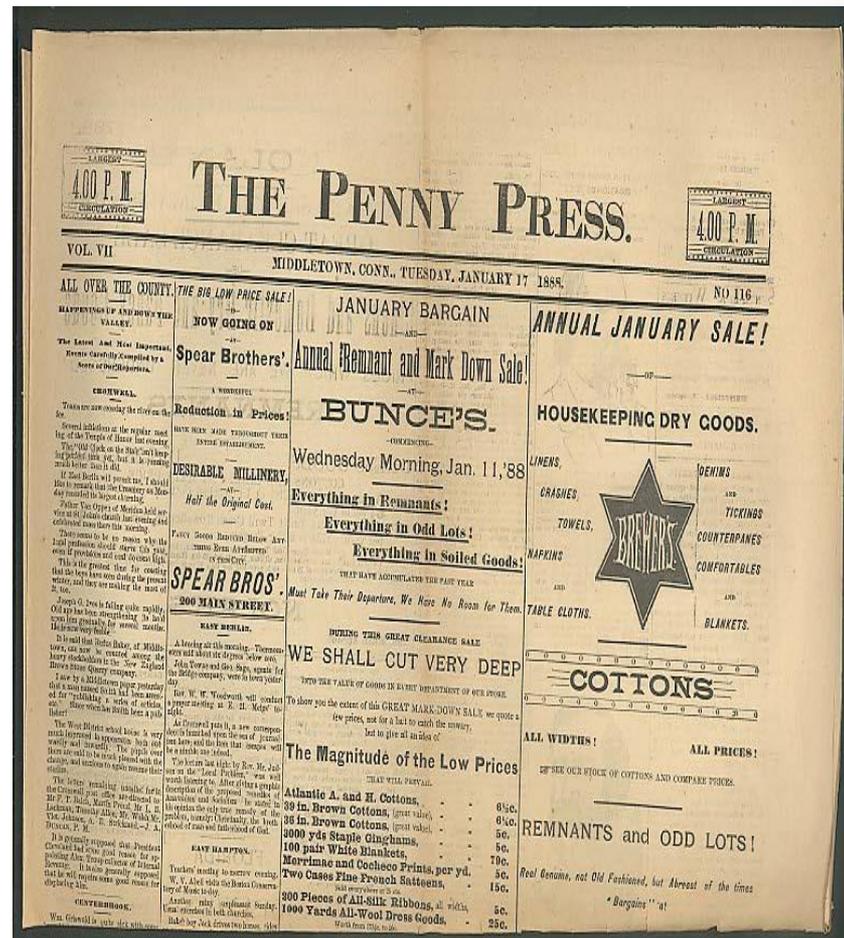


Colonial Newspapers and the Partisan Press (cont.)

- 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

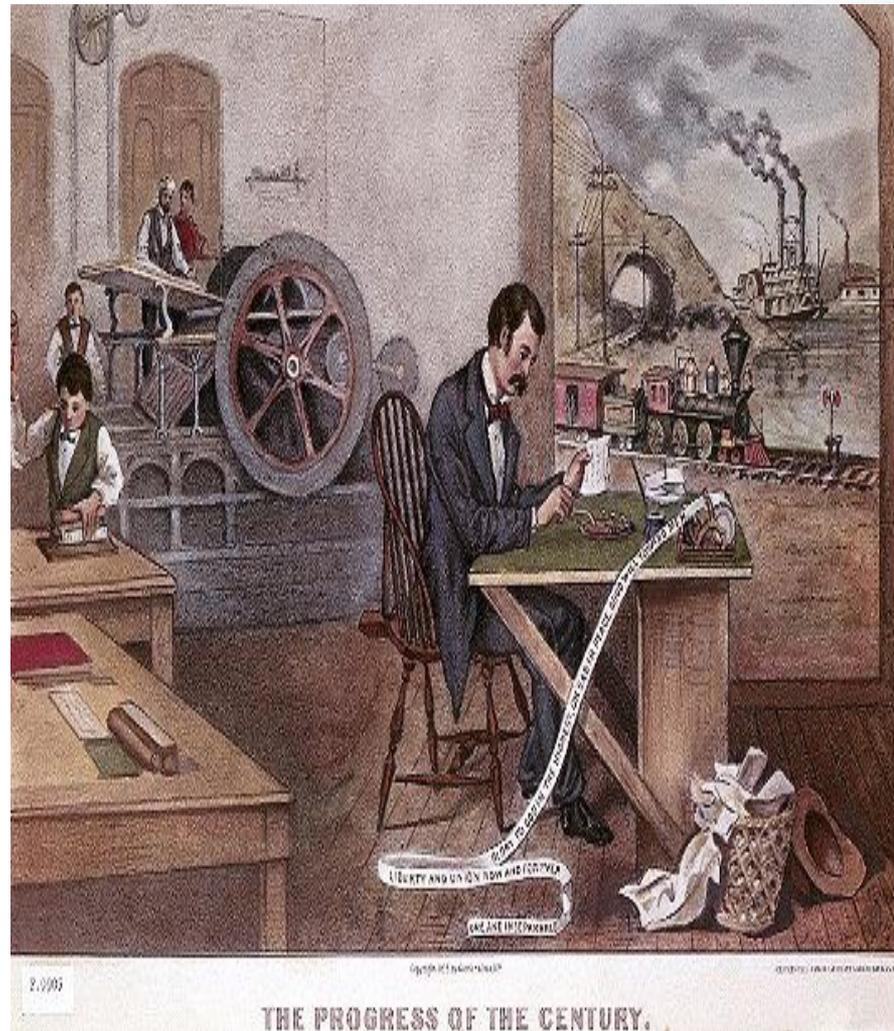
The Penny Press Era: Newspapers Become Mass Media

- 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



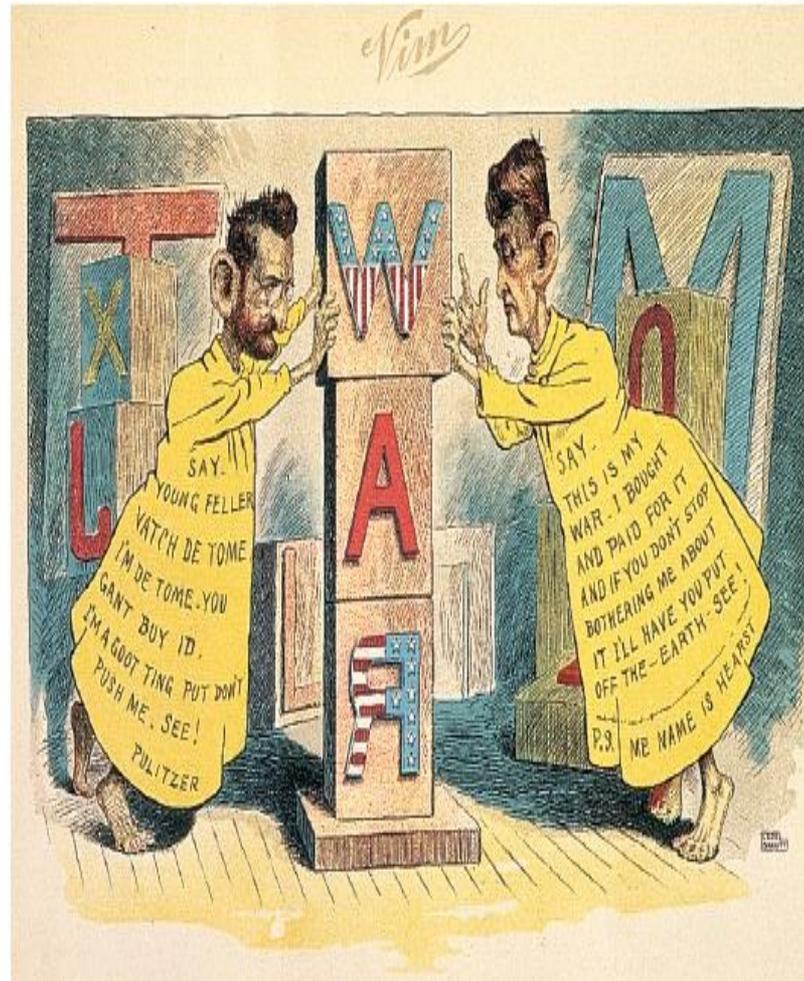
The Penny Press Era: Newspapers Become Mass Media (cont.)

- Penny papers were innovative.
 - Reported local news and crime
 - Separated news and editorial
 - Neutral toward advertisers
- Associated Press
 - Founded by six New York newspapers in 1848
 - First major news wire service



The Age of Yellow Journalism: Sensationalism and Investigation

- Yellow journalism
 - Overly dramatic stories and investigative journalism



The Age of Yellow Journalism: Sensationalism and Investigation

- *New York World*
 - 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*
 - 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

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

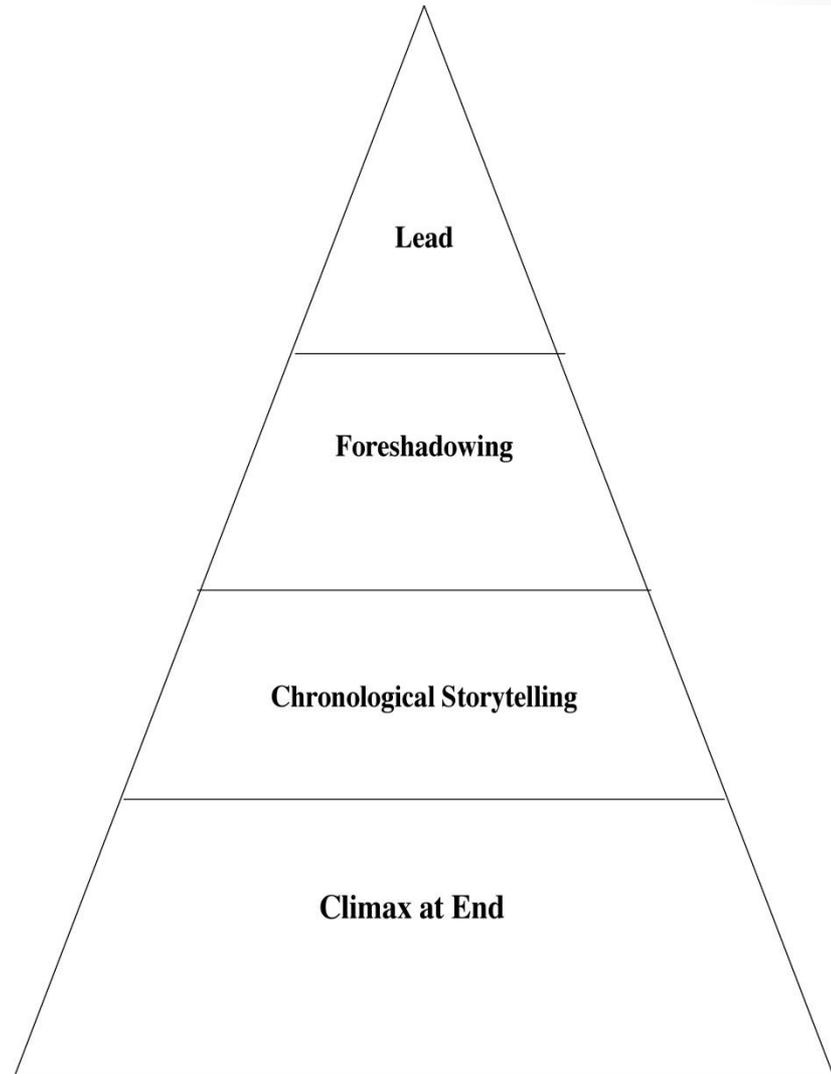
- Objective journalism
 - Distinguishes factual reports from opinion columns
- Inverted-pyramid style
 - Answers who, what, where, when (sometimes why and how) at top
 - Less significant details at bottom
 - Has come under increasing scrutiny



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



Contemporary Journalism in the TV and Internet Age

- *USA Today*
 - Used color and designed vending boxes to look like TVs
 - Mimicked broadcast news in the use of brief news items
- Online journalism redefines news.
 - Replaced the morning newspaper
 - Speeds up the news cycle
 - Nontraditional sources shape stories

Consensus vs. Conflict: Newspapers Play Different Roles

- Consensus-oriented journalism
 - Stories on local schools, social events, town government, property crimes, and zoning issues
- Conflict-oriented journalism
 - Front-page news defined as events, issues, or experiences that deviate from social norms

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



Newspaper Operations

- Newshole
 - Makes up 35 to 50% of paper
 - Remaining space devoted to advertising
- Newsroom staff
 - Publisher and owner
 - Editors and assistant editors
 - Reporters

Newspaper Operations (cont.)

- Wire services and feature syndication
 - Supplement local coverage
 - Feature syndicates provide work from:
 - Political writers
 - Editorial cartoonists
 - Comic-strip artists
 - Self-help columnists



Newspaper Ownership: Chains Lose Their Grip

- Newspaper chain
 - Company that owns several papers
 - Emergence of chains reflected the movement toward oligopolies in the 1920s.
- In decline today
 - Fewer readers and less ad revenue
 - Consolidating and eliminating jobs
 - Selling off papers

Joint Operating Agreements Combat Declining Competition

- Newspaper Preservation Act
 - Allowed for the creation of joint operating agreements (JOA)
 - Two competing papers keep separate news divisions while merging business and production operations for a period of years.
 - In 2012, only six remain in place
 - Monopolistic, but sometimes have been the only way to maintain competition between newspapers

Readership Declines in the United States

- Decline began during the Great Depression with the rise of radio.
- Dropped in the 1960s and 1970s
 - Competition from TV and weeklies
- Dropped again in the 2000s
 - Online readership increased
- Other nations have experienced increases in readership.

Going Local: How Small and Campus Papers Retain Readers

- Small daily and weekly community papers are doing better than many metro dailies.
 - Trusted media outlet in areas without many radio, TV options
 - Serve a very loyal readership
 - Practice a consensus-oriented journalism that doesn't result in ad revenue dips when editors tackle controversial topics

Blogs Challenge Newspapers' Authority Online

- Rise of blogs in the 1990s
 - Initially dismissed as amateur journalism
 - Gained credibility and readership in recent years
 - Traditional journalism has entered the realm of blogging.
 - Blogging has become a viable main feature.

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SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
BLOGS NETWORK
IMPROVING, PROTECTING AND DISCUSSING JOURNALISM SINCE 1909

Newest Posts (National)

- Newspaper sues after denied access to gang boundary 13 July 2012, 2:55 pm
- Talking with SDX winners 13 July 2012, 9:14 am
- Attorney attempts to restrict reporting during public meeting 12 July 2012, 3:34 pm
- Tools for investigative journalists: NARA keeps some JFK documents secret; CIA shows interest in spy pop culture 11 July 2012, 3:43 pm
- From Wall Street to microfinance: How corruption is seeping into the financial sector 10 July 2012, 4:12 pm
- In Nottingham, culture drives FOI decisions more than real dedication to transparency 10 July 2012, 4:00 pm
- Six keys to professional tweeting 10 July 2012, 9:14 am
- On Embracing Technology, or, Being a Young Journalist 10 July 2012, 3:51 am
- Freedom of Information Act's 46th anniversary is a reminder of journalism's watchdog role 6 July 2012, 4:43 pm
- Don't forget the tilde: New Mexican president is Enrique Peña Nieto 5 July 2012, 4:23 pm

Subscribe to all National Blogs via RSS

Newest Posts (Regional)

- Studio SPJ: Talking with SDX Winner Sarah Stuteville 29 June 2012, 1:29 am
- FOI workshop comes to Bellingham (Wash.) June 29 26 June 2012, 7:54 am
- Region 9 Virtual Town Hall Meeting 21 June 2012, 4:38 pm
- Louisville SPJ Awards Dinner is June 21 12 June 2012, 9:48 pm
- Region 5 Virtual Meeting is June 9 5 June 2012, 9:07 am
- SPJ DePaul Wins Three Campus Involvement Awards 5 June 2012, 4:44 am
- 2011 SPJ Contest Disqualified Categories 21 May 2012, 4:20 am
- Awards corrections & re-orders 10 May 2012, 10:12 pm

Active Regional Blogs: 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12

National Blogroll

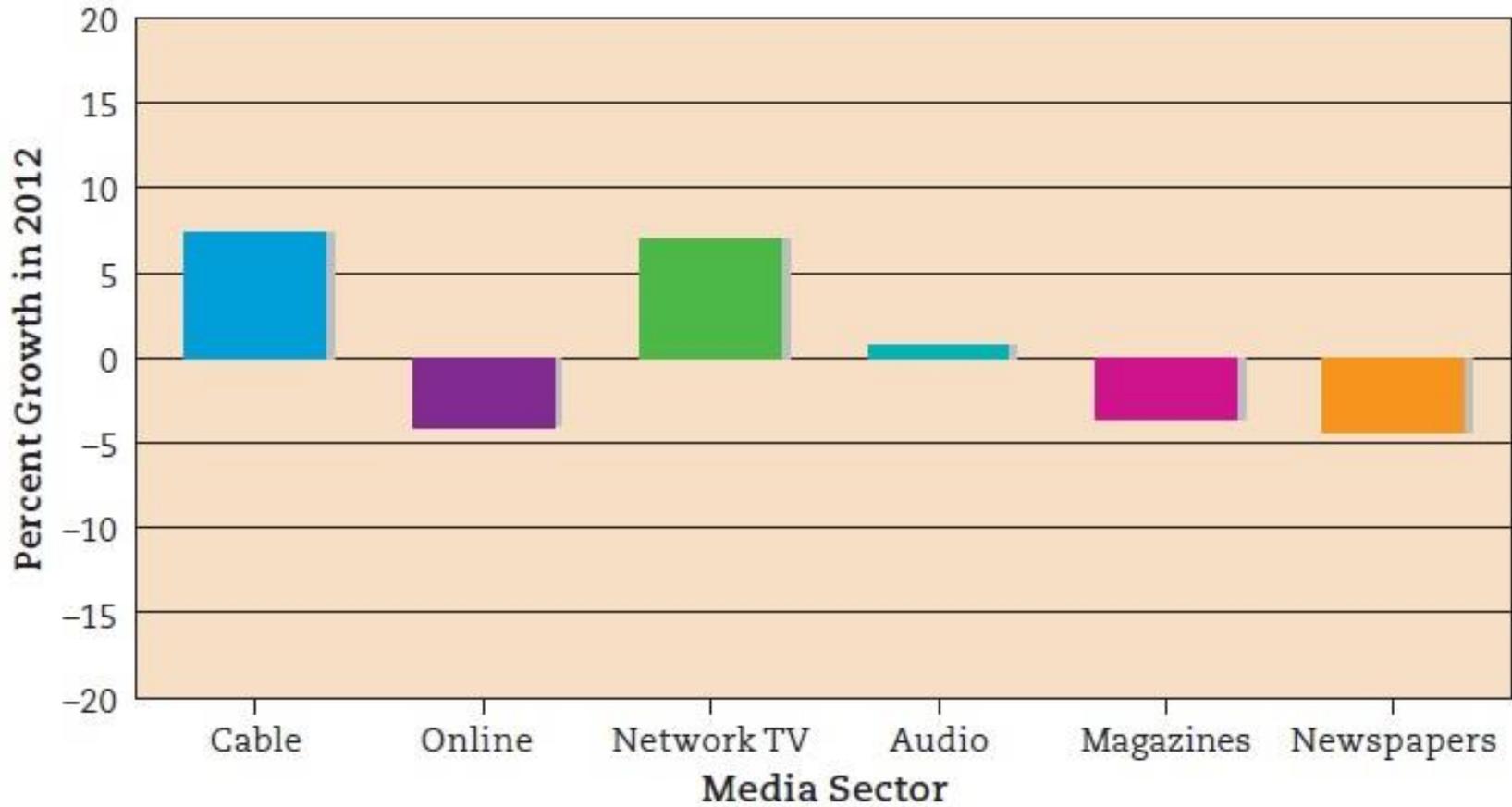
Blogs Challenge Newspapers' Authority Online

- Some mainstream journalists have blamed blogs for lowering journalistic standards.
- The blogosphere would argue otherwise, stating that it constitutes the “fifth estate,” monitoring journalists and raising standards.

Convergence: Newspapers Struggle in the Move to Digital

- Newspapers take advantage of the Internet's flexibility.
 - Unlimited space
 - Immediate updates
 - Links to related material
 - Multimedia capabilities
- Advances have yet to pay off.
 - Some papers are trying to establish a paywall.

Figure 8.2: Percentage Change in Ad Spending by Medium, 2012



New Models for Journalism

- New business model ideas
 - Developing new ventures
 - Support from wealthy universities and/or Internet companies
 - Newspapers as nonprofit entities
 - Public radio and TV focusing on local news
 - Universities becoming sources of news reporting
 - National Fund for Local News

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.



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?