

Media Aesthetics

## **07 Online News and the Future of Journalism**

# 01: Introduction: transforming news

- Between 2007 and 2010, at least thirteen major capital city newspapers in the US ceased publication, while many more went to online-only versions or to producing a print edition two to three times per week.
  - 1) declining print circulation (particularly among young people)
  - 2) the shift of classified advertising to the internet
  - 3) the rise of low-cost alternative online news outlets
  - 4) new forms of information media (citizen journalism, blogging, self-publishing)
  - 5) fundamental shifts in user behaviour towards accessing news content
- Substantial layoffs and restructuring at virtually all major commercial news organizations.
- Considerable structural costs associated with the transition to digital, due to the traditionally high fixed costs (plant and equipment, etc.)
- Online advertising revenues are considerably lower than print newspapers: \$7 is lost from the print sale, only \$1 is made up from the digital sale: online reader worth 10% of a print reader in terms of equivalent advertiser spend.

— **Benefits** of online media in news consumers worldwide

- 1) access to much wider range of sources of news, information, opinion, often at no cost to the reader
  - 2) access to international sources of news, information, opinion
  - 3) citizens to become the publishers of news, information, opinion
  - 4) critical and alternative voices to audiences through low-cost online publishing platforms
  - 5) comment on, distribute and share news stories by the former audience
  - 6) continuous, real-time sources of news and information
  - 7) citizens to contribute to news stories with new information, photos, etc. through social media platforms such as YouTube and Twitter
  - 8) fact check news stories against other online sources of information, one's own stories from multiple sources of information and data accessible at minimal or zero cost
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# 02: transforming journalism

- **Changes of recent journalism**

- 1) upto the 1990s: for a single outlet, lucrative advertising-based revenue model, highly profitable for decades, a monopoly, rarely interact directly with readers, viewers, or listeners

- 2) today, none of these things is true:

- not in the context of a single medium, but 'skillful storytelling knowing which medium is most effective'

- the collapse of boundaries of time: the internet and the 24-hours news cycle

- Who is a **journalist**: communication network for everyone's voice

- **Contemporary social role of journalism**

- 1) from 'new as a lecture' to that of 'journalism as a conversation': citizen journalism, networked journalism and computational journalism

- 2) will adapt to the internet as did to the telephone, the telegraph and the printing press

- **Professional ethic** that is lacking among those not trained in the organizational culture of newsroom journalism

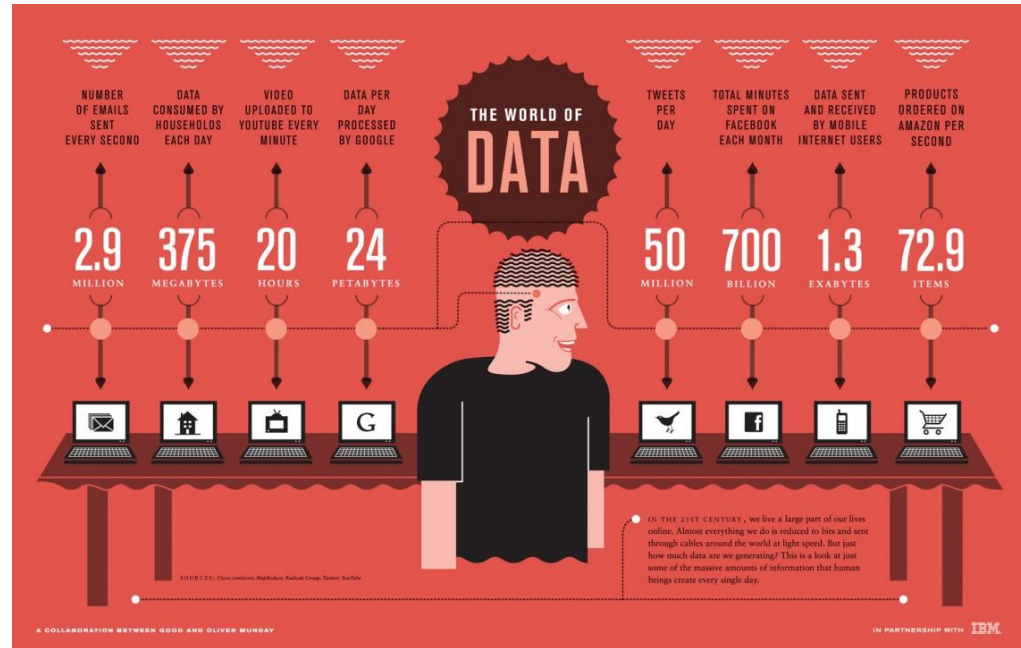
- ‘High modernist’ conception of the journalist as fearless truth seeker: From the 1970s to the 1990s was the peak period of high modernist journalism.
  - 1) inherent problems with the journalist as hero: ‘too close to the powerful institutions
  - 2) the commercial nature of most news
- New forms of journalism in dialogue with the wider public rather than mediating between political institutions and the mass public
- Elite information sources, high-status journalism have its own problems: 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq on WMDs
  - 1) government management of political communication, large-scale government advertising for selling new policies
  - 2) growing crisis of public trust

# 03: new forms of journalism

- 'There is no way to preserve or restore the shape of journalism as it has been practiced for the past 50 years'
- New times require new thinking

[? Keep the journalist spirit, or else] [1][2]

- [\[Interactive journalism\]](#)

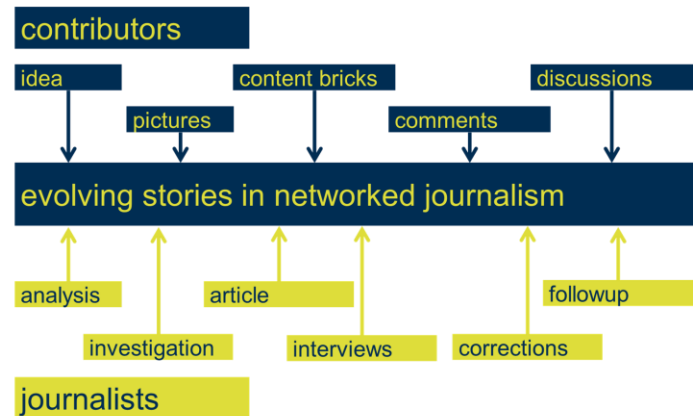


# 03-1: citizen journalism

- 'The act of a citizen, or group of citizens, playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information ... to provide independent, reliable, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires'
- Their sites as direct competitors to the news media
  - 1) <[DrudgeReport.com](http://DrudgeReport.com)>: Monica Lewinsky scandal 1988
  - 2) <[OhmyNews](http://OhmyNews)>: 2000, South Korea, 'Every citizen is a reporter'
  - 3) <[globalvoiceonline.org](http://globalvoiceonline.org)>: combine ongoing funding sources (the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School)
  - 4) [The Huffington Post](http://The Huffington Post): court action by activists for aggregating content for free from bloggers, or to pay a below-award rates to would-be citizen journalists
- [Other examples?]

# 03-2: networked journalism

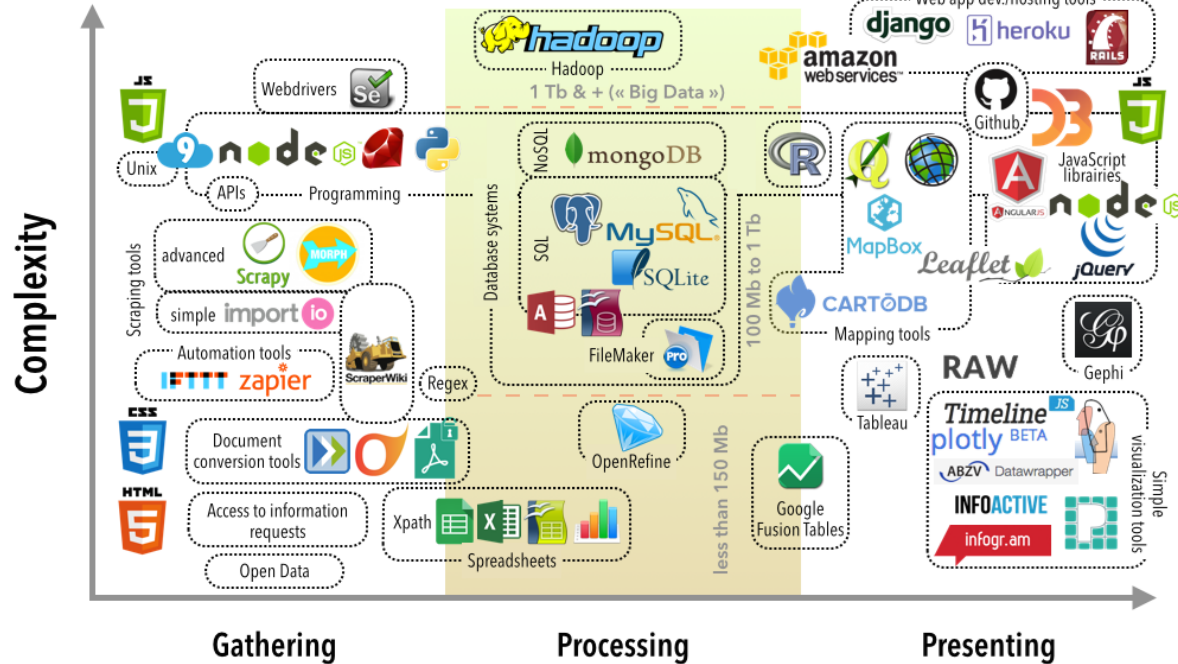
- 'Professionals and amateurs working together to get the real story ... to share facts, questions, answers, ideas perspectives' : the line between mainstream news journalism and citizen journalism as more of a continuum of practices
- Acknowledging the increasingly complex and multilayered information ecosystem that is the internet
- 'a return to some of the oldest virtues of journalism: connecting with the world beyond the newsroom; listening to people; giving people a voice in the media; responding as what the public tells you in a dialogue'
- Ideas from public broadcasters: BBC, ABC: user-generated content, professionals and amateurs collaborate across shared platforms
- [the problem of authority? Who is the author?]





# 03-3: computational journalism

## Computational Journalism Tools (2015)



# 03-3: computational journalism



# 03-3: computational journalism

- The application of computing to journalism [AI, Big data] [ref: [conversation map conference](#)]
  - 1) process such as searching, correlating, filtering and identifying patterns, which have long been undertaken by people, but can now be performed with much greater speed and accuracy by computational devices
  - 2) news gathering: sense-making, or the process of generating new knowledge (making sense)
- **Intelligent systems [helping or doing?]**
  - 1) fuse large amounts of data into succinct meanings
  - 2) process meanings in contextually relative ways
  - 3) enable humans to achieve insights from this data fusion and processing
  - 4) infer hypotheses that humans are considering
  - 5) enable people to have access to the intuitions of others
  - 6) present information in relevant ways that enhance the tacit knowledge of humans about the subject matter
- Opportunities
  - 1) crowdsourcing
  - 2) co-reporting: British MP's expenses claim 2013
- **Post-industrial journalism:** new ways of engaging the public and using computing tools to present information in news → lose revenue and market share

# Conclusion

- [www.journalism.org](http://www.journalism.org)
- [www.towcenter.org](http://www.towcenter.org)