

UBC ETEC 540 – Text Technologies

Assignment #2 - Video Documentary

Jurassic Press: the history of “penny newspapers” and what it is today

by Cathy Miyagi

Time (approx.)	Frame	Track	Script
0:55	Trailer		
0:10	STANDUP	S1	Introduction Ok, maybe that was a little too dramatic. But ask any aspiring journalist today and they’re likely not writing for one of these [show newspaper]
0:05	B-ROLL: dinosaur figurines	1	The days of the print journalism are dead, extinct!
0:14	STANDUP	S2	When’s the last time you’ve seen one of these? [show penny] Well with a penny, you used to be able to get one of these. [show newspaper] So how did this all start? What ever happened to penny newspapers?
0:15	ie. changes in media literacy practices, communication style or form	S3	This video will address how penny newspapers (as a technology), impacted mass literacy or vice versa. Most importantly, we’ll try to answer: “How did it change the social, political, or cultural norms we have today?”
0:03	Part 1: Origins		
0:15	Old newspapers Tabloids	2	Penny press newspapers made information accessible to the American middle class. But it wasn’t for the purpose of distributing news per se. It was for the coverage of crime, tragedy, adventure, and gossip (Thompson)... Kind of like today’s tabloids.
	Disclaimer		This video will explore penny newspapers within the American context.

0:14	Bourgeoisie image Washington Vote vote	3	Newspapers before the 1830s used to cost about 6 cents, which were subscribed by the educated, literate, elite class (Thompson). They were partisan; That is, backed by political parties.
0:17	Newspaper stock (op-eds & human interest stories)	4	So, one-cent newspapers became the go-to for the broader population; It became about covering news outside of government interests and attracting different demographics, which resulted in changes in newspaper content, structure, and the practice of journalism itself.
0:14	editorials smoking priest glory days	5	While news previously took on the form of editorials, penny newspapers allowed for nonpartisan reporting, an opportunity for reporters to write detailed stories of local interest that required local interaction.
0:14	The Globe newspaper boys	6	They were written in tabloid style with easy language to appeal to a broader audience. There was also increased physical circulation. We're talking about the era of the "newsboys" found on the street corners of New York.
0:30	Friedman's book review crudest form of journalism... sensational gossip	7	Barbara Friedman, a University of North Carolina professor at the School of Media and Journalism, cites Susan Thompson's book, <i>The Penny Press: The Origins of the Modern News Media</i> . She claims that penny press papers were the "crudest form of journalism" because of the sensational gossip that was reported. It adhered to the lower-class, or less educated readers. This then begs the question... How were such cheap newspapers sustainable or even profitable?
0:24	Ad 1 Ad 2	8	While its predecessors relied on subsidies from political parties or subscription revenues, the main source of revenue for penny newspapers was advertising. It became an advertising medium that targeted a new socio-economic class.

			And in doing so, this also paved the way for new categories of news coverage (Friedman) such as sports, business, and lifestyle.
	(show data viz)	8a	Here's a snapshot of the growth of daily newspapers in the U.S. from a Stanford study.
0:03	Part 2: The Influencers		
0:15	Influencer #1 – <u>Benjamin Day</u> (The Sun, 1833)	9	<p>It's said that Benjamin Day from New England was the first major driver of penny newspapers.</p> <p>He started <i>The Sun</i> during the 1833 depression.</p> <p>He defined what we call today, sensationalism – focussing on human-interest stories.</p>
0:18	Influencer #2 – <u>James Gordon Bennett</u> (The New York Herald, 1835)	10	<p>Then came James Gordon Bennett of the New York Herald.</p> <p>He introduced the practice of observation and interviews or what we'd call today, first-hand reports.</p> <p>So instead of getting news from physical documents, penny newspapers became even more popular, as more emphasis was put on the timeliness of news.</p>
0:12	Influencer #3 – <u>Horace Greeley</u> (The New York Tribune, 1841)	11	<p>Then came the era of bipartisan news, as mentioned earlier.</p> <p>Horace Greeley's editorials in the New York Tribune became the voice of the news, a platform to promote Republican views.</p>
0:16	Influencer #4 – <u>Henry Raymond</u> (The New York Times, 1851)	12	<p>Most notable of the founding fathers of penny newspapers was Henry Raymond of the New York Times.</p> <p>His paper incorporated the journalistic standards that are used today; That is, the concept of objectivity and impartiality.</p>
0:03	Part 3: So what?		
0:25	People walking	13	So in summary, it's quite ironic:

	Mercantile ads x 3		<p>Penny newspapers were both a cause & effect of working-class interests.</p> <p>Stories in penny newspapers were originally a-political with documents as the major source of “news”. So things like ship sailing schedules, food prices, and other mercantile information WERE the news...information that was only applicable to elite members of society (Thompson).</p>
0:14	<p>Poor newspaper boy</p> <p>Voting booth</p> <p>Bipartisan cartoon</p>	14	But as penny newspapers’ sensationalist reporting attracted the poor and uneducated, it quickly became a vehicle capable of gaining the critical mass necessary that supported a bipartisan American political landscape.
0:17	<p>Trump media</p> <p>(freedom of speech and press)</p>	15	<p>Then, in what became a bipartisan MEDIA landscape, the FREE PRESS was born as an essential element in maintaining the liberty and social equality of citizens.</p> <p>U.S. President Thomas Jefferson’s attitude towards a free press was, in fact, the foundation of the First Amendment of the Constitution.</p>
0:03	Part 4: Newspapers today		
0:13	Twitter clip on latest Postmedia layoffs	16	There are arguments that journalism has been reduced to “churnalism” whereby budget cuts in the newspaper industry resulted in a reduction in reporters and hence, lower quality news (Broersma 22).
0:21	<p>iphone scrolling</p> <p>phone in hand</p>	17	<p>But what is considered “newsworthy” content? And who determines this?</p> <p>Front-page news took into consideration things such as page placement, headlines, layout, font size, and the number of columns and sidebars (Schudson, 192).</p> <p>Today, this takes on the form of “click-bait”, but with control in the hands of the reader.</p>
0:19	B-ROLL: Social media	18	It is hard to ignore the power of digital cameras and cell-phones in documenting our world and occasionally changing it... It is also hard to ignore

			the inventiveness of some traditional news organizations in blending new media with the old, and in learning to enlist their audiences in research itself (Schudson, 197).
	B-ROLL: Zaid Noorsumar	VO	Zaid Noorsumar is a journalism student from Centennial College in Toronto. He just completed his internship at the CBC and the Canadian Press.
	INTERVIEW clips		
	FACT CHECK!		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 59% of boomers read newspaper content on digital devices 63% of millennials access newspaper content through social media (Vividata) <p>The U.S. Postal Act of 1792 codified subsidies up to 75% for news publishers (Cowan).</p>
0:05	My 2 cents		
0:49	STANDUP	S3	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The rise & fall of penny press newspapers describe journalism weakening more as an economic institution rather than as a profession.</p> <p>A journalist's job is to transform an interpretation into truth (Broersma 26), and into what I would describe as a relatable reality.</p> <p>Journalists extract newsworthy facts and ideas which are defined by how one can "fit them into the media formats and forms the public is familiar with" (Broersma 25).</p> <p>So in other words, I think it's fair to say that "the world needs to be reported on, but also explained" (Schudson 164).</p> <p>Reporting (and explaining) in Toronto, I'm Cathy Miyagi.</p>
10:05	Total Time (excluding credits)		

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