

Ch. 10: Mass Media



- *If the media is to serve well as information gatherers, gatekeepers, scorekeepers, and watchdogs, they must be free of government controls.*

The Party Press



- Parties create, subsidize and control various newspapers
 - A. Hamilton: Gazette of the U.S.
 - Republicans: National Gazette
 - T. Jefferson: National Intelligencer
 - A. Jackson: Washington Globe
- Circulation was small, subscription expensive, highly partisan

The Popular Press



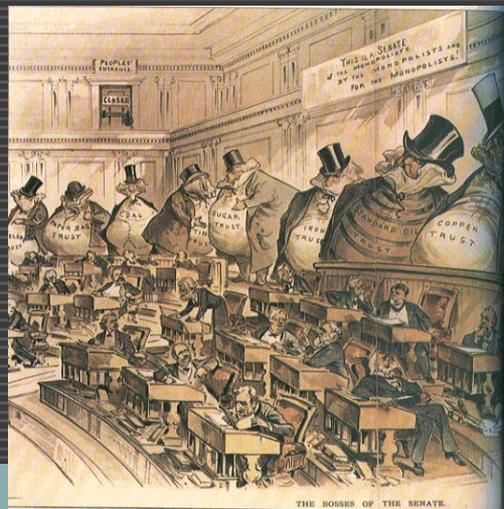
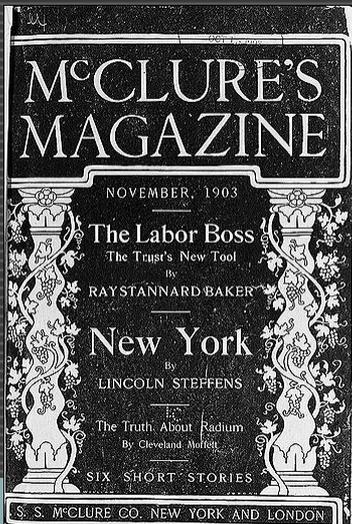
- Changes in society and technology...
 - High-speed press
 - Telegraph spread news nationally
 - Development of Associated Press – small sound bites, no bias
 - Concentration of people (urbanization) – “penny press”
 - Press became for profit – criticizing the govt. and/or business



Magazines of Opinion



- Middle class favored progressive papers
- Individual writers gain national following for investigation
- # of competing newspapers decline – leads to less sensationalism
- National magazines focusing on policy education



Electronic Journalism



- Radio – 1920's, Television – 1940's
- Advantage:
 - Public officials could speak directly to the people
 - No use for parties, editors, interest groups, advertisers, etc.
- Disadvantage:
 - People could tune you out (turn the channel)
 - Fewer politicians could be covered by new media
 - Shorter soundbites – “dumbing-down” of politics

The Internet



- Free market in political news
- Facilitates communication b/w voters and political activists
- Main avenue for campaign contributions
- Leads to misinformation
 - Everyone is a reporter
 - Competition for exclusive, immediate news

Trends in online politics

*Asked of those who went online for election news during that campaign:
What do you do when going online for election news? In parentheses, the total number of online political news consumers in that year's campaign.*

	1996 (7 million)	1998 (9 million)	2000 (34.5 million)	2002 (26 million)	2004 (63 million)
Research candidate positions on issues	--	--	24 million	21 million	34 million
Get or send email with jokes about the election	--	--	--	8 million	32 million
Research candidate voting records	--	3 million	11 million	12 million	20 million
Take online polls	2 million	2 million	12 million	10 million	18 million
Find out about the endorsements or ratings of candidates by organizations	--	--	--	10 million	16 million
Get information about when or where to vote	--	1 million	5 million	6 million	14 million
Join political discussions and chat groups	2 million	1 million	3 million	3 million	6 million
Contribute money to a candidate online	--	--	2 million	1 million	4 million

Source: Pew Research Center for The People & The Press and Pew Internet & American Life Project surveys.

Presidential Campaign Donations in the Digital Age

10% of 2012 presidential campaign donors have contributed via text message or cell phone app. Democrats are more likely to contribute online or directly from their cell phone, while Republicans are more likely to contribute in person, by phone call, or via regular mail.

Aaron Smith
Research Associate, Pew Internet Project

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Among the 13% of adults who have donated to one of the presidential candidates in this year's election:

67% donated in person, over the telephone, or through the mail

50% donated online or via email

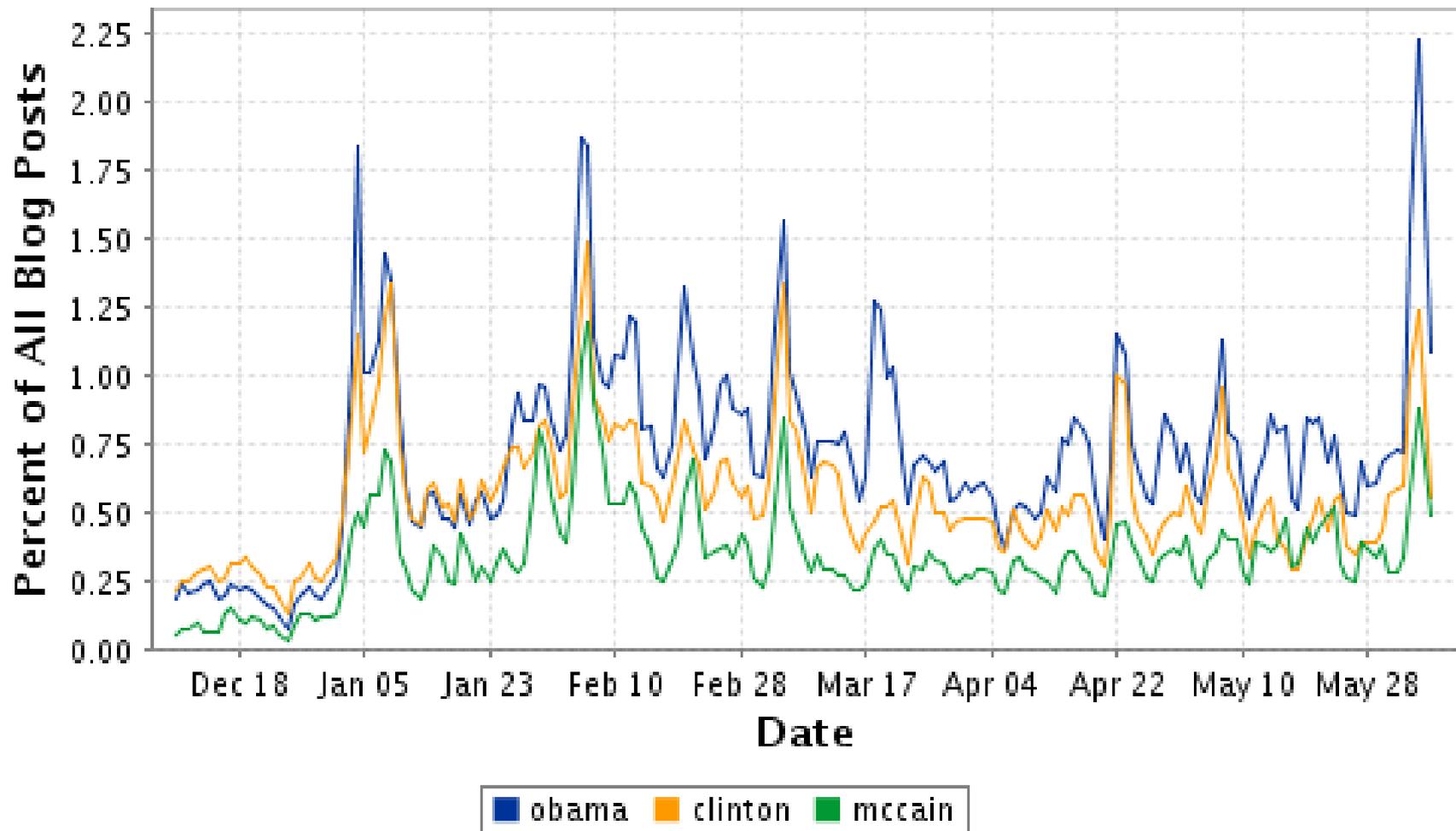
10% donated by sending a text message from their cell phone or using a cell phone app

87% of Republican campaign donors have contributed in person, by telephone, or via the mail;
57% of Democratic donors have contributed in this way.

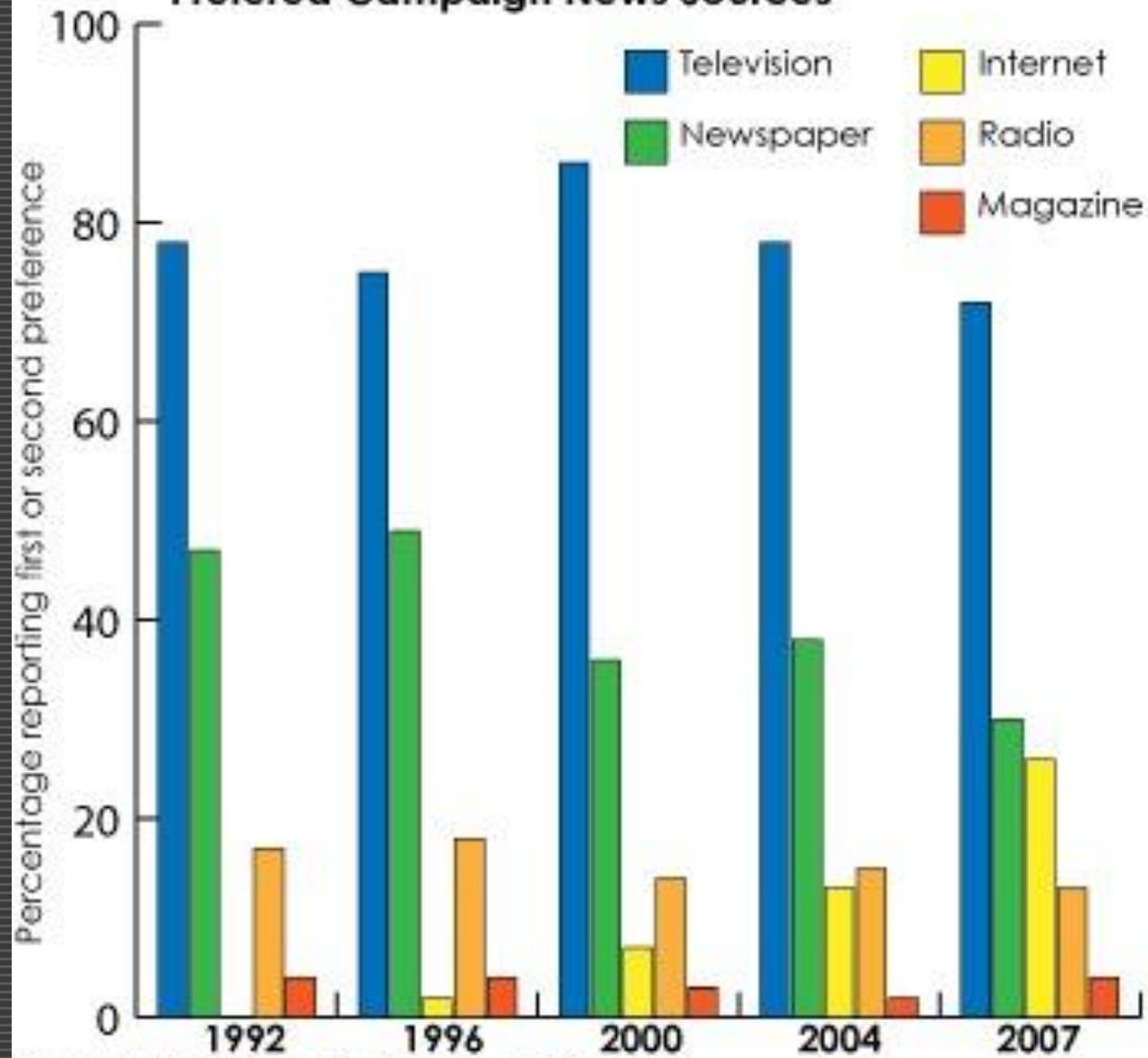
57% of Democratic campaign donors have contributed online or via email, compared with 34%
of Republican donors.

15% of Democratic campaign donors have contributed via text message or cell phone app,
compared with 6% of Republican donors.

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Preferred Campaign News Sources



Source: Pew Center for the People and the Press

Degree of Competition



- With so many sources
 - Newspapers, radio, television, websites, blogs, Twitter and other social media, Reddit. etc.
- Newspapers are declining
- Newspapers and internet are more competitive
- U.S. Press is locally owned
- FCC regulates ownership

The National Media



- Consists of: AP, National magazines, television networks, Newspapers
- Significance: Washington follows it closely
- National Reporters: better paid, more liberal, better educated, investigative

Roles Played by the National Media



- Gatekeeper: determine national political issues
- Scorekeeper:
 - 1) Elections are covered like horse-races
 - 2) Media momentum is crucial
 - 3) Watchdogs – uncover political scandals

Rules Governing the Media



- Newspapers are free from govt. regulation
- Radio and television are licensed and regulated
- Confidentiality:
 - Reporters rights vs. state and federal rights



Regulating Broadcasting



- FCC licensing: seven year for radio, five for television
 - 1) Equal time rule
 - 2) Right of Reply rule
 - 3) Political Editorializing rule
 - 4) Fairness Doctrine

Campaigning



- Equal time rule applies
 - Equal access for all candidates
 - Rates no higher than cheapest commercial rates
 - Debates had to include all candidates

Leaks in the Media



- Constitution – branches compete
- Adversarial press since Vietnam, Watergate
- Cynicism toward government created era of attack journalism

Sensationalism



- Intense competition means that each has a small share of audience
- Sensationalism draws an audience and is cheap
- Reporters don't check sources as carefully

Free-Response Questions



- 1) According to Wilson and DiLulio, “Important changes in the nature of American politics have gone hand in hand with major changes in the organization and technology of the press.” Identify TWO changes that have occurred as a result of technology, and describe the impact of those changes on the media’s coverage of politics.



- 2) Although the United States has one of the freest presses in the world, the media are still subject to some constraints. Identify and explain two formal constraints on the media.