



A History of News

By Mitchell Stephens

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What is news? Why are we so eager to exchange it? Why does it so often seem sensational? How does the way news is gathered and presented affect our politics and our lives? *A History of News*, Third Edition, provides an extended, international history of journalism that ranges from preliterate societies to the digital age. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of news and provides unique insights into contemporary journalism. Author Mitchell Stephens, an accomplished writer and media critic, analyzes news in all of its manifestations--spoken, written, visual and digital--from an international perspective. For the third edition, Stephens has broadened the scope of the book's international coverage, expanded the section on television news, increased coverage of women and minorities and added new material on the Internet and the digital revolution. The book also features an updated timeline, questions at the end of each chapter and new boxes, many of which underline connections between older news systems and issues in contemporary journalism.

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A History of News By Mitchell Stephens Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Humankind has always been interested in news, notes New York University journalism professor Stephens, and in this impressive work he shows how that interest has been satisfied. Although it is impossible to provide examples of the oral transmission of news from preliterate societies before the third millennium B.C., the author demonstrates it in action among primitives in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thence he moves to handwritten news, sometimes in personal letters, sometimes in public notices, like the *acta* posted and copied in ancient Rome and the newsletters written in Renaissance Venice, which were the immediate predecessors of newspapers. News in print followed quickly after the invention of movable type and newspapers proliferated, until they began to be supplemented, if not supplanted, by the electronic media. This solid history is made even more absorbing by such sidelights as the universal fascination with gossip, gore and the supernatural and trenchant observations about the relationship between society and the news it consumes.

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From Library Journal

Traditional accounts of journalism tend to move from one historically important paper to another, but Stephens (journalism, New York University) breaks that mold. He proffers a broader social focus on the changing form and function of news and gives us the world view, not just that of America. He deftly traces news from primitive societies to early modern Europe up through electronic media today. His final chapter, "A Surfeit of Data," perceptively and concisely sums up the gains and losses of our current journalistic forms. His version also is less trenchant and analytical than Michael Schudson's similarly focused *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (Basic, 1978). Very useful for college journalism curricula. Daniel Levinson, Thayer Academy, Braintree, Mass.

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Review

"...a deft tour through the history of news. From oral news systems to handwritten bulletins to the Gutenberg press to news ballads to newspapers to radio and television, he doesn't miss a beat.... He has given the news and those who disseminate it a degree of legitimacy previously unsuspected by or of them, and he makes a powerful case for treating "the news" as seriously as any other aspect of common human interest and endeavor. "A History of News" is in all respects first-rate, and original, work."

-- Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post*

"...a lively and original historical introduction...There is a particularly useful account of the development of reporting...; and at every stage Mr. Stephens's wide knowledge of his subject furnishes him with striking facts and analogies."

-- John Gross, *New York Times*

Praise for previous editions:

". . . thorough, scrupulous, and witty. . . *A History of News* is in all respects first-rate, and original, work."--Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post*

". . . as a critical historian, his analysis is not only astute, but often elegant and even downright poignant . . . a book indispensable for its lucid demonstration that the news, while promising enlightenment, also promotes confusion."--Mark Crispin Miller, *New York Times Book Review*

"Stephens has produced a study of the concept of 'news' from prehistoric times to our own, and the book succeeds as a thoroughly accessible work about the history, anthropology, economics, psychology, and practical techniques of journalism."--Jonathan Kirsch, *Los Angeles Times*

"Stephens . . . has given us an insightful and very different look at our communication past. . . . We do not have another communication history like this. . . . Perhaps we should make our students dive deeper. Perhaps we should ourselves. This book does."--Donald Lewis Shaw, *Journalism Quarterly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jaime Leflore:

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Joey Mendoza:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their sparetime with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book can be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the book untitled *A History of News* can be great book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

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People live in this new day time of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the extra time or they will get lots of stress from both daily life and work. So , if we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not really a robot. Then we inquire again, what kind of activity are there when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer can unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, the book you have read will be A History of News.

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