

# Chapter 1

## From Tom Paine To Blogs And Beyond

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## Our First Amendment Rights: Freedom of Speech

Our first amendment rights, especially our right to free speech are among the most paramount liberties this world has ever seen.

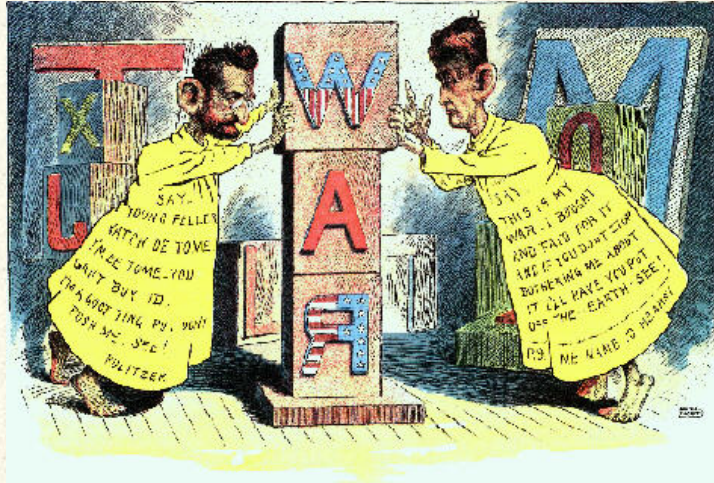
Our entire news industry, our radios, television broadcasts, newspapers, our online sites are only possible now that we have secured these important liberties.

Thomas Jefferson even went as far as to say that given the choice between government and newspapers he would choose the news.

Do you think that it is possible to have an unbiased, accurate news force in a country that does not have freedom of speech?

If not, what does this mean for international news?





Pamphleteers, Yellow Journalists and Mudruckers

Pamphleteers: A breed of activist, using their literal skills to promote or refute social/political issues. Tom Paine is of course an an example of one such pamphleteer.

Does anyone know what he is most famous for writing?

Common Sense urged the congressional government to publish a constitution and separate from the Monarchy-based oppression of the British.

Yellow Journalists: Are journalists that downplay legitimate news in favor of eye-catching headlines that sell more newspapers; sometimes, it deceives the audience it is intended for.

Mudruckers: More than most journalists of the era, muckruckers performed the public service function by exposing a variety of outrages, including the anticompetitive predations of the robber barons and cruel conditions in workplaces.

Do you think the pamphleteers, yellow journalists and mudruckers are still present in today's population of journalists?

How do these three groups differ? How are they similar?



Newspapers rapidly became the standard in news. The news industry in the United States was revolutionary in many ways and part of this can be attributed to the post office.

In the early to mid-1800's the United States had the best post service in the world, this was crucial to the timely, cheap, reliable delivery of news to our people on a regular time schedule.

In the present time both newspapers and the post office are not doing as well... The post office is currently in a state of disaster with mounting debt and difficulties.

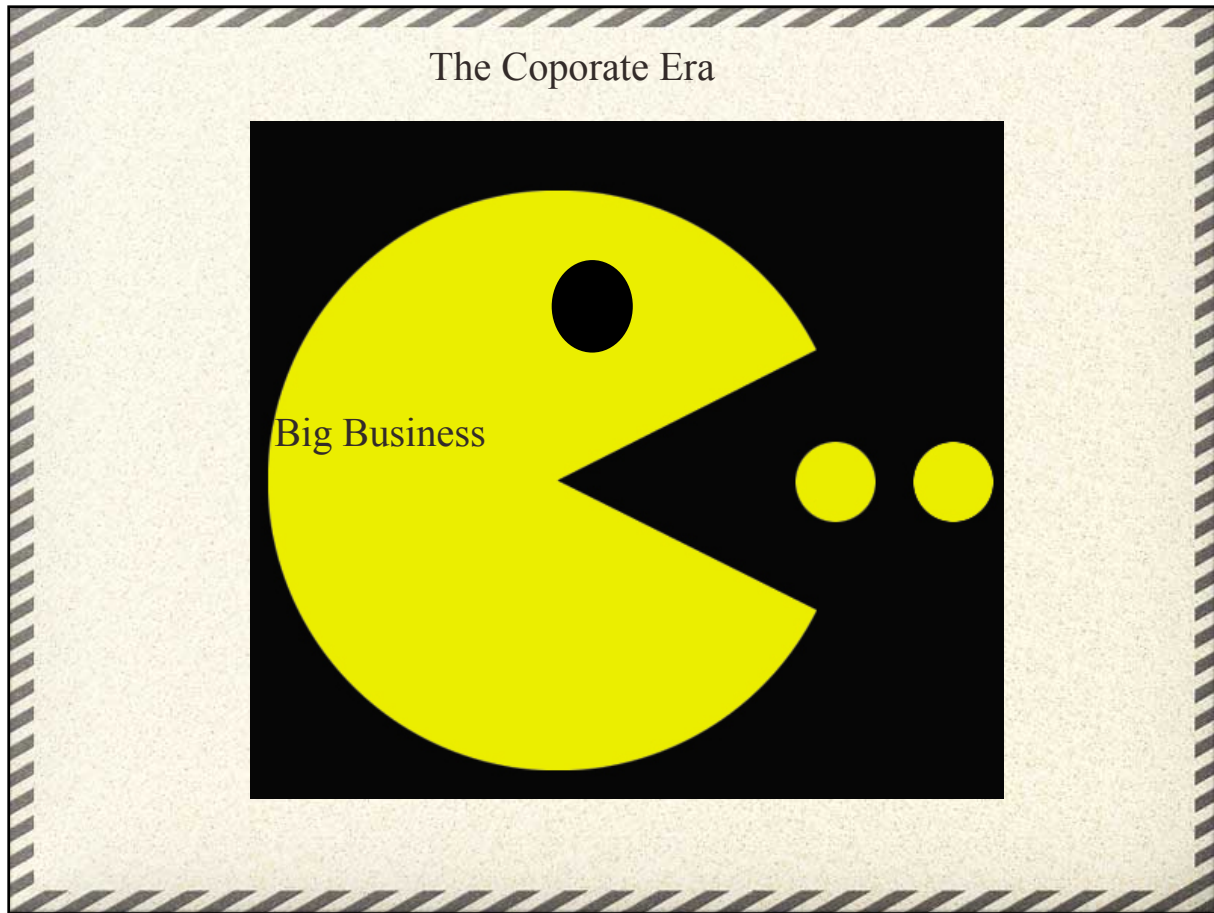
The government is looking into ways to revive the post office and is considering cutting down the number of delivery days per week.

The newspaper industry is facing similar difficulty as consumers turn to other sources to get their news.

What do you think the future of the newspaper business will be like?

Do you think the entire news industry will be digitized and there will be no more paper publications?





In the 20th century the newspaper business, and really the news industry in general, increasingly saw big businesses take over. Whether it was a partnership between two firms or a larger company eating up a few smaller ones... the newspaper business saw many large companies take control.

What do you think the end result of all this consolidation is?

Is it better for the overall news industry to have many smaller voices or just a few large ones?

From Outside In

ARPANET



Ma Bell  
American Telephone and Telegraph

The government funded a research and development program which ultimately led the precursor to the modern internet.

Named ARPANET, which stood for Advanced Research Projects Agency Network, this network dated back to the 1960's when it was originally thought up.

Later there were issues surrounding AT&T concerning a potential monopoly on their MA Bell network. After a court ruling they were order to let 3rd party companies and individuals use their previously established phone infastructure.



### Gillmor's (First) Epiphany

Gillmor had his first internet-based epiphany when he ran into trouble using some of his software on his Osborn personal computer.

This was back in 1985, ancient history in the world of computers.

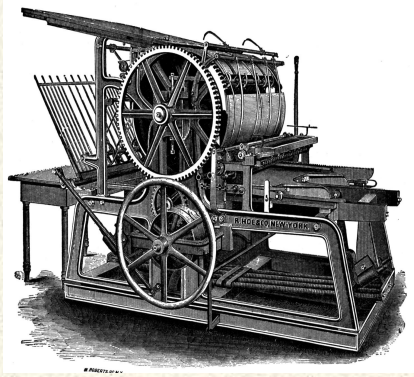
So what does he do?

Keep in mind there is no dell help-hotline, no Apple Genius bar, and no online instruction manual for the software...

So he posts a question on a forum of sorts, not really expecting too much to materialize only to find when he revisited the next day that he had gotten helpful responses from people all over the country and even as far away as Australia.

In response to this we wrote: "I was amazed. I'd tapped the network, asking for help. I'd been educated. This, I knew implicitly, was a big deal."





Printing Presses to Printers...  
Music Studios to Macs...



Some of the other beneficiaries of the internet and the digital era are small musicians and publishers.

Previously the only way to print, even a tiny publication was to use a printing press which only the wealthiest businesses could own.

Nowadays there are table-top printers that can easily do the work of these industrial giants.

The same goes for musicians who wish to record and create their own music... instead of large recording studios it is now possible to record and mix your own music on a computer.

Can anyone think of any other benefited from all the new technology, the internet especially?





## Radio Talk Shows

Radio Talk shows began to take shape and became increasingly popular.

Viewers could call in and comment on issues they found interesting or noteworthy. This type of radio-listener interaction dates back as far as 1945.

Before Radio talk shows citizens that felt the desire to comment or discuss the news directly with the news organizations had to write out a letter to a newspaper, send it, wait for the next issues of the paper, hope that an editor had gotten their letter, skimmed through the paper to see if their had been any response or acknowledgement of the letter then either resend another hand written copy or respond if the paper was kind enough to comment on the letter.

Of course these days if we are online reading the Boston Globe and we want to comment we scroll to the bottom of the page and add a comment... it's just that easy.

## Opening the Door...



In 1990, Tim Berners-Lee created the hypertext technology that became the World Wide Web. He wrote software to serve, or dish out, information from connected computers, and a "client" program that was, in effect the first browser.

He also helped catalyze the invention of Hypertext Markup Language which essentially allowed those with a modest understanding of coding to create and link web documents and pages.

The single most important thing that Lee did surrounding the internet was his choice not to patent his invention(s)... this allowed the internet to be what it is today, accessible to all, open to and free...



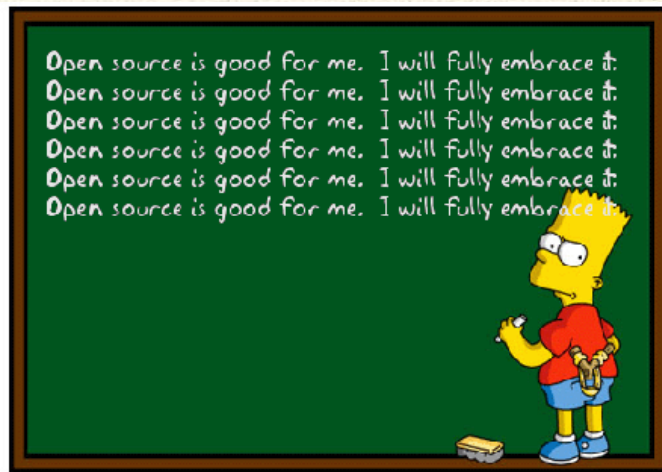
## OPEN SOURCE

More Efficient

More Effective

More Reliable

Much Safer



Open source software came about in the 1980's. It all began in January 1984, when Richard Stallman left his post at MIT's Artificial Intelligence division to develop new technology to make the internet more transparent.

The original version of the internet had what Gillmor describes as black boxes which while the user might be able to discover the function of one of these boxes it was impossible to know exactly how it worked.

While this may not seem extraordinarily hindering in fact it was.

From a safety standpoint the internet became much safer when it became clear what exactly a given mousclick would result in.

Another key aspect of this relates back to some of our previous studies.... think back to our discussion regarding the intelligence of the group compared to the intelligence of an individual.

In most cases a group of people will always be able to produce a better product than even the smartest individual, the internet is no different.

With open sourcing on the internet came the ability to edit or in some cases correct the flaws left unseen by others. The internet has in many ways



Gillmor argues that in many ways September 11th was the launching pad for our modern news system. With citizen bloggers coming out in full force to voice their opinions, experiences, and thoughts.

Videos were circulated on the internet, as well as photos and audio clips. For the first time all the tools in the grassroots arsenal were being put to use simultaneously for the same cause.

Maybe if there were one thing positive that came out of this tragic event was that the community at large united together and in so doing were able to create a lasting record of the events through mighty blogger and internet journalist work.