

## **Last time: Today's news environment**

- Previous generations – news came mostly from established local & national news outlets
- Now – an ocean of information
- Instant coverage (or expectation of it)
- Professional and non-professional
- Participate, not just consume
- Less established news hierarchy
- More difficult to stand out
- More opinion-driven material
- More difficult to know what to believe

# Human nature vs. basic needs

- Theory of Technological Determinism
- Scholarly research: Technology constantly changes, but human nature does not
- Need to communicate with others
- Desire to learn, apply knowledge
- Form communities/societies – work together
- Share stories through generations
- Basic impulse – spread the word

# Newspapers

- The only major news medium for many decades
- Competition – most major cities had many papers
- Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century – build circulation – as much about entertainment as news
- ‘Yellow Journalism,’ ‘Stunt Journalism’
- Began to have competition from magazines (investigations, ‘muckraking’)
- 1920s – turned toward professionalism – established ethical standards – Pulitzer Prizes
- For decades – self-policing profession – ‘objectivity’
- Eventually other media got into news business

# Breaking news: Extra editions

- Before electronic media, only way to follow fast-developing news
- Small four-page editions devoted to main story
- Assassinations, wars, deaths, accomplishments
- Big stories – people would gather outside newspaper offices, waiting for updates
- ‘Extra! Extra! Read all about it’
- Became less necessary with newer media

# Breaking news: Extra editions

Our Weather Man



47TH YEAR 36 Pages—4 Sections and Comic Section Decatur, Illinois, SUNDAY MORNING, May 22, 1927 \*\*\* FIVE CENTS

## LINDBERGH REACHES PARIS

### Wild Celebrations Mark End of Flight

#### Whole World Rejoices With Youthful Flyer

Paris Shouts "Magnificent"; St. Louis Goes Mad With Joy; Washington Crowds Cheer; New Yorkers Dance When News Arrives

PARIS, May 22.—"Magnificent, stupendous," was the cry in Paris when the news was flashed that Lindbergh had actually turned the trick, and the hundreds on the boulevards were as hoarse as the horns of the bull. The news was greeted by a storm of cheering and waving of flags. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move. The news was greeted by a storm of cheering and waving of flags. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move. The news was greeted by a storm of cheering and waving of flags. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move.

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#### MEN ATTEMPT TO SLASH DIKE TO SAVE HOMES

Unnamed Persons Seek to Divert Flood Current to Other Side

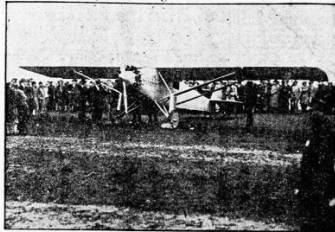
WATERS STILL RISE  
BAYTON, La., May 22.—A group of men were seen attempting to cut a dike in the bayou between the town and the water. The dike was built to protect the town from the water. The men were seen with tools and were working on the dike. The water was rising and the town was in danger. The men were seen with tools and were working on the dike. The water was rising and the town was in danger.

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#### "Lucky" Lindbergh Starts for Paris



The Spirit of St. Louis, piloted by Lindbergh, on the first of the three New York to Paris flights. The plane is seen on the tarmac, ready for takeoff.

LINDBERGH LIFE IS NOT UNUSUAL  
Started Farming, Went to College, Took Up Aviation  
NEW YORK, May 22.—The life of Charles Lindbergh is not unusual. He was born in a small town in Wisconsin. He went to college and then to aviation. He was a pilot and a farmer. He was a pilot and a farmer. He was a pilot and a farmer. He was a pilot and a farmer. He was a pilot and a farmer.

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### AMERICAN AVIATOR MAKES FLIGHT IN 33 HOURS, TO BED

Huge Crowd Welcomes International Hero of Air; "So This Is Paris; I Did It," Are Youth's Words On Arrival.

PARIS, May 22.—Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh, the young American aviator, who hopped off from New York Friday morning alone in his monoplane, arrived in Paris Saturday, safe and sound, as everyone hoped he would. The sandy-haired son of the Middle West dropped down out of the darkness at Le Bourget Park at 10:21 o'clock Saturday night (5:21 p. m., New York time) only 34 hours after leaving Long Island—the first man in history to go from New York to Paris without changing his plane.

The young American is so popular here that he was greeted by a huge crowd of people. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move. The news was greeted by a storm of cheering and waving of flags. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move. The news was greeted by a storm of cheering and waving of flags. The crowd was so dense that it was impossible to move.

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Mad Butcher Who Killed 43 Buried in Hole

"FLYING KID" PLANS FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA

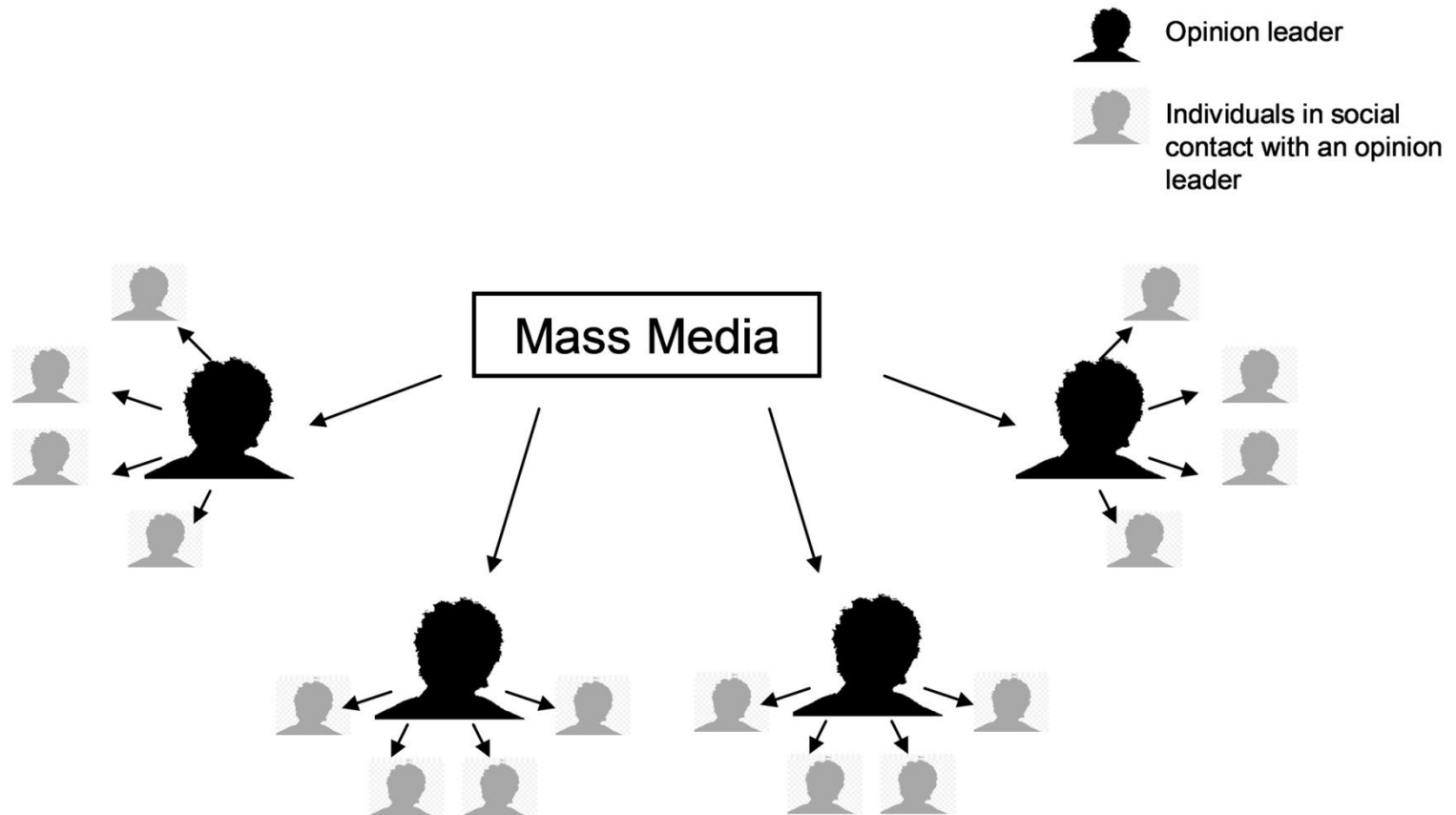
## Newspapers – Professionalism

- Competition from magazines, other new media
- Audiences tired of sensationalism, absurdity
- Pulitzer Prizes begin 1917, 6 years after death
- Moved (mostly) away from partisanship
- Sheer size, daily schedule allowed depth, variety of coverage
- Established credibility in spite of limitations

## Different media take up news

- Movies – gained popularity in 1910s and forward
- Originally just for entertainment
- 1920s-30s – newsreels – moving images
- Radio – first emerges in 1920s
- 1926 – first radio network – NBC – primarily an entertainment medium
- Could cover breaking stories live w/audio
- Competition with newspapers, but also alliances
- Still, newspapers reigned as main source of news through first half of 20th Century

# Two-step flow model



Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955

# Technological earthquake: Television

- First networks - 1948
- Exploded in popularity in 1950s
- Not much of a factor in news until 1960s
- Key event: JFK assassination
- Evolution – videotape, satellites
- Anchors emerged as trusted news sources
- Newspaper circulation & ad revenue fell

# How television changed news

- Primarily an entertainment medium
- Television news had to adopt elements of other TV programming – get ratings, ad revenue
- Emphasis on video, visuals, emotion
- Emphasis on immediacy over depth
- Easier to process quickly and peripherally
- Audiences shifted preferences
- Newspapers scrambled to adapt
- Politicians shifted media strategies

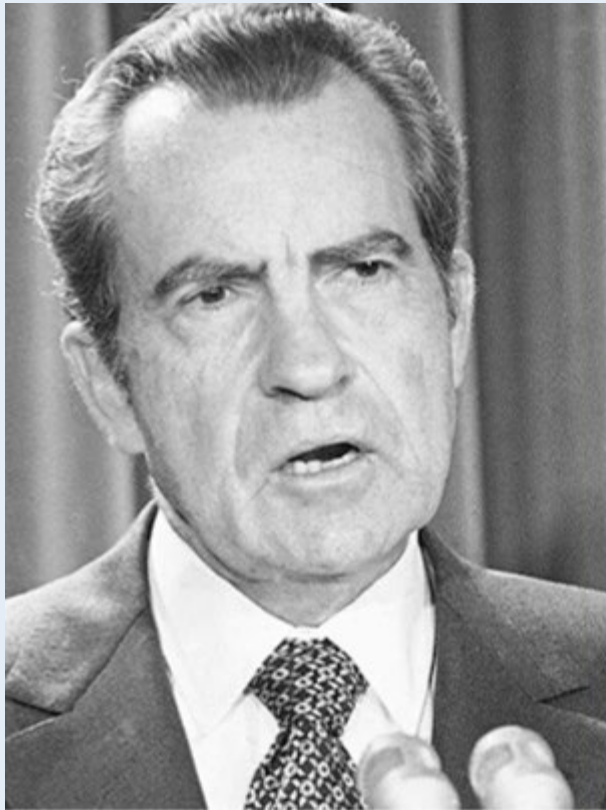
**Important moment in  
history of American political  
communication:  
January 1968**

## Mike Douglas Show: January 16, 1968



# **Mike Douglas Show: January 16, 1968**

**Guest:**



**Richard Nixon**

**Producer:**



**Roger Ailes**

## Nixon and Ailes, 1968



# Ailes' media strategies for Nixon

- Humanize him through TV ads and appearances
- Limit press exposure to controlled events
- Carefully craft simple campaign messages
- Place Nixon in telegenic settings
- Use surrogates to criticize opponents
- Portray his followers as 'real Americans'
- Paint news media as elite, liberal, out of touch
- Continued strategies later with Reagan, Bush

# Roger Ailes



**Political consultant, 1968-92**  
**Co-founder, Fox News**

# Concept of 'Fake News'

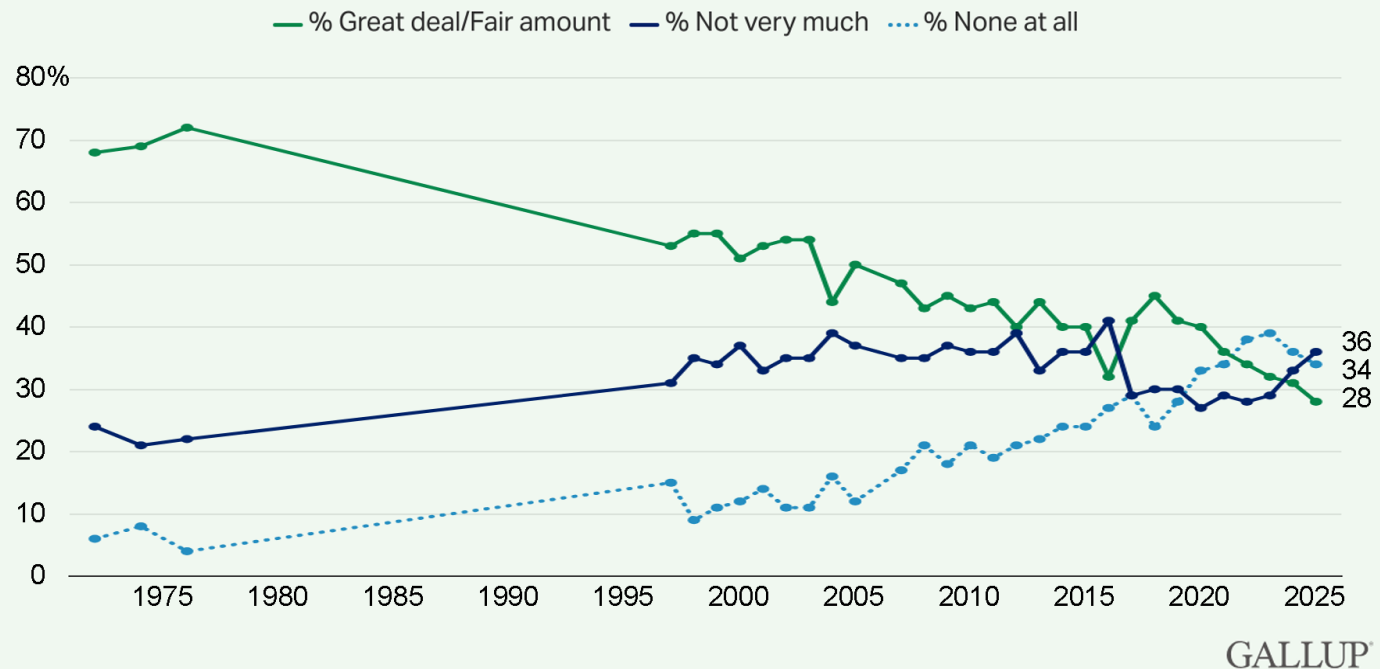
- False/misleading info reported as legitimate news
- Nothing new – Yellow Journalism of late 1800s full of sensationalism & fabrications designed to sell papers
- Digital Age – anyone can publish anything with no fact checking – can spread untrue info, mislead audiences
- Saturation – people don't know who/what to believe
- Echo Chamber effect – audiences only follow outlets that publish stories that reinforce their beliefs
- People gradually believe more & more bizarre things about perceived enemies – sites push conspiracy theories
- Most well-known example – Pizzagate
- Politicians use term to their advantage – call anything that makes them look bad 'fake news' even if it's true

## Why does this matter outside of politics?

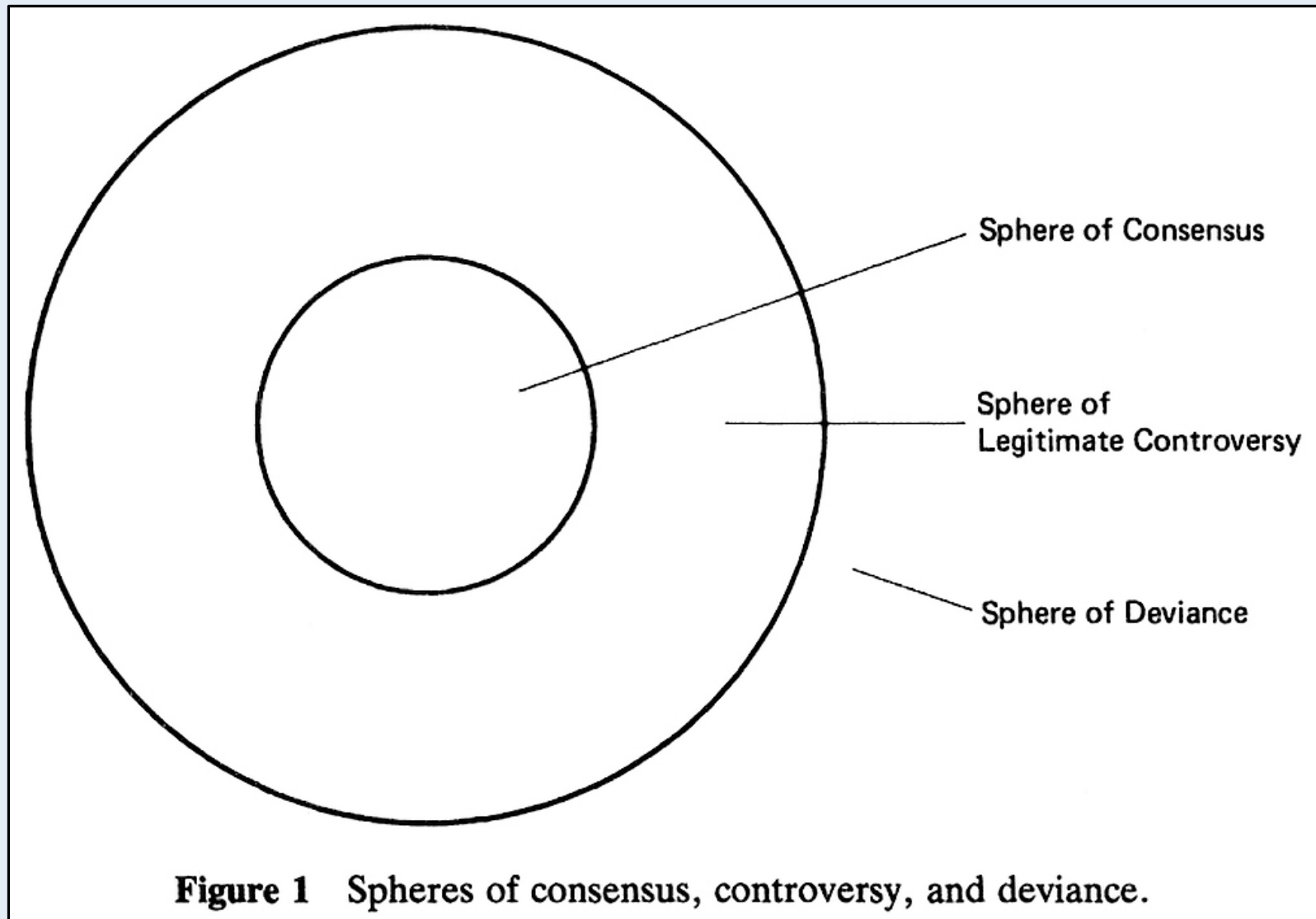
- Timing – newspapers already losing readers to TV
- Took advantage of existing social divides
- Challenged journalism's credibility
- Institutionalized distrust of news media
- Created 'us vs. them' narrative
- Turned huge swath of populace against media
- Anti-media narrative continues to this day

## Americans' Trust in Mass Media, 1972-2025

*In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media — such as newspapers, TV and radio — when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly — a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?*



**Gallup Poll: Trust in Media at New Low of 28% in U.S.**



[Dan Hallin, UC San Diego: Spheres](#)