Y490 POLITICS OF THE INTERNET

December 3, 2009
“Traditionally, this type of analysis focuses on how economic inequalities based upon ownership and control serve to narrow the range of media content available in market-based societies.”

Source: Chadwick, p. 290.
Three Schools of Thought

- **Strong political economy approach**
  - Media should be seen as directly servicing a wider system of material production (consumer capitalism)

- **Weak political economy approach**
  - Greater role for individual leadership in the media industries (e.g. Bagdikian)

- **Instrumental approach**
  - How owners and political elites use the media as instruments of ideological mobilization (e.g. Chomsky)
Top Global Web Sites (2009)

- Google
- Facebook
- Yahoo!
- YouTube
- Windows Live
- Wikipedia
- Blogger.com
- Baidu.com
- Microsoft Network (MSN)
Top 10 ISPs

- SBC (AT&T) (business and consumer DSL, U-Verse, and satellite—ISDN not disclosed) 14.8
  - [October 22, 2008] Press Release [.xls]
  - 15.4%

- Comcast (cable broadband) 14.7
  - [October 29, 2008] SEC 10-Q
  - 15.3%

- Road Runner (cable broadband, both business and residential) 8.6
  - [November 5, 2008] Trending Schedules
  - 9.0%

- Verizon (FiOS and DSL) 8.5
  - [October 27, 2008] Press Release [.xls]
  - 8.8%
  - 5

- America Online (all U.S. AOL brand accounts) 7.5
  - [November 5, 2008] Trending Schedules
  - 7.7%

- EarthLink (DSL, dialup, cable, satellite, PLC, and webhosting—some other business lines not included) 3.0
  - [October 31, 2008] SEC 10-Q
  - 3.1%
  - 7

- Charter (cable broadband) 2.9
  - [November 6, 2008] SEC 10-Q
  - 3.0%
  - 8

- Qwest (DSL only) 2.8
  - [October 29, 2008] Press Release [.xls]
  - 2.9%
  - 9

- Cablevision (cable broadband) 2.4
  - [November 6, 2008] SEC 10-Q 2.5%
  - 10

- United Online (counting paid access only) 1.5
  - [November 10, 2008] SEC 10-Q
  - 1.5%
Decline of Newspapers?

- Last year was the worst on record for the U.S. newspaper industry. Total advertising revenues (both print and online) declined 16.6 percent to $37.85 billion, according to the latest figures from the Newspaper Association of America. That is $7.5 billion less than in 2007. Print advertising alone declined 17.7. Classifieds were down 29.7 percent. And even online advertising was down 1.8 percent to $3.1 billion.

Online readership is growing but overall readership is down according to the Pew Research Center.
Closing of Newspapers

- At least 120 newspapers in the U.S. have shut down since January 2008, according to Paper Cuts, a Web site tracking the newspaper industry. More than 21,000 jobs at 67 newspapers have vaporized in that time, according to the site.

Open Source Software

- A set of principles about how to write software in which source code is available to others for the purpose of improving it
- Pioneers: Eric Raymond, Richard Stallman, Linus Torvalds (Linux)