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Beyond News: The Future Of Journalism (Columbia Journalism Review Books)



Synopsis

For a century and a half, journalists made a good business out of selling the latest news or selling ads next to that news. Now that news pours out of the Internet and our mobile devicesâfast, abundant, and mostly freeâthat era is ending. Our best journalists, Mitchell Stephens argues, instead must offer original, challenging perspectivesânot just slightly more thorough accounts of widely reported events. His book proposes a new standard: "wisdom journalism," an amalgam of the more rarified forms of reportingâexclusive, enterprising, investigativeâand informed, insightful, interpretive, explanatory, even opinionated takes on current events. This book features an original, sometimes critical examination of contemporary journalism, both on- and offline, and it finds inspiration for a more ambitious and effective understanding of journalism in examples from twenty-first-century articles and blogs, as well as in a selection of outstanding twentieth-century journalism and Benjamin Franklin's eighteenth-century writings. Most attempts to deal with journalism's current crisis emphasize technology. Stephens emphasizes mindsets and the need to rethink what journalism has been and might become.

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the most enjoyable books I've read in a year or two. Well, actually, I got the audio version and listened to it (the narrator was excellent). It was everything I hoped it would be: entertaining with great stories along with an overall picture of the news business and its history for a

couple of hundred years. I really enjoyed his treatment of tough issues such as ethical dilemmas as well as his clear--though sympathetic--treatment of current issues and the challenges facing the news today. I think anyone concerned with government, politics, or just being a good citizen would enjoy this and benefit from it--immensely.

Mitchell Stephens(professor at NYU) has written an important, erudite critique of contemporary print (newspaper) journalism in order to save it from irrelevance. Losing revenue and readers/viewers (online), newspapers are fighting to survive in a media world given over to opinion, both intelligently informative and blindly partisan. He wants to update objectivity, the writing formula that insists on taking quotes from both sides, using highly-placed sources, collecting facts (who, what, where and who, rarely why) and omitting the opinion and judgment of the journalist. Just-the-facts journalism doesnâ™t excite readers who are left with little understanding of what the facts mean. Gathering facts and presenting them clearly remains important, but Stephens wants âœwisdom journalism,â • in which journalists are allowed to provide informed, intelligent, interpretive and insightful perspective on current events. Every journalism professor, journalist, editor, and serious student ought to read this compelling book.

Let's hope that after reading this book numerous people in the news industry and professors responsible for students studying media will take the advice and run with it. You get a great perspective on where journalism needs to go to survive. Stephens is dead on when he calls for a change from reporting to "sense making". Here is the method to reinvent journalism.

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