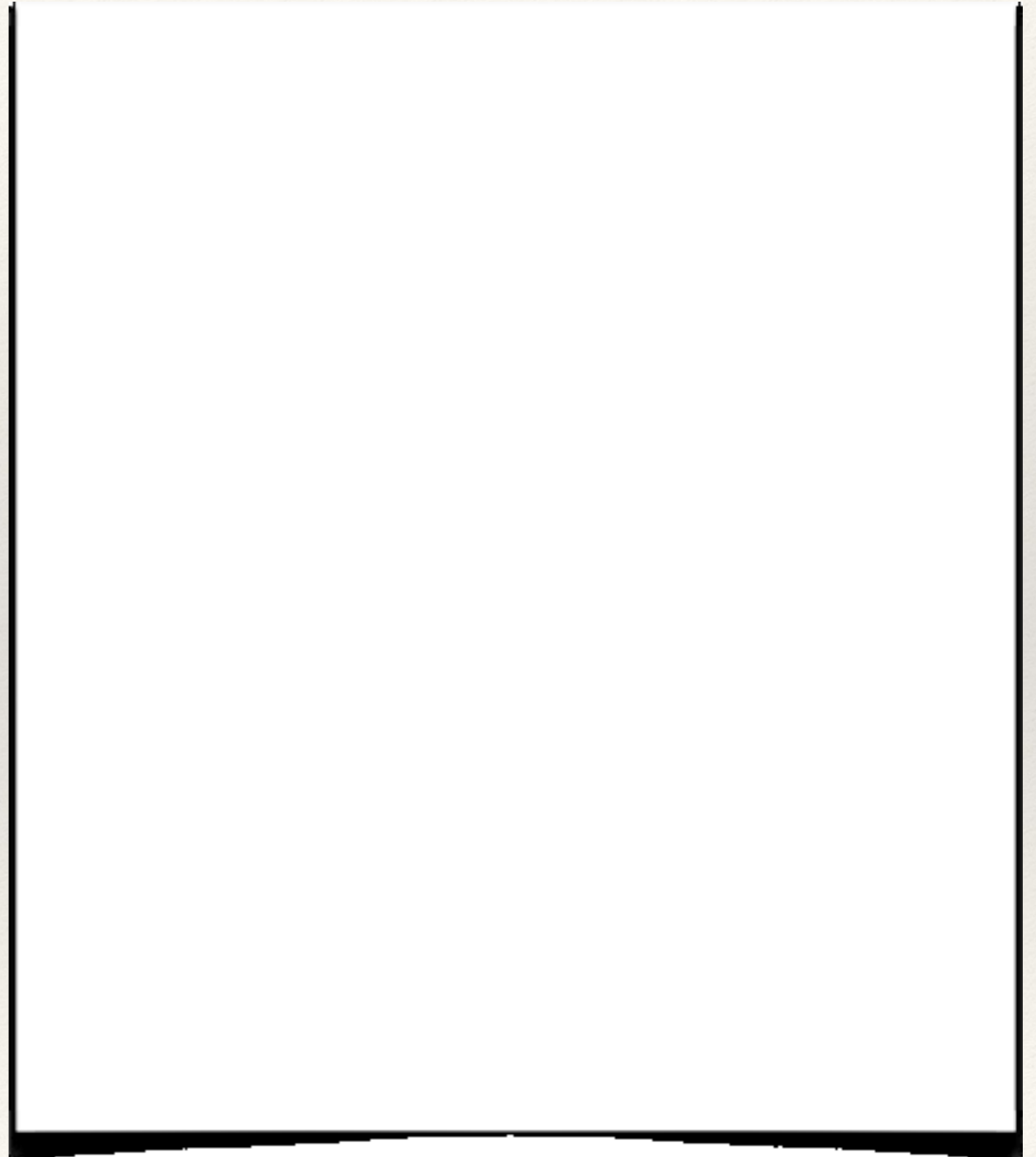

The Nature of Mass Media - A Theoretical Perspective

**Past, Present and
Future**

Henry Loeser PhD

Natural Law

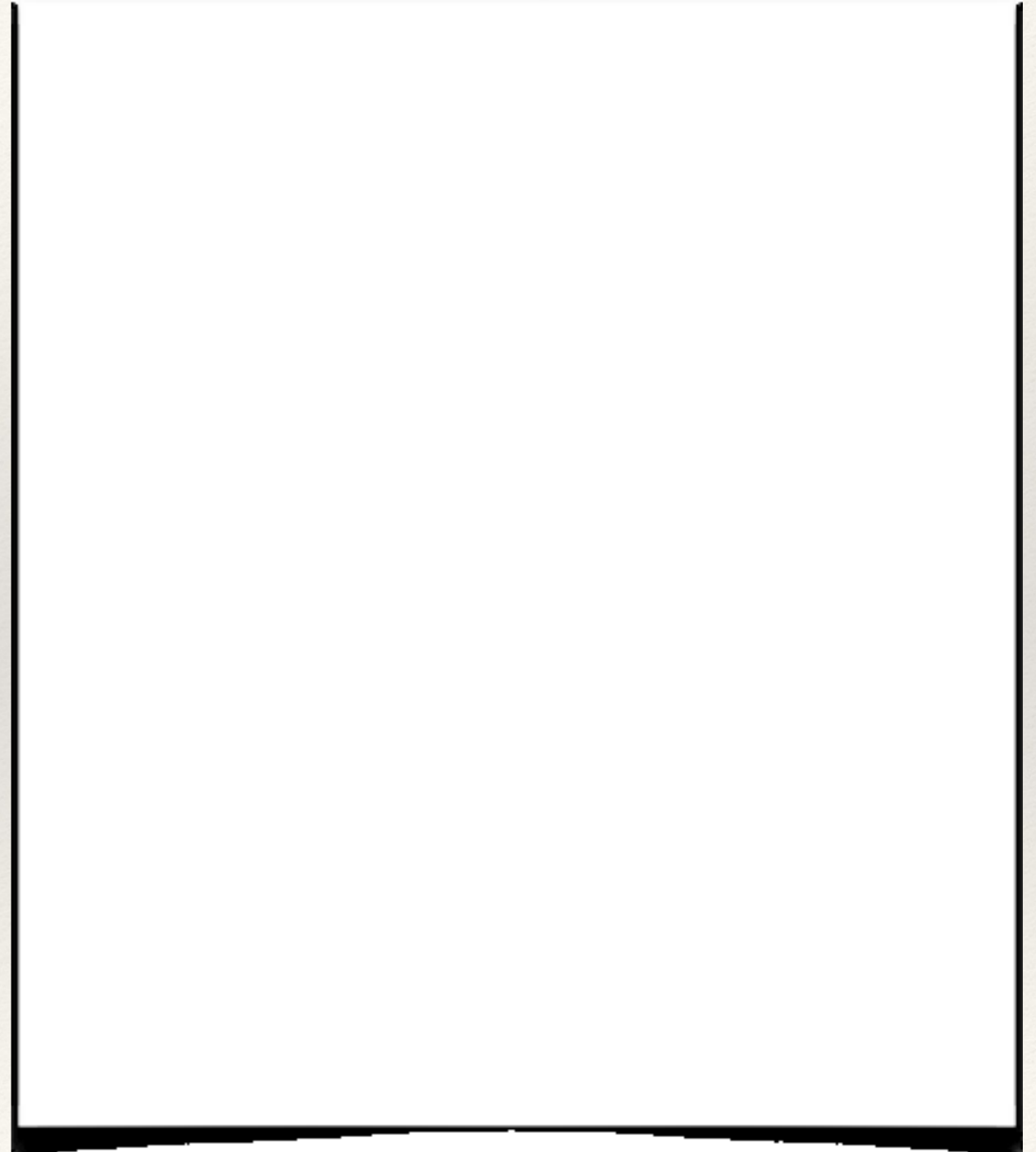
- ❖ Structure of Nature
- ❖ All living things seek utility
- ❖ Nurture (Rationality)
- ❖ Communication



Human Evolution

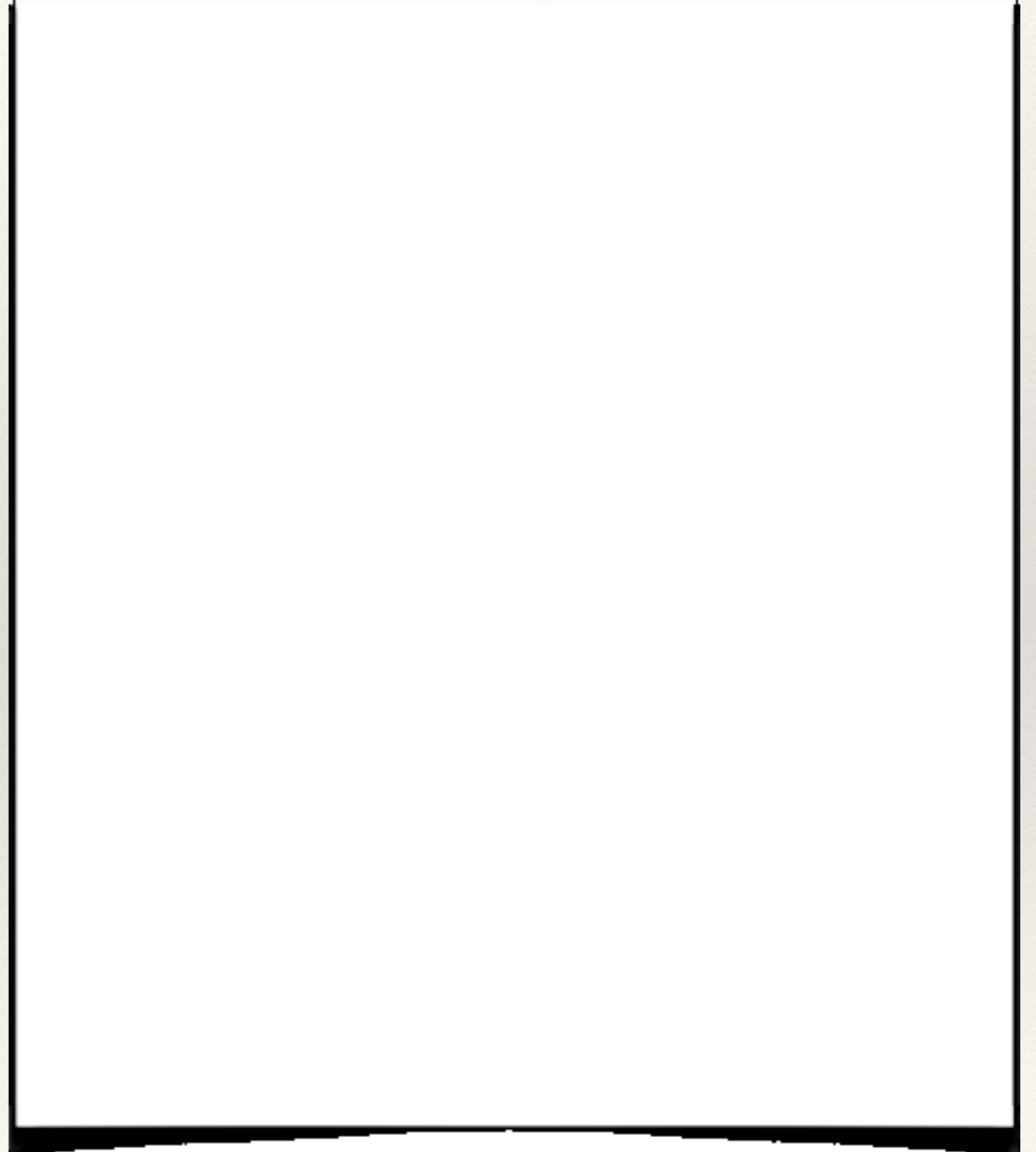
- ❖ Groups
- ❖ Symbolic Interaction
- ❖ Language

- ❖ ***"We shape our tools, and thereafter, our tools shape us." -Marshall McLuhan***



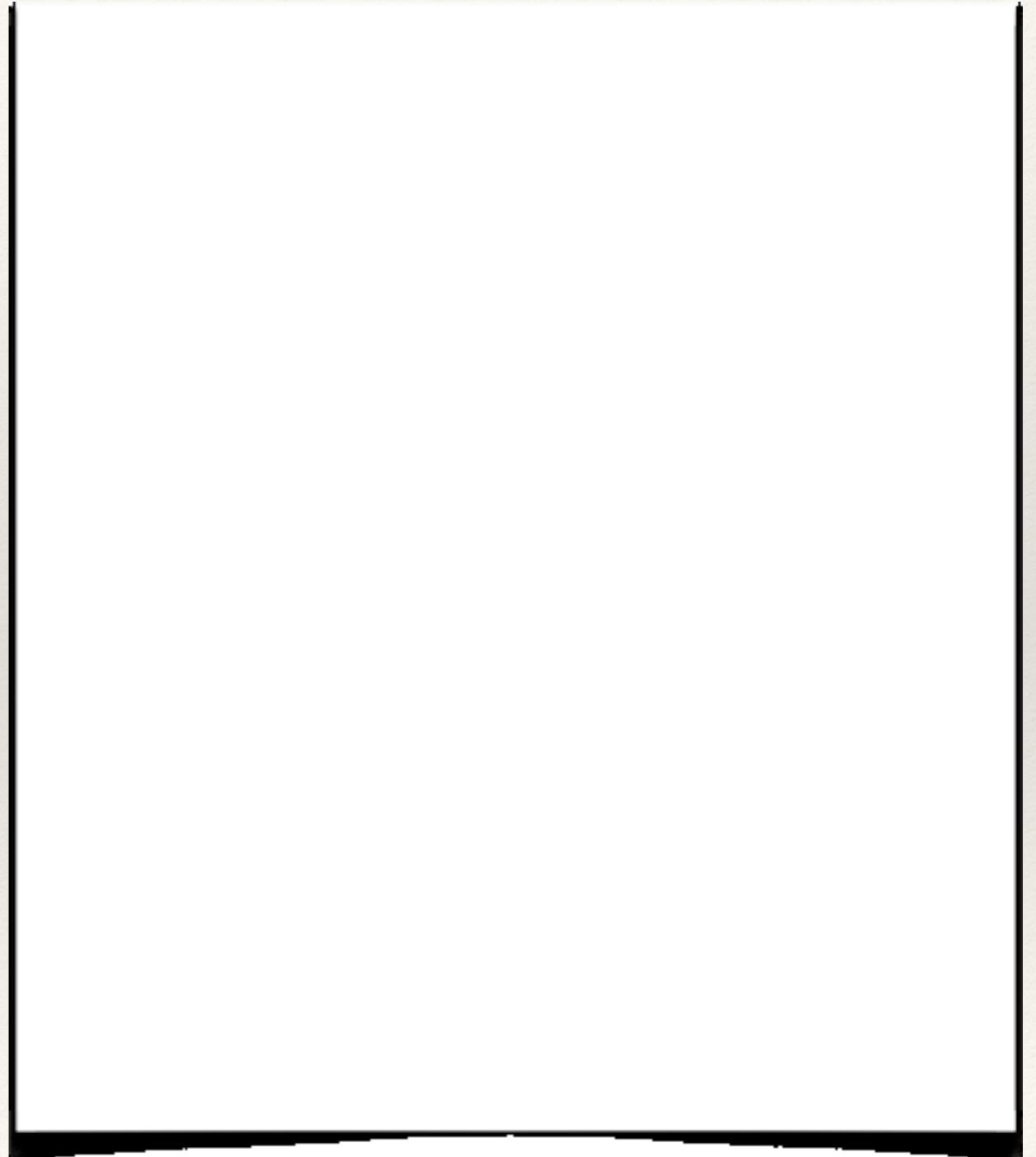
Forming Societies

- ❖ Specialization
- ❖ Agency vs. structure
- ❖ Mass Communication



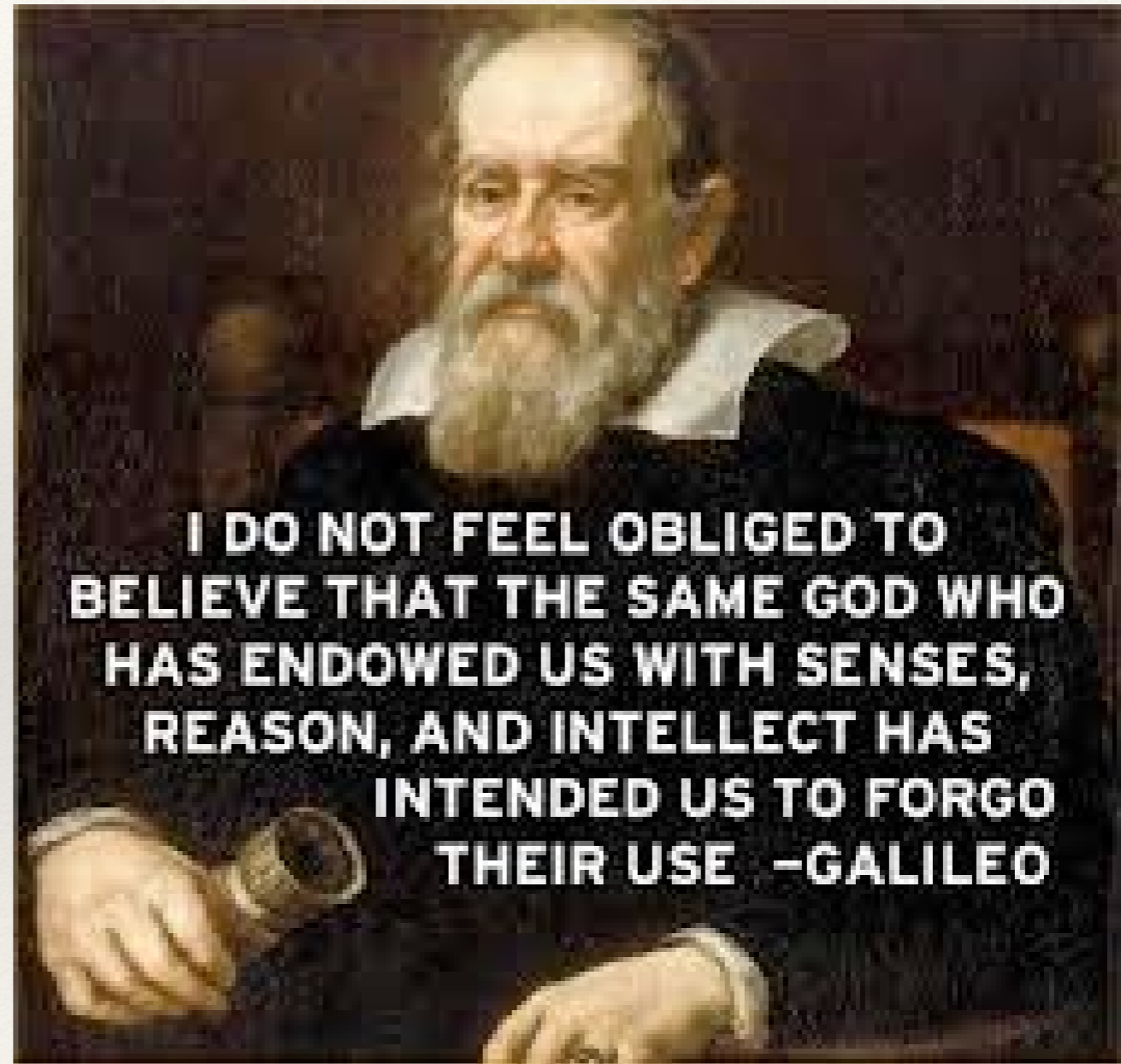
Medieval Europe

- ❖ Feudalism
- ❖ Dual authoritarianism of monarchy and church
- ❖ Culture
- ❖ Rise of merchant class media



Enlightenment

- ❖ Science & technology
- ❖ Secularism

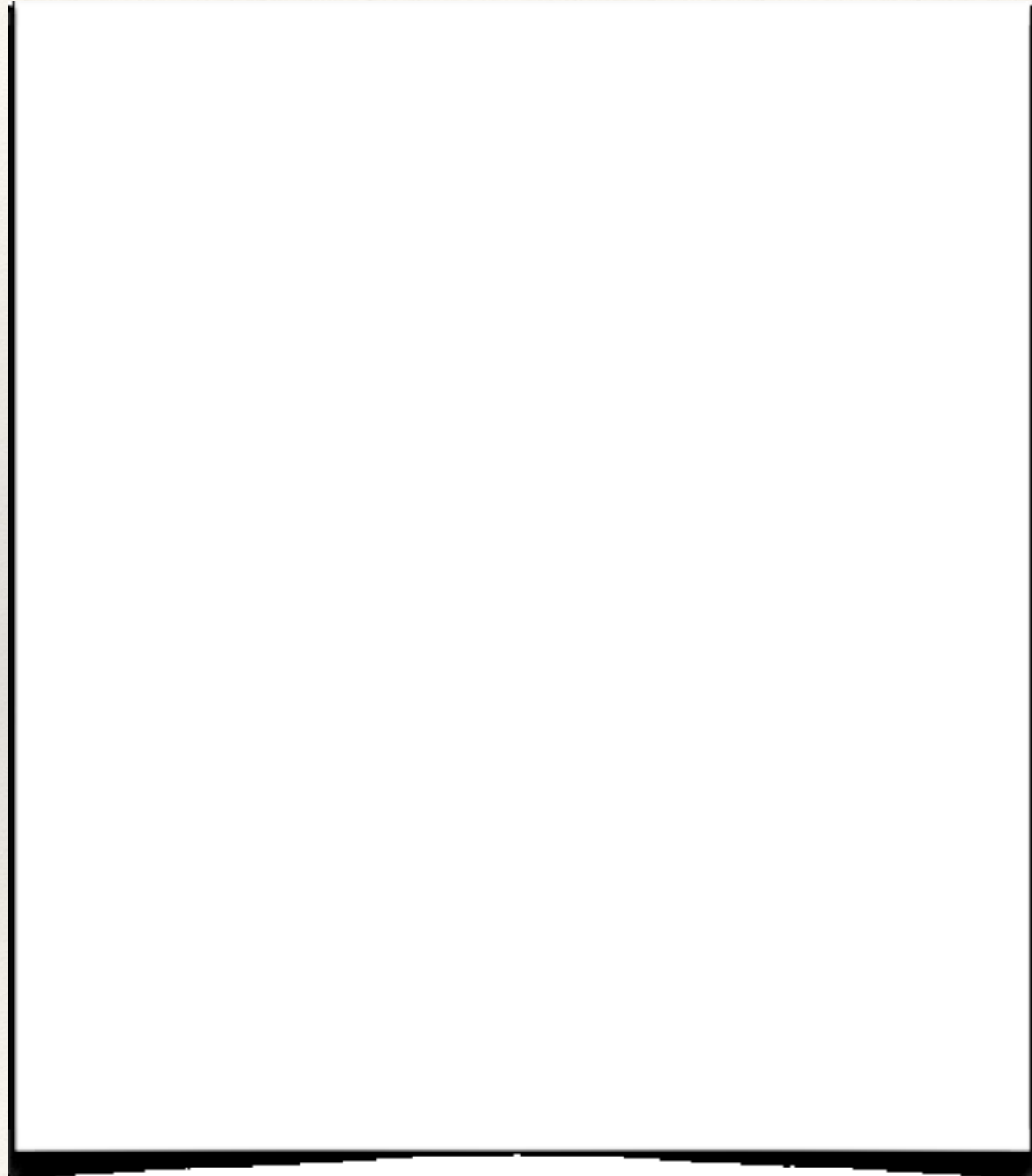


Epistemology

- ❖ - knowledge
- ❖ - logic /rationalism
- ❖ - value
- ❖ - aesthetics

Modernity

- ❖ Urbanization
- ❖ Democracy
- ❖ Mass Media forms



Social Sciences

- ❖ Individual - Psychology
- ❖ Groups - Sociology, Economics, Political Science
- ❖ Positivist (Natural Sciences, mathematics)
- ❖ Interpretivist (Symbolic interpretation / critique)

Sociology

❖ Structure

- ❖ - Spencer: "each feature, custom, or practice, its effect on the functioning of a supposedly stable, cohesive system"
- ❖ - Giddens: "the pre-eminence of the social world over its individual parts (i.e. its constituent actors, human subjects)"

Civil Society

- ❖ Aristotle: “koinōnía politike” (society apart from family & government)
- ❖ Hegel: “burgerliche gessellschaft” (citizens’ society)
- ❖ Heller: “mosaic of identities”
- ❖ Habermas: “communicative action in possibility spaces”
- ❖ Bourdieu, Giddens: “media reproduces culture in civil society”

Civil Society

- ❖ a segment of society apart from commerce and government occupied by individuals and groups in public life outside the home, encompassing their cultural, ethical, political, and/or religious interests
- ❖ Culture
- ❖ Politics

Conflict Theory

- ❖ Dysfunctional society
- ❖ Agency vs. Structure
- ❖ Legal alternativism

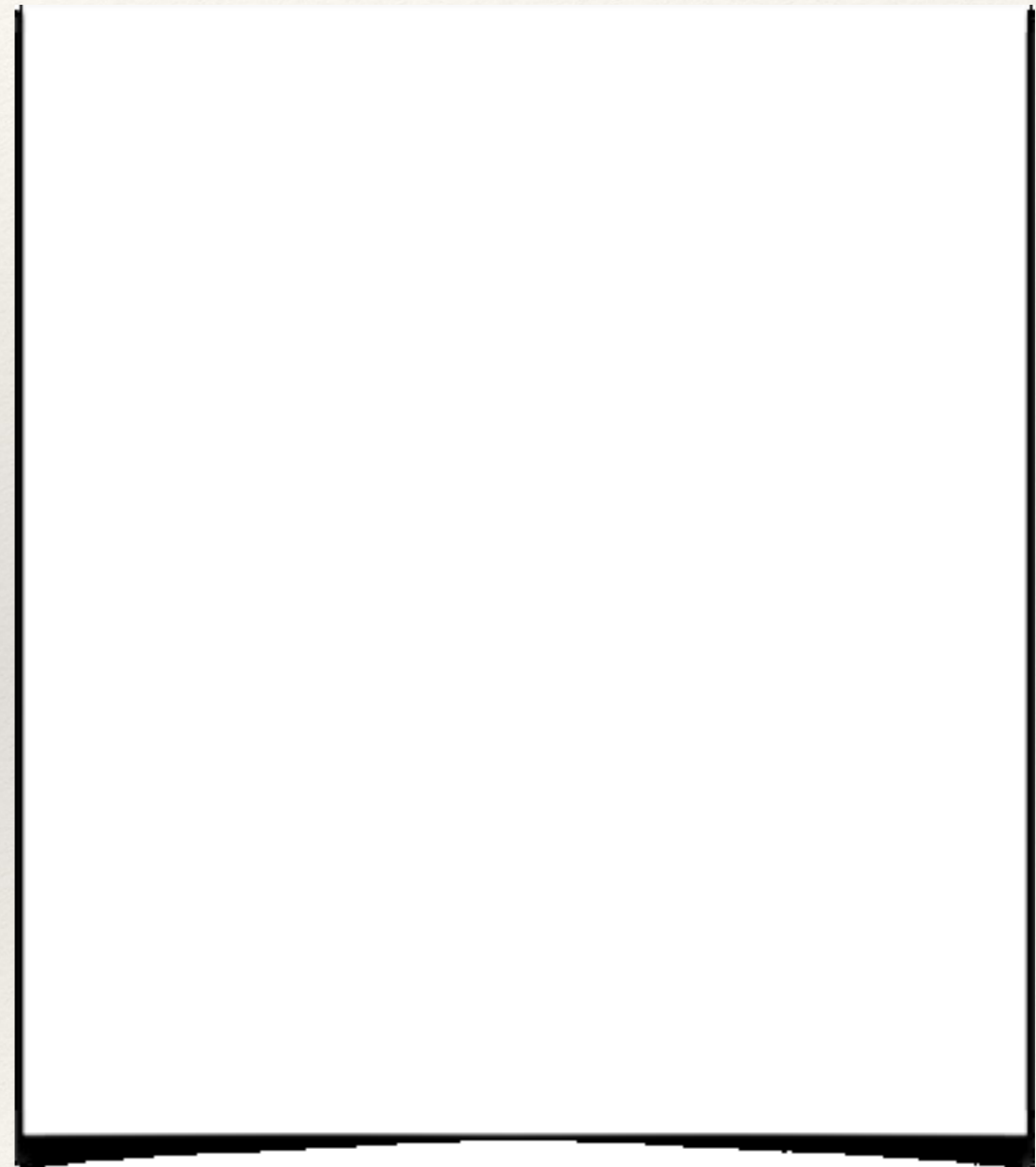
Conflict Theory

- ❖ Horkheimer & Adorno:
- ❖ In the “culture industries”, the rise of 20th century large cultural industry players had created a structured, supply-driven system that “integrates its consumers from above” and was negating the opportunities for individuals and small groups of producers to comprise “a more diverse and pluralistic platform for societal understanding”
- ❖ Researching the development of public policy should include not just an examination of the actors' behavior, but also an exploration of the value systems upon which the actions were based

Culture Industries

- ❖ The Frankfurt School
- ❖ Adorno & Horkheimer 1944
- ❖ “culture now impresses the same stamp on everything”

The Public Sphere



The Public Sphere

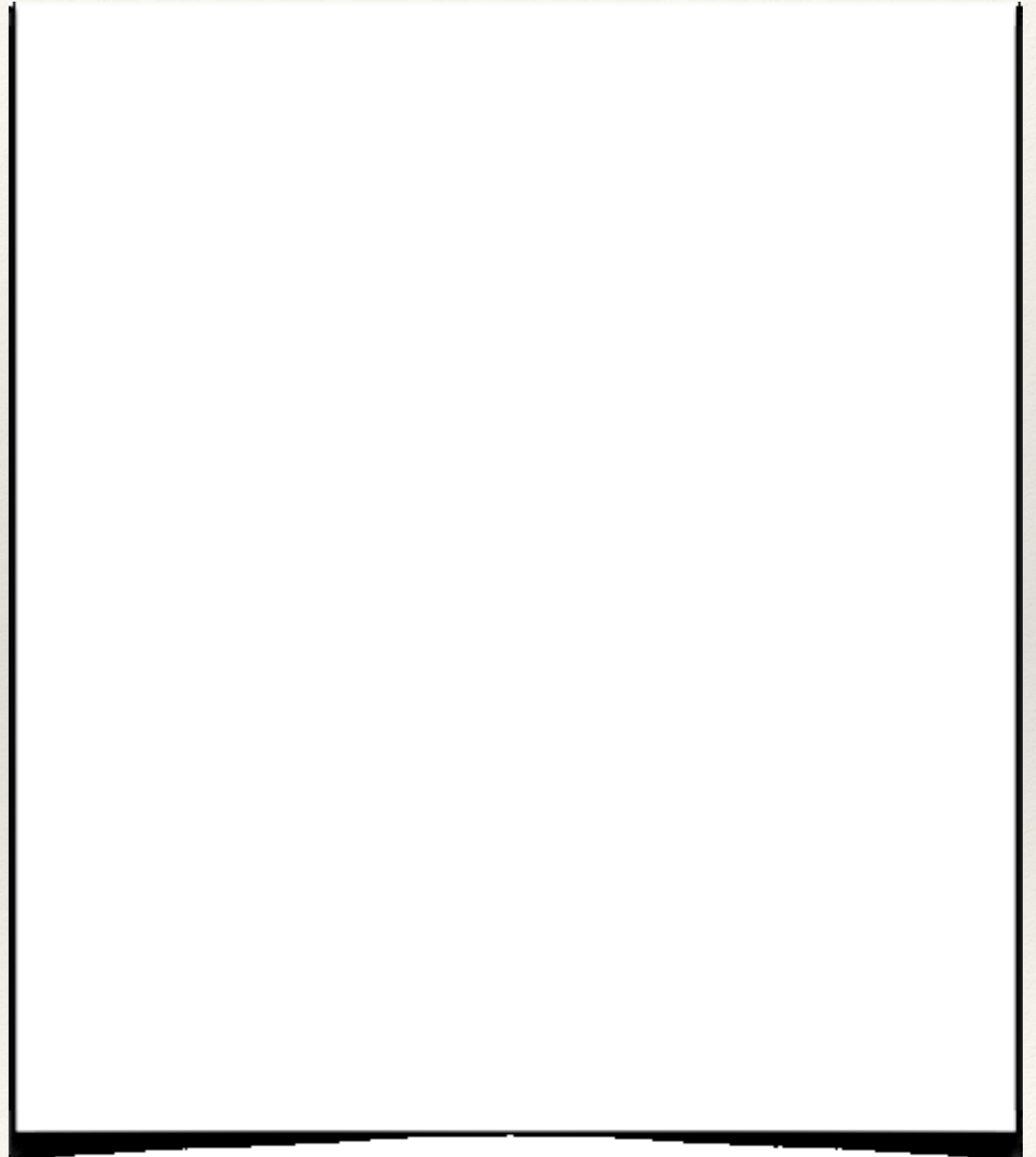
- ❖ a participatory bourgeois public sphere of real discourse among equals that transformed into a site of spectator politics manipulated by elites who took control of the medium
- ❖ the public sphere merged the private concerns of literate individuals regarding family and social integration with the larger public concerns of society
- ❖ presented in spaces reserved for open discourse among citizens and delineated through argumentative discourse intended to identify and prioritize interests for the common good. Individuals could inform and influence public opinion, even if it was in opposition to the current political status quo.

Public Sphere

- ❖ The degradation of the public sphere began in the late 19th century concurrent with the societal transition to a system marked by merging economic and political forces, the decline of the individual, and the manipulation of the culture industries

The Public Sphere

- ❖ **Re-Feudalization:** Public Sphere transformed into “spectator politics manipulated by elites who took control of the medium”



The Public Sphere

- ❖ Habermas: “forum for culture and politics co-opted”
- ❖ Edwards: “multiple public spheres”
- ❖ Fraser: “issues of class & gender”
- ❖ Foucault: “multidirectional power generation from discourse”
- ❖ Herbst: “mobilize political resources”

Radio



FIRST FULL-TIME RADIO ANNOUNCER IN THE WORLD

Harold W. Arlin shown as he looked in the early 1920's. He did the first play-by-play of baseball and football and introduced many noted persons in their radio debuts on KDKA.

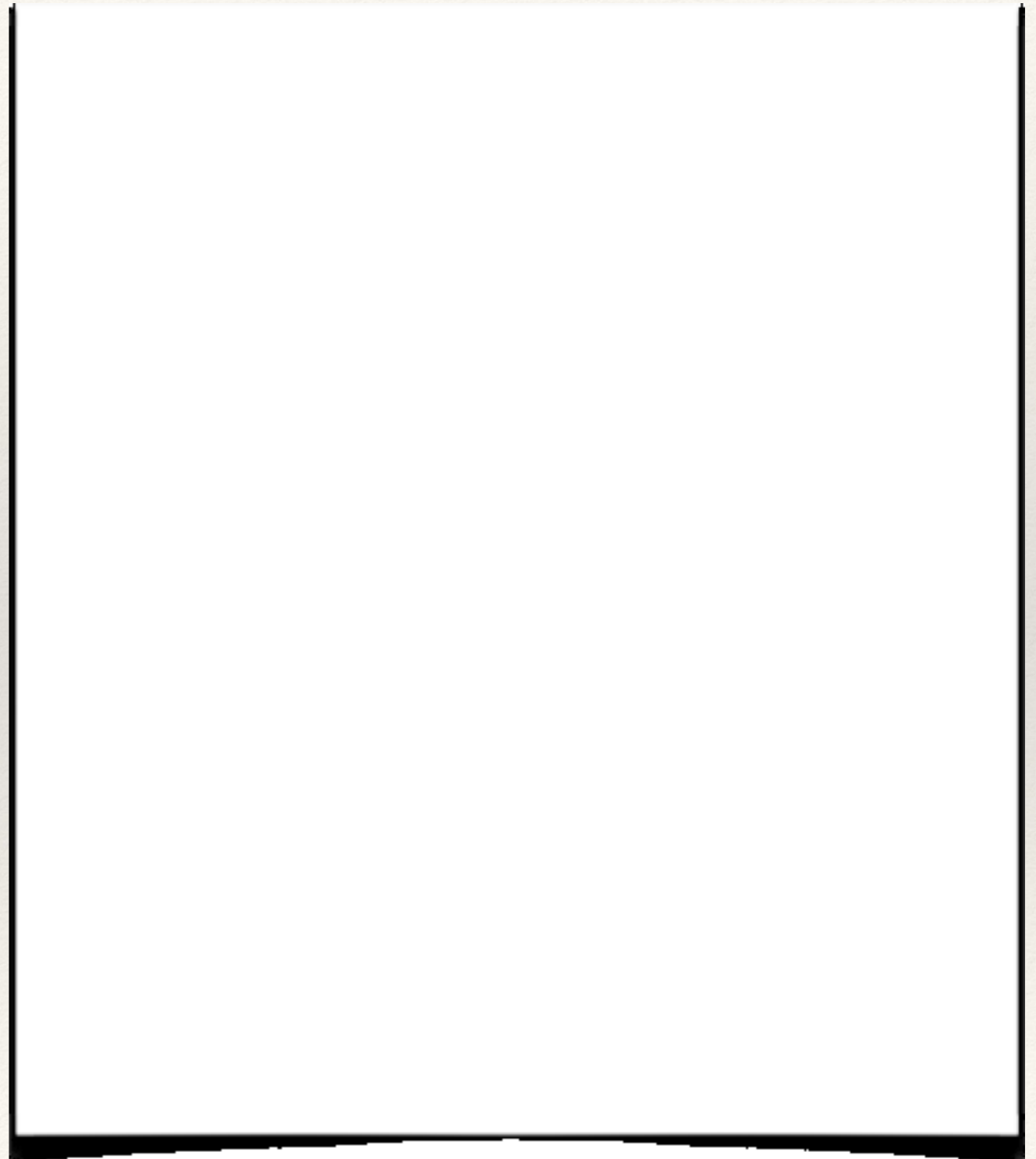
Television



⏸ 🔊 1:07 / 1:50 ⌚ ⚙️ 📺 🗉

Re-Feudalization II

- ❖ **Re-Feudalization II:**
- ❖ -Policy issues
- ❖ -Commercial broadcast conglomerates
- ❖ -Alternatives struggle

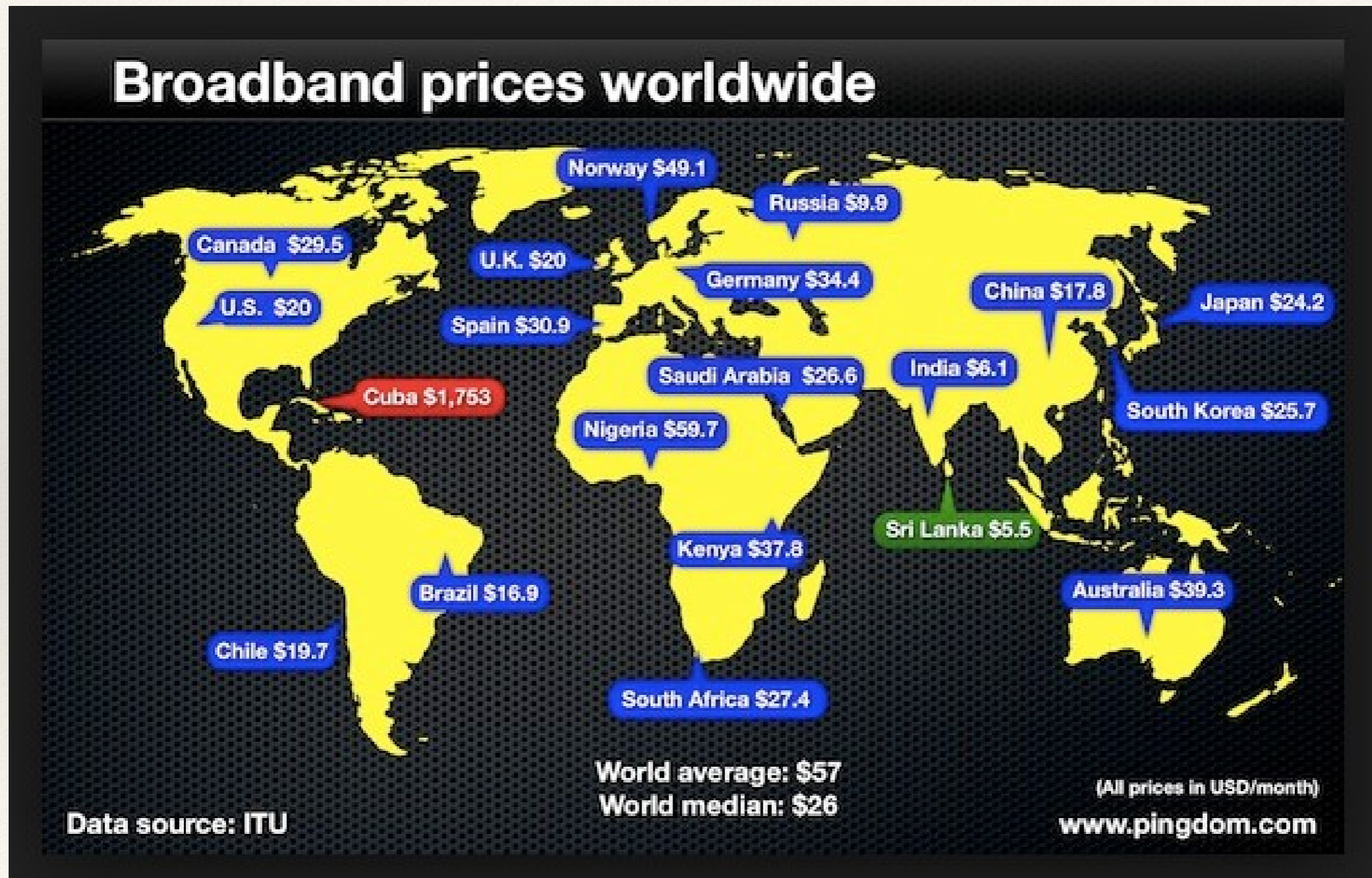


IP - The Great Liberator?

- ❖ One-to-many revolution
- ❖ low barriers to entry
- ❖ virtual democracy

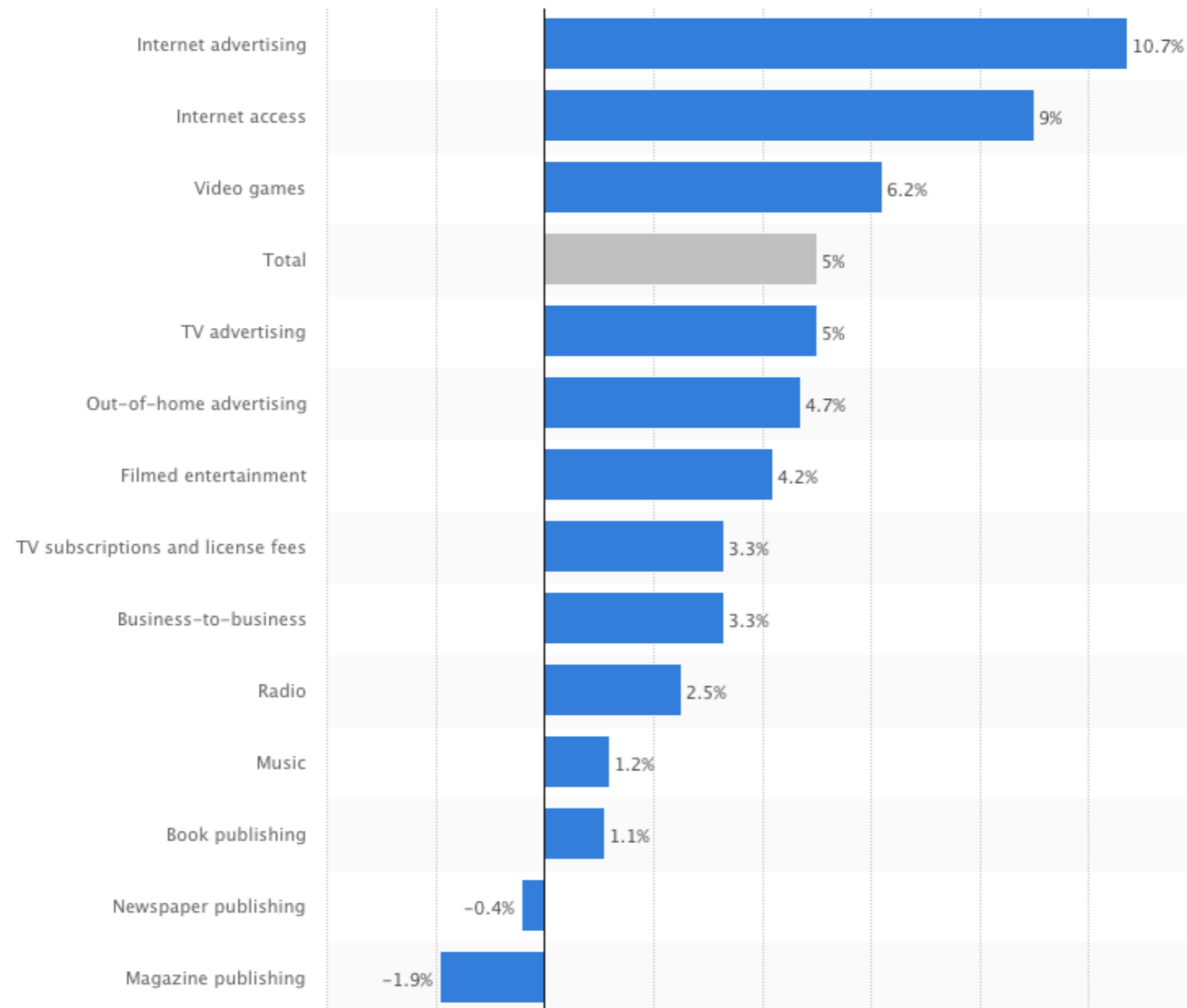


Q1 - The Pipes



Q2 - The Revenue

Compound annual growth rate of the global media and entertainment spending between 2013 and 2018, by sector



Q3 - The Content

- ❖ Information
- ❖ Opinion
- ❖ Entertainment



Q4 – Your Data



Re-Feudalization III?

- ❖ Tech oligarchs
- ❖ Net neutrality
- ❖ Weaponization
- ❖ *“The Internet has become a potent tool of deception wielded by political extremists, disinformation warriors and conspiracy theorists.” -New York Times*



ICT4D



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NEWS



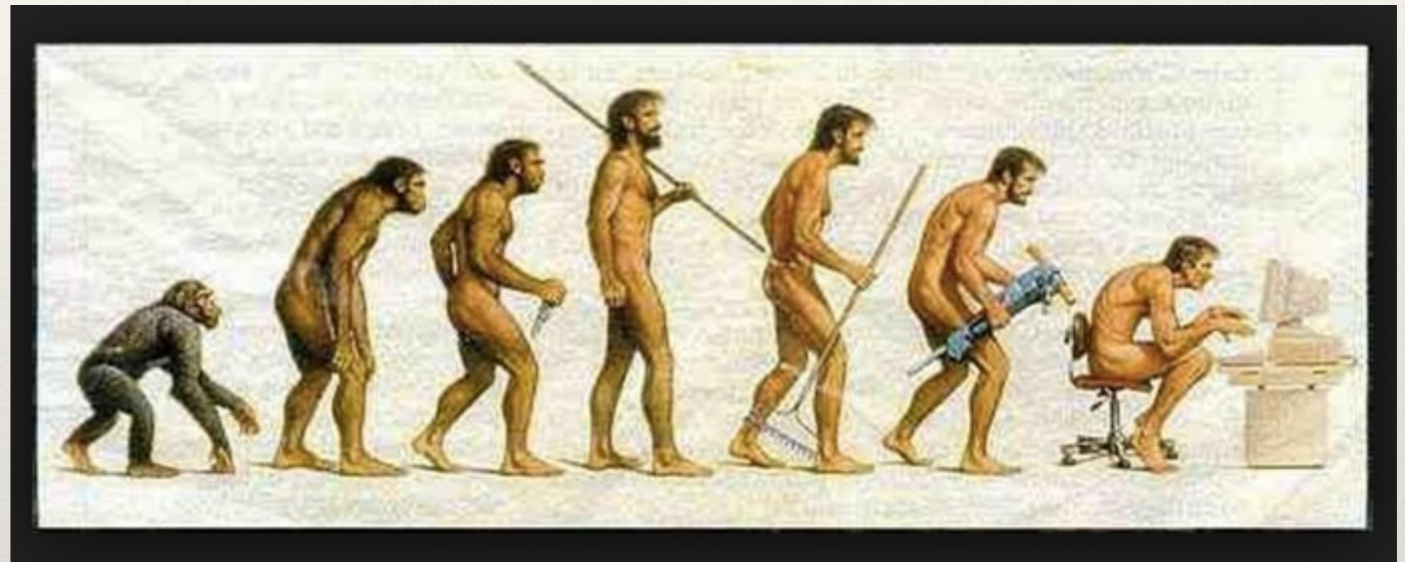
InterConnection – TCF's new eco-friendly partner offers low-cost hardware solutions for telecentres

The Future

- ❖ Beyond streaming
- ❖ Neutrality
- ❖ Creative Commons
- ❖ Funding for real journalism

Human Evolution

- ❖ Structural Functionalism?
- ❖ Mass Media form?
- ❖ The Public Sphere?



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