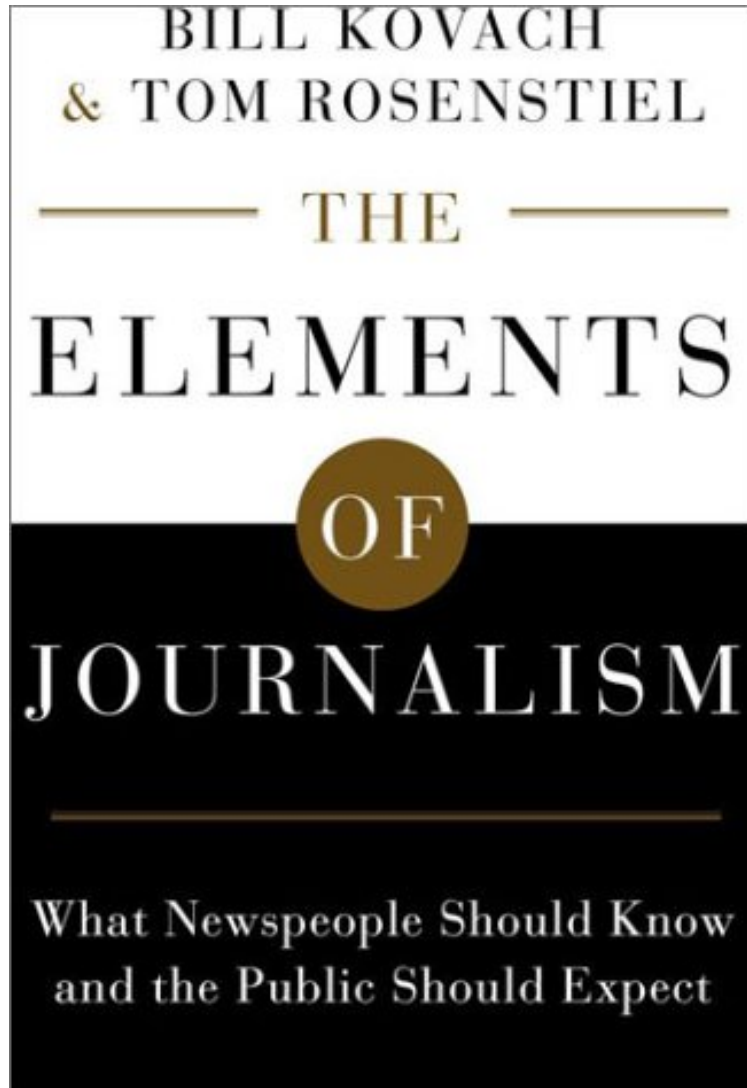


The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect

Bill Kovach, Tom Rosenstiel

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#699491 in eBooks 2001-07-24 2001-07-24 File Name: B000FC1HVY | File size: 15.Mb

Bill Kovach, Tom Rosenstiel : The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect:

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A must read for anyone in the mediaBy Sara WestheadThe newspaper I work for has been going through some major renovations to reclaim readers, offering them a product that they want - that they can't live without. This book gives another side of the same story, focusing on the principles that journalists must keep in order to survive on into the 21st century with their integrity intact. I am a sub-editor and will

be strongly recommending this book to all of our senior staff, including those in non-writing departments. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Required reading By Judi L. Hetrick "Elements" is essential for anyone concerned with the state of the news business and citizenship today. It reminds journalists of the basic reasons news work is fundamentally important. It calls on citizens to demand the best. Without a citizen-journalist partnership for information exchange in a vital and responsible public sphere, Kovach and Rosenstiel remind us that democracy itself is in jeopardy. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful and thought-provoking By frumiousb The project of Kovach and Rosenstiel (indeed, the project of the entire Committee of Concerned Journalists) was to distill and publish the basic building blocks of what we understand as journalism. In this, they do an admirable job. Stressing qualities such as fairness to the facts and activities such as verification, they make a strong case that while the journalist may not be impartial his/her method should be. Useful for both public and professionals, the book is well-structured with notes at the end of each chapter with pointers to further reading.

In July 1997, twenty-five of America's most influential journalists sat down to try and discover what had happened to their profession in the years between Watergate and Whitewater. What they knew was that the public no longer trusted the press as it once had. They were keenly aware of the pressures that advertisers and new technologies were putting on newsrooms around the country. But, more than anything, they were aware that readers, listeners, and viewers — the people who use the news — were turning away from it in droves. There were many reasons for the public's growing lack of trust. On television, there were the ads that looked like news shows and programs that presented gossip and press releases as if they were news. There were the "docudramas," television movies that were an uneasy blend of fact and fiction and which purported to show viewers how events had "really" happened. At newspapers and magazines, celebrity was replacing news, newsroom budgets were being slashed, and editors were pushing journalists for more "edge" and "attitude" in place of reporting. And, on the radio, powerful talk personalities led their listeners from sensation to sensation, from fact to fantasy, while deriding traditional journalism. Fact was blending with fiction, news with entertainment, journalism with rumor. Calling themselves the Committee of Concerned Journalists, the twenty-five determined to find how the news had found itself in this state. Drawn from the committee's years of intensive research, dozens of surveys of readers, listeners, viewers, editors, and journalists, and more than one hundred intensive interviews with journalists and editors, *The Elements of Journalism* is the first book ever to spell out — both for those who create and those who consume the news — the principles and responsibilities of journalism. Written by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, two of the nation's preeminent press critics, this is one of the most provocative books about the role of information in society in more than a generation and one of the most important ever written about news. By offering in turn each of the principles that should govern reporting, Kovach and Rosenstiel show how some of the most common conceptions about the press, such as neutrality, fairness, and balance, are actually modern misconceptions. They also spell out how the news should be gathered, written, and reported even as they demonstrate why the First Amendment is on the brink of becoming a commercial right rather than something any American citizen can enjoy. *The Elements of Journalism* is already igniting a national dialogue on issues vital to us all. This book will be the starting point for discussions by journalists and members of the public about the nature of journalism and the access that we all enjoy to information for years to come. From the Hardcover edition.

.com These are tough times for journalism. Newsroom executives' bonuses tend to be based on their company's profit margin. Journalists are constantly jockeying for the time and space necessary to tell their stories as they see fit. Only 47 percent of Americans even read a newspaper. And *Time* and *Newsweek* — news magazines, remember? — were seven times more likely to have the same cover story as *People* magazine in 1997 than in 1977." It's no wonder that in 1997, the Committee of Concerned Journalists formed to "engage journalists and the public in a careful examination of what journalism was supposed to be." *The Elements of Journalism* reports the results of that study, which included 21 public forums (attended by 3,000 people), in-depth interviews with 100 journalists, editorial content studies, and research into the history of journalism. Part of what the committee members learned, they already knew. Journalism is complicated business: journalists are paid by management but work for the citizens; they tend to be self-taught (there is little evidence of mentoring and much disdain for journalism schools); and they need to be objective even when they're not impartial. This has always been the case. But the committee also detected a trend, one abundantly evident to anyone who has tried to find news on the evening TV news: "news was becoming entertainment and entertainment news." "Unless we can grasp and reclaim the theory of a free press," warn Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, the book's authors, "journalists risk allowing their profession to disappear." Through their discussions with journalists, the Committee of Concerned Journalists defined nine "clear principles" of journalism, which Kovach and Rosenstiel explore in great detail. The first principle is, "Journalism's first obligation is to the truth." The last: "Its practitioners must be allowed to exercise their personal conscience." In between come issues of loyalty, verification, independence, and power monitoring, among others. Invigorating reading for newsroom interns, jaded reporters, and anyone else who needs to be reminded of the rigorousness, integrity, and meaning of journalism. --Jane Steinberg From Publishers

WeeklyIn 1997, 25 men and women formed the Committee of Concerned Journalists and began a three-year investigation into what they believe is a crisis in journalism today. If, as they set forth, "the purpose of journalism is to provide people with the information they need to be free and self-governing," the committee believes that journalism has lost its credibility in the interest of the bottom line. One of the main reasons for this new emphasis on the bottom line, claim committee chair Kovach and fellow member Rosenstiel (coauthors of *Warp Speed: America in the Age of Mixed Media*), is that "technology is shaping a new economic organization of information companies [e.g., Time Warner is now part of AOL, Disney owns ABC News], which is subsuming journalism inside it." In this incisive, controversial and well-presented work, the authors have synthesized the committee's findings to lay down nine principles of sound journalism for both those in the industry and the citizens who rely on the free press as a fundamental element of democracy. First and foremost among these principles is journalism's "obligation to the truth." At first glance, this principle may appear self-evident, but as Kovach and Rosenstiel explain, what constitutes the truth is sticky and often misunderstood. For example, the truth may be neither fair nor balanced, nor should it necessarily be, they say. Kovach and Rosenstiel have issued a clarion call to their colleagues, and they hope that all journalists, editors and owners of news organizations will incorporate the principles of the profession as they've outlined them into their everyday work. However, the authors offer no specific suggestions as to how to enact these principles in a wide-reaching or systematic manner. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "At a time when technological and financial forces are creating formidable challenges to journalism's traditional values, Kovach and Rosenstiel have written an immensely valuable primer on who we are, what we do, and how we should do it."-- David Halberstam "The Elements of Journalism is a remarkable book that does a superb job of describing the problems, articulating the values, outlining the risks, and offering understandable and practical ways to respond to the difficulties of the present state of journalism. The Elements of Journalism ought to become required reading for every institution (and individual) engaged in journalism." mdash; Neil Rudenstine, President, Harvard University "Of the many books that have been written about reporting the news, this one best captures the shortcomings, subtleties, and possibilities of modern journalism. It deserves to become as indispensable to journalists and journalism students as *The Elements of Style*." mdash; Tom Goldstein, Dean, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University "In an age when partisan rancor and ratings-driven showmanship have crowded out the more subtle virtues of solid journalism, Tom Rosenstiel and Bill Kovach provide a timely refresher course in the importance of press fundamentals. They remind us that at its best, journalism is a high public calling, and all those who practice it have a deeper obligation to their readers and viewers than to the demands of the market." mdash; David Talbot, editor-in-chief, Salon.com From the Hardcover edition.