Over the past two decades, the interdependence between print and visual forms of popular media has become commonplace.

Apart from economics, however, a cultural gulf between the two genres remains.

Public debate continues to pit the "superior" quality of print media—usually represented by serious books—against the "inferior" fluff of television. Even within print culture itself, a mini-version of the high-low cultural gulf is apparent.

The bottom line is that the book industry has met the social and cultural challenges of television. Books have managed to maintain a distinct cultural identity, partly because of the book industry’s willingness to capitalize on TV’s reach, and vice versa.
Our oldest mass medium is still our most influential and our most diverse.

The portability and compactness of books make them a preferred medium in many situations, including relaxing at the beach or in the park, resting in bed, and traveling to work on buses or commuter trains.

Most important, books and print culture enable individuals and nations to store knowledge from the past.

In their key social role, books are still the main repository of history and everyday experience, passing along stories, knowledge, and wisdom from generation to generation.

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Books & The Power of Print Timeline

- **papyrus** - one of the first substances to hold written language and symbols; obtained from plant reeds found along the Nile River.
  - As early as 2400 B.C., the Egyptians wrote on papyrus.

- **parchment** - treated animal skin that replaced papyrus as an early pre-paper substance on which to document written language.
  - Although the Chinese began making paper in A.D. 105, paper made by hand from cotton and linen did not replace parchment in Europe until the thirteenth century.
- **codex** - an early type of book in which paper-like sheets were cut and sewed together along the edge, then bound with thin pieces of wood and covered with leather.
  - The first proto-modern book was probably produced in the fourth century by the Romans.
  - Whereas scrolls had to be wound, unwound, and rewound, codices could be opened to any page, and their configuration allowed writing on both sides of a page.

### Manuscript Culture

- **manuscript culture** - period during the Middle Ages when priests and monks advanced the art of bookmaking.

- **illuminated manuscripts** - books from the Middle Ages that featured decorative, colorful designs and illustrations on each page.

- **block printing** - a printing technique developed by early Chinese printers, who hand-carved characters and illustrations into a block of wood, applied ink to the block, and then printed copies on multiple sheets of paper.

- The next step in printing was the radical development of movable type, first invented in China around the year 1000.

### The Gutenberg Revolution

- between 1453 and 1456, Johannes Gutenberg used movable type to develop a **printing press**.

- **printing press** - a fifteenth-century invention whose movable metallic type technology spawned modern mass communication by creating the first method for mass production.

- It reduced the size and cost of books, made them the first mass medium affordable to less affluent people, and provided the impetus for the Industrial Revolution, assembly-line production, modern capitalism, and the rise of consumer culture.
The social and cultural transformations ushered in by the spread of printing presses and books.
- when people could learn for themselves by using maps, dictionaries, Bibles, and the writings of others, they could differentiate themselves as individuals; their social identities were no longer solely dependent on what their leaders told them or on the habits of their families, communities, or social class.
- this permitted them to challenge the traditional wisdom and customs of their tribes and leaders

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**Book Production in the United States**

- English locksmith Stephen Daye set up a print shop in the late 1630s in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- In 1640, Daye and his son Matthew printed the first colonial book, *The Whole Booke of Psalms* (known today as *The Bay Psalm Book*).
- In 1744, Benjamin Franklin imported *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, the first novel reprinted and sold in colonial America.

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- **paperback books** - books made with cheap paper covers, introduced in the United States in the mid-1800s.
- **dime novels** - sometimes identified as pulp fiction, these cheaply produced and low-priced novels were popular in the United States beginning in the 1860s.
- **pulp fiction** - a term used to describe many late nineteenth-century popular paperbacks and dime novels, which were constructed of cheap machinemade pulp material.
The printing process also became quicker and more mechanized.

**linotype** - a technology introduced in the nineteenth century that enabled printers to set type mechanically using a typewriter-style keyboard.

**offset lithography** - a technology that enabled books to be printed from photographic plates rather than metal casts, reducing the cost of color and illustrations and eventually permitting computers to perform typesetting.

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Modern Publishing and the Book Industry

**publishing houses** - companies that tried to identify and produce the works of good writers.

These companies professionalized the book industry by dividing into discrete tasks the jobs of acquiring, publishing, and marketing books.

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Types of Books

**trade books** - the most visible book industry segment, featuring hardbound and paperback books aimed at general readers and sold at bookstores and other retail outlets.

**professional books** - technical books that target various occupational groups and are not intended for the general consumer market.

**textbooks** - books made for the el-hi (elementary and high school) and college markets.
- **mass market paperbacks** - low-priced paperback books sold mostly on racks in drugstores, supermarkets, and airports, as well as in bookstores.
- **instant book** - in the book industry, a marketing strategy that involves publishing a topical book quickly after a major event occurs.
- **religious books** - Bibles, hymnals, and other materials related to religious observances.
- **reference books** - dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, and other reference manuals related to particular professions or trades.
- **university press** - the segment of the book industry that publishes scholarly books in specialized areas.

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**Trends in Book Publishing**

- A number of technological changes in the publishing industry demonstrate the blurring of print and electronic cultures.
- The book industry has adapted successfully in the digital age by using computer technology to effectively lower costs: Everything from an author’s word-processing program to printing and distribution is digitized.
  - **e-books** - electronic books that can be downloaded to portable e-book reading devices.
Books and the Future of Democracy

- A 2004 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) study, *Reading at Risk*,
- reading literature had declined 10 percent among all age groups over the past decade, especially among eighteen to twenty-four year olds.
- Nineteen percent of seventeen year olds said they never or hardly ever read—up from just 9 percent in 1992.
- Four of ten college-aged people reported they read literature on a regular basis, compared to six of ten in 1982.
- Of seventeen thousand adults surveyed, nearly two-thirds of the men said they did not read literature at all (the study did not ask about biography and nonfiction).
- Among all adults surveyed, 60 percent preferred watching TV, 60 percent preferred attending a movie, and 55 percent liked exercising—all activities ranking higher than reading literature.