

MASS MEDIA

READER

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By Charles McKenzie
and Rick Wilber



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MASS MEDIA READER

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Alliance Press

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

After more than a quarter-century of teaching one version or another of the various introductory survey courses to the mass media field at four different colleges, and after more than ten years teaching this course, MMC 3602 (Mass Communications and Society) at the University of South Florida, I have finally found the perfect supplementary text for the course. You have it in your hands.

This Reader gives students a good, close look at many of the artifacts that went into creating today's global mass media systems, and its content and organization should help students acquire a useful first-hand perspective on the media's history, present and the future.

The book began as a result of my long-standing desire to give students a chance to encounter as many of the significant documents in that history (and present, and future) as I reasonably could. Acquiring the material is a daunting task, however, and it is only through the hard work, perseverance and insight of Charles McKenzie, a graduate student and teacher in the School of Mass Communications, that the book has, at last, come to exist.

Following lengthy discussions about the Reader's content, purpose and its usefulness for the course, it was Charles who gathered the great bulk of this material and then guided the book through the lengthy and difficult task of choosing what to include and what to exclude, worked with the publisher to acquire the often-expensive permissions, negotiated contracts, did the important jobs of organizing the material, writing supportive text, proofing (and proofing again, and again) the pages and, ultimately, brought the book into production. This is, I suspect, just the first of many books for the energetic and talented Mr. McKenzie.

The supportive staff of the School of Mass Communications was also crucial to the book's existence, as it is for everything we instructors manage to accomplish in the classroom. A special thanks to Lisa Croy and Cathy D'Azzo as well as Anthony Torresi, Alexandra Drouin and Marcia Stein.

The book is dedicated to the thousands of students who have taken one version or another of this course from me over the years at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, Mankato State University, Florida Southern College and at the University of South Florida.

Rick Wilber
December, 2000

A special thank you goes out to a dozen amazing women whose efforts and patience made this book possible. Stacy Smith of Alliance Press was handed this project midstream but did a fantastic job leading a rookie editor through the process. Tracy Metivier went to bat for me countless times, tirelessly tracking down these documents' owners and then negotiating and renegotiating permissions. Following illegible directions written essentially on cocktail napkins, Joann Piet took a seemingly unrelated set of faxes, E-mails and packages and somehow turned them into a fine looking book. Rick and I are lucky that all of these women live at least 1,000 miles away, or surely each would have beaten down our doors at some point to strangle us. Perhaps we are not yet out of danger—Lisa Croy and Cathy D'Azzo are well within striking distance. They are the ones who keep us on track and keep the School of Mass Communications running smoothly. For the past 27 years, the two women who have kept me running smoothly are my mother and grandmother. It would take a book twice as long as this one to thank them for all of their love and sacrifices. Jenny Van Horn was an invaluable research assistant. I hope she hurries up and becomes an invaluable psychologist because some of us involved with this book are going to need her services soon. Four people who will gladly testify to my madness are Callie, Jessica, Patricia and Allison, who should know by now that I tease them only out of the sincerest love, gratitude and respect.

A handful of remarkable men deserve credit as well. Dr. Rick Wilber gave me the honor of working on this project. Dr. Edward J. Friedlander gave me one of the most rewarding opportunities of my career, namely to teach the outstanding students of the University of South Florida. One such student is Stephen Barkofski, the talented artist who designed the cover. While I worked on this book, my thesis committee (Larry Leslie, Randy Miller and Ken Killebrew) graciously stayed off my back . . . for the most part—the thesis is in the mail, Dr. Killebrew. Most importantly, my father and grandfather quietly exemplified on a daily basis the kind of work ethic needed to complete a task like this one. That gift along with their love will remain with me always. Thank you to all of you.

Charles McKenzie
December, 2000

THE MASS MEDIA AT WAR

Revolutionary War	2
<i>Common Sense</i> by Thomas Paine	3
<i>"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly."</i>	
<i>Unite or Die: An Early Political Cartoon</i>	3
The Boston Massacre: The <i>Boston Gazette</i> and Paul Revere's Engravings	4
<i>"Unhappy BOSTON! See thy Sons deplore, Thy hallow'd Walks besmear'd with guiltless Gore."</i>	
The Arguments of the Federalists and Antifederalists.....	6
<i>"It will therefore be of use to begin by examining the advantages of the Union, the certain evils, and the probable dangers, to which every State will be exposed from its dissolution."</i>	
<i>"The Constitution . . . squints toward monarchy: and does not this raise indignation in the breast of every true American?"</i>	
George Washington's Letter to the Editor of the <i>Connecticut Courant</i>	9
<i>"... there is the best reason to believe that efforts adequate to the abilities of this country would enable us speedily to conclude the war and to secure the invaluable blessings of peace, liberty and safety."</i>	
"Corwallis Taken!" from the <i>Boston Gazette</i>	9
Civil War.....	11
"The American Question in England" by Karl Marx for <i>The Daily Tribune</i>	12
<i>"If antislavery and idealistic England felt not attracted by the profession of the North, how came it to pass that it was not violently repulsed by the cynical confessions of the South?"</i>	
"A Duty Which None Can Refuse" by William Smith.....	13
<i>The Virginia governor calls men to arms to save surrounded Richmond.</i>	
Capturing Reality v. Creating Images.....	14
"Mrs. Lucy Williams - Morgan's Betrayer" from the <i>Charleston Mercury</i>	16
<i>"Lucy, the youngest daughter, was then a good looking, romping girl, but forwardly inclined. As she grew, her faults increased in inverse ration to her graces."</i>	
Death of a President.....	17
<i>As the nation waited, reporters and writers of official gazettes tracked the progress of the mortally wounded Abraham Lincoln.</i>	
Spanish-American War	21
Hearst's War	22
<i>"You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war."</i>	
New York Journal Front Page Announces the Sinking of the Maine	23
Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders: Coverage by Stephen Crane	23
<i>"Then the woods became aglow with fighting. Our people advanced, deployed, reinforced, fought, fell – in the bushes, in the tall grass, under the lone palms – before a foe not even half seen. . . They were under a cruel fire; half of the men hardly knew whence it came; but their conduct, by any soldierly standard, was magnificent."</i>	
"War Is Kind" A Poem by Stephen Crane.....	25

World War II	27
<i>The Great Dictator</i> by Charlie Chaplin	28
<i>"In this world, there is room for everyone. . . . The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way. Greed has poisoned men's souls; has barricaded the world with hate; has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed."</i>	
Correspondent Ernie Pyle Covers the War	29
<i>"The toes of his GI shoes pointed toward the land he had come so far to see, and which he saw so briefly."</i>	
Looking into the Eyes of Buchenwald: Margaret Bourke-White and Edward R. Murrow Offer Early Reports from a Concentration Camp.....	31
<i>"Men and boys reached out to me. They were in rags and the remnants of uniforms. Death already had marked many of them, but they were smiling with their eyes."</i>	
The Kiss Seen 'Round the World: Photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt of <i>Life</i>	32
Propaganda Singles Out You!	33
Vietnam.....	35
<i>Dispatches</i> by Michael Herr	36
<i>"We were as exotic and as fearsome as black magic, coming on with cameras and questions, and if we promised to take the anonymity off of what was about to happen, we were also there to watchdog the day."</i>	
Execution of Viet Cong Suspect: A Photograph by Eddie Adams.....	37
<i>The camera captures the moment of death.</i>	
Kent State Shooting: A Photograph by John Filo.....	38
<i>An amateur photographer shows the war at home.</i>	
The Napalm Girl: A Photograph by Nick Ut.....	39
<i>The world adopts a child.</i>	

NEWSPAPERS

"Last Moments of the Late Queen of France" from <i>Thomas's Massachusetts Spy</i>	43
<i>"Her Spirits were neither elevated nor depressed; she seemed quite insensible to the shouts of 'Vive la Republique!' She even shewed a kind of satisfaction in looking for the moment which might rid her of her miserable existence."</i>	
"Capital Punishment and Social Responsibility" by Walt Whitman for <i>The Sun</i>	44
<i>"Men seem to think, when they have provided a judge to do their judging, and a sheriff to do their hanging, they have washed their own hands clean of the blood of the immolated victims of their will. This is not so. It is but the fatal offspring of irreflection, . . ."</i>	
"Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?" by Janel Stephens	44
<i>"Stanley was given the assignment of the century: the task of finding Dr. David Livingstone, a Scottish missionary/explorer believed to be lost in the uncharted jungles of Africa."</i>	
Nellie Bly: "Girl Reporter"	47
"Madhouse Memoir" by Nellie Bly.....	47
<i>"People in the world cannot imagine the length of days to those in asylums. They seemed never ending, and we welcomed any event that might give us something to think about as well as talk of."</i>	
"Around the World in 72 Days" by Nellie Bly.....	50
<i>"We saw black people of many different tribes. . . . They wore no other ornament than the colored feather, which lent them an air of pride . . . but in a place as hot as Aden, jewelry must be as much as anyone would care to wear."</i>	
The Yellow Kid and Yellow Journalism: Cartoons by George B. Luks	53

“At the End of the Ambulance Run” by Ernest Hemingway for the <i>Kansas City Star</i> ..	54
<i>“When ‘George’ comes in on the soiled, bloody stretcher and the rags are stripped off and his naked, broken body lies on the white table in the glare of the surgeon’s light, and he dangles on a little thread of life while the physicians struggle grimly, it is all in the night’s work, whether the thread snaps or whether it holds so that George can fight on and work and play.”</i>	
Advertisement: A Correspondence School for Journalism.....	55
<i>“Practical work from the start. Improved methods. Best results.”</i>	
“Is There a Santa Claus?” A Letter to the Editor by Virginia O’Hanlon and an Answer by Francis P. Church of <i>The Sun</i> (New York).....	56
<i>“Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy.”</i>	
Yes, Virginia, There is A Hackneyed Phrase	56

ETHICS, LAW AND MEDIA CRITICISM

Photojournalism and Ethical Decision-making by Doug White.....	58
<i>“Photojournalists have historically not spent enough time considering the ethical foundations of decision-making or the impact their decisions can have on themselves and on their subjects.”</i>	
Ruth Snyder Execution Photo by Tom Howard for the <i>New York Daily News</i>	60
<i>“Photographically, the photo was far from perfect, but the exclusive image was exactly what the Daily News needed. The paper sold an extra 500,000 copies that issue. The photo ran on the cover for two consecutive days. The first day’s headline read simply: ‘Dead!’”</i>	
The Great Moon Hoax by Richard Locke for <i>The Sun</i> (New York)	61
<i>“Certainly, they were like human beings . . . They averaged four feet in height, were covered, except on the face, with short and glossy copper-colored hair, and had wings composed of a thin membrane, lying snugly upon their backs, from the top of the shoulders to the calves of the legs.”</i>	
Advertisement: Tall Tales Sell Circuses and Freak Shows	63
<i>“The Last Giraffe, secured at the cost of a fortune as a special feature of Ringling Bros.! The one and only giraffe known to exist in the entire world. When he is gone, the giraffe will be extinct.”</i>	
“A Thousand Voices Bloom” by J. Boylan for the <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>	64
<i>“The scale of this enterprise was reflected in a recent Lycos Internet search that turned up nearly 74,000 references to the term ‘media critic.’ Not all media criticism, however, is equally worthy.”</i>	
A Letter from John Peter Zenger in the <i>New-York Weekly Journal</i>	66
<i>“I have sent you a Detail of such particulars that concern the Liberty of the Press within the Colony, and because I would not have you or my self charged with the Publication of a Libel, I shall confine my self to a plain Narration of Facts without any comments.”</i>	
<i>New York Times v. Sullivan: The Creation of the Actual Malice Standard</i>	67
<i>“We think the evidence against the times supports at most a finding of negligence in failing to discover the misstatements, and is constitutionally insufficient to show the recklessness that is required for a finding of actual malice.”</i>	
The <i>Ulysses</i> Decision.....	69
<i>“In respect to the recurrent emergence of the theme of sex in the minds of his characters, it must always be remembered that his locale was Celtic and his season Spring.”</i>	
<i>Miller v. California: The Supreme Court Defines “Obscenity”</i>	71
<i>“The dissenting Justices sound the alarm of oppression. But, in our view, to equate the free and robust exchange of ideas and political debate with commercial exploitation of obscene material demeans the grand conception of the First Amendment and its high purposes in the historic struggle for freedom. . . . The First Amendment protects works which, taken as a whole, have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value, regardless of whether the government or a majority of the people approve of the ideas these works represent. . . . But the public portrayal of hard-core sexual conduct for its own sake, and for the ensuing commercial gain, is a different matter.”</i>	

MOVIES

<i>Citizen Kane</i>	74
Some Reviews.....	74
<i>"A young man named Orson Welles has shaken the medium wide-awake with his magnificent film, Citizen Kane. His biography of an American dynast is not only a great picture; it is something of a revolutionary screen achievement."</i>	
Two Scenes from the Original Shooting Script.....	75
<i>"Eight years ago . . . I stood in front of the "Chronicle" window and looked at a picture of the nine greatest newspapermen in the world. I felt like a kid in front of a candy shop. Tonight I got my candy. Welcome, gentlemen, to the "Inquirer." It will make you happy to learn that our circulation this morning was the greatest in New York—642,000."</i>	
Advertisement: "Edison's Greatest Marvel: The Vitascop"	81
"The Maestro of the Movies" by Steve Persall of the <i>St. Petersburg Times</i>	82
<i>"Jarre gains inspiration from conversations with the director, the screenplay and selected film clips where musical accompaniment is suggested. The process usually is more economical than Jarre's experience on his first Oscar-winning effort, Lawrence of Arabia."</i>	

RADIO AND SOUND RECORDING

Advertisement: "Will There Be a Victrola in Your Home This Christmas?"	86
<i>The War of the Worlds</i> by Orson Welles	87
<i>"Good heavens, something's wriggling out of the shadow like a gray snake. Now it's another one, and another. They look like tentacles to me. There, I can see the thing's body. It's large, large as a bear and it glistens like wet leather. But that face it . . . Ladies and gentlemen, it's indescribable."</i>	
"An Encyclopedia of Lost Practices: Talk Radio" by Frank Gannon of the <i>New York Times</i>	91
<i>"What next? They lied to us about Agent Orange and Roswell and automatic weapons and Heidi Klum. Whoa, she is hot! This is just something to give John Q. Public a little closure because we are just turning into wild animals and becoming like Satan around the water cooler on Monday."</i>	
"True Radio Confessions: Time to Move That Dial" by Mike Hoyt of the <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>	92
<i>"Bless me, father, for I have sinned, maybe. I've been listening to Imus . . . When Morning Edition starts to repeat, I slip over to Imus in the Morning. After NPR I feel like I worked out and ate grapefruit, spiritually speaking. After Imus I feel like I had a cheeseburger and a cigarette."</i>	
"New bands Get a Plug on the Wires: Websites Can Bring Untapped Talent to the notice of Record Labels" by Roger Trapp for <i>The Independent</i> (London)	93
<i>"The consolidation in the industry . . . has given the big players great distribution power. But it has left them less well-placed to deal with an industry that is increasingly fragmented. . . . the business has gone from a situation where at any one time there were just two or three 'big sounds' to one where there are 'hundreds and thousands of different bands' playing in a range of styles."</i>	

ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

"The New Ad Fad" by Peter Goddard of the <i>Toronto Star</i>	96
<i>"The potential is staggering. Item: Imagine a bottle of pop that Ally McBeal has in her hand in an upcoming episode. Sprite's logo can be digitally superimposed on it for the Toronto market. In San Francisco, though, it might be 7-Up. In London, it may be Amstel beer."</i>	
Advertisement: Andrew Jackson Runs for Office	96
<i>"Firm united let us be, Rallying round our Hickory tree."</i>	

Classified Advertisement: A Future President Runs Away	97
<i>"I will pay the above Reward to any person who will deliver said apprentices to me in Raleigh, or I will give the above Reward for Andrew Johnson alone."</i>	
Advertisement: "Clark Stanley's Snake Oil Liniment"	99
<i>"The strongest and best liniment known for the cure of all pain and lameness. For Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Sciatica, Lamé Back, Lumbago, Contracted Muscles, Toothache, Sprains, Swellings, Etc. Cures Frost Bites, Chill Blains, Bruises, Sore Throat, Bites of Animals Insects and Reptiles."</i>	
The First Testimonial: Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound	100
<i>"Woman can sympathize with woman. Health of woman is the hope of the race."</i>	
Advertisements: Companies Then and Now Promise to "Pump you up!"	101
<i>Then: "Your arm can be enlarged 1 inch and strengthened 50 per cent in one month by using the Hercules Graduated Gymnastic Club and Strength Tester 5 minutes each day."</i>	
<i>Now: "Only 12 minutes, 3 times a week is all it takes. If you can ride a bike, you can lose weight and improve your fitness on the Lifecycle Aerobic Trainer."</i>	
"Phillip Morris Exec Explains PR for 'America's Most Reviled Company'"	
by Jerry Walker of O'Dwyer's PR Services Report	102
<i>"Philip Morris is conducting a multi-million dollar PR/ad campaign to burnish the company's negative image. For many years, the company, which Business Week called 'America's most reviled company' . . . did not have much in the way of a corporate image strategy."</i>	
Advertisement: "H.W. Johns' Asbestos Plastic Stove-Lining"	103
<i>"One of the most desirable articles for the household ever produced."</i>	
"Why Public Relations Knowledge Is Vital Today" by Edward L. Bernays	104
<i>"Publics we come into personal contact with affect our attitudes and actions; and publics we never meet affect us through symbols. Through this process, we come to understand or misunderstand the world around us. And through it we are understood or misunderstood. Since we are dependent on others and want to be understood, it is important that our conduct, attitudes, and expressions be guided by a consciousness of our public relations."</i>	

POLITICS

<i>A Modest Proposal</i> by Jonathan Swift	108
<i>"I have been assured . . . that a young healthy child well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious nourishing and wholesome food . . . A child will make two dishes for an entertainment with friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter."</i>	
<i>Areopagitica</i> by John Milton	111
<i>"For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the commonwealth: that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained that wise men look for."</i>	
<i>All the President's Men</i> by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward	112
<i>"Haig characterized the stories as 'scurrilous,' accused the Post of 'disservice to the nation', and appealed to Mrs. Graham to stop publishing such accounts. Haig himself, the reporters soon learned, had come to doubt the wisdom of the President's course."</i>	
<i>Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72</i> by Hunter S. Thompson	115
<i>" . . . too many adrenaline rushes in any given time-span has the same bad effect on the nervous system as too many electro-shock treatments are said to have on the brain: after a while you start burning out the circuits. When a jackrabbit gets addicted to road-running, it is only a matter of time before he gets smashed—and when a journalist turns into a politics junkie he will sooner or later start raving and babbling in print about things that only a person who has Been There can possibly understand."</i>	

MINORITIES IN THE MEDIA

Frederick Douglass on the <i>Liberator</i>	120
<i>"I had not long been a reader of the Liberator, and a listener to its editor, before I got a clear comprehension of the principles of the antislavery movement. I had already its spirit and only needed to understand its principles and measures and as I became acquainted with these my hope for the ultimate freedom of my race increased."</i>	
<i>The Liberator</i> : The Front Page	120
An Early <i>Freedom's Journal</i> Cover	121
"The Final Struggle" by Frederick Douglass for <i>Frederick Douglass' Paper</i>	122
<i>"Liberty and Slavery cannot dwell together forever in the same country. There is not one iota of affinity existing between them. They hate each other with a hatred which is unto Death. They ever have been, and they ever must remain, in a state of irreconcilable hostility. Before a union can be effected between them, the laws which govern the moral universe must be repealed."</i>	
<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> by Harriet Beecher Stowe.....	123
<i>"In the very depth of physical suffering, bowed by brutal oppression, this question shot a gleam of joy and triumph through Tom's soul. He suddenly stretched himself up, and, looking earnestly to heaven, while the tears and blood that flowed down his face mingled, he exclaimed, 'No! no! no! my soul an't yours, Mas'r! You haven't bought it, -- ye can't buy it! It's been bought and paid for, by one that is able to keep it; -- no matter, no matter, you can't harm me!'"</i>	
"A Day and a Night in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'" by Frederick Douglass for <i>Frederick Douglass' Paper</i>	126
<i>"The feeling with which [Stowe's] manner inspired us, is not unlike that experienced when contemplating the ocean waves upon the velvet strand. You see them silently forming—rising—rolling—and increasing in speed, till, all at once, they are gloriously capped in sparking beauty. Thus, wave after wave rolls in from the ocean: the mind fastened upon the beauty of the one, until disengaged by the still greater beauty of those succeeding."</i>	
<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> by Mark Twain	128
<i>"But I soon gave up that notion, for two things: She'd be mad and disgusted at his rascality and ungratefulness for leaving her, and so she'd sell him straight down the river again; and if she didn't, everybody naturally despises an ungrateful nigger, and they'd make Jim feel it all the time, and so he'd feel ornery and disgraced. And then think of me! It would get all around, that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was to ever see anybody from that town again, I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame."</i>	
Civil War Coverage of Blacks: Some Examples	132
<i>"The black has less originality—a truth doubted by none. He has no turn for the arts of painting and sculpture. He has as good an ear for music as the white man, but no skill in composing. And lastly, the black has no poetical tendencies."</i>	
"The Language of Race" by Keith Woods of the Poynter Institute.....	133
<i>"... the mangled language of race is punctuated with descriptions that underscore ethnicity but describe nothing. It is mired in euphemisms and the tortured, convoluted syntax that betray America's pathological avoidance of straight talk about race relations."</i>	
The Caldwell Journals: "From Then to Now, A Personal Essay on the Media, The Civil Rights Movement and the Aftermath" by Austin Long-Scott	136
<i>"We saw it played out in the streets every day, but they had trouble accepting anything close to its full reality. Although the media managers we worked for wouldn't admit it, they wanted only that small portion of the truth which they would digest in relative comfort, without having their faith in a just and compassionate America too badly shaken."</i>	
"Out of Sight: Latinos Missing in Action on Fall's TV Lineup" by Preston Turegano of the <i>San Diego Tribune</i>	139
<i>"A recent survey conducted by the Screen Actors Guild shows two-thirds of Latino actors have been rejected for a role because of ethnic stereotyping and many find that having a Spanish surname is a barrier to their career. The study also reported that fair-skinned Latinos stand a better chance of being cast in Spanish-speaking productions than those with dark skin."</i>	

<i>Black Hills Daily Times</i> Extra: “Indians! Indians!”	142
<i>“The two men were shot and scalped; the woman was shot, scalped, and horribly mangled with the ox-goad run into her body.”</i>	
Documenting the Natives: A Photo by Edward Sherrif Curtis	144
“An Address to the Whites” By Elias Boudinot of the <i>Cherokee Phoenix</i>	145
<i>“Some there are . . . who at the bare sight of an Indian, or at the mention of that name, would throw back their imaginations to ancient times, to the ravages of savage warfare, to the yells pronounced over the mangled bodies of women and children, thus creating an opinion, inapplicable and highly injurious to those for whose temporal interest and eternal welfare, I come to plead.”</i>	

THE OLD WEST

A Day in the Life of <i>The Tombstone Epitaph</i> : Some Excerpts.....	150
<i>“After Wilson was shot, he ran some eighty yards and fell in front of Buford’s house on Fourth. He was carried back into the saloon and expired in a few moments, having been shot through the heart.”</i>	
A Day in the Life of <i>The Dodge City Times</i> : Some Excerpts.....	151
<i>“Robert was basking in the enervating luxury of Susy’s presence, . . . himself and Susy were escaping positions relative to each other of such a delicate nature as to entirely prohibit us from describing in these chaste and virtuous columns.”</i>	
Children and Advertising: Miller Brothers’ 101 Ranch Wild West Show	151

MAGAZINES

“It Was A Wonderful Life” by Kenneth Auchincloss of <i>Newsweek</i>	154
<i>“Life virtually invented photojournalism--and, with a stable of photographers that included Alfred Eisenstadt, Philippe Halsman, Margaret Bourke-White and David Douglas Duncan, it set a standard of excellence that has never been matched.”</i>	
“Voice of a Lost Age Falls Silent” by Ed Vulliamy of <i>The Observer</i>	154
<i>“To a generation of Americans, it represented a lost age in which both the photos and the issues they explored were black and white, a time of moral certainty and an America that knew its place in the world.”</i>	
“An Apology for Printers”	156
<i>“Being frequently censur’d and condemn’d by different Persons for printing Things which they say ought not to be printed, I have sometimes thought it might be necessary to make a standing Apology for my self, and to publish it once a Year, to be read upon all Occasions of that Nature.”</i>	
“The History of the Standard Oil Company”	158
<i>“One of the most depressing features of the ethical side of the matter is that instead of such methods arousing contempt, they are more or less openly admired. And this is logical. Canonize ‘business success,’ and men who make a success like that of the Standard Oil Trust become national heroes! The history of its organization is studied as a practical lesson in money-making.”</i>	
Advertisement: “ <i>Collier’s</i> Exposé of the Patent Medicine Fraud”	160
<i>“Newspapers have done so much to create the success of ‘fakes’ in medicine that their duty is clearly to help remove them. It sounds high-minded for Journalism to bark ferociously against the reign of graft in politics or in high finance, but it can practice a little real reform, if it chooses, by canceling some of the most profitable results of its own limberness of conscience.”</i>	

THE MASS MEDIA AT WAR

Words and images have created wars. They have sustained them. They have motivated citizens to pick up arms and also to call for peace. As citizens scramble for news from the front, tremendous power rests in the hands of those who create the words and images of war. After all, a single picture or a single phrase can grow to symbolize a complicated conflict that might otherwise require years of explanation.

In the following chapter, we'll look at some examples from the powerful intersection of war and mass communication. From William Randolph Hearst telling readers to "Remember the Maine!" to Saddam Hussein watching CNN as coalition forces attacked his country, the media and war have a link that goes back as far as language.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

(1775-1783)

After a decade of conflict, the 13 British colonies revolted against their parent country. The colonies won the war, but the political future of the United States was still uncertain.

Thomas Paine, the publisher of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* and a friend of Benjamin Franklin, wrote *Common Sense*, an eloquent pamphlet which sold 500,000 copies when it was first published. The revolutionary piece was passed along and quickly helped inspire the Declaration of Independence. The document, which was published anonymously, dramatically criticized the monarchy and called for citizens to overthrow the British.

COMMON SENSE

By Thomas Paine (Jan. 10, 1776)

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (not only to tax) but "to bind us in all cases whatsoever," and if being bound in that manner, is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious; for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he.

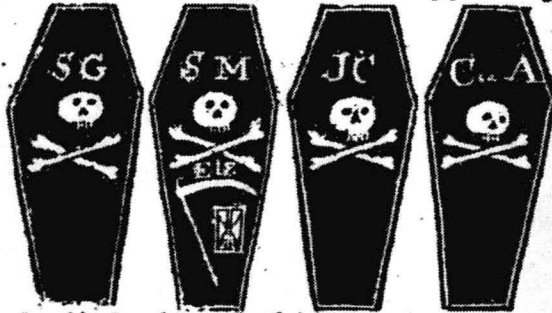
The heart that feels not now is dead; the blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made them happy. I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death. My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief breaks into my house, burns and destroys my property, and kills or threatens to kill me, or those that are in it, and to "bind me in all cases whatsoever" to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it is a king or a common man; my countryman or not my countryman; whether it be done by an individual villain, or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other. Let them call me rebel and welcome, I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being, who at the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him, and fleeing with terror from the orphan, the widow, and the slain of America.



Left: The idea for this drawing came from Benjamin Franklin in 1754. During the revolution, he asked Paul Revere to redraw it. Several revolutionary newspapers then included it in their banners, and it appeared with the warning "Don't tread on me" on one version of the American flag. It is considered by many to be the first political cartoon, printed in North America. When Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he is quoted as saying, "We must all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately."

The 29th Regiment have already left us, and the 14th Regiment are following them, so that we expect the Town will soon be clear of all the Troops. The Wisdom and true Policy of his Majesty's Council and Col. Dalrymple the Commander appear in this Measure. Two Regiments in the midst of this populous City; and the Inhabitants justly incensed: Those of the neighbouring Towns actually under Arms upon the first Report of the Massacre, and the Signal only wanting to bring in a few Hours to the Gates of this City many Thousands of our brave Brethren in the Country, deeply affected with our Distresses, and to whom we are greatly obliged on this Occasion—No one knows where this would have ended, and what important Consequences even to the whole British Empire might have followed, which our Moderation & Loyalty upon so trying an Occasion, and our Faith in the Commander's Assurances have happily prevented.

Last Thursday, agreeable to a general Request of the Inhabitants, and by the Consent of Parents and Friends, were carried to their Graves in Succession, the Bodies of Samuel Gray, Samuel Maverick, James Caldwell, and Crispus Attucks, the unhappy Victims who fell in the bloody Massacre of the Monday Evening preceeding!



On this Occasion most of the Shops in Town were shut, all the Bells were ordered to toll a solemn Peal, as were also those in the neighboring Towns of Charlestown Roxbury, &c. The Procession began to move between the Hours of 4 and 5 in the Afternoon; two of the unfortunate Sufferers, viz. Messrs. James Caldwell and Crispus Attucks, who were Strangers, borne from Faneuil-Hall, attended by a numerous Train of Persons of all Ranks; and the other two, viz. Mr. Samuel Gray, from the House of Mr. Benjamin Gray, (his Brother) on the North-side the Exchange, and Mr. Maverick, from the House of his distressed Mother Mrs. Mary Maverick, in Union-Street, each followed by their respective Relations and Friends: The several Hearses forming a Junction in King-Street, the Theatre of that inhuman Tragedy! proceeded from thence thro' the Main-Street, lengthened by an immense Concourse of People, so numerous as to be obliged to follow in Ranks of six, and brought up by a long Train of Carriages belonging to the principal Gentry of the Town. The Bodies were deposited in one Vault in the middle Burying-ground: The aggravated Circumstances of their Death, the Distress and Sorrow visible in every Countenance, together with the peculiar Solemnity with which the whole Funeral was conducted, surpass Description.

Boston Gazette (March 12, 1770)

BEFORE THE WAR

Boston Gazette

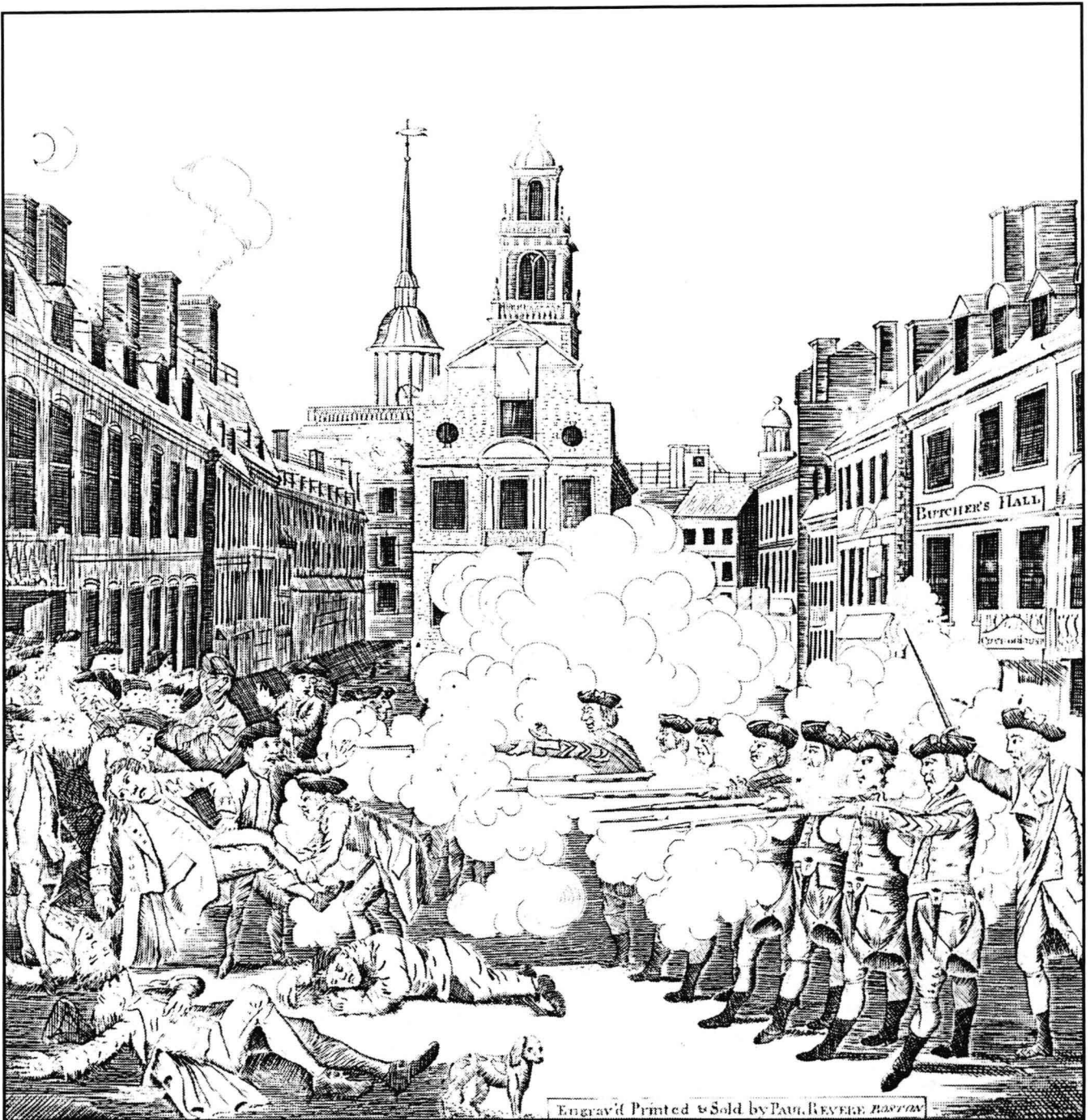
On March 5, 1770, a group of angry colonists confronted a squad of British troops in Boston, Mass. The protesters, who were led by Samuel Adams, threw projectiles at the squad. The soldiers retaliated, firing into the crowd and killing five.

Though the war would not officially begin for five years, Crispus Attucks, an escaped slave who was half black and half Native American, is considered by many to be the first casualty in the fight for independence. Twenty years earlier, Attucks' owner bought an advertisement in the *Boston Gazette* that offered a reward for his escaped slave: "A Mulatto fellow, about 27 Years of Age, named Crispus, 6 feet 2 inches high, short cur'l hair, his knees nearer together than common."

After the massacre, Attucks' name again appeared in the Boston newspaper. For coverage of the Boston Massacre, engraver and silversmith Paul Revere created renderings of coffins bearing the initials of Attucks and three of the other casualties. Attucks became a hero to abolitionists.

In the ensuing trial of the British troops, future American president John Adams defended the troops and attacked the colonists for starting the skirmish. Two troops were convicted and two were freed.

Revere also captured the event in an engraving. It too was published in the *Gazette* and widely distributed (see facing page). One of the earliest pieces of American war propaganda, it helped mobilize the colonists and unite them in the revolutionary effort. Like many examples of wartime mass mediated messages, the accuracy of the image is dubious. The crowd depicted in the scene is peaceful.



Engrav'd Printed & Sold by PAUL REVELE BOSTON

Unhappy BOSTON! See thy Sons deplore,
 Thy hallow'd Walks besmear'd with guiltless Gore.
 While faithless P—n and his savage Bands,
 With murd'rous Rancour stretch their bloody Hands;
 Like fierce Barbarians grinning o'er their Prey,
 Approve the Carnage and enjoy the Day.

If scalding drops from Rage from Anguish Wrung
 If speechless Sorrows lab'ring for a Tongue,
 Or if a weeping World can ought appease

The plaintive Ghosts of Victims such as these;
 The Patriot's copious Tears for each are shed,
 A glorious Tribute which embalms the Dead.
 But know, FATE summons to that awful Goal,
 When JUSTICE strips the Murd'rer of his Soul:
 Should venal C—ts the scandal of the land,
 Snatch the relentless Villain from her Hand.
 Keen Execrations on this Plate inscrib'd,
 Shall reach a JUDGE who never can be brib'd.

FEDERALISTS/ANTIFEDERALISTS

Now accepted as the law of the land, the U.S. Constitution was a controversial document before its ratification. After the colonies gained their independence from the British, the formerly united political leaders were divided about how power would be distributed in the states. Alexander Hamilton edited The Federalist, a series of 85 essays in New York's Independent Journal (October 17, 1787, through April 12, 1788), which tried to shore up support for the federal constitution. While the authors included Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay, the first essays were signed "A Citizen of New York" and later ones were attributed to the pen name "Publius." The series advocated a strong central government for the purposes of commerce and defense. In an attempt to further sway public opinion, the essays were also distributed as pamphlets. More significantly, judges, lawmakers and scholars continue to look to The Federalist Papers as aids in the interpretation of the Constitution.

Though not as organized or extensive as The Federalist, the Antifederalists' essays and speeches received support in New York and Virginia, states in which ratification was nearly defeated. The Antifederalists were lead by Patrick Henry, who wrote that the "sword and purse" should not be turned over to a central government but should remain in the hands of the individual states. The Constitution, he wrote, "squints toward monarchy."

The Federalist Papers

Number 1

By Alexander Hamilton

After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America. The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed, the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force. If there be any truth in the remark, the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made; and a wrong election of the part we shall act may, in this view, deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism, to heighten the solicitude which all considerate and good men must feel for the event. Happy will it be if our choice should be directed by a judicious estimate of our true interests, unperplexed and unbiased by considerations not connected with the public good. But this is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected. The plan offered to our deliberations affects too many particular interests, innovates upon too many local institutions, not to involve in its discussion a variety of objects foreign to its merits, and of views, passions, and prejudices little favorable to the discovery of truth.

Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power, emolument, and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments; and the perverted ambition of another class of men, who will either hope to aggrandize themselves by the confusions of their country, or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not, however, my design to swell upon observations of this nature. I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views. Candor will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright intentions; and it cannot be doubted that much of the opposition which has made its appearance, or may hereafter make its appearance, will spring from sources, blameless at least if not respectable — the honest errors of minds led astray by preconceived jealousies and fears. So numerous indeed and so powerful are the causes which serve to give a false bias to the judgment, that we, upon many occasions, see wise and good men on the wrong as well as on the right side of questions of the first magnitude to society. This circumstance, if duly attended to, would furnish a lesson of moderation to those who are ever so much persuaded of their being in the right in any controversy. And a further reason for caution, in this respect, might be drawn from the reflection that we are not always sure that those who advocate the truth are influenced by purer principles than their antagonists. Ambition, avarice, personal animosity, party opposition, and many other motives not more laudable than these, are apt to operate as well upon those who support as those who oppose the right side of a question. Were there not even inducements to moderation, nothing could be more ill-judged than that intolerant spirit which has at all times characterized political parties. For in politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution.