Historiography

in Mass Communication

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Historiography in Mass Communication

Editorial Purpose

This journal publishes articles dealing with the study of mass communication history and of history in general. (It does *not* publish articles about historical events, episodes, people, etc., as one finds in, for example, historical research papers.)

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Essays

This journal invites historians to submit essays. They may be original ones written specifically for this journal, or they may be from material that the authors already have (such as classroom lectures, AJHA presidential addresses, etc.).

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In Memoriam: Pamela Ann Parry

December 5, 1962 – February 4, 2025

By David R. Davies ©

Parry

Davies

Writing a remembrance of Dr. Pam Parry is simultaneously the easiest and hardiest writing assignment ever.

Easy, as anyone who knew Pam can attest, because she had so many qualities to brag on. Hard, because those very qualities endeared her to so many and make it difficult even now to accept that she's gone. It's unlikely I can do justice to what Pam meant to her friends and colleagues, but I'll try to channel Pam's can-do spirit to give it my best shot.

Dr. Pamela Ann Parry died in February at age 62 after a long career in journalism, public relations, and academia. Everyone, or nearly everyone, in the media history world knew her or knew of her. Many knew her through her scholarship — she wrote five books and numerous articles — and

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more still through her three-year stint as editor of *Journalism History* or through her ubiquitous presence at AJHA and AEJMC conferences and elsewhere.

Her professional accomplishments were impressive, but what set her apart was her kindness. She was, quite simply, the nicest person I have ever met. Many of her friends said the same thing about her. This quality endeared her to a wide range of people across her networks of historians, students, journalists, and colleagues. Pam cared deeply — about her family, her students, her colleagues, and her work. Her personality combined with a deeply ingrained work ethic set her apart.

My first contact with her came in May 2007, when she visited us at the University of Southern Mississippi to inquire about our doctoral program in mass communication. At the time she was teaching public relations at Belmont University in Nashville, and it seemed to me even then that she was a perfect candidate for a doctorate. Already a seasoned teacher at Belmont, she also had a strong background in journalism, having worked as a reporter, editor, and public relations practitioner. When she told the admissions committee she had decided to join our program, we were absolutely delighted.

Once in Hattiesburg, she immediately set herself apart. She had a seriousness of purpose that, combined with the aforementioned work ethic and her natural curiosity, made her the perfect graduate student. She soon completed her coursework and began work on an ambitious doctoral project that would ultimately lead to a book, *Eisenhower: The Public Relations President* (2014). She had a contract for the book even before she graduated.

For her dissertation, Pam had originally proposed a very narrow topic. But I saw her talent and knew she would make a larger impact with a broader topic. (She loved to tell the story of our gentle tug of war

over her topic. If you went to AJHA conferences you probably heard it at least once.) Her Eisenhower book indeed plowed new ground, a mark of her talent in pulling together far-flung strands of history to weave an important narrative. In gathering material for the project, she became such a regular presence at the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Kansas that she became good friends with the library staff, who had her back to Abilene for speaking engagements.

After the doctorate, Pam gravitated toward administration. To no one's surprise, she had a gift for it. She served as chair at Eastern Kentucky University and also at Southeastern Missouri State. She faced the challenges of administration with the same good cheer and positivity that she brought to all of her work. In recent years she had returned to faculty, and I can't count the number of times she spoke how much her students and their success meant to her.

A decade ago Pam founded the Women in American Political History book series and was kind enough to bring me on as co-editor. Working with Pam was a highlight of my professional career. We published seven books, with another title due this year. The success of the series was due to Pam's leadership and the terrific board of editors she recruited.

Pam edited *Journalism History* until just last year, impressing colleagues during her three-year tenure and overseeing the journal's 50th anniversary issue. In 2024, she was elected to AJHA leadership and so was on track on become the organization's president in two years. She was a regular presence at AJHA and at AEJMC.

We'll all miss Pam as a friend and as a colleague.

• In 2023, *Historiography in Mass Communication* conducted an interview with Dr. Parry. You can find it here: https://history-jmc.com/2023_Issues_files/vol.%209%202%20Historiography2.pdf

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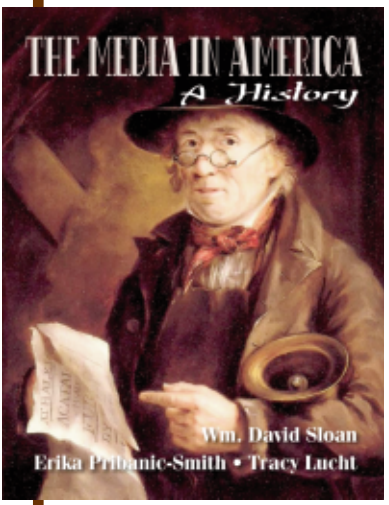

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How Important Is History to You?

By Wm. David Sloan ©

I had just begun formulating this essay when I got the news of Pam Parry's death.

Sloan

What a shock. Only two weeks earlier, Pam had spent four days visiting with my wife and me.

She told us about the books she was working on and a book series she was co-editing. Beyond those, she already was planning another project to begin as soon as she finished those. She and I spent several hours discussing a publishing project to start next year.

"How excited she was about all those things she was doing!" Joanne (my wife) said when we learned Pam had died.

Even before Pam passed on, I had planned to use her as an example for this essay. She was one of our field's most committed historians. She worked with little support and under conditions that would be insurmountable for most of us.

Southeast Missouri State University, where Pam taught, is a four-year program. It doesn't offer a graduate degree in mass communication. Professors teach four courses a semester, and usually a lab to go along with at least one of them. The program doesn't attach particular

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importance to the staples of graduate programs — to doing research, publishing books, or producing journal articles. Teaching's the thing. Professors who do research do it because they want to, not because they have to. Pam researched history because she loved it and thought it was important.

I've known other professors like Pam. They write history papers, articles, and books even with little incentive from their departments. I once knew a professor, a historian now dead, who taught five courses and two labs every semester in an undergraduate journalism program. Yet, while writing his Ph.D. dissertation, at the same time that he was teaching full-time, he published a book. In the two years after completing his doctorate, he wrote several conference papers and journal articles, revised his dissertation, and got it published as a book. The reward he got from his department was a pleasant "That's nice." He wrote another nine books before his retirement.

Two of today's truly outstanding JMC historians have spent their careers laboring under similar circumstances. Julie Williams and Debbie van Tuyll both taught in undergraduate programs. Yet each has been among the most productive historians of their generation. Both are recipients of the Kobre Award for Lifetime Achievement from the American Journalism Historians Association. They've written papers, articles, and books because they love history. And, like Pam, they think it's indispensable.

You may know others like Julie and Debbie and Pam — or you may yourself be like them. If you are, then you know why they've produced so much history. It's not because their departments made it easy. It's because history is important to them. Like them, you do the work even though you don't have to and despite the fact that you don't get much support from your school or reward for your labor.

If you worked in a program where you had to teach only two courses a semester, you would think you had entered paradise — or at the least were on vacation.

And you look around and see professors in graduate programs teaching classes perhaps six hours a week, and it's hard to understand why they write so little or never produce anything.

You wonder how serious they are about history. How important is history to them?

To them, we would ask:

Would you produce history even if you didn't have an easy teaching load? What if you had to teach four courses every semester?

Would you produce history even if you didn't get grants? What if you had to pay for your own travel to visit archives?

What if your school didn't grant sabbaticals to do research?

Are you willing to forego summer teaching and its extra income so that you can work on a book or travel to do research?

How prolific have you been? Have you had a journal research article published in the last two years? If you've had your Ph.D. for at least five years, have you had a history book published? Since then, have you averaged at least one book every six or seven years?

Are you now working on a history research project? If you aren't, why aren't you? Do you plan to begin one when your semester classes end this month?

Do you do historical research mainly to get tenure or promotion? Or is it more important to you than professional advancement is? Is it vital enough that you would do it even if it didn't count toward promotion or tenure? Would you do history simply because you love it?

Is it more important to you than are today's media practices and daily news flare-ups? Do you spend more time talking about history

than about the latest television controversy?

Are you more interested in the past than in the present? Do you get more impassioned about muckraking or the penny press than you do about Fox News or MSNBC?

Do you talk more about politics in the 19th century press than you do about today's partisan squabbles?

Do you spend more time studying history than you do posting on Facebook?

If you don't, then you should examine why you say you're a historian. Or why you want people to think you are. Ponder how important history is to you. If "very" is not your answer, consider why you don't move to communication theory or some other field.

I hope every historian in our field is serious about history. I hope that, like Pam Parry, every one of them thinks JMC history is important. We don't need loafers. As the Greeks famously said, "I can do more with one soldier who will fight than 100 who won't."

Thoughts

Challenging Widely Held Ideas

A historian friend, in fact one of the sharpest scholars in JMC and one of the best historians in the field, recently confided in me that she's reluctant to explore ideas that are unpopular. "I've always thought it would be interesting," she said, "to study slaveholders who thought they were good slaveholders to see what they did that they thought was good."

The danger in doing such a study, my friend told me, is that some JMC historians would criticize her for suggesting such a possibility —

as if in doing so she would be suggesting that slavery itself was good.

Unfortunately, the conformist mindset she describes has become widespread. And in a field such as JMC history, where so many practitioners seem more interested in ideology than in history, it not only has grabbed a foothold but is gaining the upper hand.

That is true even with *organizations* devoted to history, which one would think, and would hope, have some immunity from it, simply because they are *history* organizations. Good historians are taught to be evenhanded in dealing with ideas. But that's not always the case. Unfortunately, too many historians are more committed to causes than they are to history. They influence organizations to mimic them. They are, in fact, anti-history.

Such a mindset restricts what we study and constricts what we know about history. We might as well be banning books.

The importance of history makes it worth risking the hazards of fighting anti-history. When loud ideologues rise up as a band to suppress any view with which they disagree, then is the time for historians to stand up — even when taking a stand is unpopular. It's not always easy or comfortable to do so.

But as someone said, those ideas that are most firmly entrenched and most widely held are exactly the ones that need to be challenged. That's certainly true with some of the ideas snaking their way through JMC historiography. If they're not challenged, they will suffocate history.

The Joy of History

Like many of you, I came to the study of history late in my academic career. The pleasure I found made me wish I had known it earlier.

Perhaps you discovered the same thing.

A practical kid pursuing practical stuff, I majored in journalism as an undergraduate. It wasn't until beginning my Ph.D. that I discovered a higher professional calling. The college's graduate director, when he learned that I could do arithmetic, begged me to pursue the social sciences. But I already had decided, like many of you, to take Frost's road less traveled. For me, the road was history, and it made all the difference.

In many JMC programs, historians exist out on the periphery. Social science colleagues don't give much regard to history. It ranks low in the list of merits for recognition and special treatment. Yet how many historians would trade their joy in what they do for pay raises and pomp? Joy is its own reward.

When I was teaching at the University of Alabama I worked mainly with history, but I also got to know many of the doctoral students laboring in the social and behavioral sciences. Often I asked them how they were doing in their studies, and a surprisingly large number would tell me, almost invariably, "I *have to* go to the library to do some research" or "I *have to* work on my dissertation today."

Yet when I asked history students the same question, I never got a *have to* answer. They would tell me, "I can't wait until I'm free this afternoon so that I can work on my dissertation." They were traveling on Frost's road.

They may have equated historical study to love.

If you were in love, wouldn't you do the best you possibly could to treat the beloved the absolute best that you could? If we historians love the study of history as much as we say we do, shouldn't we do our absolute best to treat it the best it deserves?

Making History in Camilla, Georgia

By David W. Bulla ©

One of the things that my wife, Kalpana Ramgopal, asks me every time I am working on a conference paper, article, or book chapter is what is the relevance of this research to contemporary mass communication. She is a former journalist and likes to ask questions. However, my answer is usually evasive. "I am not sure what happened in the 1860s has any significant connection to what is happening today," I meekly tell her. After all, American newspaper journalism, which is what I mainly study, was in the ascendancy one hundred sixty years. Today, well, at best, it is not quite extinct — yet.

Bulla

Therefore, I admire historians whose research has an effect on society, such as Professor Amber Roessner of the University of Tennessee providing commentary that puts a significant mass media trend in context. That is what she ably did earlier this year in explaining how the news media reported on Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign in 1976, establishing non-stop, horse-race election coverage.

Thus, sometimes historians have an impact on society, and because I teach in Georgia, I want to discuss a situation where historical research

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has made a difference.

Albany State University history professor Joshua Butler says that "it is important to know the things you do not know," and Butler wants the world to know about the Camilla Massacre, which occurred in southwestern Georgia on September 19, 1868. Indeed, Butler's research is a prime example of how digging into the past can have a profound effect on a community. As a graduate student at Valdosta State University, Butler systematically dug into the public record on what happened that day in 1868. At least three reports were written in the days, weeks, and months after the event. Much of Butler's work was based on those primary sources; he also looked at newspaper coverage of the event and then the journal articles written about Camilla over the next century and a half. He figured out that what at first appeared to be a riot by Republicans and Black marchers was actually a massacre that resulted in at least a dozen deaths and dozens of wounded who were hunted down like animals as they tried to scatter back to Albany (about 25 miles away) from Camilla (which is 200 miles south of Atlanta).

Butler's Valdosta State thesis, entitled "'Almost Too Terrible to Believe': The Camilla, Georgia, Race Riot and Massacre, September 1868," was written in 2012. Butler, who would go on to earn his Ph.D. at Florida State University, did not stop there. Based on the conclusions he made about what had happened when the Mitchell County Sheriff and many of the townspeople had attacked the mostly Black marchers from Albany for a Republican Party mass meeting on the Camilla Courthouse Square, Butler worked to get the various factions in the town to put up a state historical marker to let the world know what occurred.

"I set out to learn more about the event I learned about in class [at Valdosta State] and saw there were two main articles about it, which

were drastically different," Butler said. "I set out to see why there were different versions of the event and what could lead me down that path. I found that there was a larger narrative that I wanted to tell, and that was how Camilla was related to other similar riots [in the South], again as a way to understand why some had books, and others did not."

As is often the case, once Butler began to dig into the record, he had new questions that needed to be answered.

"Historically, I wanted to find out if this was a political riot or a racial massacre," Butler continued. "The two are similar but also quite different. It was an ambush."

As a historian, Butler knew he had to get the facts right. Both sides were armed, although the Camilla townsfolk had rifles while about half of the marchers had shotguns, although little ammunition. Where did the Camilla weapons come from?

"One mistake I made when working on the event in my Valdosta days was that I said it had no connection to the Ku Klux Klan, but I later learned that Young Men's Democratic Club was code for Klan," he said. "Therefore, it was the KKK that delivered the weapons to Camilla."

The delivery of the weapons armed the townspeople who would shoot the mostly Black marchers at the Republican rally. This was only three years after Appomattox and Lincoln's assassination, and the Republican Party for a brief period was leading Georgia. The days of post-war tolerance were numbered, as the state legislature that summer ejected twenty-eight duly elected Black members, all of whom were Republicans.

The fact that what happened in Camilla was a massacre and not a riot, as had become the dominant narrative in the South — and in Georgia — would require a public campaign to re-establish the facts of

the case. Butler had his Ph.D. in hand and eventually an assignment as a history professor at Albany State University in the city where the 1868 march began. Now he needed a plan.

"We neared September 19, 2018, the 150th commemorative event, and I worked with local pastor Joe Thomas and the then executive director of the Albany Civil Rights Institute, Frank Wilson," Butler said. "We planned to have an event at the institute in August. We went on local television, and I was teaching at the now defunct Bainbridge State [College] but was able to bring in Steven Hahn to give a talk."

Hahn, a historian at New York University, is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*. Hahn, who studied under C. Vann Woodward at Yale, helped put the Camilla incident in context.

"These planning meetings initially, however, were in Albany, but most were in Camilla, and we wanted to include the community," Butler continued. "The event at the Albany Civil Rights Institute was so successful that they had to turn people away, so we held a second meeting there later. We knew we wanted the marker then, but we needed support. Frank had secured markers for the Albany Civil Rights Movement but was unsure who would sponsor it here. The Camilla event had a smaller-than-anticipated turnout (but it was still cool because we led a march to the courthouse and placed a wreath)."

A hurricane, Michael, would hit a few weeks later, and the conversations about the Camilla marker came to a halt. However, a year later, Butler received an invitation from a city councilman who formed a committee to look into erecting a marker. The councilman called on an outside group who had had success securing lynching markers. That's when COVID started, and the pace of the process slowed again.

A citizen from Columbus applied for the Camilla marker from the Georgia Historical Society, but that application was turned down. Butler continued to work on the research end of things, and an application was taken by to the Georgia Historical Society in 2022. This time the society approved the application. The dedication of the marker was held during Black History Month in 2023 with Butler as the keynote speaker. The dedication, held on February 27, 2023, on the Camilla town square where the massacre began, was part of a team effort that included Butler, Union Baptist Church of Camilla, the Mitchell County NAACP, and the class of 1990 from Mitchell County High School.

Butler notes that Mitchell is a rare county in Georgia — or the Deep South, for that matter — that does not have a Confederate monument. Accordingly, he knew that the process had to be done carefully and with a good deal of diplomacy.

When the marker was finally unveiled, the Albany State history professor had a very definite reaction to seeing that the work he and the community had done come to fruition.

"I was one of the first to see it and read it," Butler said of the marker, once it had been erected on the Camilla town square. "It was a moving moment for me. I went from the kid who grew up here to the college student who learned about it in a modern Georgia history class (I actually do not remember the professor discussing it, but one of the students in the class had chosen it as their research presentation topic so that is what sticks out to me). Now, as a professional historian, it was truly a full-circle moment."

The Camilla marker, as approved by the Georgia Historical Society and Mitchell County commissioners, reads: "In one of the most violent episodes in Reconstruction Georgia, a rally in Mitchell County in September 1868 resulted in about a dozen freedmen being killed and sev-

eral dozen wounded. Georgia had been re-admitted to the United States just two months prior. Leading up to the terrible events of September 19, White Democrats and Republicans in the Georgia legislature expelled all 28 African-American legislators. One of those expelled, Philip Joiner from southwest Georgia, led several hundred freedmen from Albany to Camilla for a rally in the Mitchell County seat. Upon arrival, the sheriff and other local Whites opened fire. Many Black voters stayed home for the 1868 presidential election two months later. News of the massacre circulated throughout the country, and Congress returned Georgia to military occupation and further Reconstruction."

Indeed, as Butler notes in his thesis and Hahn in his book, there had been a pattern of violence against Blacks in Georgia in the first three years after the war, through the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment in July 1868. In fact, the Freedmen's Bureau reported 336 cases of assault with the intent to kill or murder of Black men in the first ten and a half months of 1868 in Georgia. Butler comments that rarely was there any price to pay for the perpetrators of this violence. That set a precedent and the Klan-armed Mitchell County residents figured they would get away with whatever they were going to do to the Black marchers.

Finally, the big day came, and Butler, after the unveiling, was one of the public speakers.

"I had remarks written out but quickly went off the script," he said, when it was his turn to speak. "It was a moving time. My family was there, so it was a big deal. After we concluded the presentation, we stayed for a long time because people wanted to take pictures of it and us, or they had questions. You could tell that it meant something to the people, which stands out the most."

That's the best kind of historical research — the kind that has

meaning to a community. And I must note that much of Butler's research came from the day's newspapers, as well as other primary documents. Newspapers North and South were bitterly divided over how to frame the constant terrorism that was visited upon African Americans and their white sympathizers after the Civil War. Just nine days after Camilla, some 200 people were killed in Opelousas, Louisiana. Republican editors called Camilla and Opelousas massacres. Northern Democratic and Southern journalists called them riots. The two terms were loaded rhetorically.

Yet, as Butler found in his deep dive, Camilla was, in fact, a massacre with between a dozen and two dozen killed and dozens more wounded. The whites of Mitchell County hunted down the scattered marchers after the initial shooting. When the election came in early November, most African Americans in southwest Georgia stayed home. The Klan and the Mitchell County whites had made their point and gotten the results they wanted. Moreover, the Republicans' day in Georgia was coming to an end as well, and Jim Crow's was just beginning.

The marker itself cannot do justice to what happened as nobody was ever convicted of murdering the marchers, but historians like Butler help to set the record straight. Robert Penn Warren said of history that it "cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future." That's what Butler and his colleagues in Albany and Camilla have done: Allowed us to face the past faithfully and accurately, so that we may prepare for the future.

Since that February day in 2023, what has Butler seen?

"People come and see the marker," he said. "I always see people taking pictures there, especially when they held the city's Juneteenth cele-

bration at the courthouse. It still looks as good as it did on day one. And, to this day, there is still no Confederate monument. So that is a significant win for those who started this journey."

History, Objectivity, and Truth

By Hubert P. van Tuyll ©

TV anchor David Brinkley, on his last night as host of ABC's Sunday night news program, apologized to then-President Bill Clinton for calling him a bore by remembering something he'd written a few years back. Brinkley said, "Now, before we begin, I'm reminded of something I wrote years ago.... It may be impossible to be objective ... but we must always be fair."

van Tuyll

There is much wisdom in Brinkley's statement, not just for journalists but also for historians. Although a few disciplines still cling to the term "objectivity," in its purest form, it is, indeed, not possible. Still, the concept is far from useless. Just as calculus has a concept in which one is always getting closer to something without actually reaching it, we can continually approach objectivity without ever quite getting there, which raises the question of why we can't get there.

Many would immediately assume it's because of "biases" and "prejudices," but this is a misleading starting point. Biases and prejudices are the easiest problems to deal with as they are the most obvious. Let's take the most obvious example, which is when we are writing about a group whose experience we do not share. This is, in my opinion, the most

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overused case, but we cannot leave it unaddressed.

Suppose I was writing about the experience of Lithuanian-Americans. I know very little about them. I might have some deep hidden prejudice about people from the Baltics, or East Europeans generally. So, maybe I should seek a Lithuanian-American to write some of my piece. But a member of the minority group, while having more knowledge, also has biases and prejudices. Sometimes an outsider can actually write a better piece because he or she will have a better perspective on the matter under consideration.

But not a purely objective one. This problem was diagnosed by one of Western world's greatest philosophers, Immanuel Kant. A professor who spent his life and career in Koenigsberg (Kaliningrad), then part of Prussia — and I am oversimplifying here — concluded that the human being simply cannot truly observe the entire "real world." We can only see certain facts, make particular observations, be aware of events and characteristics, etc. Kant did not devalue any of this, but his thought should encourage us to retain some humility about our research and analysis. It may be very good; it can never be final. This should encourage doctoral students.

And there is plenty of evidence that the historical profession, while emphasizing more and more objectivity, still needs work — because, as you will see shortly, of that search for objectivity. It is easy to poke fun at the history writing of yore. In ancient times, attempts to write more objective history were not common. As a military historian, I am proud that it was Thucydides who attempted to write the first objective history in history after Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian Wars. But many earlier histories were written to memorialize events or glorify individuals. (Try reading a biography of a Civil War general written in the 19th century for an example.) That does not make those sources worthless. It

was not until German scholars like Leopold von Ranke and Hans Delbrueck came along that modern history writing started to become the norm. Delbrueck wrote a particularly fascinating piece analyzing the Greeks' story about the Persian invasions. The Greeks had claimed that one million to five million Persians had invaded their county. Delbrueck was the first person — in almost 2,400 years — to ask how many people could the Persians have actually supplied? He calculated 250,000 at the very most.

So, should we feel good that history has gotten more objective? Yes and no. The definition of objectivity is not consistent and is, in fact, sometimes counterproductive. Two problems exist. The first problem is that historians write more and more for each other, sometimes in increasingly smaller circles. I had to cancel one very thorough and objective academic journal because I literally could not make it through the articles any more. (I hold a B.A. in economics, a J.D. in law, and a Ph.D. in history. So I don't think my education was the problem.) As we have written more and more for our own people, perhaps necessarily to get tenure and promotion, our public impact and prestige have correspondingly shrunk. The astounding current ignorance of history is not necessarily the fault of the ignorant.

Bad history can be corrected, and public interaction can be improved, but a second, more insidious problem is the a type of scholarship that claims to be objective but suffers from a professional self-censorship that its enemies label "political correctness." The banning of language should be recognized as a banning of ideas. This idea is hardly original to me. Its most famous expositor was George Orwell in his novel *1984* (1949), a novel that is universally known, often quoted, and occasionally actually read. Nowadays, it is most often cited by right-wingers who overlook, or are possibly unaware of, Orwell's commit-

ment to socialism and trenchant criticisms of capitalism, but with the rise of right wing political parties across the globe, its relevance to the left will be rediscovered. Few ideological movements are truly tolerant, and the liberalism common among university faculties is no exception. I have actually experienced session chairs interrupting presentations because they disapproved of language being used. Sometimes this is merely silly, such as the substitution of "enslaved persons" for "slaves." (As a military historian, I wonder: should I start referring to ordinary soldiers as "conscripted persons" or "enlisted persons," as the case may be?)

History is far from the worst discipline in this regard, but it is not immune. Good historians, like all decent human beings, can be won over by the arguments in favor of using scholarship for (presumed) laudable purposes. Changes in language are a good example. The use of "enslaved persons" was supposed to make the slave to be seen as a real human, not merely the subject of a system. That is good policy — but bad history. Of course we should seek to humanize the slave. But on closer examination, doing so is problematical. If we start focusing on the slave as an enslaved person, we might start thinking of the slave as just another person living in the Old South, who happened to be enslaved. This is entirely inaccurate, for the slave was, in fact, primarily a slave, subject to the system. Scholars have been humanizing the slave at least since Robert Blassingame published *The Slave Community* in 1972. Yet, given the stridency of some historians, one wonders sometimes whether instructors soon will be red-pencilling undergraduate papers that use the term "slave."

A trend that enhances the chances of those who wish to limit language and ideas is declining literacy. As populations read less complex materials, language will become simpler. If you teach at a university

where lectures and materials have not been simplified for the benefit of incoming students, you are a lucky instructor. The deterioration of language was, after all, Orwell's ultimate form of censorship. It began with the "memory hole" and banning certain terms, but the final action was to create a simpler form of language so that certain ideas could not be expressed any more. Correcting wrongs, past or present, should not become a road to intellectual perdition.

Roundtable: Journalism and the Meaning of America

By Bruce Evensen, Lauren Kessler, John Nerone, Nancy Roberts, and Linda Steiner ©

After the publication of *Journalism and the American Experience* (2018), a book examining journalism's significance in American history, I began a companion study of journalism's role in the making of the meaning of America. As we approach this new nation's 250th anniversary, we have already reached the 250th anniversary of Daniel Boone's procession across the Cumberland Gap. Axmen and early settlers paused at the crest of the old Wilderness Road, looking back at all they'd known, and ahead to all they'd come to know.

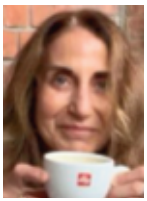
Evensen

To historians approaching retirement age and for those of us who have arrived, there is the realization that we have lived through more than a quarter of America's history. From Eisenhower onward we have experienced the Cold War, the New Frontier, the Great Society, the Civil Rights Movement, Morning in America, and

Bruce Evensen is an emeritus professor of Journalism at DePaul University in Chicago. He created and for many years directed its graduate program in journalism. His books include Truman, Palestine and the Press: Shaping Conventional Wisdom at the Beginning of the Cold War; When Dempsey Fought Tunney: Heroes, Hokum and Storytelling in the Jazz Age; God's Man for the Gilded Age: D. L. Moody and the Rise of Modern Mass Evangelism; The Responsible Reporter: Journalism in the information Age; *and* Journalism and the American Experience. *He served as associate editor on* Encyclopedia of American Journalism History.

many other competing claims about the meaning of America as we enter the Age of the Internet.

This roundtable examines what the scholarship of journalism historians tells us about journalism's role in the many meanings of America.



Kessler

Lauren Kessler is an Affiliate Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Washington, where she teaches storytelling for social change. She is also Professor Emerita at the University of Oregon, where she founded and directed a graduate program in literary journalism. She is the author of fifteen books. She specializes in exploring invisible subcultures, including maximum-security prisons, ballet and those with Alzheimer's.

Nerone

John Nerone is Professor Emeritus in the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. He has taught courses in the history of communication, the history and theory of freedom of expression, and historiography. He has written four books, including Violence Against the Press *and* The Media and Public Life.

Roberts

Nancy Roberts is Director of the Journalism Program at the State University of New York at Albany. Her research specialities are the history of alternative periodicals, the literary aspects of journalism and journalism ethics. She has co-authored two books and is the author of American Peace Writers, Editors, and Periodicals: A Dictionary and Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker. *She has served as president of the American Journalism Historians Association and head of the AEJMC History Division.*

Steiner

Linda Steiner is Distinguished Scholar-Teacher and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs in the University of Maryland's College of Journalism. Her research focuses on gender matters in newsrooms, citizen journalism and feminist media. She is a former editor of Critical Studies in Media Communication *and* Journalism & Communication Monographs. *She is co-author of two books and co-editor of nine books, including most recently, We Can Do Better: Feminist Manifestos for Media and Communication. She has been president of the AEJMC.*

Evensen: *The meaning of America is likely embedded in what has been called an American creed. The Declaration of Independence speaks to that creed when it emphasizes "deriving just powers from the consent of the governed." Our Constitution references that creed when it discusses government's job is "to establish justice" by "promoting the general welfare." Our National Seal encourages a core idea of — "out of many, one." What does your research and the research of others tell us about journalism's role in the creation and maintenance of the American creed?*

Roberts: Journalism has both helped to create and maintain the American creed — and, also, to undermine it. And here I mean both mainstream journalism and advocacy journalism.

Many early colonial newspaper editors sought to "promote the general welfare," but they also had to kowtow to the royal government or else risk censorship, suspension, and even incarceration. This chilling effect stymied their coverage of political issues, particularly those that, if reported, would damage public opinion toward the colonial British government.

In the mid-1700s, the Patriot press — one of the first advocacy presses in what became the United States — energetically reported on the constraints of the British government toward the American colonies, including taxation without representation. It is impossible to imagine that the Revolution could have occurred, without the essential role of the Patriot press in galvanizing public opinion.

The party press in the early national period both promoted American citizens' general welfare, but also at times stymied its development. Meanwhile, in the antebellum period, empowered by the First Amendment, social movements flourished and expressed their advocacy in newspapers and periodicals, enhanced by new developments in printing

technology and increasing literacy. These movements included peace advocacy, which spawned several publications such as *The Harbinger of Peace* and *The Friend of Peace*. Others then prominent included Black newspapers such as *Freedom's Journal* and abolitionist publications, as well as feminist and temperance journalism.

In the late 19th century, mainstream newspapers such as those of Pulitzer's *New York World* and Hearst's *New York Journal* commanded mass audiences. Their legacy is mixed, as they proved to be both "people's champions" but also the source of sensationalist, fabricated yellow journalism that pushed Americans to embrace the Spanish-American War.

Nerone: The Declaration appeals to informed consent. The founders expected the press to generate consent by providing a platform for a continual public conversation in which any citizen could participate. Kevin Barnhurst and I argued that the master metaphor for this notion of the press was the town meeting: the press was supposed to be a virtual town meeting hall, a neutral forum for citizens to deliberate.

The town meeting metaphor did not include a role for what we call journalism. The key actors in the press were printers. Looking back, we might think that printers were actually journalists, but no one at the time of the founding actually called them that. Online searches of Jefferson's and Madison's papers at the Library of Congress turned up no entries for journalism. Likewise, *The Federalist Papers*. It was over a century later that journalism came to claim a professional identity.

How did the emergence of professional journalism change the meaning of what is called the American creed? There are at least two ways of looking at it. The more common one sees professional journalism as a necessary adjustment to modern society. This is the understand-

ing of the canon of journalism commentary from the first half of the 20th century, from Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* to the Hutchins Commission report on *A Free and Responsible Press*. As the world became more complex and interconnected, ordinary citizens could no longer be expected to be competent about public affairs and instead would have to delegate to journalists. Another way of putting this saw modernity as generating concentrations of social, economic, and political power: in an age of big business, governance required empowered journalism as a countervailing power. Citizens were still important, but as spectators and sporadically as voters. In most situations, journalists would stand in as their representatives.

A minority view sees the rise of journalism as a hostile takeover of the public sphere. This has long been the perspective of critics on the right, who condemn journalism's liberal bias, or fake news. It has also been a feature of left-wing criticism, as in Ed Herman and Noam Chomsky's "propaganda model."

Steiner: My work on the women's suffrage press of the 19th and early 20th century and on 20th century feminist media, as well as work by others (including scholars participating in this roundtable) on non-mainstream political media, suggests a consensus on the centrality of democracy and especially justice. Editors, publishers, and writers for those "alternative" media accepted their responsibility, as journalists, to promote core values. They all agreed, I think, to promote general welfare.

Different groups operating their own news outlets, however, have had very different conceptions of the governed, the meaning of consent in practice, what justice looks like, and what promoting general welfare entails. Radical and/or progressive editors and publishers, and for that

matter, conservative and proudly reactionary editors and publishers, had conflicting notions of who deserved to vote and who deserved to be celebrated as model citizens. (This is pluralized because they thought in group terms and were treated in terms of groups.) Suffrage editors often debated whether to argue for the vote as a matter of equal rights or because enfranchised women would save the nation by electing reform minded officials and throwing out the hooligans.

Journalists for the women's liberation and women's rights outlets, and for the Black press, essentially argued that lifting the boats of *some* groups was necessary. They were less concerned, ultimately, whether lifting those boats would eventually raise the boats of all. And they were largely convinced that their "niche" outlets were crucial to providing support and attention to the more deserving groups, often ignored or demonized by mainstream presses — which they correctly understood to play a more conservative (in the philosophical sense) and stabilizing role.

Evensen: *When he was 31, Noah Webster, an early Federalist editor, saw a significant future role of journalism in strengthening the new nation. In 1789, he observed the language of the Republic should guide the values of that nation. Webster believed the values that forged the country's identity would become its common destiny. Based on your research, how well or poorly has journalism given voice to the values that built our nation?*

Nerone: I'm going to limit my comment to two sets of values in the Declaration of Independence. The first is the assertion that all are created equal. The second is the vision of government by consent, with all that is implied there. In my research, journalism has usually done better by the second than the first.

Journalists have usually been promoters and facilitators of democratic government. They have usually been committed to making information more available to the public. For most of U. S. history, journalists have wanted to motivate voters: through the 19th century, most news organizations had partisan allegiances. When journalism came to embrace objectivity, most news workers thought of themselves as serving electoral processes and public opinion by making citizens better informed and holding the powerful accountable. Even though they thought of themselves as champions of the ordinary citizen, on balance their work tended to reflect the existing distribution of power in society. Lance Bennett's indexing model seems pretty accurate.

On equality the record is less admirable. Our textbooks sensibly highlight admirable figures like Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, who were feminists in addition to promoting racial equality. But such figures were hardly representative of the press. I vividly recall how disturbing it was to read through press coverage of the 1898 Wilmington, North Carolina, riot. It's not an exaggeration to say that for most of U. S. history the bulk of the press was racist and sexist, and I don't mean in subtle ways. Until well into the 20th century, white supremacy was the norm for local and many national news organizations.

Steiner: Webster's call for linguistic unity across the country opposed linguistic differentiation between classes (so people would speak the same whether elite or poor) and regions. I'm not arguing for adopting British affectations and the King's English. Still, I wonder about the appropriateness of Webster's opposition to regional dialects and regional accents, whether taken literally or figuratively.

I enormously appreciate the vigorous, colorful, lively language and stubborn logic that emerges early on in the feminist presses and other

feminist media forms as well as in the citizen journalism projects I have studied. They draw their emotional resonance from the local. Indeed, the refusal to pull their punches is what made them so much fun to study. The alternative media largely give voice to specific takes on both local and national problems and issues, making for a loosely based, uneven patchwork quilt. Their resistance to standardizing and homogenizing national projects is well worth considering, before we try to evaluate how well the mainstream media with national distribution/circulation knit all those messy threads into a single national fabric.

James Carey asked: are wontons, ravioli, empanadas, pierogi, samosas, mandu, gyoza, pasties, and pupusas essentially the same, because they all involve fillings wrapped in dough? Or are they essentially different, because the recipes — fillings, dough, spices, oil — follow from and reflect a particular region and culture? With Carey, I tilt toward the latter and regard the particularity and specificity as valuable and inherently worth preserving.

Evensen: *In summarizing what a civil society looks like, Abraham Lincoln famously describes a government "of, by and for the people." In his 1862 message to Congress, he refers to America as "the last, best hope of earth." How has American journalism, based on your research, contributed to — or impeded — the forging and preservation of a just society that Lincoln had in mind?*

Kessler: "We will speak out, we will be heard, Though all the earth's systems crack;

We will not bate a single word, Nor take a letter back."

These are the words of James Russell Lowell, a 19th century American poet, a staunch Abolitionist who used both his poetry and prose in

the fight against slavery.

"It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake."

These are the words Frederick Douglas, writer, orator, the most important Abolitionist and civil rights leader of the 19th century.

Our history is rich with examples of those who used the power of the pen and the power of the press to fight against slavery, for women's enfranchisement, against war, for the rights of workers, against corporate greed, for environmental protection. The list, if not endless, is significant and impressive.

Nerone: I'm persuaded by Manisha Sinha's account in *The Rise and Fall of the Second American Republic* and Matthew Stewart's similar argument in *An Enlightenment of the Mind*. Lincoln appears in these accounts as remarkably committed to progressive values; reconstruction was not simply about ending slavery but addressing a broad spectrum of inequalities. Bernard Bailyn used the phrase "the contagion of liberty" to describe the impetus of the American Revolution; it is equally applicable to the Civil War, which generated momentum for a broad critique of the nation's political economy embracing women's rights and labor rights alongside rights for "freedmen." Segments of the press — the descendants of the abolitionist press, the rising Black press, working class newspapers, and suffragist publications in particular — were instrumental in supporting this broad movement. Mainstream newspapers had a more ambivalent involvement. Some editors and reporters are justly celebrated, but on balance the press did little to frustrate the "redemption" of the South, the rise of Jim Crow, the corporate capture of the Fourteenth Amendment, the repression of labor activism, and the rise of imperialism. Twentieth-century journalism had a more

positive engagement with Lincoln's vision.

Evensen: *Ninety years ago, Langston Hughes wrote, "Let America be America again. The Land that never has been yet, and yet must be, the land where every man is free. The Land that's mine — the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, me." How have minority communities used journalism in the struggle of America to live up to that meaning?*

Steiner: Right! The nation had never truly been free and the dream, Hughes says, is "almost dead today." But not yet dead. That last yearning, still-true line of Hughes's Depression-era poem urges, "And make America again!" Such irony. I credit activists and advocacy journalism for keeping that dream alive. The poem's multiple voices express conflicting points of view — one bitter and despairing, one hopeful. There is the America that is asserted and the America that asserts ideals of freedom and justice. Then we hear the poem's literally parenthetical, figuratively muffled, nearly silenced minority voice.

The history of minority communities and their journalism, and Hughes's hopeful note suggest that the struggle is long and agonizing but eventually brings reform and improvement, albeit not perfection. So, the suffrage, women's liberation, and feminist media have pushed the country to live up to ideals of freedom and justice; and have pushed mainstream journalism to join in solidarity. The same with the Black press and of ethnic minorities, the media of sexual minorities, of political minorities (socialists, anarchists).

Nerone: Minority communities are quite diverse, but a couple of dynamics seem common to their relationship to journalism. First, they typically find themselves marginalized in mainstream news organiza-

tions — both in content and in the workplace. They respond by making their own media, and these media often succeed at providing what Catherine Squires has called an "enclaved counterpublic," which offers a valuable resource for both practical purposes and cultural identity. Minority media have generally been less effective, however, in achieving a voice in the larger public sphere — but there are distinguished exceptions. I'm thinking of the role that reporters for the Black press played in engaging journalists for national media in the Civil Rights movement, as Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff show in *The Race Beat*.

A final dynamic involves a cycle of assimilation and appropriation. As mainstream news media come to recognize both the moral imperative of inclusion and the market value of minority consumers, they turn to minority media as a kind of farm system, recruiting talent while at the same time making minority media less viable. The end of segregation crippled the business model of the Black press. Similarly, immigrant, ethnic, and foreign-language media have found it hard to survive as new generations become more assimilated, a dynamic that Robert Park pointed out a century ago.

Evensen: *What can journalism history tell us about the success or challenges faced by America's reform movements?*

Kessler: For centuries, the journalism of dissidents has existed alongside the conventional media. This dissident journalism has been the beating heart of every reform movement in American life, an essential — if not always successful — part of the ongoing American experiment.

It is where a new status quo — challenging ideas, from banning child labor to ensuring food safety — has gotten its footing. It is where people with "startling" ideas like feminists and utopians gave voice to

their against-the-grain beliefs. It is where outsiders connected to outsiders, where activists gained followers, where ideas that improved lives, saved lives, empowered the powerless, and helped create a strong nation...where such ideas were first articulated and kept alive. Some of these ideas are now embedded in our culture and in our laws, and we are a stronger nation for that.

Steiner: What U.S. reform movement has not relied on journalism in some way or form? The purpose of media formations organized by advocates and true believers is often to experiment (to see what is effective) with explanations, justifications and even slogans, and to celebrate, rally, and mobilize recruits. At some point, political movements typically turn to more mainstream news outlets to attract publicity and support (converts, endorsements, money, votes). Thus, one answer to the question is that journalism history shows how all successful reform movements faced and presumably met a series of communication problems. Some of those communication challenges were also technological. They turned on the extent to which the available media technologies were sufficiently simple, affordable, and accessible that movement advocates could master them and use them to their own ends. Could distribution systems be created or exploited that got their own media content into the hands of believers?

Another issue was whether movement leaders developed networks of supporters or at least enough individual supporters who either could work as journalists for the mainstream media or who would use their social and cultural capital to convince journalists to cover movement activities in a serious, respectful way — that didn't demonize them or ridicule them. That is, movements need both kinds of media. Take Mary Livermore, a founding editor of the major suffrage newspaper,

Woman's Journal, after her own suffrage paper the *Agitator* was merged into the *Journal*. On her recommendation, her protégé Sallie Joy White went to work for the *Journal* in 1870. Then, having decided White would better serve the movement by working for the mainstream press, Livermore introduced White to a *Boston Post* editor, who hired White to cover a regional woman suffrage convention, making her the first woman staff reporter on a Boston newspaper. (In 1885 White moved to the *Boston Herald*, and she also co-founded and led the New England Woman's Press Association.)

Nerone: The news system has varied over time. My research suggests that reform movements had easier access to the media system in the years of the party press, when the main source of content for most newspapers was the exchange system. A printer like William Lloyd Garrison could set up exchanges with hundreds of printers of all sorts, and the *Liberator*'s content would be copied by many of them: sometimes sympathetically, but usually by party editors hoping to alarm the general public. The exchange system offered access but tended to distort the public face of reform movements, emphasizing the more disruptive voices. Garrison's prominence in the antislavery movement owed much to his skill at provoking editors of all parties; he delighted in reprinting their outraged responses. Even so, reform movements had more access than in journalism's "high modern" moment, when the primary way to engage the press was to make news, which usually requires some kind of spectacle, which automatically deposited reformers in what Daniel Hallin called the "sphere of deviance." The news media welcomed antiwar activists in the sixties into the sphere of legitimate controversy — I'm old enough to remember this — only after the general public had turned against the war. Again, there are distinguished exceptions.

Roberts: In the 20th century and beyond, we see advocacy journalism taking a larger role in critiquing mainstream society's injustices, especially during the periods of the Great Depression and the Vietnam War. The 1930s saw the creation of Dorothy Day's *Catholic Worker*, which advocated for justice for the homeless and incarcerated and also disavowed war. The *Catholic Worker* has consistently opposed war, from the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s and World War II, to the Korean War, Vietnam, and beyond. It has been the single Catholic pacifist voice for decades and as such has kept alive, in challenging times, the early Christian ideal of peace.

By the time of the Vietnam War, U.S. public opinion began to shift on questions of war and peace and the *Catholic Worker* attracted many youthful activists. They were also reading the scores of underground GI newspapers such as the *Star-Spangled Bummer* and *Marine Blues* that critiqued that war, among many other antiwar voices. The 20th century also saw the growth of many other influential advocacy publications, including those of social movement organizations that further the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans people.

Evensen: *How has journalism helped to define and re-define what it means to be an American?*

Kessler: Those who devoted their time and energy to publishing and editing dissident journals were convinced of both the righteousness of their cause and the power of the press. They were malcontents, who wanted change, and idealists, who believed change was possible. They were women and men, members of every racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, and political group in the country. Coming from both urban centers and rural outposts, they lived and worked in every state of the

union. Some were native-born; others were newly arrived. They were young, middle-aged, and old. They were the patchwork quilt that was — and is — our country. Their history is our history. We are the beneficiaries of their tireless efforts.

Nerone: Journalism broadly conceived — that is, including minority media, reform media, labor media, and so forth — has always featured contests over what it means to be an American. In most periods of U.S. history, one could argue that there has been a hegemonic notion of what it means to be an American, with various media voices seeking to expand it or constrict it. The present age is especially fraught, with the foreign-born population at a historic high, and with biological markers of identity, like race and sex, more fluid than ever before. At the same time, institutional journalism exercises less authority over matters of identity than at any time in my lifetime. It used to matter more whether the *New York Times* or the Associated Press recognizes the use of "they/them" as gender-neutral pronouns. It was indeed important that such journalism institutions rejected race, gender, and ideological restrictions on American identity when they had the power to define it. They no longer do. And now all sorts of other media voices are playing the game without a referee.

Steiner: In my view, journalism's "unifying" tendencies are not intended to unify the nation in terms of a value system or creed but, rather, represent efforts to reduce costs and maximize profits. It's less an imagined national community and more a standardized, easily understood market. Everybody has a camera-equipped cell phone, and even professional cameras are cheap and portable; so people can tell their own stories or share them. But every television network uses a store-and-for-

ward technology that allows all its owned and operated stations to use shared material as if it were local, when it's not. The material is actually from "someplace else."

A common broadcast and print journalism trope is the trend that is reported locally but then circulated as if it represents the whole nation. Is the goal to define or redefine a central creed or sense of how to be an American? No. I think the goal of networks, and of chains and media partnerships, is to sustain the largest possible market and consolidate the national consumer. Meanwhile, and this predates the contemporary crisis of the funding model by many decades, the sharing through affiliate radio station members, distribution systems, syndication services, enables an industrial model. It reduces the number of salaried journalists. If publishers can make the story of one stand in for many, essentially reducing the total number of stories told, then the publisher can significantly reduce human and technological costs. This puts a different spin on the notion of "*out of many, one.*"

"Alternative" projects are inherently inefficient uses of people's time and resources. No wonder distribution services also exist for alternative media. The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) has been an advocate and incubator for the Black Press since 1940. Frieda Werden's *WINGS: Women's International News Gathering Service* has been "Raising Women's Voices through Radio Worldwide" since 1986. But the goal of these services is sharing their voices, not muting them.

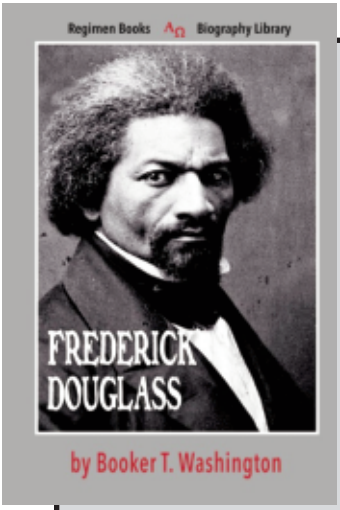
Evensen: *How have political parties and social movements used journalism in the ongoing struggle to shape the meaning of America?*

Roberts: Harnessing social media, today's social movements have invigorated their public communication, honing their websites and produc-

ing well-edited digital journalism. For example, after the murder of George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis in 2020, online advocacy for equal rights for African Americans by movements such as Black Lives Matter exploded and helped inspire a more critical national perspective on race relations.

Today, anyone who treasures free speech and the press watches the Trump Administration with some trepidation. Many worry whether journalism, both mainstream and advocacy, will be able to withstand this denigration at the hands of the President and his staff. If anything, the current climate underscores the importance of teaching our students about how journalism has historically resisted bullying, starting with the early colonial press.

Nerone: Each variety of journalism has its own uses for politicians and activists. Any kind of journalism offers different advantages in the game of representing the public, which is what politicians and activists generally compete for. High modern journalism, which is what journalism historians usually have in mind, had agenda-setting and gatekeeping capacity, and players strategized to package their proposals in terms that would meet expectations of being in the public interest, which usually meant speaking in the idiom of a relatively small group of empowered folk, like government officials, opinion leaders in business and culture, and academics. The other way to pass the gatekeepers was to assemble a large mass of bodies, something that was hard to do if you hadn't already passed through the gates, so to speak. That form of journalism used to seem terribly unfair — there was a referee, but she wasn't very fair. Now that there is no referee, a perhaps unjustified nostalgia has set in.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass was one of the most astounding figures in American history.

He would have been a notable character in any period, but hardly any other American rose so high above his circumstances. Born a slave, he became a leading figure during the most memorable epoch in our history — that age from the Antebellum era, through the Civil War and emancipation, and into Reconstruction and the great Industrial period that followed.

In this classic biography, Booker T. Washington — who followed in Douglass' footsteps as the most influential African American of his generation — provides a multifaceted account of his predecessor and his impact during the most momentous events in the nation's history.

To purchase a copy, or to learn more about this landmark biography, click on the cover image.

Historian Interview

Christina Littlefield ©

Christina Littlefield is an associate professor with a dual appointment in communication and religion at Pepperdine University. She received her Ph.D. from the Divinity Faculty at the University of Cambridge, England. She is co-author with Richard T. Hughes of *Christian America and the Kingdom of God: White Christian Nationalism from the Puritans through January 6, 2021* and the author of *Chosen Nations: Pursuit of the Kingdom of God and its Influence on Democratic Values in Late-Nineteenth Century Britain and the United States*. She won the Rising Scholar grant from American Journalism Historians Association in 2017 for her work on social gospel muckrakers, and a Scripps Howard Foundation Visiting Professors in Social Media grant in 2019 to visit the Post and Courier in Charleston, South Carolina. She is a member of the AJHA board of directors and serves as the organization's web editor. Specializing in church history, journalism history, sociology of religion, and theology and ethics, she takes an interdisciplinary approach to examine the intersection of religion, politics, media and culture. Her current historical research focuses on the social gospel and muckraking of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Littlefield

Historiography: *Tell us a little about your family background — where you were born and grew up, your education, and so forth.*

Littlefield: I was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, in a tight-knit, working-class family who struggled to stay above the poverty line. My dad was a union electrician who was blacklisted after being injured, and my mom worked inventory to keep a roof over our heads. As a high school journalist, I was recruited to Pepperdine University through a journalism summer camp. As a first-generation college student, I found a home in Pepperdine's Church of Christ tradition and was baptized in the faculty Jacuzzi my first year. I added a religion minor to my journalism major, and then stayed on for an interdisciplinary master's degree in religion and communication. After working as a journalist, I completed a Ph.D. in Divinity, specializing in church history, at the University of Cambridge in England.

Historiography: *What did you do professionally before going into teaching?*

Littlefield: I spent four years at the *Las Vegas Sun*, starting as a general assignment reporter, quickly earning the higher education beat, and then I produced religion features as a side hustle. Thanks to the Newspaper Preservation Act, the *Sun* became an insert in the larger *Review Journal*, and for a brief shining time, the *Sun* staff produced some exceptional investigative, enterprise reporting. My reporting won the Freedom of Information Award from the Nevada Press Association in 2007. It also led to the indictment, conviction and jail time of a community college vice president who was using college materials, equipment and employees to build his ranch estate.

Historiography: *Where, and what courses, have you taught?*

Littlefield: I taught at a small seminary in England during my Ph.D., but most of my teaching career has been at my alma mater. I am unique at Pepperdine in having a dual role in two divisions, Communication and Religion and Philosophy, and two of my religion courses have been cross listed with history and American studies. In Communication, I've taught introduction to news writing, investigative and narrative reporting, advanced storytelling and communication ethics. This fall, I'll teach journalism history for the first time.

In Religion, I primarily teach our general education requirement in Christianity and culture, focusing on religion in the public sphere. I've also taught history of Christianity, American religious history, and American moral thought.

Historiography: *Tell us about your background in history: When did you first get interested in historical research? How did your education prepare you to be a historian? etc.*

Littlefield: I've always loved history, as my father was an arm-chair historian specializing in military history, specifically the 1840s through the Civil War. But it was a master's class in American religious history that forever rooted my own academic interest. I was fascinated by the complexity of how religion, culture and politics merged in different contexts, and I took every religious history class Pepperdine offered. Then, while working as a journalist, I took a three-course sequence in church history through Fuller Theological Seminary's extension program, paid for with a Lilly grant through the Religion News Service. Eventually, I studied religious history for my Ph.D. at Cambridge. It was after getting the joint appointment at Pepperdine that my divisional dean at the time, Dr. Ken Waters in Communication, encour-

aged me to consider how I could merge my love and knowledge of journalism with my love and knowledge of history, and I branched into journalism history.

Historiography: *Who or what have been the major influences on your historical outlook and work?*

Littlefield: Richard T. Hughes, professor emeritus of religion at Pepperdine University, was my mentor and the professor of all my religious history classes at Pepperdine. I read his book, *Myths America Lives By,* when it was still in manuscript form in that American religious history class in 2003, and I became fascinated by the concept of civil religion. As articulated by Robert Bellah, a sociologist of religion, civil religion is the beliefs, values, narratives, symbols and rituals of a nation, in which we make some sacred ideas secular and secular ideas sacred. Hughes unpacked five mythic narratives in American religious history — the Chosen Nation, Nature's Nation, Millennial Nation, Christian Nation and Innocent Nation, and showed how they worked for both good and ill. He also unpacked the mythic dimensions of American capitalism. A newer, 2018 edition further looked at how white supremacy undermines each of these narratives. Hughes' work helped me better understand how Americans have blended religious and secular ideas throughout our history, and how religion, culture and politics all intersect in shaping historical moments.

Historiography: *What are the main areas or ideas on which you concentrate your historical work?*

Littlefield: My historical work emphasizes this concept of civil religion

and how it has evolved throughout British and American history. I have specifically looked at the myths of a Chosen Nation and a Christian Nation, and more recently, the phenomenon of Christian nationalism. My first book and my current research focus on the Social Gospel, which is a late 19th, early 20th century progressive movement for social reform across England, Germany and the United States that embraced these national myths. As I dove into journalism history, I have looked at how Social Gospel leaders produced periodicals for reform work alongside and even before the more well-known muckrakers.

Historiography: *Summarize for us the body of work — books, journal articles, and so forth — that you have done related to history.*

Littlefield: My first book is called *Chosen Nations: Pursuit of the Kingdom of God and its Influence on Democratic Values in Late-Nineteenth Century Britain and the United States*, which came out from Fortress Press in 2013. It covers a roughly 50-year period at the turn of the 19th-20th century and looks at three Social Gospel leaders in each country, considering how they embraced the Chosen/Christian nation myths, and influenced reform efforts to counteract industrialization, urbanization, and rising immigration. It looks at the good, bad and ugly in American and British civil religion at the peak of Protestant dominance in both countries.

My second book updates a 2009 work by Hughes, *Christian America and the Kingdom of God,* now doubled in size and subtitled *White Christian Nationalism from the Puritans through January 6, 2021.* University of Illinois Press released it in February 2025. This book traces the debate around Christian America and the scholarship of Christian nationalism. As in the first edition, it includes biblical exegesis to con-

sider what scripture says about a Chosen nation and the kingdom of God, the two biblical ideas behind the myth of a Christian America. Then, the book traces how Christians have pursued a Christian America and the kingdom of God from the Puritans through the January 2022 midterms, with both positive and negative results. The book includes significant attention to how the Christian right created its own media bubble and lived reality for its followers.

I have an essay, "Christianizing America: School Board by School Board," that draws from this book coming out in June 2025 in the *History of Science Journal's* (ISIS) "Focus Section: The Culture Wars at 100," edited by Dr. Ed Larson, of Pepperdine University, Dr. Christopher White, of Vassar University, and Dr. Stephen Welden, of the University of Oklahoma.

I am working on a third book on the Social Gospel muckrakers, and I've published a journal article in *American Journalism* titled "Promulgating the Kingdom: Social Gospel Muckraker Josiah Strong." Strong is now remembered most for his pro-Anglo Saxon *Our Country,* but at his death he was best known for his social reform and work for factory safety. I've also published two book chapters on the social reform rhetoric of Walter Rauschenbusch, generally considered to be the most theologically influential leader of the American Social Gospel. This includes "Sowing Seeds: How Walter Rauschenbusch's Failed Newspaper *For the Right* Germinated His Later Muckraking Work" in *In the Shadow of a Prophet: The Legacy of Walter Rauschenbusch,* edited by William Brackney and David Gushee and published by Mercer University Press in 2020; and "Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918): Providing a Road Map for Social Critique" in *Words and Witnesses: Communication Studies in Christian Thought from Athanasius to Desmond Tutu*, edited by Robert H. Woods and Naaman K. Wood, out

with Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. in 2018.

Historiography: *Of the books and articles you have written, from which ones did you get the most satisfaction?*

Littlefield: The new and expanded edition of *Christian America and the Kingdom of God* is getting the most traction because it helps explain our current moment, and I'm having a lot of fun doing various podcasts to promote the book.

Historiography: *We realize that it is difficult to judge one's own work — and that the most accomplished people are often the most modest — but if you had to summarize your most important contributions to the field of JMC (journalism/mass communication) history, what would they be?*

Littlefield: I believe this is still to come, in my work on Social Gospel muckrakers. The full work will look at the transatlantic nature of what the British call exposure literature and what Americans call muckraking, but consider more deeply the religious connotations of this work. While there has been some great work on the religious motivations of the muckrakers, journalism historians haven't spent much time looking at how religious figures contributed to this movement or produced their own journals, and church historians have only given these periodicals passing mentions.

Historiography: *As you look back over your career, if you could do anything differently, what would it be?*

Littlefield: I'm hoping I still have 20-25 years to go, so my hope is that

I will continue to grow and develop as a historian. As I now work to promote my second book, I wish I had done more to promote my first. I knew nothing about self promotion in 2013 and really did nothing to help *Chosen Nations* get traction.

Historiography: *Tell us about your "philosophy of history" (of historical study in general or of JMC history in particular) or what you think are the most important principles for studying history.*

Littlefield: I have been influenced by Herbert Butterfield's critiques of the Whig interpretation of history, the idea that we're inevitably moving progressively upward, and, as a Christian, by political theologian Reinhold Neibuhr's cyclical or post-providential vision of history, that with each step forward, we inevitably open up greater potential for good or for harm, and can stumble backward before we progress again. The more I study history the more I believe in total depravity and human free will, and the more allergic I become to concepts of providence that make God responsible for the finer details of life over say the broad brush strokes. This may seem like a theological tangent, but for me, my philosophy of history is rooted in my theology. Furthermore, this sense of the frailty of humanity makes me that much more determined to carefully research and explain the five Cs of history, that is change over time, causality, context, complexity, and contingency. I'm particularly fascinated with how worldviews have changed over time, how they are always shaped by their contexts, and how they hybridize with each other.

Historiography: *How would you evaluate the quality of work being done today in JMC history — its strengths and weaknesses?*

Littlefield: I am most excited today about the joint diversity grants sponsored by AJHA and AEJMC History Division to support telling stories that have been underrepresented. This can be difficult work in even finding the historical records on women and people of color to piece together their narratives, but it is essential in giving us a fuller understanding of media history. As web editor for the AJHA, I spend hours posting our annual conference program and I am always impressed with the interdisciplinary methods our members are using, from oral history and ethnography to rhetorical analyses and detailed historical storytelling, and the range of topics and time periods being covered.

If there's any weakness, it is just that we have focused so much on journalism, and print journalism in particular, that there hasn't been as much historical coverage of broadcast journalism, public relations, advertising or other forms of mass communication.

Historiography: *What do you think we in JMC history need to be doing to improve the status of JMC history in (1) JMC education and (2) the wider field of history in general?*

Littlefield: I will be teaching journalism history for the first time this fall, and it took two rounds of poor assessment data on the knowledge of history and theory to convince my colleagues of the need for such a class. Pepperdine is not AEJMC accredited, so there was no external pressure to add journalism history. I've seen a lot of creative syllabi from AJHA peers. I think the Journalism History podcast has been successful in helping broaden the public understanding of journalism history. I would love to better promote when JMC or AJHA members share their historical expertise in the news.

One controversial but potentially fruitful area for future growth is more work that covers recent history — the last twenty years or so — that helps contextualize and root current events in history. I know this is a debate within the broad history profession, of how far back should we be working to have critical distance. My *Christian America* book brings things up until the 2022 midterms, which means the final chapters are utilizing more of my journalism skills than my historical ones. However, those recent chapters greatly help my students understand the recent past, how we got to where we are today, and how they connect to farther off events. It helps make history real to them. I am also currently studying the media tactics and Christian nationalist rhetoric of Turning Point USA Founder Charlie Kirk. While this is utilizing more media studies methodology, I know this work benefits from the ability to root Kirk historically in the larger story of the Christian right.

Historiography: *What challenges do you think JMC history faces in the future?*

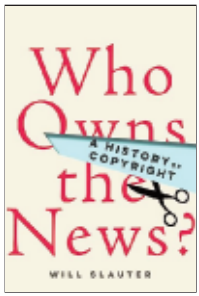
Littlefield: Unfortunately, all of history is under assault by changing ideological winds and the desire to push forward certain narratives that highlight only the most positive, patriotic elements of the American story. These same ideological winds of course are also attacking and hindering new discovery of knowledge in seeking out diverse stories, and reducing funding and support for libraries and for those archives that we depend on. I appreciate how our organizations are stepping up to speak collectively for the importance of historical thinking and historical facts, and the need to tell these stories comprehensively. But I worry that the current electoral victors will rewrite the narratives, as we are already seeing with the January 6, 2021 insurrection.

Book Award Interview

Will Slauter ©

Will Slauter won the 2020 Best Journalism and Mass Communication History Book Award from the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication for his book *Who Owns the News? A History of Copyright*. He received his Ph.D. in history at Princeton, with a dissertation on transatlantic journalism in the age of the American Revolution. Since 2010 he has been teaching in France, where he is a professor at Sorbonne Université. There he teaches mainly U.S. history. *Who Owns the News?* was published by Stanford in 2019. Along with *Who Owns the News?* he co-edited a 2021 open-access book on intellectual property in the visual arts during the 19th century. It's available at this link: https://www.openbookpublishers.com/books/10.11647/obp.0247

Slauter



Historiography: *Give us a brief summary of your book.*

Slauter: This book offers a historical perspective on what may otherwise seem like a fairly new problem: how to make money gathering the latest news if competitors are able to quickly republish the same news? The problem is actually much older than modern-day media conglomerates or even journalism as a profession. The question of how to control the republication of news came up every time there was a new publishing format

or technology, from the post office and the telegraph through broadcast radio and the Internet. Accusations of "piracy" and "plagiarism" can be found as early as the 17th century, which was also when the first printed periodicals devoted to current events appeared, and competition was actively restricted through a combination of state regulation and private arrangements among publishers. Over the course of the 19th century, the word "copyright" became a catch-all term for a minority of journalists, publishers, and press agencies that sought to enforce some sort of exclusivity in the news that they gathered or produced.

The historiographic premise of the book is that we need to analyze intellectual property in relation to the business strategies and editorial practices of journalism. And in order to do that, we need to combine methods from legal history and journalism history. My conviction is that simple chronologies of copyright legislation can be very misleading. For example, to look in the statute books and find that "newspapers" were first explicitly mentioned in the copyright statutes in 1909 in the U.S. and 1911 in the UK doesn't tell us very much. Copyright has never been a light switch that can be flipped on, suddenly causing everyone to stop copying. The process needs to be studied. First, why did these laws only change in the early 20th century? It turns out that in both countries lobbying to create a copyright in news reports had been repeatedly defeated for decades prior to the 1909 and 1911 statutes. Second, what did news organizations actually do to protect their investments *before* and *after* the statutory recognition of copyright for journalism? Over time, what role have professional norms, business arrangements, and public shaming played in regulating the reuse and republication of news? In short, how much has copyright actually mattered, and in what situations?

Historiography: *How did you get the idea for your book?*

Slauter: I think the context helps to explain the book's emphasis. In 2008-2009, I was co-organizing a seminar series on "Intellectual Property and its Discontents" with colleagues at the Columbia Society of Fellows in the Humanities. I noticed that there was almost no scholarship on intellectual property for journalism. Meanwhile, during that same year, the economic crisis of journalism was alarming; numerous newspapers laid off staff or closed entirely. Several prominent news organizations were talking about the need for stronger intellectual property to ensure that investments in quality journalism could continue in the face of aggregators, search engines, and blogs (nobody was yet too worried about social media, let alone artificial intelligence). Beyond copyright, there was a renewed interest in resurrecting the misappropriation doctrine (or "hot news" doctrine), which dates back to the World War I era case of *International News Service v. the Associated Press*. I became interested in the history of that ruling, which I felt was being awkwardly retrofitted for the digital age. More generally, I wanted to know about the broader history of attempts to control the circulation of news by treating it as "property."

The gestation of the project in 2009 clearly shaped my focus on attempts to enforce exclusivity in factual reports of breaking news. By the time I finished writing in 2017, the terms of the debate had already shifted thanks to the rise of social media and the difficulty for news publishers to "monetize content" as it traveled from the confines of their own websites to social media platforms. If I were to begin the project today, the rise of artificial intelligence would provide a quite different backdrop for studying the authorship and ownership of news, no doubt leading to different questions and points of emphasis within the histor-

ical record.

Historiography: *What was the state of the historical literature about the topic at the time you began work on your book?*

Slauter: Most research in the field of copyright history, whether done by historians of publishing or legal scholars, had focused on books, with very little being said about newspapers and other periodicals such as monthly magazines and quarterly reviews. These different publishing formats create different temporalities that are important to the business model of journalism and its civic function — think, for example, of a weekly paper synthesizing what was reported in the daily papers, or of a monthly review reflecting on the significance of events that only came into focus with the passing of time. The temporal dimension of publishing needs to be taken into account in studies of copyright and in discussions of its reform. The economic model of a novel or feature film is not the same as the economic model of round-the-clock journalism, to say nothing of its political role in democratic societies.

In the field of journalism history, there was a growing literature on the business history of news and the political economy of the media, and I relied on it extensively. Within legal studies, there were a number of law-review articles that examined some of the legislation and court cases involving news (especially the INS case, which is very well-known). Victoria Smith Ekstrand, who works at the crossroads of law and journalism studies, had published monographs on the INS case and its legacy. But there was no general overview of the sort that I wanted to write, and no study that attempted to study legal developments in relation to evolving publishing practices.

Historiography: *Tell us about the research you did for your book: What were your sources, how did you research your book, how long did you spend, and so forth?*

Slauter: I spent about ten years researching and writing this book. During that time, I changed institutions several times and relocated to France, which put me farther away from sources in the U.S. (but somewhat closer to those in the UK, where I could make short trips). More importantly, perhaps, the chronological and geographic bounds of the project were so vast that the research could have gone on forever, and I necessarily had to make choices about sources.

Much of the decision was made for me when I was lucky enough to obtain research fellowships at specific institutions. The holdings of these libraries and archives shaped the direction of the project. A month at the New York Public Library, for example, enabled me to dig into surviving business papers from the 19th and early 20th centuries, including the records *New York Tribune* and *New York Times*, and the papers of Richard Rogers Bowker, who in addition to being editor of Publishers Weekly was an early copyright expert and reformer.

A month at the Library Company of Philadelphia and a longer residence at the American Antiquarian Society gave me unparalleled access to printed sources from the 18th and 19th centuries, including some that have never been digitized, and which ended up being crucial. For example, in chapter 4, I discuss a court case from 1828 involving an attempt to secure copyright for market news. Although copyright scholars are familiar with the court's ruling, nobody had ever looked at the actual publications at issue in the case — the business paper or "price current" that claimed exclusive rights over the information it collected, and the big daily newspaper that regularly copied this information.

Examining those sources enabled me to understand the origins and outcomes of the litigation in relation to the publishing environment of the time. For scholars of 19th-century print culture in the United States, there is no better place to work than the American Antiquarian Society! Almost every newspaper, magazine, or pamphlet I wanted to look at was within my reach, and the expert staff repeatedly drew my attention to useful sources.

The Library of Congress was the other institution where I spent a considerable amount of time, thanks to a Kluge Fellowship. There again, the possibilities were endless, so I spent the bulk of my research time with the copyright records in an attempt to better understand when publishers, press associations, and agencies began registering news articles for copyright. I did not have the time or resources to study historical patterns in depth or to produce statistics, but I did get a better sense of when and how copyright became a part of business practices in the late 19th century, well before the statutes were revised to mention newspapers. The use of copyright by news organizations in the 20th century has yet to be studied in any detail. It could be a book of its own. For that reason, I decided to devote my final substantial chapter to the INS case and its legacy, and used the epilogue to study developments in the digital age.

Historiography: *Besides the sources you used, were there any others you wish you had been able to examine?*

Slauter: Copyright restrictions also play a part in the availability of sources available to historians! Most of the digital databases of historical newspapers do not propose coverage after 1930 because it is assumed that material published after that date is protected by copyright. Major

papers like the *New York Times* have a historical archive that can be accessed by subscription, but many local and regional newspapers from the mid to late 20th century no longer exist, and even those that do exist do not necessarily have the resources to make a digital archive available. There may be selective print runs in various libraries, but securing the rights for digitization and then scanning all that material is time-consuming and expensive. Scholars of 19th-century journalism have written about how the prominence of major papers like The Times of London in historical databases of newspapers skews our perception of what journalism meant for people who read all the other publications that aren't in the database. The NEH and the Library of Congress's "Chronicling America" project is doing great work by expanding the corpus of historical newspapers available to the public for free, but they can't go beyond the copyright line. In that respect, studying 20th-century newspapers is hard in a different way than studying 18th-century newspapers.

Historiography: *Based on your research for the book, what would you advise other historians in our field about working with sources?*

Slauter: I believe that there are unique and interesting sources everywhere and that time spent with even seemingly boring documents (such as the "price current" mentioned earlier) can lead to useful insights. It's increasingly easy to find gems online, but we shouldn't forget the collections of our local and regional libraries — there are lots of sources that remain overlooked. Like many teachers, I have my students study primary sources and give short presentations on what they find. Sometimes I think scholars should do this with each other, at an early stage of research, before we get to the more polished state of a confer-

ence paper. Perhaps we need the equivalent of those cooking shows where they pull three ingredients out of a basket and have to make something creative. We could give each other documents that we find puzzling and brainstorm interpretations. Of course, we already do this informally with friends or close colleagues, and some professional listservs still exist where the collective wisdom is sought on very erudite questions. Scholarship always requires collaboration at some level or another.

Historiography: *What were the challenges you faced in researching your book?*

Slauter: In addition to the almost limitless possibilities of the archive, I found it difficult to distill all the details into a coherent narrative. In the end, I wish I had made more of the comparative analysis (UK vs. U.S.), or reduced the chronological dimensions of the project so as to spend a little more space elaborating my argument and a little less space establishing what happened in each period. But this is always a trade-off, and I believe the book contains a lot of information that was not previously known.

Historiography: *Is it possible to get too close to a research subject? How do historians maintain their neutrality of viewpoint when conducting and interpreting research?*

Slauter: History is increasingly politicized, for better and for worse. On the one hand, we want quality research to inform vigorous public debate. On the other hand, we don't want political imperatives and present-day concerns to monopolize the research agenda. That's danger-

ous in part because it leads to self-censorship in terms of what topics students choose for dissertations and what projects scholars submit for funding calls. We could lose whole areas of inquiry if everyone tries to do what is in the air at the moment. And one cannot ever win at the "relevance" game: ten or fifty years from now readers could look at our published work and see it as being dated and less relevant to them because it was too anchored in the concerns of 2025! We have to take a broad view and we have to take our time.

In the case of research on copyright, or any other area of public policy, scholars have to retain their intellectual rigor and follow the evidence where it leads, rather than cede to the temptation to highlight evidence that supports one side or the other. I have my own political views about the purpose of copyright, as well as its limitations as a solution for different problems. I tried to mute much of that as I let the historical record speak for itself in the book. A few colleagues told me they wished I had taken a stronger stand in the book. I did speak out via other outlets, for example by writing editorials or participating in public forums related to copyright reform in the European Union. But even there I sought to maintain rigorous scholarly standards, by clearly documenting my historical sources and drawing people's attention to developments that were not getting enough attention.

Historiography: *What new insights does your book provide?*

Slauter: The idea of intellectual property in news has always been controversial, even if the reasons for that have changed over time. The growth of copyright — what is protected, against whom, for how long, etc. — was not an inevitable process of expansion, but one that occurred in fits and starts, with periods of retraction as well as expansion.

That history is instructive because it defamiliarizes the rhetoric that we hear about intellectual property every day. And independent of political, economic, or moral arguments about intellectual property, it is important to think about whether the policy mechanisms being proposed or enacted actually work, and how we would even know if they work! The book spends at least as much time examining how industry insiders — especially editors and publishers — thought about and dealt with the question of copying as it does analyzing how legislatures and courts handled this question. Doing that helps to destabilize assumptions about what intellectual property is or what it can accomplish.

Historiography: *What findings most surprised you?*

Slauter: I found a lot of evidence of early newspaper editors (working in the late 18th and early 19th centuries) policing each other, as if they were attempting to establish shared editorial norms. In the absence of professional associations or journalism schools, early editors openly discussed the purpose and methods of newspaper work. Hidden in those pages one can find debates about how to verify the credibility of reports, controversies over political bias in reporting, techniques for dealing with the abundance and speed of reports, and so on. What interested me is that they often discussed the contested right to reproduce material from other newspapers, and how such borrowed material should be cited. They did not agree on how all of this should be handled, but they discussed it, and they were in frequent dialogue with each other. Indeed, news publishing in this early period was more about the selection, compilation, and editing of existing sources than it was about original writings. The term "scissors editors" became a powerful image for either criticizing or praising the role of copying that everyone could see

was crucial to the very existence of journalism.

Historiography: *What advice would you give to people in our field who are considering doing a book in JMC history?*

Slauter: People who engage in historical research always have to overcome doubts about the "relevance" of their work. We have to push back against that mentality because research in the humanities and social sciences has value in its own right. Whether formulating new questions about existing evidence, gathering new sources to re-examine classic questions, looking at problems from a new vantage point, or some other contribution, what matters is advancing knowledge by applying rigorous standards of inquiry.

I was trained as a historian first and then became interested in news as a subject of inquiry, so for me there was never any doubt that studying the history of journalism and communication was justified. How else would we understand how we got where we are, the role of agency and contingency in shaping developments, the consequences of the choices and mistakes made along the way, and the alternative paths not taken? Beyond that, knowing how others lived through changes in the past helps us to get our bearings as we confront a dizzying present.

When it comes to writing a book, my main advice would be to focus on what interests you most. If you find a topic and an approach that keeps you engaged and alert to surprises along the way, then you have already increased the chances that others will appreciate and learn from your work.

The Professional

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The Media and Foreign Policy

By Patricia Neils ©

NOTE: This is the thirteenth article in our series "How Media History Matters," dealing with the significance that the mass media have had in American history. We think the series will appeal especially to historians who believe historical claims need evidence to support them. It's easy, someone has said, to suggest explanations if one doesn't have to worry about facts. Many ways exist to justify JMC's historical importance. JMC historians make a mistake if they focus on just one explanation, whether it be "cultural history," materiality, Progressivism, or any other interpretation. They shouldn't put all their eggs in one basket. One monolithic explanation won't work.

In the following essay, Patricia Neils examines the media's historic role in influencing American foreign-policy making. She cautions that historians must be careful not to make assumptions about the influence of the media without adequate evidence.

The interrelationship of the media and foreign policy decision makers is immensely multifaceted and controversial. As Gabriel Almond's seminal study points out, in foreign policy decision making, communication elites (owners, controllers and active participants of the mass media) interact with governmental elites (including members of

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the Department of State, foreign affairs committees of the House and Senate, administrative or bureaucratic elites, and special interest elites), and reflect the economic, ethnic, religious and ideological complexity of the American population.[1]

In one recent study Doris Graber approaches this enormous subject by analyzing the nature of the behavior that shapes the content of foreign affairs coverage in the media, as well as the character of the mechanisms by which that coverage has an effect on the political processes of foreign policy making.[2] She begins by focusing on the "press as observer" whereby the "salient aspects of the search for, and the presentation of, foreign policy news" are evaluated. She then looks at the "press as participant" and focuses on how foreign policy coverage can either contribute to or impinge upon policy making. From still another vantage point, Graber looks at the "press as catalyst," examining how the press is utilized by the public to satisfy its interests in foreign affairs, and at the implications this role has for foreign policy coverage.

Graber acknowledges that these three roles are not mutually exclusive, but she believes that taken together, they define what the press does in the foreign policy making process, and they help to focus attention on the systematic consequences of behaviors involving the press in foreign policy making. For example, in its role as observer, the press provides the knowledge on the basis of which the political process can fashion sound foreign policy decisions. In this sense the press might be viewed as a sort of intelligence agent to the policy making process. There is, however, a requirement not only for factual information but for theoretical premises and contexts that give meaning to "facts," and for subsequent analysis that draws out their consequences and implications. The press thus also functions indirectly as an opinion source for officials by serving as a mechanism for the transmission of the opinions of others

as well as for the creation and stimulation of opinions.

While recognizing various roles of the media in foreign policy, James Reston's path-breaking study *The Artillery of the Press* emphasizes the participatory role of journalists in getting the news.[3] He pleads for a more active press in getting the facts, in revealing causes, and in criticizing U.S. foreign policy. He points out that correspondents occasionally uncover facts that are either unknown to, or ignored by, the government. By publishing them, journalists often influence the government to investigate further and adjust policy accordingly.

Reston also notes that much of the time, the influence of the press on foreign policy depends on the attitude of the President toward the media. For example, President Eisenhower was irritated by the press and did not read it carefully. Although President Kennedy once barred the *New York Herald Tribune* from the White House, he read newspapers avidly as a check against the activities of his own government. It was not unusual for him to call his Secretary of State or even one of the regional Assistant Secretaries to ask for a report on some news account in the back pages of the *New York Times.* Such attention, no doubt, enhanced the influence of the press during Kennedy's thousand days in the White House.

Also of major importance is Bernard C. Cohen's classic study *The Press and Foreign Policy*, which explores the consequences of the way that the press defines and performs its job, and of the way that its output is assimilated by the participants in the process.[4]

Along similar lines, an updated study by Martin Linsky, *Impact: How the Press Affects Federal Policymaking*, finds officials in government believe that the press has a large impact on policy making, from agenda setting to policy evaluation.[5]

Through all the comprehensive research done thus far, a number of

criticisms regarding the role of the press in policy making are persistent. Among the criticisms are the following allegations. First, the press impinges upon and interferes with policy making because it is heavily involved in and dedicated to early exposure. Second, journalists often lack academic training and background information in foreign affairs, and hence give shallow, misleading and erroneous reports. Third, journalists, because of their lack of in-depth information or out of a sense of patriotism and loyalty to their country, become pawns of the administration writing what officials want them to write. Fourth, even with accurate information and historical understanding, journalists often intentionally mislead the public or distort the news to support their own biased point of view. And fifth, through its selection of information and misinformation for publication, the media sets the agenda for public discussion and policy making.

Supporters of the role played by the press in policy making, however, doubt administrative infallibility in foreign policy and make several points. First, in a democracy the press plays an important role in ensuring widespread participation in political decision making. Second, the press plays an important role in explaining foreign policy to the public that would otherwise be basically unaware of international affairs. Third, the press often uncovers new facts and asks thought-provoking questions of the administration that sometimes call for an adjustment of current policy. Fourth, the press forces policy makers to be responsive to popular opinion. Finally, the press functions as an opinion source for officials by serving as a mechanism for the transmission of the opinions of others and for the creation and stimulation of that opinion.

Although it is impossible to scientifically measure and evaluate the impact of the press on policy making, the Time-Life media empire of

Henry Luce clearly illustrates the interplay of these complex and controversial questions and viewpoints. Because Luce was born in China and committed his magazines to comprehensive coverage of three decades of tumultuous events there, the Lucepress' influence on U.S. China policy is particularly significant.

Henry Luce and American-Chinese Relations

According to W.A. Swanberg's 1972 popular biography *Luce and His Empire,* Henry Robinson Luce was a publishing tycoon who used his media empire — *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune* magazines; radio broadcasts on March of Time; and Time Newsreels shown in theaters throughout the United States — to seduce the intellectually innocent reader into accepting his own prejudiced view of the world. Specifically, Swanberg says, "The 'loss of China,' was a shock to America in some part because the Lucepress had given Americans a biased and misleading picture of personalities and events there...." Swanberg alleges that Luce not only controlled public opinion but also controlled U.S. policy making. He states that "[a] strong case could be made that America's disastrous Asian policy after 1949 was in large part due to years of Lucepress Propaganda." He suggests further that the Korean and Vietnam wars would not have occurred; that the Soviet-Chinese split would have taken place far earlier; and that America could be the unquestioned world leader with an unblemished moral reputation had it not been for Henry Robinson Luce.[6] Similarly, David Halberstam in his best-selling book, *The Powers That Be* (1979), contends that Luce was "frozen and wrong" about China and hence responsible for "two terrible wars" since World War II.[7] Still more recently, Sterling Seagrave in *The Soong Dynasty* (1985) contends that Luce had a "blind spot toward the Chiangs and

the Soongs" and that "[h]e provided the distorting lens through which many Americans came to see events in Asia."[8]

To be sure, in 1947 Clare Boothe Luce, Henry Luce's wife, became President of the China Policy Association, which has been sometimes regarded as the core of the China Lobby, and Luce himself occasionally met with Undersecretary of State Robert Lovett, with Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Arthur Vandenberg, with Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, and with Congress' China Policy Expert Representative Walter Judd. Also, *Time* and *Life* editorialized on U.S. China policy, and frequently irritated the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.[9]

On the other hand, Lovett, Vandenberg, Forrestal, and Judd needed no convincing or influencing from Luce on the China issue. Those who knew Luce best say that it is totally erroneous to envision Luce gadding about Washington shaking hands, offering media or financial support to anyone who would promote his China views.[10] In the biographies and private papers of political figures during this era Luce is rarely mentioned.[11]

After leaving China, Luce continued his education in the United States, graduating from Yale University *summa cum laude* in 1920, and with Briton Hadden founded *Time* magazine in 1923. Meanwhile in China, the Manchu dynasty was overthrown, and the visionary Dr. Sun Yat-sen proclaimed a Republic in 1911. Soon after Sun's death in 1925, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek emerged as the leader of the Nationalist forces and the Kuomintang (KMT) Party. At about the same time Mao Tse-tung established himself as the leader of the rival Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In 1937, when the Japanese bombed Shanghai and began a full-scale invasion of China, the American media conveyed a tremendous

outpouring of sympathy for the Chinese people as they heroically resisted the invaders. Madame Chiang Kai-shek was given an enthusiastic welcome when she visited the United States in 1943 and spoke before the United States Senate. Throughout World War II, largely because of the Luce publications, Americans saw China as an honored ally in the global struggle against totalitarian aggressors.

Policy makers in Washington reflected the popular mood and set out "to forge a tightly administered program designed not only to expedite economic aid but also to transform China into a useful military and political ally of the United States."[12] Soon after the passage of the Lend-Lease program in March 1941, White House economic adviser Lauchlin Currie was commissioned to expedite new aid to China. In this capacity Currie worked closely with T.V. Soong, whom Chiang Kai-shek had designated as his personal representative in Washington. Currie thereby became unofficially but integrally involved in policy making. Relying on such personal contacts outside governmental agencies was typical of Roosevelt's diplomacy, and Currie, Chiang, and Soong were all close associates of publisher Henry Luce.

In his second (1942) mission to China, Currie was instructed to "reassure the Chinese Government of America's determination to support China and to defeat Japan," to "bolster Chinese morale," to "explore the full story of our military support to China," and to "give assurance that China will be fully consulted on all matters touching the post-war settlement and adjustments." Thinking along the lines of Henry Luce, Roosevelt instructed Currie to "imply" that

> Sino-American relations, and particularly economic aid in the post-war period will undoubtedly be influenced by internal developments in China. The trend away from democratic and progressive concepts

> is discouraging to American friends of China and augurs ill for future political stability in China and for China's peaceful development.[13]

When Currie returned to the United States, he recommended to the President that we should "go out of our way in giving evidences of friendship, close collaboration and admiration for China." He assured Roosevelt of Chiang Kai-shek's "sentimental attachment" and admiration for America and its President as cultivated in the media. Currie said that, "The great influence America now has in China can be exerted not only to further our own interests in a narrow sense, but also, if we have sufficient wisdom and goodwill, to guide China in her development as a great power in the post-war period. China is at a crossroads." He prophesied:

> It can develop as a military dictatorship or as a truly democratic state. If we use our influence wisely, we may be able to tip the scales in the latter direction and, through the inauguration of political, social and economic reforms and the enhancement of the efficiency and honesty of the bureaucracy, contribute toward the well-being of hundreds of millions of people and indirectly to our own future well-being.[14]

In accord with Currie's way of thinking during these years, Henry Luce repeatedly editorialized that U.S. welfare was tied to that of China. Currie was, in fact, well acquainted with Luce and pleased with the China coverage in *Time* and *Life* magazines. On April 24, 1941, just prior to Luce's own visit to China, Currie wrote to China's Vice-Minister of Information Hollington Tong, saying:

> May I take this means of introducing to you my friend, Mr. Henry

> Luce. As you know he has been one of the best friends China has in this country and has done much to arouse and maintain America's interest and support in China's struggle. He is anxious to get as accurate a picture as he can of the current situation in China and I know you will do everything you can to facilitate the same.[15]

Voices of Dissent

Although virtually all the popular magazines, journals, and newspapers were supportive of Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang administration during the 1930s, by the early 1940s a few dissenting voices were being heard. Along with Michael Straight's November 16, 1942, article in the *New Republic*,[16] T.A. Bisson's 1943 report in the *Far Eastern Survey*,[17] and Hanson Baldwin's article in the *Reader's Digest*,[18] Pearl Buck proposed a piece for *Life* magazine. She wrote to Henry Luce in March 1943 saying, "I don't usually send my own articles to an editor, but this isn't just an article. I am fearful that certain dark possibilities now looming in China will materialize and cause undue disillusionment and pessimism about China over here.... I have endeavored to prepare a background in this article for whatever comes."[19]

In the article Buck argued for greater military aid to China along with a better understanding of what was happening there. She explained that the liberal voices in China were being silenced by the KMT government, and the conservative bureaucracy of Chiang Kai-shek was becoming more and more oppressive; free speech and press were severely curtailed, and official corruption was increasing.

The decision to publish Buck's article was for Luce a soul-searching experience. He was well aware of the conditions that Buck described and was conscientious about his responsibility as an editor to keep the

public informed. In agonizing over his decision to publish the article, Luce wrote a lengthy memo to his senior staff that clearly reflects his awareness of, and his responsibility in regard to, the interconnection between journalism and policy making. He said:

> I am interested in publishing Pearl's article on China for two reasons:
>
> 1) As one who is given credit or blame for helping to increase American interest in China in the last two years, I do not want to be found guilty of having misled the American people — bringing their friendship for China to the "verge of sentimentality" that "will inevitably end in disillusionment."
>
> 2) Being considerably, if not fully, aware of the faults or evils in Chinese administration, I would naturally welcome anything that can be done to improve the actual situation.
>
> But there is a very real question whether Pearl's article would not do much more harm than good. Instead of doing a valuable job of "correction," its effect might simply be in the direction of returning the whole matter of China to a state of confusion even worse than the previous state of indifference.
>
> But we believe in truth....
>
> If TIME, LIFE and FORTUNE have been a principal channel of information about China, will someone take the trouble to look over everything we have published in the last three or four years — and actually assess it, actually put down the serious faults of commission and omission?
>
> What exactly is the serious fault in the American view of China? Do Americans actually love the Chinese too much, "adore" them, etc.? I think that's ridiculous. Most Americans are just getting out of the "laundryman" stage of opinion. Their joy and excitement, if you

> like, is mainly a kind of intuitive discovery that they can feel about Asiatics.... The misunderstanding Pearl is worried about has to do with the word "democracy." The real question revolves around an opinion of the Chinese government. Actually not 10% of the American people have any opinion of the Chinese government, — except the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang. So actually the semantic question turns on Chiang and the Soongs. If we want to talk straight, isn't that the real point? ...
>
> The plain fact is that China has been struggling into modernity — her own modernity, but modernity nevertheless — and that for 16 years the Generalissimo and the Madame have led that struggle. Could there have been better leaders — or worse? Could they, being the leaders, have done substantially better — or substantially worse? Surely, these are not easy questions.[20]

Indeed, they were not then, and today they still are not easy questions. It is significant, however, that Luce was asking them and bringing them to the attention of the American people and the policy makers in Washington. In spite of his misgivings, Luce did, in fact, publish Buck's article. It appeared in the May 1943 issue of *Life*.

Meanwhile, Theodore H. White, a Harvard graduate and student of John K. Fairbank, was *Time's* military and political correspondent in China. As such, he was inexorably caught in the maelstrom of KMT-CCP rivalry and conflicting American opinions about China. Although White's early reports from China were, even by Luce's standards, excessively supportive of the Kuomintang, he soon came to "disagree violently" with his publisher and began to condemn Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist regime.[21] When Luce refused to publish all of White's dispatches unedited, White protested. In their many arguments about

China and editorial policy, Luce and White exchanged numerous and lengthy memos. In one of these Luce explained:

> My responsibility in this case is a dual one. For I not only have the general responsibilities of an Editor-in-Chief; in this case, I have the added responsibility of being, whether I like it or not, an expert on China. The quality of my expertness on China would not be such as to get me a Ph.D. on the subject.... But, like the innocent bystander, I cannot refuse to testify: I was there, Charlie — I knew him when.

As a conclusion to this same 1944 memo, Luce expressed some ominous forebodings that, in a few short years, would also prove to be prophetic. He lamented:

> I guess the hard tack I want to get down to is that we Americans are not in a very good position to tell China how she should integrate herself in a manner agreeable to us until we have integrated a little of our own "democratic" might and majesty in a manner somewhat more beneficial to China. We are sure of our ultimate good intentions (or are we?); we are sure (or are we?) that if Chiang Kai-shek & Co. will only be patient, meanwhile behaving like good little pseudo-Americans, we will get around to "liberating" them and make everything okay.[22]

Through a continual outpouring of memos Luce extended *Time's* editorial policy debate regarding China beyond his correspondence with T.H. White, and on to his senior staff in the New York office. After one such discussion he concluded, "We regret the existence of this gash in China's body politic, but we in no way offer any implied advice to Chi-

ang Kai-shek; as to how he ought to handle the problem."[23] Nevertheless, Luce continued to promote articles for publication that asserted "the long-term basis of faith in China under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership."[24] He recognized that

> The most difficult problem in Sino-American publicity concerns the Soong family. They are or have been the head and front of a pro-American policy. It ill befits us, therefore, to go sour on them. On the other hand, they are probably increasingly less popular in China. During the next year we may try to work our way through this problem. Meanwhile, restraint is indicated.[25]

By 1944 criticisms of the Kuomintang were overwhelming. The American General Joseph Stilwell, who had been assigned to the China theater during World War II, despised Chiang Kai-shek and his administration. Career diplomats assigned to Stilwell such as John Paton Davies and John Service admired their superior and shared his views. They sent numerous critical reports to the U.S. State Department and predicted that the Communists would win the civil war in China. When Stilwell's insubordination and contempt for Chinese leadership became an international scandal, however, he was recalled by President Roosevelt.

Aid for China

During these years Henry Luce frequently met with his old friend Undersecretary of State Robert Lovett. Luce also met with the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Arthur Vandenberg. After one such meeting Luce wrote to Vandenberg saying, "With Bob

[Lovett], as with you, I had a mission, namely to do my duty about China. The measure of degradation of American policy in the Pacific is the fact that a few guys like [Congressman Walter] Judd and me have to go about peddling a vital interest of the United States ... as if it were some sort of bottled chop-suey that we were trying to sneak through the Pure Food Laws."[26] Echoing Luce's conviction that the United States was not doing enough in China's behalf, *Life* on January 6, 1947, proclaimed, "Our Chinese policy has been one of mere temporizing and is now demonstrably bankrupt."

Probably at least partially because of media pressure, the Truman administration finally lifted the China arms embargo in May 1947, instead of July as had been scheduled. Shortly thereafter other forms of economic aid were also resumed through various agreements. Unhappy with this limited support, Luce persuaded another friend, William Bullitt, a former American ambassador to France, to go to China and "write an article on ways and means of aiding Chiang. Luce hoped that Bullitt's eminence would carry more weight in Washington than an article by another *Time-Life* correspondent."[27]

When Bullitt returned with his report, Luce wrote Secretary of State George Marshall, informing him that, "The issue of LIFE appearing on the newsstands this Friday will contain a major article by William C. Bullitt advocating immediate aid to China. Because this article may focus considerable public attention on the present Chinese situation, I wanted to tell you about it in advance, and give you briefly the background for it." Luce's consideration for Marshall was primarily based on the fact that Marshall had himself sent General Albert Wedemeyer on a similar mission about that same time. Luce knew that the Wedemeyer report calling for increased aid to China had been suppressed and that the Bullitt report "followed parallel lines."[28]

Bullitt's article, titled "Report from China," appeared in the October 13 issue of *Life*. Bullitt said he submitted his piece because he felt it was a vital interest of the United States, "To prevent the domination of China by any nation which might eventually mobilize the 450 million Chinese for war against us." He proclaimed in headline captions that "Without U.S. help China is doomed to become a satellite of Russia. China can be saved — for only one-twentieth the cost of helping Western Europe under the Marshall Plan. But we must act at once." The piece promised to show "How a sick Roosevelt appeased Stalin and broke a pledge at Yalta; How Marshall unwittingly helped the Chinese Communists overrun Manchuria; Why it took Truman two years to learn that our foreign policy was bankrupt; Why war is coming toward the Americas and what the President must do." Bullitt's recommendations were indeed along the same lines as those of General Wedemeyer, including more than a billion dollars' worth of economic and military aid to China and the proposal that General Douglas MacArthur take over coordinating the program.

Shortly after his return to the United States, Bullitt met with Senator Vandenberg and immediately wrote to Luce about that meeting. He said:

> I talked with Vandenberg for an hour this morning. He expressed great confidence that he could get Marshall to do what he wanted done. He promised me that he would suggest but not demand that when Marshall makes his statement Monday next to the Foreign Relations Committee, emergency aid to China should be included along with emergency aid to France and Italy. He added that on Tuesday he would question Marshall in private session with regard to China. I tried to impress on him the need for emergency aid in two forms:

(1) declassification of arms and immediate shipment; and (2) an immediate credit of from 60 to 70 million dollars.[29]

Bullitt told Luce that he also met with the Secretary of the Treasury and with Clarke Clifford, Admiral Leahy, and Walton Butterworth in the State Department. Regarding the Butterworth meeting, Bullitt noted, "Incidentally, he said to me that he was extremely grateful for my article because it gave him some material with which to combat the members of the Far East Section of the Department of State, all of whom were against any aid to the Chinese Government." Bullitt emphasized over and over again to Luce that ultimately a decision regarding aid to China would depend on General George Marshall. He said that the Secretary of the Treasury told him that "the Export-Import Bank could certainly dig up at least 60 million dollars immediately for a credit to China if Marshall should wish to have such a credit given." Bullitt said he guessed that "Marshall unquestionably will bring in some proposal for some sort of aid to China; but his emotional attitude against the Chinese Government remains unchanged, and I fear that the aid may be eye wash rather than effective medicine."[30]

On December 20 Bullitt updated his report to Luce, saying that "Vandenberg, Taft, Bridges, Styles, Joe Martin, Dewey, Stassen — in other words the Republican Party — are on record for immediate and adequate aid. Forrestal, Leahy, the whole Navy, most of the Army, Clarke Clifford, and Wedemeyer are working for aid." Bullitt confided to Luce also that the "State Department is scared that unless it presents on January 6, 1948, a comprehensive plan, there will be a Congressional investigation of its policies vis-a-vis China." Bullitt pointed out, however, that Marshall was still an obstacle. Although he was ready to lock horns with the General, Bullitt said, "Last night I was strongly ad-

vised not to thump him for the moment, as the economic section of the department is going full steam ahead on its project for China."[31]

Official Ambiguity

Meanwhile, General Albert Wedemeyer, also a friend of Henry Luce, met with him regarding his mission to China. Wedemeyer recalled:

> We had an interesting chat in his Waldorf Towers suite; but since Marshall had admonished me scrupulously to avoid discussing the contents of my report with anyone, I had to parry Luce's searching questions and explain the reason why I could not give him any details concerning my report and recommendations.
>
> Other members of the press, as well as radio commentators, members of Congress, and officials in the Pentagon, constantly importuned me, trying to elicit some information or obtain hints of the contents of my report. I couldn't understand the decision to handle the report so secretly. I felt that at least top officials in the Pentagon, and certainly members of the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committees, should have full access to it and to members of the mission if explanation or amplification were required. Pressures were brought to bear on other members of my mission [which included a corps of experts and secretaries], who had been similarly warned not to divulge the contents. Soon it became known in all circles that a rigid clamp had been put down by the President and Secretary of State. In subsequent testimony, before Congressional committees, Secretary Marshall accepted full responsibility for this decision.[32]

Time experienced and expressed the same bewilderment and dis-

may as did General Wedemeyer. On July 21, 1947, the magazine had enthusiastically reported that Wedemeyer was being sent to China to assess the country's needs and make recommendations. *Time* commented that, unlike Marshall, Wedemeyer had always opposed attempts to bring the Communists into a coalition.

When Wedemeyer returned to Washington, *Time*, expecting a new progressive policy, reported on September 29 that "For nine months the U.S. had no policy beyond indecision, hostility, and righteous advice for Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's government." On October 20, one week after the publication of Bullitt's report, *Time* revealed Marshall's disappointing decision to keep the Wedemeyer report secret, based on the supposition that it would jeopardize European aid and stir up controversy.

Wedemeyer reflected years later that Marshall seemed to have failed to appreciate the ambiguity of his policy. On the one hand, he recommended that $400,000,000 be given to Greece to keep the Communists out of power, while on the other he continued to deny military or economic aid to the Chinese until Chiang Kai-shek agreed to compromise with the Communists.[33] Ironically, however, it proved to be the publicized suppression of Wedemeyer's report that eventually pressured Marshall to change his mind and belatedly recommend aid for China.[34]

While *Time* and *Life* opposed the State Department's policy toward China, they remained reserved in their criticism of the revered General George Marshall. A few other periodicals were not so respectful; and Walter Trohan, chief of the *Chicago Tribune's* Washington Bureau, began collecting "the largest file on Marshall of any newspaperman in the capital." Writing years later for the *American Mercury,* he summed up what he saw as "The Tragedy of George Marshall."[35] Meanwhile, on November 24, 1947, *Time* commented:

> Never had Nationalist China more anxiously craved a sign that the U.S. recognized and responded to China's critical hour. What Chinese got by way of a sign last week was Secretary of State George Marshall's testimony before a Senate committee that, in his opinion, China would need economic support at the rate of $20 million a month, beginning next April and continuing for some 15 months.
>
> Although this meant that aid to China was at last out of the pigeonhole, it seemed too little, too late. Some grim Chinese, who compared Marshall's sum to the $500 million a month he proposed to spend to buttress Western Europe, decided that the time had come to write off the U.S. entirely. Said Chinese Vice-President Sun Fo: "A drop in the bucket.... I've always had a hidden suspicion that American friendship was not dependable."

Time blamed the indecisive and inadequate China policy on the State Department, saying on January 12, 1948, that the United States Information Service *Information Bulletin* framed by Willard Thorp and William Walton Butterworth, Jr., slanted the news and ignored the reports and advice of Wedemeyer, Judd, Bullitt, Dewey, and James Byrnes. *Time* noted that of sixty-six U.S. editions of the *Bulletin on China* that were distributed by USIS, fifty-nine were anti-Chiang and anti-U.S. aid. The "hostile" *New York Herald* was quoted eleven times and the "guardedly sympathetic" *New York Times* just three times.

By December 8, 1947, *Life* still saw no significant rewards for its efforts. It editorialized:

> Secretary Marshall, under questioning by Congressmen, had earlier admitted that the department was working on a 1948-49 China program to cost $300 million; but this vague, tardy, and inadequate pro-

> gram did not erase the previous words of Under Secretary [Robert] Lovett, who admitted in October that he did not know what U.S. policy toward China is. But [Presidential candidate Thomas] Dewey, Vandenberg, and other Republicans have a policy. It is immediate aid and the release of our surplus military supplies to the Chinese government.

Time made a similar recommendation December 8 and December 29.

Meanwhile, another policy making friend of Luce, Navy Secretary James Forrestal, publicly agreed that Secretary Marshall's policy in China was disastrous. When Henry Luce asked Forrestal to talk with his *Fortune* magazine staff and give them his "prescription" for "how much defense the United States needed in order to carry out foreign policy," Forrestal called for a greatly enlarged military budget. In December 1948, *Fortune* published an article titled "The Arms We Need." Based almost entirely on Forrestal's figures, it concluded that "the only way to avoid having American foreign policy dominated by crisis is to live in crisis — prepared for war."[36]

"Blunder and Bluster"

Belatedly, Luce's message seemed to be getting through. Between 1947 and 1950, the U.S. policy began to view Asia as increasingly important (although not of equal importance with Europe). Accordingly, in order to get the approval of the European aid program in Congress, Marshall promised to prepare a China aid proposal as well. As a result Congress approved additional aid for China along with the $4 billion European Recovery Program. The China Aid Act of April 1948 consisted of an appropriation of $570,000,000 for economic assistance. The bill also pro-

vided $128,000,000 worth of arms aid to China.

Marshall opposed military assistance because, as he explained to the House and Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations in executive session, this would involve "obligations and responsibilities on the part of this Government which I am convinced the American people would never knowingly accept." In a closed discussion before Senate and House committees, Marshall elaborated on his position, saying that in order to destroy the Communists, the United States would have to

> ... underwrite the Chinese Government's military effort, on a wide and probably constantly increasing scale, as well as the Chinese economy. The U.S. would have to be prepared virtually to take over the Chinese Government and administer its economic, military, and governmental affairs.... It would be impossible to estimate the final cost of a course of action of this magnitude. It certainly would be a continuing operation for a long time to come.... It would be practically impossible to withdraw....[37]

The Luce publications were not convinced. On April 5, 1948, a *Life* article titled "China: Blunder and Bluster" commented, "Our Policy, no longer pro-Communist, is still defeatist, and our aid comes late.... American behavior in and toward China has been the most completely disastrous failure of U.S. foreign policy since the war. And the U.S. government seeks to alibi this failure by blaming it all on Chiang Kai-shek." *Life* held Marshall directly responsible, saying that when he presented the program to Congress, he "drew the usual hopeless picture of conditions in China (corruption etc.) and concluded that it is impossible to develop a practical, effective, long-term, overall program for economic

recovery.'" Angrily, *Life* commented further:

> The $570 million he asked for was merely "to help retard the present rapid rate of economic deterioration and thus provide a breathing space." Call it conscience money, a holding attack, Operation Rathole: it is not a bet on the Chiang government nor a commitment to support it.
>
> The China Aid Bill will not save China from Communism. And unless the State Department makes a clean change in its attitude toward China, it will not even serve to gain us 5¢ worth of good will.
>
> But the presentation of the China Aid Bill to Congress served one useful purpose. It brought to the fore a few expert witnesses on China who had, for one reason or another, kept silent or been kept under wraps.
>
> Thus the full case against our war and post-war China policy, a policy of disastrous neglect half-ridden by irrelevant sermonizing, has only recently been heard above the noise of the propaganda against Chiang.

The editorial went on to quote from the few outspoken pro-Chiang witnesses, including William C. Bullitt, General Douglas MacArthur, General Albert Wedemeyer, and General Claire Chennault, whose series of articles for the Roy Howard newspapers agreed with the Luce point of view.

Distressed with the aid that proved to be "too little, too late," Henry Luce continued to lobby for a real commitment. Except for a few supporters who were highly limited in their power and influence, Luce's crusade, however, was a lone one. In the late 1940s, it appears that he did not represent the prevailing point of view in regard to China. Voices like that of newsman Robert S. Allen were determined to counter any

efforts Luce made in China's behalf. In devoting part of a broadcast to the increasingly powerful China Lobby, Allen expressed his outrage with what he regarded as a "raid on the U.S. Treasury." He said that it was all being

> masterminded by certain well-known Americans. They are a strange group of allies. On the extreme right is Henry Luce, ultraconservative publisher.... Luce has been propagandizing and agitating for another two-billion-dollar U.S. handout for Chiang for a long time.... And in Washington practically the whole Luce bureau has been working full blast as part of the Chiang lobby....[38]

Similarly, radio commentator Eric Severeid referred to the China Aid Act as a victory for "Republican Representative Judd of Minnesota and publisher Henry Luce...."[39]

Even though Congress passed and President Truman signed the Bill, General Marshall boldly intervened and prevented it from being delivered until the end of that year, when, according to Wedemeyer, it was too late to stop the Communists.[40] The first arms shipment did not leave the United States until November 1, 1948. Much of what finally arrived proved to be inappropriate and outmoded.

Meanwhile, Time Inc. vice-president and treasurer Charles Stillman took a leave of absence to head a government program commissioned to investigate China's industrial, transportation, and power problems. The experience proved very discouraging, as Stillman found, like so many others before him, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to break through China's inept and corrupt bureaucracy before effecting any meaningful economic reforms. At the end of his assignment, he took pride in turning back to the U.S. Treasury millions of dollars

for which a useful purpose could not be found in China. Before the end of the year, the Economic Cooperation Administration decided it was useless to spend more money in the areas with which Stillman was concerned, and he returned to the United States with the conviction that there was little hope for the Nationalist regime on China's mainland.

Time-Life correspondents in China agreed with Stillman's assessment and informed Luce that the Nationalists had neither the military capability nor the confidence of the people necessary to withstand the Communist advance. In late October of 1948, *Life's* correspondent Roy Rowan and photographer Jack Birns escaped from Mukden just before it fell to the Communists. The Nationalists lost 300,000 of their best troops, and 360,000 Communist troops were now free to take over all of North China. Mukden marked the beginning of a series of stunning defeats for the Nationalist forces.

Along with occasional feature stories, one- and two-column articles that appeared in *Time* throughout 1948 clearly reflected the overall pessimism.[41] Communist victories were reported week after week as the starving, war-weary Chinese people fell to their domination.

With the ninth appearance of Chiang Kai-shek on its cover, *Time* reported on December 6, 1948, that "[t]he Communists were overrunning China like lava...." From Nanking, Manfred Gottfried, chief of Time-Life foreign correspondents, cabled a report home that read: "Until I came to Nanking, I had not realized how completely the Chinese of the cities have lost confidence in Chiang Kai-shek. This is true of all classes. They feel toward him as Americans felt toward Herbert Hoover in 1933.... China is very nearly lost."

The situation seemed utterly hopeless on both sides of the Pacific. By the end of 1948 the administration in Washington as well as the general public mood were not about to make the kind of financial, mil-

itary, and emotional commitment that would be required to "save China." Thus the eleventh-hour, dramatic appearance of Madame Chiang in Washington in December 1948 to make one last urgent plea for a three-billion-dollar aid program "failed to evoke even an echo of the wild enthusiasm that had greeted her in 1943."[42]

Even Senator Vandenberg was growing more and more equivocal about aid to China. Some months after the China Aid Bill had passed, Vandenberg received through Senator William F. Knowland of California, a long and gloomy report from an expert on the Chinese political and financial situation. Vandenberg wrote on October 21, 1948, that it presented

> ... a situation which is well nigh imponderable. Its conclusions seem to be predicated on the fact that China is lost unless "the United States takes on a positive policy of military aid" ... and that [unless] this military aid is forthcoming at once (which is prior to the new year).... I should say that it is impossible for us to enter the Chinese equation on any such all-out basis ... without new Congressional action. If we are to give [such] military aid to China ... it would involve an enormous obligation....
>
> I have no doubt that the general trend in China is ... going from bad to worse and that perhaps this Communist trend is calculated to continue.... The vital importance of saving China cannot be exaggerated. But there are limits to our resources and boundaries to our miracles....[43]

Vandenberg added that "the situation in China has disintegrated so rapidly that [we] ... confront the grave question as to how any sort of American aid can be made effective and not be a waste of American re-

sources....”[44] Although Vandenberg believed that China should be kept out of Communist hands, he indicated that he had lost faith in Chiang Kai-shek's administration. At the same time he agreed with Henry Luce that Chiang had been loyal to the Allied cause during the war and that the United States was honor-bound to continue its support.[45]

The final engagement between the forces of Chiang Kai-shek and those of Mao Tse-tung occurred with a Nationalist offensive at Hwai-Hai in January 1949. It quickly bogged down, with troops showing little will to fight. Within a few short months of that decisive victory, Mao Tse-tung won all of mainland China. Chiang fled to Taiwan, where he died in 1976.

Conclusion

As this essay illustrates, Henry Luce's views were often contrary to both public opinion and government policy. In spite of his steadfast support of the Nationalist government in China, studies have shown that from late 1945 until early 1948 all levels of public opinion generally supported Truman's China policy, whether that policy was mediating between Chiang and the Communists in 1945-46, or American withdrawal from the talks in 1947. But according to Walter LaFeber's study of public opinion's impact on policy makers, Truman did not cultivate support. Indeed, quite to the contrary, in May 1947 he told the Association of Radio News Analysts, “Our government is not a democracy, thank God. It's a republic. We elect men to use their best judgment of the public interest.” Secretary of State Dean Acheson, agreed and even more bluntly claimed, “If you truly had a democracy and did what the people wanted, you'd go wrong every time.... Acheson's opinion of Congress was almost as low as his view of the public. Congress' func-

tion was "vital," he noted in 1953, but the legislature is composed of people who "don't know and don't care and are just generally raising hell around.... Members of Congress may comment if they desire, but only rarely are they in a position to change anything."[46] Similarly, in regard to the State Department, Acheson said that "officials spent an inordinate amount of time on Capitol Hill, but their testimony should not be confused with consultation. Even consultation, in the view of the executive, frequently meant only to inform.

LaFeber contends that "[i]ndividual senators such as Arthur Vandenberg, did gain a role, but when the major, specific policies are examined (for example, the Truman Doctrine or even NATO), his importance [if any] seems to have been in having the policy adopted by Congress, not in the conception of the policy's essentials."[47] In his memoirs, Vandenberg confirmed that he was not consulted in regard to East Asian Affairs. He complained that he was generally handed a program of decisions already made to which he was expected to give his official approval.[48]

Scholars have shown that policy makers seldom follow the opinion of even "knowledgeable" or "attentive" publics such as Congressional reporters, editors, and publishers. Although journalists undoubtedly had some unconscious influence, from 1945 to 1949 their opinions were not a major factor in the determination of foreign policy.[49]

In spite of Truman's disavowal and the discouraging comments of other officials, however, Nancy B. Tucker notes that, "Truman read several local and New York newspapers as well as other regional papers on a regular basis.... The President also received oral press summaries at his daily morning staff meeting and clippings from a variety of sources. Throughout his years in office, he enjoyed good relations with the White House press corps and made several reporters close friends."

Hence, she concludes that the media must have had at least some indirect influence on the Truman administration's formulation of foreign policy. Furthermore, she maintains, "If journalists did not exercise any direct control over policy decisions, by determining what the public and officials read, they significantly influenced what Americans thought about and took action on."[50]

Although biographers mistakenly blame Henry Luce for all the exaggerated fears, misconceptions, and paranoia that characterized American images, attitudes, and policies toward China, this essay illustrates that while Luce and his magazines did indeed have a notable influence on U.S. China policy, it was mostly indirect and only moderately successful. While Luce never persuaded policy makers to make a substantial commitment to China, however, his role vis-a-vis policy makers was significant in that he disseminated information, promoted debate, and fostered a clearer understanding of the issues in Sino-American relations. In this sense he made a major contribution to the democratic tradition of widespread participation in political decision-making.

NOTES

[1] Gabriel Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (1950.) For a further theoretical discussion of the interrelationship of the press and foreign policy see also James Aronson, *The Press and the Cold War* (1990); Andrew Arno and Wismal Dissarayake, eds., *The News Media in National and International Conflict* (1984); and Nicholas O. Berry, *Foreign Policy and the Press: An Analysis* (1988); the several works by Bernard Cohen, including *The Influence of Non-Governmental Groups on Foreign Policy-Making* (1959), *The Press and Foreign Policy* (1963), and *The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy* (1973); William A. Dorman and Mansour Farhang, *The U.S. Press & Iran: Foreign Policy and the Journalism of Deference* (1987); Doris Graber, *Public Opinion, the Press and Foreign Policy* (1992); John Hohenberg, *Between Two Worlds: Policy, Press, and Public Opinion in Asian-American Relations* (1966); V.O. Key, Jr., *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (1961); Ross Koen, *The China Lobby in American Politics*, Richard Kagan, ed. (1974); Donna R. Leff, David Protess, and Stephen C. Brooks, "Crusading Journalism: Changing Public Attitudes and Policy Making Agendas," *Public Opinion*

Quarterly 50 (1986): 300-15; Donna Leff and Harvey L. Molltoch, "Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 47 (1983): 16-35; Louis Liebovich, *The Press and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-1947* (1988); Michael Leigh, *Mobilizing Consent: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy, 1937-1947* (1988); Martin Linsky, *Impact: How the Press Affects Federal Policy Making* (1986); Martin Linsky, Jonathan More, Wendy O'Donnell, and David Whitman, *How the Press Affects Federal Policymaking* (1988); Patrick O'Heffernan, *Mass Media and American Foreign Policy*: *Insider Perspectives on Global Journalism and the Foreign Policy Process* (1991); James Reston, *The Artillery of the Press: Its Influence on American Foreign Policy* (1966); Melvin Small, ed., *Public Opinion and Historians: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (1970); James Strouse, *Mass Media, Public Opinion and Public Policy Explorations* (1985); and Alan J. Zaremba, *Mass Communication and International Politics: A Case Study of Press Reactions to the 1973 Arab-Israeli War* (1988).

For a more specific discussion of the influence of the press on American China policy see Akira Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American East Asian Relations* (1967); Anthony Kubek, *How The Far East Was Lost: American Policy and the Creation of Communist China, 1944-1949* (1963); A.T. Steele, *The American People and China* (1966); Harold Isaacs, *Images of Asia: American Views of China and India* (1962); Ross Koen, *The China Lobby in American Politics*, Richard Kagan ed. (1974); Chin-Chuan Lee, ed., *Voices of China: The Interplay of Politics and Journalism* (1990); Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy 1949-1950* (1983).

2 Graber, *Public Opinion, the Press and Foreign Policy*.

3 Reston, *The Artillery of the Press....*

4 Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy*.

5 Linsky, *Impact: How the Press Affects Federal Policy Making*.

6 W.A. Swanberg, *Luce and His Empire* (New York: Scribner, 1972), 473, 389, 277.

7 David Halberstam, *The Powers That Be* (New York: Dell, 1979), 125.

8 Sterling Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 387, 9.

9 Letter, Time Inc. historian Robert Elson to author, 12 May 1983.

10 Walter Judd, telephone interview, 17 February 1985.

11 See also Peter F. Drucker, *Adventures of a Bystander* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 239-40.

12 Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 38.

13 "Tentative Draft of Instructions to Lauchlin Currie," Box 5, Folder on "President F.D. Roosevelt Memoranda," 1942, Lauchlin Currie Papers, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif. (hereafter cited as Currie Papers).

[14] "First Trip to China; Report to President," 15 March 1941, Box 4, Folder 33. Currie Papers.

[15] Letter, Lauchlin Currie to Hollington Tong, 24 April 1941, Box 1, Currie Papers.

[16] Michael Straight, "Is it a People's War?" *New Republic* (November 1942): 633-35.

[17] T.A. Bisson, "China's Part in a Coalition War," *Far Eastern Survey*, 14 July 1943, 63-67.

[18] Hanson Baldwin, "Too Much Wishful Thinking About China," *Reader's Digest* (August 1943): 63-67.

[19] Letter, Pearl Buck to Henry R. Luce, 3 March 1943, Time Inc. Archives, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York City.

[20] Henry R. Luce, "Private Memorandum on Pearl Buck's article on China," March 1943, Time Inc. Archives.

[21] Theodore White, *In Search of History: A Personal Adventure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 214-20.

[22] Ibid., 4.

[23] "Strictly Confidential Memo," Henry R. Luce to John Shaw Billings, 24 March 1944. *Time-Life-Fortune Papers,* John Shaw Billings Papers, South Carolina Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia (hereafter cited as Billings Papers).

[24] "Strictly Confidential Memo," Henry R. Luce to John Shaw Billings, 16 June 1944, Billings Papers.

[25] "Strictly Confidential Memo," Henry R. Luce to John Shaw Billings, 24 March 1944, Billings Papers.

[26] Quoted in Robert Elson, ed. Duncan Norton-Taylor, *The World of Time Inc., The Intimate History of a Publishing Enterprise*, 2 vols. (New York: Atheneum, 1968-1973) 2: 223-24.

[27] Elson, *The World of Time Inc.*, 2: 223.

[28] Henry Luce to George Marshall, 7 October 1947. George Marshall Papers, Box 134, Folder 10, George C. Marshall Library, Lexington, Va.

[29] Letter, William C. Bullitt to Henry R. Luce, 6 November 1947. Henry R. Luce Papers, Container 34, "China, miscellaneous correspondence and memoranda," Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as the Henry R. Luce Papers).

[30] Ibid.

[31] Letter, William C. Bullitt to Henry R. Luce, 20 December 1947, Henry R. Luce Papers.

[32] General Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 396.

[33] Ibid., 378.

[34] A. H. Vandenberg, Jr., and Joe A. Morris, eds., *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1952), 532.

[35] Walter Trohan, "The Tragedy of George Marshall," *American Mercury* 72 (March 1951): 267-75.

[36] Arnold A. Rogow, *James Forrestal, A Study of Personality, Politics, and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 338. Forrestal was appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1944 and Secretary of Defense in 1947.

[37] Vandenberg and Morris, *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*, 519-20.

[38] Quoted in Swanberg, *Luce and His Empire*, 253; Radio Broadcast, WOR, 21 December 1947.

[39] Quoted in Swanberg, ibid., 266.

[40] Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* 400.

[41] See, for example: 19 and 26 January; 9 and 23 February; l, 8, 15, and 22 March; 26 April; 3 May; 28 June; 5 July; 23 August; 1 and 8 November; and 27 December.

[42] Elson, *The World of Time Inc.*, 226

[43] Vandenberg and Morris, *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*, 525-26.

[44] Ibid., 529.

[45] Ibid., 529-30.

[46] Dean Acheson quoted in Walter LaFeber, "U.S. Policy-Makers, Public Opinion and the Outbreak of the Cold War, 1945-50," in *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, ed. Yonosuke Nagai and Akira Iriye (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 60.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Vandenberg and Morris, *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*, 519-20.

[49] LaFeber, "U.S. Policy-Makers...," 60.

[50] Nancy B. Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy 1949-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 162 and 144-5.

PRAISE FOR

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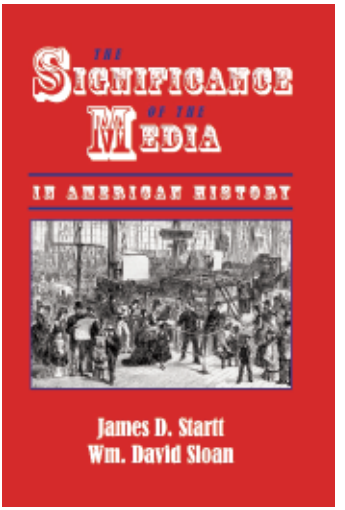

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News & Notes

(Please note: Announcements are from the organizers of the activities.)

33rd Annual Sachsman Symposium on the 19th Century Press, Nov. 13-15, 2025

The Society of Nineteenth Century Historians, in partnership with the Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Augusta University, presents the 33rd Annual Sachsman Symposium on the 19th Century Press, formerly known as the Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression.

The Society invites panel and paper submissions dealing with any topic related to the media of the nineteenth century. Of particular interest this year are studies related to 19th century media law and ethics; international coverage of the American Civil War; and the 19th century minority and foreign language press. Other recent topics have included studies of political and sports reporting, reporting on slavery and abolition, the illustrated press, sensationalism, and reporting on the arts.

Submission Deadline: August 25, 2025. Please send your paper or a panel proposal as a Word attachment to 19thCenturyHistorians@gmail.com. Students are encouraged to submit their research work. Please note:

- Papers should be at least 10 pages with a 200-300-word abstract.
- Pre-formed panel proposals should include a panel title and abstract, and the names, contact information, and presentation title for each presenter.
- Selected papers and panels must be presented during the conference, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, November 13-15, 2025.

• It is not necessary to be a member of the Society to submit a paper or panel for consideration.

Location: The conference will take place at Augusta University. We strongly encourage on-site participation to take advantage of collegial, collaborative scholarship and discussion; public history experiences; and networking opportunities. A Zoom option is available upon request.

Recognition: Top papers will be recognized. The top student paper will be honored with the Sachsman Family Award for outstanding student research. Financial assistance may be available for in-person presentations by undergraduate and graduate students thanks to the Schmitt Family Fund, which is dedicated to encouraging student research.

Publications: Papers accepted to the Symposium may be considered for a future book publication with the author's permission. In addition to dozens of collaborative and independent publications by participating researchers, the Symposium has produced nine books covering a broad range of subjects. These include *The Civil War and the Press* (2000); *Memory and Myth: The Civil War in Fiction and Film from Uncle Tom's Cabin to Cold Mountain* (2007); *Words at War: The Civil War and American Journalism* (2008); *Seeking a Voice: Images of Race and Gender in the 19th Century Press* (2009); *Sensationalism: Murder, Mayhem, Mudslinging, Scandals, and Disasters in 19th-Century Reporting* (2013); *A Press Divided: Newspaper Coverage of the Civil War* (2014); *After the War: The Press in a Changing America, 1865-1900* (2017); *The Antebellum Press: Setting the Stage for Civil War* (2019), and *The Civil War Soldier and the Press* (2023). Panel presentations from the 2020, 2023, and 2024 Symposiums were recorded and aired on C-SPAN and C-SPAN 2.

For More Information: Contact: 19thCenturyHistorians@gmail.com or visit 19thcenturyhistorians.org for the latest information on the Society, links to publications, upcoming book projects, and other news.

Contact Information
Katrina Jesick Quinn, Slippery Rock University
Contact email: katrina.quinn@sru.edu

Call for Papers, Panels, and Research in Progress for 2025 AJHA Convention

The American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA) invites submissions of research papers, panel proposals, and research-in-progress abstracts on any aspect of journalism and media history for its 44th annual convention to be held September 25-27, 2025, in Long Beach, California.

Submission Deadline: All submissions are due by Monday, June 2, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. EST.

The AJHA embraces a broad view of journalism and media history, including print, broadcasting, advertising, public relations, and other mass communication forms intertwined with the human past. Transnational research is also encouraged.

Paper Requirements

Originality: Submissions must contain original material and should not have been submitted to or accepted by another convention or publication.

Submission limits: Individuals may submit one entry per competition. Please note that paper, panel and research-in-progress submissions by the same author must cover different topics.

Convention attendance: At least one author of each accepted

paper or research-in-progress submission must register for and attend the convention. Panelists are also required to register and attend.

Format guidelines for research papers:

• Papers should be no longer than 25 pages (excluding notes and figures), double-spaced, in 12-point font, with numbered pages.

• Place endnotes and figures at the end of the document.

• The Chicago Manual of Style is recommended but not required.

Submissions must be emailed as a Word document to ajhapaper@gmail.com.

Your submission should include:

1. Your full paper, free of any identifying information. Follow format guidelines above.

2. A separate Word document with a 150-word abstract, paper title, and author details (name, email, phone, institutional affiliation, student/faculty status).

Upon submission, an auto-reply confirmation will be sent. If confirmation is not received within 48 hours, check your spam or junk folders. Contact Jennifer Moore (mooreje@d.umn.edu) if you do not find the auto-reply confirmation.

For questions, contact AJHA Research Chair Jennifer Moore at the University of Minnesota Duluth (mooreje@d.umn.edu). Authors should expect notification of acceptance in late July.

Panels

Panel proposals should explore original journalism and media history topics, offering diverse perspectives that encourage meaningful discussion. Diversity in race and gender among panelists is strongly encouraged.

Submission Requirements:

• Title and brief topic description.

• Moderator and participants' information (name, institutional affiliation, student/faculty status).

• A brief summary of each participant's presentation.

Panel proposals must be submitted via email to Susan Swanberg: swanberg@arizona.edu. Organizers must confirm participation from panelists before submission. Moderators serve as facilitators and cannot be panelists.

For questions, contact Susan Swanberg at the University of Arizona (swanberg@arizona.edu). Notification of acceptance will be sent in late July.

Research in Progress

This category is for ongoing projects that will not be completed before the conference. Participants will present an overview of their research purpose and progress, facilitating discussion and feedback.

Submission Requirements:

• A blind abstract including title, purpose statement, and the availability and role of primary sources (max two pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins).

• A separate page detailing primary sources.

Submissions must be emailed as Word attachments to ajharip@gmail.com, with author identification in the file name only. The email body should include author details (name, project title, phone, email, institutional affiliation, student/faculty status).

For questions, contact Gwyneth Mellinger at James Madison University (mellingx@jmu.edu). Notification of acceptance will be sent in late July.

Call for Contributions: Routledge Companion to Public Relations History

Scholars are invited to submit chapter proposals for the upcoming *Routledge Companion to Public Relations History*. Contributions are welcome on a wide range of topics, including:

- Public relations history across sectors such as business, entertainment, politics, social movements, nonprofits, and education
- The history of PR ethics and historiography
- Global perspectives on PR history, as well as country-specific studies
- Additional topics related to PR history (authors are encouraged to propose ideas beyond those listed above)

Submission Details

To propose a chapter, please submit:

A **250-word abstract**

A **one-page outline** (12-pt Times New Roman, single-spaced)

Deadline: Friday, May 2, 2025

Submit to: Cayce Myers at mcmyers@vt.edu (as a Word attachment)

Timeline:

Proposal Acceptance Notifications: Early to mid-June 2025

Full Chapter Deadline: October 1, 2025

Final Chapter Revisions Due: December 1, 2025

Chapter Length: 6,000-8,000 words (including notes)

The project is expected to be 25-30 chapters providing a comprehensive overview of PR History. It will be delivered to the publisher in 2026. Thank you for considering this project.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions at mcmyers@vt.edu.

Cayce Myers, Editor

Routledge Companion to Public Relations History

Call for Nominations: Sidney Kobre Award for Lifetime Achievement

The Sidney Kobre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Journalism History is American Journalism Historians Association's highest honor.

The Kobre Award recognizes individuals with an exemplary record of sustained achievement in journalism history through teaching, research, professional activities, or other contributions to the field of journalism history. Award winners need not be members of the AJHA.

Nominations for the award are solicited annually, but the award need not be given every year. Those making nominations for the award should present, at the minimum, a cover letter that explains the nominee's contributions to the field as well as a vita or brief biography of the nominee. Supporting letters for the nomination are also welcome.

The Awards Committee selects the winner from among nominees and presents the award during a luncheon at the AJHA National Convention.

Send nominations no later than May 15, 2025.

Electronic submissions are preferred via email to: Dr. Willie Tubbs, Assistant Professor, University of West Florida, wtubbs@uwf.edu.

Alternatively, postal submissions may be sent to the following address:

Dr. Willie Tubbs
AJHA Service Awards Chair
Communication Department
Building 36, Room 183
University of West Florida
11000 University Pkwy
Pensacola, FL 32514

Previous Winners:

1986 Sidney Kobre

1992 Ed Emery, Minnesota
1997 Maurine Beasley, Maryland
1998 David Sloan, Alabama
1999 Hiley Ward, Temple
2001 Jim Startt, Valparaiso
2002 Margaret Blanchard, North Carolina
2003 Michael Murray, Missouri-St. Louis
2004 Joseph McKerns, Ohio State
2005 Barbara Cloud, Nevada-Las Vegas
2006 Hazel Dicken-Garcia, Minnesota
2007 Wally Eberhard, Georgia
2008 Patrick Washburn, Ohio
2009 Betty Winfield, Missouri
2010 David Copeland, Elon
2012 David Paul Nord, Indiana
2013 David Abrahamson, Northwestern
2014 Leonard Teel, Georgia State
2015 Michael Sweeney, Ohio
2016 Jean Folkerts, North Carolina
2017 Kitty Endres, Akron
2018 Eugenia Palmegiano, St. Peter's
2019 Debra Van Tuyll, Augusta
2020 Ford Risley, Pennsylvania State
2021 Julie Williams, Samford
2022 Janice Hume, Georgia
2023 John Maxwell Hamilton, Louisiana State
2024 W. Joseph Campbell, American University

Call for Nominations: National Award for Excellence in Teaching

Deadline for nominations: June 1, 2025

The annual American Journalism Historians Association Award for Excellence in Teaching honors a college or university teacher who excels at teaching in the areas of journalism and mass communication history, makes a positive impact on student learning, and offers an outstanding example for other educators.

An honorarium of $500 accompanies the prize.

Eligibility:

A nominee may be tenured or untenured, and should hold either a full- or part-time appointment with a minimum of three years teaching experience at a college or university that confers an associate, baccalaureate or higher degree in journalism, mass communication, communication studies, or history as of the submission due date.

All nominees must have responsibility for teaching the history of journalism and mass communication either as a stand-alone course or as part of a broader course.

Nomination packets must include:

Letter of nomination from the candidate that includes the following:

- a. A summary of his/her teaching philosophy and how he/she designs courses or assignments to actualize that philosophy,
- b. An example of how experience has improved his or her teaching over time,
- c. A discussion of how the impact of his or her teaching has become evident.
- Curriculum vitae
- A syllabus from a mass communication history course or a course that incorporates mass communication history.
- Three items that demonstrate teaching effectiveness. These may

include assignment sheets, lesson plan or detailed lecture notes, PowerPoint presentation for a lecture, examples of student work along with the assignment sheet from which the work was created (anonymize the work if possible and obtain permission to submit from the student where copyright may be an issue).

• One letter of support from a colleague (peer or senior) or academic administrator.

Nominations should be sent to Education Chair Amy Lauters electronically as a PDF (one file).

Previous Winners:

2008 Betty Winfield, Missouri
2010 David Sloan, Alabama
2011 Leonard Teel, Georgia State
2012 Janice Hume, Georgia
2013 Earnest Perry, Missouri
2014 Bernell Tripp, Florida
2015 Tracy Lucht, Iowa State
2016 Wayne Dawkins, Hampton
2017 Amber Roessner, Tennessee
2018 Mike Sweeney, Ohio
2019 David Vergobbi, Utah
2020 Michael Fuhlhage, Wayne State
2021 Ira Chinoy, Maryland
2022 Dianne Bragg, Alabama

2025 Covert Award Call for Submissions

AEJMC's History Division announces the 41th annual competition for the Covert Award in Mass Communication History for entries published in 2024.

The Covert Award recognizes the author of the best mass communication history article or essay published in the previous year. Book chapters in edited collections published in the previous year are also eligible.

The AEJMC History Division has presented the award annually since 1985.

https://mediahistorydivision.com/history-divisionawards/covert-award/

The $400 award memorializes the esteemed Dr. Catherine L. Covert, professor of journalism at Syracuse University (d.1983). Cathy Covert was the first woman professor in Syracuse's Newhouse School of Journalism and the first woman to head the History Division, in 1975. Prof. Covert received the AEJMC Outstanding Contribution to Journalism Education Award in 1983.

Submit an electronic copy in pdf form of the published article/essay/chapter via email to Covert Award Chair, Elisabeth Fondren, fondrene@stjohns.edu, by March 31, 2025.

The publication may be self-submitted or submitted by others, such as an editor or colleague. Essays published exclusively online require date of publication, URL, verification of originality and authorship, and the essay in pdf format.

Seeking Digital Media Reviews for *American Journalism: A Journal of Media History*

Are you interested in writing a digital media review for American Journalism: A Journal of Media History? The Digital Media Reviews section of the journal showcases digital archives, websites, social media accounts, and film resources that would be useful to media historians or media history educators. Past submissions have highlighted digital ar-

chives authors consulted in their own research or that are housed at their own institutions, while others have explored popular media (social media, film, or television series) that engage with relevant historical topics or issues.

Suggested review length: 700 to 800 words long

Topic: Any digital media resource or production (website, social media account, digital archive, or film) about journalism, media, film, or public relations history

Deadline: Flexible

Please visit American Journalism's website to learn more about the journalism itself as well as the DMR section. If you have an idea for a digital media review, I warmly encourage you to contact me for further information about submission guidelines. I especially encourage submissions from junior scholars, doctoral candidates, and graduate students interested in journalism, media and/or popular culture history.

Contact Information

Carrie Teresa Isard, Niagara University

Contact email: cteresa@niagara.edu

Call for Papers for Printing History Themed Issue: Community Publishing

Printing History is pleased to announce an issue highlighting community printing and publishing practices. We invite author submissions that approach print history expansively, with a focus on small press, DIY, ephemeral, fringe, and community-focused materials that challenge mainstream notions of the print historical record. We particularly welcome submissions spotlighting the printing practices of marginalized communities.

We invite interested researchers and practitioners to share work

engaging in the following topics:

- Print as a means of collective organizing and communication
- Print projects that articulate and affirm identity
- Zines, artists' books, small/underground/alternative press
- Print material that challenges dominant historical narratives
- Activist ephemera and resource guides
- Underrepresented, regional, and vernacular production and practice
- Representations of non-dominant knowledge systems
- Community-engaged creative and professional practice
- Collaborative and nonhierarchical print production
- Queer print cultures
- Printing and publishing practices of BIPOC artists and communities
- Critical bibliography

In general, *Printing History* follows the Chicago Manual of Style. An APHA style guide and further information for contributors can be downloaded here.

Submissions should be emailed to editor@printinghistory.org. If you have questions about this issue, the process, or the journal in general, do not hesitate to write.

Call for Articles: *TMG-Journal for Media History* Special Issue on "Transmedia "Histories"

Deadline (Abstracts): May 31, 2025

How can "transmedia" history be put into practice from empirical perspectives? Following on the successful conference "Transmedia History" https://impresso.github.io/transmedia/ — organised by the Impresso Project (https://impresso-project.ch) and the University of

Lausanne's History Department, *TMG–Journal for Media History* invites scholars to contribute to a special issue on Transmedia Histories.

This special issue invites papers that prioritise a transmedia approach. We seek to present research that explores media history through the simultaneous analysis of different media, thereby emphasising the significance of the media ecosystems in which they co-evolve. 'Media' is understood in a broad sense here. It includes traditional media (books, posters, press, cinema, radio and television), but also more recent historical examples such as video games and the Internet (e.g. streaming services, podcasts, online news). The targeted timeframe is extensive, though — per the scope of *TMG–Journal for Media History* — a *historical perspective* has to be central. The special issue ultimately seeks to contribute to a decompartmentalised and interconnected history of media. The featured articles will not only place media history within a broader social, political, and cultural context but also foster a dialogue among them.

We invite articles that could fall within three promising research axes:

1. Transmedia circulations, adaptations and reciprocal influences

The aim of this strand of research is to identify and analyse various factors that facilitate the circulation of content and formats across media and/or that foster interactions between media:

- specific actors or media professions such as news and advertising agencies, foreign correspondents, exiles and diaspora representatives active in various media, translators, arrangers, cross-border media;
- spaces of circulation and exchanges that transcend traditional political and/or linguistic boundaries, such as fictional serial productions, co-productions, joint-broadcasts, technical cooperation

associations in the telecommunications field, foreign-language press;

• socio-economic factors like concentration and financial globalisation, liberalisation and deregulation, convergence and new consumption habits.

• the rhythms and temporality of information, the modes of circulation (e.g. scissors-and-paste journalism), adaptations and reconfigurations (e.g. comics to radio)

• the transmission of practices and the mobility of people or resistance to these phenomena, i.e. factors that hinder or trouble transmedia circulation (seasonal and geopolitical conditions, legal matters, censorship, etc.)

2. Intersections, reconfigurations and new media genealogies

The goal of this strand is to refine our understanding of how media define themselves in relation to each other and how — from a diachronic-historical perspective — once-new media were perceived, integrated, and critiqued. Potential questions to be addressed are:

• How did the advent of new media affect existing media? How were they perceived and narrated by other media?

• How do media publicize, promote, and criticize each other's content? What are motives and strategies?

• What "media imaginaries" emerged and how did these perhaps shape new periodisations of media history?

3. New approaches, resources and methods

In what ways can the mass digitisation of archival collections and the advancement of computational analysis tools foster transmedia research? The third axis of this special issue thus, a.o., seeks to

• identify new and/or digital approaches that facilitate and bol-

ster comparisons.

• discuss methods that enable analyses of the circulation of contents and formats at scale, in order to enhance our understanding of information fluxes. We therefore look to understand the effects that such tools have on studying transmedia histories, based on concrete historical case studies.

• We also welcome contributions utilizing a transmedia perspective that are beyond these thematic lines but are still complementary to the overall special issue.

In short, this special issue seeks to contribute to the clarification and development of a transmedia approach in the historical sciences. It aims to address transmedia from a *historical, long-term perspective* based on *concrete historical case studies* and *original research* and, more broadly, to *promote a decompartmentalised, entangled history of media*.

Submission procedure and important dates

Abstract submissions are due on May 31, 2025. They have to be in English and have to present the main research question(s), academic literature, data, method and concrete historical case study the authors plan to use. Abstracts should not exceed 1500 words. Please submit your abstract and a short bio to all four guest editors at transmediahistories@gmail.com.

Since this special issue follows from the Transmedia conference referred to above, it is addressed primarily — but not exclusively! — to those who presented there. Those scholars, who already submitted an abstract before, can either send in the same abstract, or send in an updated version. Either way, make sure it complies with the above instructions.

In *June*, we will inform the authors whether they are invited to sub-

mit a full article.

Selected authors shall be invited to submit an article of 6000-8000 words (including notes). Final acceptance depends on a double-blind peer review process. Deadline for the manuscript is November 1, 2025. Revised drafts are expected by March 1, 2026 (and, if necessary, a second round of rewriting and reviews in the ensuing months). Copy-editing will take place in the Fall. *The special issue will be published in January 2027*. Publications are open access; no payment from the authors will be required.

If you have questions, please contact the editors of the special issue, Raphaëlle Ruppen Coutaz,François Vallotton, Martin Grandjean and Jesper Verhoef at transmediahistories@gmail.com.

Publication of *Material Histories of Paper*, in the "Living Books about History" Collection

Material Histories Of Paper **brings together twenty-seven texts as well as a dozen complementary multimedia resources**, in both French and English, all in **open access**. The collection invites readers to explore the history of paper, a material that is ubiquitous yet often overlooked, and perhaps one of the essential infrastructures of the human story. It also aims to highlight the dynamic nature of research on paper by drawing on sources from a variety of disciplines.

Material Histories of Paper is part of the Living Books About History series, which publishes thematic collections using only texts that are readily, and freely, available online. The series aims to experiment with a new form of academic publishing that enables the discovery of online sources, and draws attention to the advantages of open access publishing.

This anthology aims to provide valuable resources in an accessible

way for teaching and research, but also to invite curious readers on a journey into the vibrant — and still relevant — history of paper.

Juliette De Maeyer, Aleksandra Kaminska and Ghislain Thibault Editors, *Material Histories of Paper*

https://www.livingbooksabouthistory.ch/en/book/histoires-materielles-du-papier

Erin Coyle Named AJHA Second Vice President

The AJHA Board of Directors has named Erin Coyle as second vice president, filling the position vacated upon the death of Pam Parry. Per the AJHA Constitution and Bylaws, the Board is tasked with appointing officers to vacated positions, subject to confirmation by the AJHA membership at the next election.

Coyle thanked the board for the opportunity to serve AJHA at a time when we need to strongly defend education, journalism history, historical research, journalism, press freedom, and civil rights.

"I am proud of this organization for providing opportunities for historians to research communication and underrepresented members of society," Coyle said.

"This organization provides essential mentorship and support for journalism historians," she said. "I am looking forward to working with our members to continue fostering mentorship and support for communication historians."

Coyle researches advocacy for free expression, rights to access government information and government proceedings, and conflicts between free expression and privacy rights. Winner of the 2023 AJHA National Award for Excellence in Teaching, Coyle teaches courses in journalism history, media law and ethics, writing and reporting, and theory as an associate professor at Temple University.

She is the author of *The Press and Rights to Privacy: First Amendment Freedoms vs. Invasion of Privacy Claims* and articles in top media law and media history journals.

Coyle has served two terms on the AJHA Board of Directors and has been chair of the Research Committee. She also has been a liaison to the Graduate Student Committee and assisted with the silent auction.

President Debbie van Tuyll said Coyle is an outstanding choice to join the AJHA leadership.

"She is an excellent scholar and teacher, energetic and organized," van Tuyll said. "I've been so impressed as I've worked with her in various capacities over the years — everything she does is done thoughtfully and well. I am truly looking forward to serving with her."

Coyle will fulfill the tasks associated with the second vice president for the remainder of this year, which includes assembling the conference program. If confirmed by the membership on the fall ballot, Coyle will ascend to the position of first vice president after this year's convention in Long Beach and then to president the following year.

AEJMC History Division Announces Bailey Dick As 2025 Sweeney Award Winner

Bailey G. Dick of Bowling Green State University has won the 2025 Michael S. Sweeney Award for her article "What We Talk about When We Talk about Women: Benevolent Sexism in Historical Studies of Women Journalists, 1974-2023."

The Sweeney Award, presented by the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), recognizes the outstanding article published in the previous volume of the scholarly journal *Journalism History*. The Division's Pub-

lications Committee selected the article from among five finalists provided by *Journalism History*'s current Editor Perry Parks and immediate past Editor Pam Parry. In addition to receiving a plaque and cash prize, Dick will be honored during the History Division's awards gala at this year's AEJMC conference in San Francisco.

Dick's article was published in Volume 5, Issue 3 of *Journalism History*, and it examines histories of female journalists published in the two leading U.S. media history journals, *Journalism History* and *American Journalism*. Dick sought to understand how they and their work had been described by media historians. She argues that many who study female journalists infuse "benevolent sexism" into their analysis, meaning they describe women in terms that seem positive but covertly use diminishing language that is reflective of female academics trying to fit into a male-dominated academy. Dick identifies systematic issues in how media historians write about women and provides solutions for moving forward.

Journalism History Announces Maurine Beasley as 2025 Reilly Award Winner

Maurine Beasley, Professor Emerita at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism, is the 2025 Reilly Award Winner. Beasley was selected for her long, dedicated service to *Journalism History*, and in particular her many years as an article reviewer.

The Reilly Award is named after Tom Reilly, *Journalism History*'s founding editor. Previously, the award had been given to the most downloaded article on the journal's website. With the academic publishing model evolving, *Journalism History*'s Publications Committee decided to change the award's focus to the unsung heroes of the publication process: the reviewers. Without reviewers, academic publishing

would not work. They receive no payment and put in hours of work for each article.

"Being a reviewer is a thankless job, and we want to change that," said Committee Chairwoman Maddie Liseblad. "For years, Maurine Beasley has been a steadfast reviewer, someone the editors can count on. She has worked behind the scenes, without any acknowledgements. The committee wants to celebrate Beasley's exceptional commitment and show that reviewers matter and are valued. We want to highlight the important role of reviewers in academic publishing."

Not only is Beasley a committed reviewer, but she is also the second most published author in *Journalism History* with her nine journal articles.

Moving forward, the Reilly Award will become a "Reviewer of the Year" award, focusing on a reviewer who has provided this critical service.

The Reilly Award was established in 2021 to honor the founding editor of *Journalism History*, Tom Reilly. He was a California State University, Northridge, professor who led the journal from 1974-1985. More about Reilly can be found at tinyurl.com/journalfounder.

Microgrant Winners Selected for *Journalism History* and *American Journalism* Diversity Research

Five media historians will receive funding supporting their research related to diversity and media history. The microgrants are sponsored by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's History Division and the American Journalism Historians Association. It's a collaborative effort to stimulate more diversity research in their journals, *Journalism History* and *American Journalism*.

"The microgrants program reflects a unified commitment by our

journals to support the unearthing and amplification of underrecognized voices and experiences from media history," said *Journalism History*'s Editor Perry Parks. "The more of these stories we are able to tell, the richer all of our histories will be."

Here are this year's microgrant winners:

Andrew T. Daws is a doctoral candidate in the College of Communication and Information Sciences at The University of Alabama. His microgrant project expands on his dissertation research on classified advertisements in Southern gay newspapers and how they shaped queer community and identity from the 1980s to early 2000s.

Michael Fuhlhage is an associate professor in the Department of Communication at Wayne State University. His microgrant project will focus on how Chicanos told their own stories to their people and mainstream media in the late 20th century.

Takeya Mizuno is a professor in the School of Political Science and Economics at Meiji University in Tokyo, Japan. His microgrant project examines how the military government began licensing and censorship of the Japanese "enemy language" press in Hawai'i during World War II.

Robin Sundaramoorthy is an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland and American University. Her microgrant project examines efforts by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the 1980s to increase broadcast minority ownership and will focus on Jo-Al Broadcasting, Inc. and KTOY Radio in Texarkana, Ark.

Wafa Unus is an associate professor of journalism at Fitchburg State University. Her microgrant project is a case study of advocacy and reporting in *The Moslem World & The U.S.A.*, the first monthly journal about Islam in the United States, examining how minority journalism historically united marginalized communities and shaped narratives

around intersectional struggles.

This microgrant program was launched in 2023. Counting this year's awardees, a total of 14 media history scholars have been helped financially by these grants.

Two Los Angeles Area Journalists To Be Honored by the American Journalism Historians Association

The American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA) will honor NBC4 "Today in LA" co-anchor Lynette Romero and former editor of Long Beach's Grunion Gazette Harry Saltzgaver at the organization's 44th annual national convention, to be held Sept. 25-27 in Long Beach, California.

Romero and Saltzgaver will each receive AJHA's Outstanding Local Journalist Award for Substantial Contribution to the Public Interest. The award is presented each year to journalists in the convention city's area. It is given to journalists whose work has had a positive impact on the community.

Lynette Romero is the co-anchor of NBC4's weekday morning newscast "Today in L.A." She has more than three decades of broadcast news experience, having worked as an anchor, reporter, and producer. Romero joined NBC4 in 2022, after a long, distinguished career at Los Angeles station KTLA-TV where she anchored and reported in nearly every newscast.

Saltzgaver has spent over four decades in the newspaper industry as a journalist, columnist, and editor, writing for both weekly and metropolitan daily papers. For over thirty years, he served as the executive editor of the Grunion Gazette, a Long Beach weekly publication. After stepping down from his editor role in 2023, he has continued writing a weekly column. In 2014, Saltzgaver was named National Journalist of

the Year for non-dailies by the Gazette's parent company, Digital First Media.

American Journalism Historians Association Names Los Angeles Journalist Nancy Rivera Brooks as Donna Allen Honoree

The AJHA will honor Nancy Rivera Brooks, former business editor with the *Los Angeles Times*, as the Donna Allen Luncheon honoree at the organization's 44th annual national convention, to be held Sept. 25-27 in Long Beach, California.

The annual Donna Allen Luncheon celebrates contributions of women to the field of journalism. The AJHA invites a woman journalist local to the convention city as its honored guest and featured speaker for the luncheon.

Rivera Brooks is an award-winning business journalist who has spent more than four decades writing and editing stories about the people and industries that shape the lives of Southern Californians. She was part of the team that produced a pioneering series on the Latino community, which won the 1984 Pulitzer Prize for public service.

Call for Submissions: *American Behavioral Scientist*, Pre-Internet Networked Societies

We are surveying 1960-70s military operations including but not limited to, COINTELPRO (US); CHAOS (US); CORDS & Phoenix (Vietnam); Condor (in South America); ORDEN (El Salvador); Jakarta (Indonesia) and OBAN (Brazil) for a theme issue of *American Behavioral Scientist* titled, "Pre-Internet Networked Operations." This is a survey of networked societies prior to the advent of the Internet. Potential areas of focus include the communication equipment that supported these operations, from how evident or non-evident they were; to

their staffing and hardware; the use and purpose of the operations; the operations' contributions to social and financial inequality and political polarization in the populations they monitored; and works that pertain to the theoretical or methodological approaches applied to the findings.

This survey focuses on networked communities under military authority that linked and fueled certain economic policies, ways of life, and worldviews that are normalized today (neoliberalism, various polarizations, surveillance and datafication, etc.). We are especially interested in information on the following: what role interactive computers and non-evident, wireless networks (e.g., radios, satellite communications, sonar, radar, microwave networks along the railroads, microwave towers, listening posts, teletype machines) played in the program; who used the networks and for what purpose; how visible these communication systems were to the civilian population; whether civilians knew they were being surveilled; and, in general terms, how did the program contribute to local financial inequality and political polarization.

Authors who want to collaborate on, author, or co-author, essays about COINTELPRO in the US, Phoenix in Vietnam, and ORDEN in EL Salvador, are encouraged to contribute.

Please submit an abstract of 500 words or less in English and a biostatement to Noel Packard at npac825@aucklanduni.ac.nz or through the CFP abstract portal https://www.cfplist.com/Submit

Tentative Timeline:

Deadline for abstracts is 1 October 2025.

Target publication timeline for paper publication - December 2025 and into early 2026.

American Behavioral Scientist (ABS) is a peer-reviewed journal and published fourteen times a year. It provides in-depth perspectives on contemporary topics throughout the social and behavioral sciences.

Each issue is guest edited. For more information about *American Behavioral Scientist* see https://journals.sagepub.com/home/abs.

Lead editors: Noel Packard, Ph.D.

Dr. Bradley Simpson, Associate Professor of History and Asian American Studies at University of Connecticut

For more information, please send questions and abstracts to:

Noel Packard, Ph.D., npac825@aucklanduni.ac.nz