

FIFTH EDITION

COMMUNICATION IN HISTORY

TECHNOLOGY, CULTURE, SOCIETY

David Crowley

McGill University

Paul Heyer

Wilfrid Laurier University



Boston ■ New York ■ San Francisco
Mexico City ■ Montreal ■ Toronto ■ London ■ Madrid ■ Munich ■ Paris
Hong Kong ■ Singapore ■ Tokyo ■ Cape Town ■ Sydney

Editor-in-Chief, Communication: Karon Bowers
Editorial Assistant: Suzanne Stradley
Marketing Manager: Suzan Czajkowski
Editorial Production Service: Omegatype Typography, Inc.
Composition Buyer: Linda Cox
Manufacturing Buyer: JoAnne Sweeney
Electronic Composition: Omegatype Typography, Inc.
Cover Administrator: Kristina Mose-Libon

For related titles and support materials, visit our online catalog at www.ablongman.com.

Copyright © 2007, 2003 Pearson Education, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner.

To obtain permission(s) to use material from this work, please submit a written request to Allyn and Bacon, Permissions Department, 75 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116 or fax your request to 617-848-7320.

Between the time website information is gathered and then published, it is not unusual for some sites to have closed. Also, the transcription of URLs can result in typographical errors. The publisher would appreciate notification where these errors occur so that they may be corrected in subsequent editions.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Communication in history : technology, culture, society / [edited by] David Crowley,
Paul Heyer. — 5th ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-205-48388-7 (pbk.)

1. Communication—History. 2. Mass media—History. I. Crowley, D. J. (David J.) II. Heyer, Paul

P90.C62945 2007

302.209—dc22

2006043220

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 RRD-VA 10 09 08 07 06

Credits appear on pp. 340–342, which constitute an extension of the copyright page.

John B. Thompson

John B. Thompson is a reader in sociology at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He is the author of several works on social theory, including The Media and Modernity, from which the present excerpt is taken. He is also an editor and a founding member of Polity Press.

There is another way in which the development of printing transformed the patterns of communication in early modern Europe: it gave rise to a variety of periodical publications which reported events and conveyed information of a political and commercial character. Prior to the advent of printing, a number of regularized networks of communication had been established throughout Europe. We can distinguish at least four distinct types of pre-print communication network. First, there was an extensive network of communication established and controlled by the Catholic Church. This network enabled the papacy in Rome to maintain contact with the clergy and political elites dispersed throughout the loosely knit realm of Christendom. Second, there were networks of communication established by the political authorities of states and principalities; these networks operated both within the territories of particular states, facilitating administration and pacification, and between states which maintained some form of diplomatic communication with one another. A third type of network was linked to the expansion of commercial activity. As trade and manufacturing increased, new networks of communication were established within the business community and between the major trading centres. Commercial and banking houses—like the Fugger family of Augsburg and the great merchant houses of Florence—built up extensive systems of communication and began to supply information to clients on a commercial basis. Finally, information was also transmitted to towns and villages via networks of merchants, pedlars and travelling entertainers, such as storytellers and ballad singers. As individuals gathered in market-places or tav-

erns and interacted with merchants and travellers, they picked up news about events which took place in distant locales.

In the course of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these networks of communication were affected by two key developments. In the first place, some states began to establish regular postal services which became increasingly available for general use. In France Louis XI established a royal post in 1464; private individuals could use the post by special permission and payment of a fee.¹ In central Europe Maximilian I developed an extensive postal network which linked the heartland of the Habsburg empire with cities throughout Europe. In 1490 he appointed Franz and Johann von Taxis as chief postmasters, thus establishing an imperial postal system that remained under the control of the von Taxis family for several centuries.² In England a royal post was established early in the reign of Henry VIII, and a postmaster was appointed around 1516, although the development of regular postal services for general public use did not occur until the early seventeenth century.³ Gradually in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an integrated network of public postal communication emerged, providing common carrier services for both domestic and foreign post. Of course, by twentieth-century standards, postal communication in early modern Europe was very slow. Messages were transported by horse and carriage at a time when the roads in many parts of Europe were of poor quality. Mail rarely travelled at more than 10 miles per hour over extended distances. In the late eighteenth century, Edinburgh was still a journey of 60 hours from London, and it took 24 hours to travel

from London to Manchester. It was not until the early nineteenth century, with the development of the railways, that the time required to transmit messages through the post was sharply reduced.

The second development which profoundly affected the established networks of communication in early modern Europe was the application of printing to the production and dissemination of news. Soon after the advent of printing in the mid-fifteenth century, a variety of printed information leaflets, posters and broadsheets began to appear. These were a mixture of official or semi-official statements of government decrees; polemical tracts; descriptions of particular events, such as military encounters or natural disasters; and sensationalized accounts of extraordinary or supernatural phenomena, like giants, comets and apparitions. These leaflets and news sheets were generally one-off or irregular publications. They were printed by the thousands and sold in the streets by hawkers and pedlars. They provided individuals with a valuable source of information about current and distant events.

Periodical publications of news and information began to appear in the second half of the sixteenth century, but the origins of the modern newspaper are usually traced to the first two decades of the seventeenth century, when regular journals of news began to appear on a weekly basis with some degree of reliability.⁴ In 1609 weekly journals were published in several German cities, including Augsburg, Strasbourg and Wolfenbüttel, and there is some evidence to suggest that a weekly paper may have appeared somewhat earlier (1607) in Amsterdam. Printed weeklies—or “corantos,” as these early compilations of news were called at the time—soon appeared in other cities and languages. The cities located along the major European trading routes, such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Antwerp and Berlin, became early centres of newspaper production. The news which made up the corantos was often supplied by postmasters, who collected the news in their regions and then forwarded it to the major cities. A single individual could then assemble and edit the postmasters’ reports, printing them in the form of a series of

short paragraphs with details of the date and place of origin of the information. The weeklies could also be translated into other languages and sold in different cities and countries.

By 1620 Amsterdam had become the centre of a rapidly expanding trade in news. There was a growing public interest in the Thirty Years’ War and this provided a major stimulus to the development of the fledgling newspaper industry. The first newspaper to appear in English was probably produced in Amsterdam in 1620 by the Dutch printer and map engraver Pieter van den Keere and exported to London.⁵ Between 2 December 1620 and 18 September 1621, 15 issues of van den Keere’s coranto appeared. Although it was not published weekly, it did appear fairly frequently and it provided regular coverage of the Thirty Years’ War. The first coranto printed in England was probably produced by the London stationer Thomas Archer in 1621. Archer was subsequently imprisoned for publishing an unlicensed news sheet on the war in the Palatinate, but other English corantos and news pamphlets soon appeared.

Most of these early forms of newspaper were concerned primarily with foreign news, that is, with events which were taking place (or had taken place) in distant locales. The individuals who read these papers, or listened to them being read aloud by others, would learn of events taking place in distant parts of Europe—events they could not witness directly, in places they would never, in all likelihood, visit. Hence the circulation of the early forms of newspaper helped to create a sense of a world of events which lay beyond the individual’s immediate milieu, but which had some relevance to, and potentially some bearing on, his or her life. Of course, the geographical scope of this world remained quite limited in the early seventeenth century: it rarely extended beyond the major cities and countries of Europe. Moreover, the circulation of the early newspapers was very low by present-day standards (one estimate puts the minimum print run of the early newspapers at 400 copies,⁶ and in many cases it was probably not much more than that), although papers were no doubt read by more than one individual, and were commonly

read aloud. But the importance of this new mode of information diffusion, through which printed reports of distant events were made available on a regular basis to an unlimited number of recipients, should not be underestimated.

While the early corantos were concerned mainly with foreign news, it was not long before newspapers began to devote more attention to domestic events. In England this development had to wait until 1640, when the government's strict control of the press began to weaken. Since 1586 a Star Chamber decree had established a comprehensive system of licensing and censorship (supplemented by a further decree of 1637), which limited the number of printers in England and subjected them to specific censors for each type of publication. But as the crisis between Charles I and Parliament deepened, it became increasingly difficult for the Crown to enforce its control of the press, and in July 1641 the Star Chamber was abolished. The crisis also stimulated a public demand for up-to-date news of domestic political affairs. Between mid-November 1641 and the end of December 1641 three domestic weekly newspapers appeared, each providing summaries of the proceedings of Parliament; and in the first three months of 1642 another eight newspapers appeared, though some did not last for long.⁷ This was the beginning of a period of relatively uncontrolled and intensive publication of newspapers, newsbooks and pamphlets dealing with the events of the Civil War and the issues surrounding it. During most weeks of 1645, 14 newspapers were on sale in the streets of London, as well as a multitude of other pamphlets and political tracts. While strict controls were reimposed by Charles II after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the period between 1641 and the restoration was an important one in the history of the press. For it was during this time that periodical publications emerged as key players in the affairs of state, providing a continuous flow of information on current events and expressing a range of differing views—sometimes sharply conflicting views—on matters of public concern.

The development of a commercially based periodical press which was independent of state

power, and yet was capable of providing information and critical commentary on issues of general concern, entered a new phase in eighteenth-century England. The system of licensing, which had been re-established by Charles II in 1662, fell into abeyance at the end of the seventeenth century and was followed by a spate of new periodical publications. The first daily newspaper in England, Samuel Buckley's *Daily Courant*, appeared in 1702 and was soon joined by others. A variety of more specialized periodicals appeared, some concentrating on entertainment and cultural events, some on financial and commercial news, and others on social and political commentary. The latter included a number of journals which popularized the genre of the political essay, like the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, Nicholas Amhurst's *Craftsman*, Daniel Defoe's *Review* and Jonathan Swift's *Examiner*. By 1750 London had five well-established daily papers, six thrice-weeklies, five weeklies and several other cut-price periodicals, with a total circulation between them of around 100,000 copies per week.⁸ The papers were distributed in the city by networks of hawkers and agents, as well as by a loose federation of coffee houses which acquired the major papers and made them available for their customers to read. Since many papers were read in public places like taverns and coffee houses, their readership was almost certainly much higher than their circulation—perhaps as much as ten times higher. London papers were also distributed to the provinces by rapidly improving stage-coach and postal services.

The political authorities sought to exercise some control over the proliferation of newspapers and periodicals by imposing special taxes, which would, it was thought, serve to restrict production and force the more marginal periodicals out of business, while at the same time raising additional revenue for the Crown. The Stamp Act of 1712 required newspaper proprietors to pay one penny for every printed sheet and one shilling for every advertisement. Subsequent Acts increased the amounts and broadened the basis for the application of the law. The Stamp Acts were bitterly opposed and became a rallying-point in the

struggle for the freedom of the press. It was not until the 1830s that the taxes were progressively reduced, and in the 1860s they were eventually abolished. Elsewhere in Europe the periodical press of the eighteenth century was controlled and censored with varying degrees of severity.⁹ In the United Provinces the press remained relatively free, although it was discouraged from discussing local politics and was occasionally subjected to bouts of intensive censorship. In France a centralized and highly restrictive system of licensing, supervision and censorship existed until the Revolution; a brief post-revolutionary period of press freedom was finally brought to an end by Napoleon, who instituted a strict system of censorship and control. In the states and principalities of Germany and Italy the degree of official control varied from one state to another, but newspapers were generally allowed more leeway in reporting foreign news than in discussing domestic politics.

There is considerable force in the argument that the struggle for an independent press, capable of reporting and commenting on events with a minimum of state interference and control, played a key role in the development of the modern constitutional state. Some of the early liberal and liberal democratic thinkers, such as Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill, were fervent advocates of the liberty of the press. They saw the free expression of opinion through the organs of an independent press as a vital safeguard against the despotic use of state power.¹⁰ It is significant that, following their successful war of independence against the British Crown, the American colonists incorporated the right of press freedom in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Similarly, the post-revolutionary French constitutions of 1791 and 1793, building on the Declaration des Droits de l'Homme of 1789, explicitly protected the freedom of expression (even if this freedom was subsequently abolished by Napoleon). Statutory guarantees of freedom of expression were eventually adopted by various European governments so that by the end of the nineteenth century the freedom of the press had become a constitutional feature of many Western states.

NOTES

1. See Howard Robinson, *The British Post Office: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), p. 4.
2. For an account of the "Thurn und Taxis" postal service, as it became known, see Martin Dallmeier, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Europäischen Postwesens, 1501-1806*, Part 1: *Quellen-Literatur Einleitung* (Kallmünz: Michael Lassleben, 1977), pp. 49-220.
3. Robinson, *The British Post Office*, chs 1-3; J. Crofts, *Packhorse, Waggon and Post: Land Carriage and Communications under the Tudors and Stuarts* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), chs. 8-17.
4. The identification of what could be called "the first newspaper" is a matter of dispute, though most historians would agree that something resembling the modern newspaper first appeared around 1610. See Eric W. Allen, "International Origins of the Newspapers: The Establishment of Periodicity in Print," *Journalism Quarterly*, 7 (1930), pp. 307-19; Joseph Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1620-1660* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), ch. 1.
5. Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper*, p. 3.
6. Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks, 1620-1642* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1952), p. 22.
7. Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper*, pp. 21-2.
8. Anthony Smith, *The Newspaper: An International History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), pp. 56-7.
9. For more detailed discussions of the history of political control and censorship of the press, see F. S. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952); A. Aspinall, *Politics and the Press, c.1780-1850* (Brighton: Harvester, 1973); Smith, *The Newspaper*, chs. 3-5.
10. See especially James Mill, "Liberty of the Press," in his *Essays on Government, Jurisprudence, Liberty of the Press and Law of Nations* (New York: Kelly, 1967); John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty," in his *Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government*, ed. H. B. Acton (London: Dent, 1972).

EARLY PHOTOJOURNALISM

Ulrich Keller

Ulrich Keller is a professor in the department of art history at the University of California at Santa Barbara and an adjunct curator of photography at the University of California at Santa Barbara Art Museum.

More than half a century elapsed between Daguerre's epochal invention and the early 1890s when it finally became commercially feasible to reproduce photographs as photographs in large newspaper editions. Prior to this point, the continuous tones of the camera image had to be transcribed into line engraving—which meant that there was little incentive for newspapers to employ photographers on a regular or even just intermittent basis. The picture reporters on the payroll of *Harper's*, *L'Illustration*, *The Illustrated London News*, etc., were all draughtsmen whose sketches were produced at considerably lower cost than wet collodion glass negatives in big view cameras. Invariably representing battles, accidents, and ceremonial events at the peak moment—whether or not the artist had been there—the sketches also were more exciting than images out of the camera, which usually arrived too late and could not record fast action anyway. And while the drawings of the Special Artists were usually imprecise, if not altogether fictitious in character, this did not give an edge to the photographic images, because the latter lost their specific mark of authenticity when transferred to woodblocks.¹

Thus it is no wonder that until ca. 1885 the history of photography does not know of a single photographer who specialized exclusively in news reporting, or worked solely for press organs for any length of time. Limited and instructive exceptions to the rule were prompted only by major wars, which held sufficient incentive to a few enterprising men such as Brady, Beato, and Fenton to embark on extended news photo campaigns. Even the longest of these, [Mathew] Brady's two-year campaign covering the Civil War with dozens of cameramen, was just that: a temporary effort, not a

permanent news gathering machinery. Moreover, with his galleries in Washington and New York continuing to turn out a large volume of *cartes de visite*, portraiture still seems to have been Brady's mainstay product. And if his grand war reportage eventually ended in bankruptcy, it was precisely because no commercially viable link could be forged to the existing pictorial mass media. As it seems, Brady derived only publicity but no revenues from the publication of his images by *Leslie's* and *Harper's*. For profits he had to rely on the marketing of original prints through his galleries and perhaps a few book and stationery stores. The large potential audience of Brady's war documentation could not be reached in this haphazard way, and retail sales proved altogether inadequate to cover the enormous production costs of ca. \$100,000.²

If the prehistory of photojournalism is therefore the story of an ideally indicated but practically unfeasible alliance between camera and printing press, we encounter a fundamentally different situation around the turn of the century. . . . The cameraman, while anonymous, can be identified as one of several photographers on the staff of the news agency Underwood & Underwood, which regularly furnished pictures to *Harper's Weekly*. He must have used a light, fast, hand-held camera fitted with a telephoto lens; most likely he operated from a privileged, cordoned-off press location, and it is entirely possible that Teddy Roosevelt's expressive performance was directly addressed to the press. We need not stress that the resulting photographs were reproduced as photographs on the magazine page. Furthermore, since the photographer submitted a whole series of images, an editor had to think about an effective layout strategy. He found an intelligent, witty

solution, indeed, foreshadowing the fact that photojournalism was going to be a matter of teamwork, with editors and art directors destined to add an important creative dimension to the photographer's basic camera work. The contrast to Lincoln's campaign photograph of 1860 is certainly striking. Under the pressure of corporate employers catering to mass audiences, news photography has developed a captivating, dynamic style. Instead of a posed portrait we are presented with exciting closeups of a statesman in action. . . .

There can be no doubt, then, that the much-debated "birth" of photojournalism *predates*, rather

than *postdates*, Theodore Roosevelt's presidency. The years from 1890 to the beginning of the First World War can indeed be identified as the formative period, one which was inaugurated but not wholly defined by the halftone innovation. It was at this time that photojournalism established itself technically and aesthetically, as a professional career and a social institution. The complexity of the phenomenon warrants a detailed analysis.

THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM

Somewhat crudely, and leaving aside for the moment all practical and ideological ramifications, it is possible to distinguish three basic ingredients in the organizational infrastructure of early photojournalism: a new brand of newspapers using halftone illustrations based on photographs in lieu of woodcuts based on drawings; a new type of news agency distributing photographs rather than texts; and a new generation of photographers equipped with small, fast, hand-held cameras instead of slow and big ones mounted on tripods. To begin with the first and most important (even if somewhat overrated) element, it was the advent of the halftone printing block that prompted the transition from pictorial to photographic journalism.

Halftone Pictures

On an experimental basis, halftone reproductions were used since 1867 in weekly magazines and since 1880 in daily papers. But only after substantial improvements had been made by American inventors in 1889–1890 did it become feasible for large-circulation newspapers to print photographic halftone illustrations regularly in large quantities. The development was significant and amounted to a radical redefinition if not a second "invention" of picture journalism.³ True, fifty years earlier the use of the illustrated weeklies had produced the eminent cultural phenomenon of a *permanent, institutionalized supply of news-pictures*



Mathew Brady's *carte-de-visite* portrait of President Abraham Lincoln, 1860. Lincoln was the first president to be photographed in office. *Library of Congress.*

to mass audiences. The shockwaves of the event had been registered in Wordsworth's notorious attack on "Illustrated Books and Newspapers":

Discourse was deemed Man's noblest attitude,
And written words the glory of his hand. . . .
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute.
Must laquey a dumb Art that best can suit
The taste of this once-intellectual Land.
A backward movement surely have we here.
From manhood,—back to childhood. . . .
Avant this vile abuse of pictured page!
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear
Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower stage!⁴

In spite of the anxieties it spawned in some quarters, early picture journalism was a relatively modest affair in terms of the quantity of reproductions involved. Until 1873 not a single daily newspaper carried images regularly, and the illustrated weeklies devoted to the publication of news for the general public were few in number, perhaps less than two dozen in all of Europe and America. It can be estimated that the total volume of news pictures to which a given country's public was exposed rarely exceeded 100 per week. By 1910, after the fast, efficient halftone block had all but eliminated the older reproduction technologies, the statistics reveal a dramatic increase. Hundreds of illustrated dailies and weeklies were now published in every industrialized nation, and the total number of pictures published reached staggering proportions, at least by contemporary standards. Fourteen daily newspapers in New York City alone, for example, inundated their readers with an average of 903 pictures per week in 1910.⁵ While the steep rise is attributable to a variety of factors, few experts will deny that the halftone block was the single most important of these. The permanent supply of news pictures to the urban mass audiences, at any rate, had established itself on a markedly higher level than in the woodcut era.

Significantly, it was no longer possible to launch a wholesale attack on the legitimacy of the pictorial press, as Wordsworth had done half a century earlier. Instead, the danger was now seen in the excessive quantity of reproductions. As

Harper's Weekly declared in a 1911 editorial on "Over-Illustration," "We can't see the ideas for the illustration. Our world is simply flooded with them."⁶ Popular picture consumption had become a fact of life; only its extent and pervasiveness remained subject to debate.

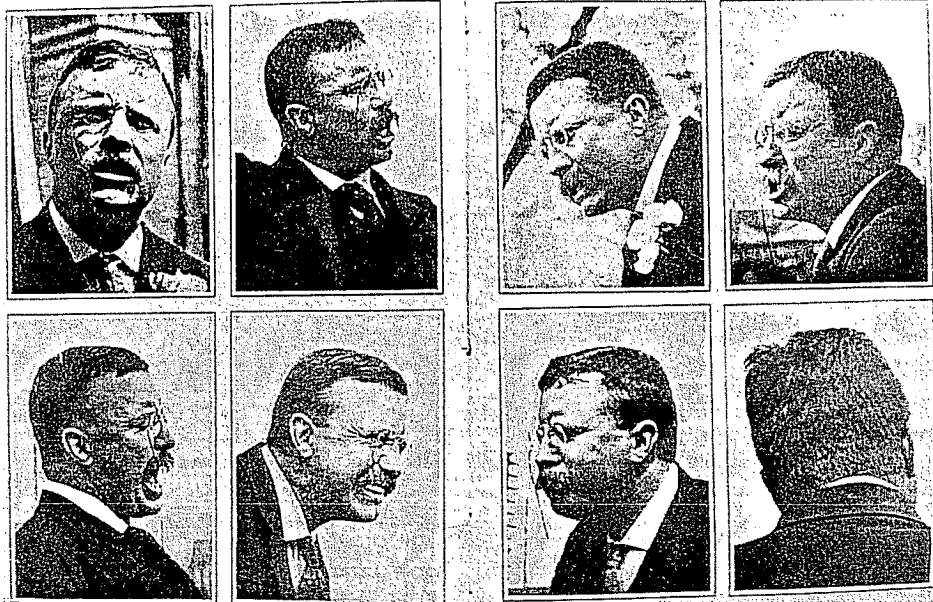
Apart from quantities, there is a qualitative side to the halftone revolution. In a justly acclaimed analytical investigation of countless manual and photomechanical printing techniques of the late nineteenth century, Estelle Jussim claimed that the halftone picture creates "an optical illusion with surrogate power" where line engravings had rendered more subjective, less reliable images. While Jussim is only thinking of art reproductions, the intellectual historian Neil Harris has broadened her claim of the halftone's "illusionary" and at the same time "objective" powers to include all kinds of photomechanical imagery, especially in newspapers and magazines.⁷ According to this view, the halftone process reproduces a given "reality" more "realistically" than ever; in a somewhat tautological manner, it is seen to simply repeat and confirm what exists already. However, if we take the position that is nowadays perhaps more tenable—that reality is not given but rather socially constructed through competing representations—a different conclusion suggests itself. The power of the halftone technology then arises precisely from the fact that it bestows the quality of authentic "reality" on constructed, in many cases biased and contrived scenes. Under this assumption our interest shifts automatically from the technical intricacies of line engravings and dot screens to the institutional framework behind and around them. It is this social instance that formulates the meanings and messages that photomechanical printing encodes "realistically" for mass consumption in a merely secondary operation. It is this social instance that must be analyzed.

Press Photographers

If the halftone block had made the newspapers accessible to photography around 1890, it was substantial improvements in emulsions and camera

HARPER'S WEEKLY

WHEN THE PRESIDENT MAKES A SPEECH



Underwood & Underwood, President Theodore Roosevelt speaking. *From Harper's Weekly*, January 26, 1907.

design that made photography attractive to the papers. The fast gelatin dry plates and roll films of the 1880s, coupled with the hand-held snapshot cameras made possible by them, opened up the realm of movement and action to photography.⁸ Previously, the newspaper had relied on the camera for a very limited subject range, especially portraits and sites. Even with the halftone innovation the newspapers would have continued to make very broad use of hand art, had it not been for the new emulsions, which ensured that instead of a few selected subjects photography could now be used to cover practically the whole range of newsworthy subjects. Combined, the halftone block and the gelatin emulsion represented an irresistible force which proceeded with breathtaking speed to ban graphic imagery from the illustrated press. Within fifteen years, many daily and weekly newspapers replaced their draughtsmen with cameramen. By 1900 a large corps of press pho-

tographers existed in America, and with the steady increase in the volume of news imagery published, this corps kept growing until it spanned the world in an ever more finely woven capillary network.

Inevitably, the subject range covered by this press corps became almost limitless. From a war in Asia to a railway accident in Brazil, a presidential campaign stop in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the little girl feeding a pigeon in Central Park, everything could take the form of a news photograph. Especially the trivial phase of the expanding spectrum of news imagery deserves to be emphasized here. Important events had always been illustrated. Trivial incidents made an appearance in force only around 1900 and they have stayed with us ever since, underscoring once more that this is the period from which modern photojournalism should be dated.

In press archives, one can occasionally find visual evidence of the newly won importance of

photojournalism. An Underwood & Underwood stereograph of President McKinley's funeral procession, to cite just one instance, features a wooden platform populated by a whole battalion of press photographers. . . . It is not a sensational picture, but it confirms that in a matter of a few years photojournalism had become a built-in feature of public life. A point is reached where no important event can take place without extensive photographic coverage. More than that, it is obvious that these newspaper representatives are highly privileged witnesses of the event in progress. Forty years earlier, only one photographer is known to have been present at the no-less-important event of Lincoln's inauguration, and he had to be content with a peripheral, impractical vantage point. In 1901, however, a large platform is expressly built to give the press photographers an optimal viewpoint: they now act as lieutenants of powerful news organizations and millions of readers. Clearly, the alliance of the press and photography has produced an institution of consequence.

The Spanish-American War appears to have been the first major armed conflict in history to be depicted primarily by photographers, as opposed to draughtsmen. It came too soon, however, to lead to any highly organized form of coverage. This distinction belongs to the Russo-Japanese War, which took place half a world away from the United States but nonetheless became subject to more massive photographic documentation than all previous wars together. *Collier's* alone employed six photographers on both sides of the front, not to mention a host of correspondents.⁹ Again, no principal difference sets this monumental effort apart from the superbly organized photo campaigns of foreign wars and domestic pomp and circumstance that *Life* magazine was to stage a few decades later.

While the bulk of the growing army of press photographers consisted of lowly staffers careening about town on motorcycles in pursuit of accident victims and police interviews, a few specially talented photojournalists soon obtained high status as chroniclers of "big-time" news events. The

heyday of star-photographers on the order of Erich Salomon and Margaret Bourke-White was to come later, but already in the early 1900s some press photographers began to circle the globe, accumulating large expense accounts and representing big-time publishers and millions of readers at the major events of the day. The days of intermittent, entrepreneurial news photography by men such as Fenton, Brady, and Gardner with their limited resources and distribution networks had definitely come to an end.

One man deserves to be singled out in the present context as the epitome of the species of the "big-time" news photographer, if not the emerging profession of photojournalism in general. Born in 1856 in England, Jimmy Hare became a photojournalist of the first hour when, after years of freelancing for illustrated magazines, he was hired as a full-time staff photographer by the *Illustrated American* in 1895. Three years later he switched to *Collier's*, a newly founded weekly destined to play a leading role in the early phase of photojournalism. Hare's first major assignment was the Spanish-American War; a few years later he was back in the camps and trenches as the most productive member of *Collier's* camera team covering the Russo-Japanese conflict. In the following years, Hare continued to document major domestic news stories, such as the sensational exploits of pioneer aviators from the Wright brothers to Ble-riot. A last challenge was provided by the First World War, which Hare covered in the service of *Leslie's* magazine. When he retired he was a celebrity of sorts. Newspapers and press associations frequently paid homage to him with articles and honorary memberships, and shortly before he died, a colorful biography was published about "the man who never faked a picture nor ran from danger." True, the star photojournalists of the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and *Life* were to reap greater fame, but Jimmy came first.

All this said, the fact remains that, as a class, early photojournalists were still relatively unsophisticated in their use of aesthetic and discursive strategies. Even the best Hare photographs look

plain and unexciting next to those of Felix Man, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Margaret Bourke-White, who managed to impress recognizable "authorial," if not artistic, signatures on their work. Early photojournalism was marked by a clear aesthetic deficit, and the as yet very rudimentary editorial planning and processing procedures alone cannot account for this deficit. An additional factor comes into view when we remember that the pay scale and social prestige of any incipient profession tends to be too low to attract eminent talents. More importantly, it seems that in looking for inspiration from other branches of photography and the arts in general, early press photographers were not likely to be richly rewarded. Most of contemporary painting and all of "Art" or "Pictorial" photography were entrenched in elitist social rituals, lofty ideologies, and romantic to symbolist styles. A photojournalist could find precious little stimulation for his daily work here, which thus never escaped the narrow confines of a cut-and-dried routine operation. Only the 1920s brought a dramatic narrowing of the gap between art and industry, technology, mass communication. Formerly despised contexts of picture-making in science, industry, advertising, and press now came to be accepted as legitimate fields of aesthetic productivity, and steeply rising earnings lent these fields an additional lure. To put it in the form of a speculative example, if around 1900 someone wanted to build an oeuvre and a reputation by means of camera work at all, he or she had hardly any choice but to join the Photo-Secession and to produce dream-like gum prints of languid females in symbolic guises. Only the functionalistic reorientation of the arts in the 1920s provided the context in which photojournalism could become a challenging aesthetic practice likely to attract individuals of talent and ambition.¹⁰

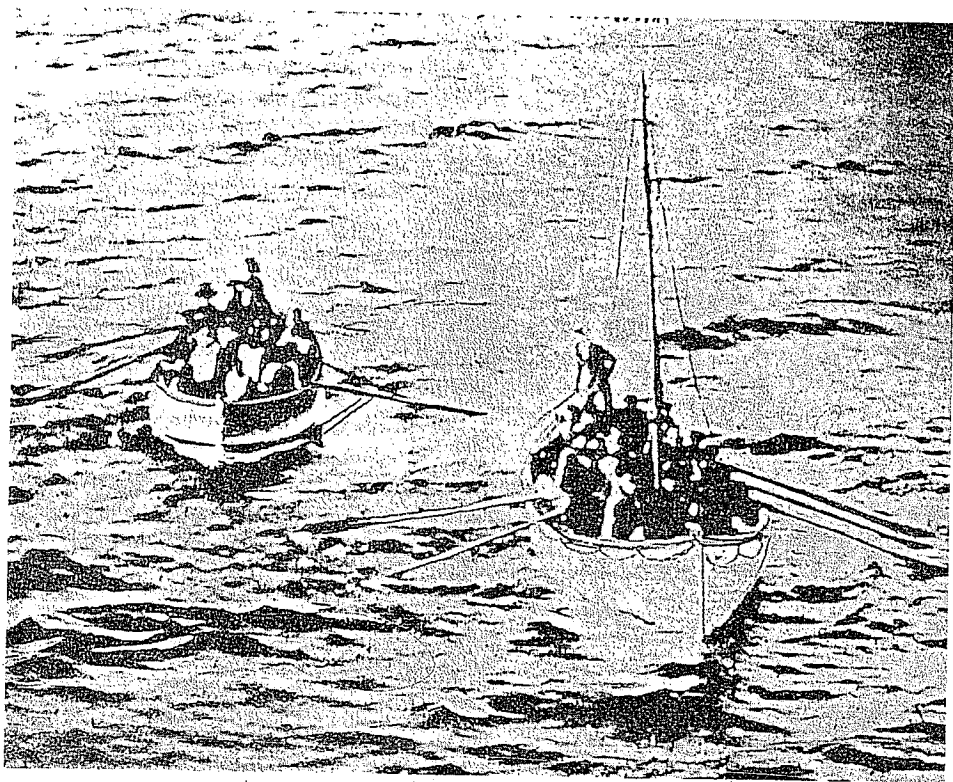
Photo Agencies

In addition to newspapers using halftone illustrations and a corps of press photographers using snapshot cameras, a third factor contributed es-

entially to the institutionalization of photojournalism: the emergence of agencies disseminating photographic news pictures. At the root of this latter development was the fact that not even the greatest newspapers with the most versatile staff photographers could cover every important news event, especially if it happened in an unpredictable moment and place. Therefore, a mechanism was needed which could supply a newspaper with pictures of noteworthy occurrences beyond the reach of its own investigative apparatus. This intermediary function was assumed by picture agencies, which made it their business to secure photographs of worthwhile subjects for sale to subscribing newspapers.

... It goes without saying that the sinking of the *Titanic* represented the type of unforeseeable and inaccessible event that must always elude planned, systematic news coverage. However, an anonymous amateur photographer was at hand on one of the rescue ships, and he found the opportunity for a snapshot as some survivors of the catastrophe approached the *Carpathia*. The resulting picture was aesthetically poor, but the subject matter made it sensational. The New York-based photo agency, Bain's News Picture Service, somehow got hold of the snapshot and distributed it to many newspapers that otherwise would have gone without illustration of the *Titanic* episode.

Photo agencies not only bought pictures from outside sources, they also employed their own staff photographers, some of whom generated unprecedented in-depth reportages of the political scene. In 1899 George Grantham Bain, director and photographer of a fledgling picture agency, decided to attach himself to the office of the American president. Over an extended period of time, Bain accompanied McKinley on every trip and also gained frequent access to the White House for formal portrait sessions. The product of this sustained effort was a voluminous reference album containing hundreds of news pictures, meticulously numbered and captioned for commercial distribution.¹¹ ... Naturally, an individual newspaper never could have afforded to devote so



Bain News Picture Service, *Titanic's* lifeboats on the way to the *Carthage*, April 15, 1912. Library of Congress.

much attention to a single political figure. For picture agencies, on the other hand, which catered to the American press as a whole, a profitable line of business opened up here.

As far as I can see, no similar undertaking had ever been carried out under earlier presidents. The Bain album marks the historically significant transition from the intermittent pictorial news recording method of the nineteenth century to the permanent, institutionalized mode of coverage made possible by the increasingly complex machinery of photojournalism at the beginning of our own century. It is a mode of operation that has been perfected ever since. When President Lyndon B. Johnson woke up at 6:30 A.M. in his White House living quarters, he pressed two buttons: that of his body guard and that of Yoichi

Okamoto, his personal photographer. Okamoto was one of two persons permitted to enter the Oval Office without knocking, and within the first three months of Johnson's term he took 11,000 pictures.¹² Bain was more conservative in his use of film, but he set the basic pattern for a long line of White House photographers.

Historically, it is worth pointing out that *verbal* news reportages became subject to distribution by commercial agencies already during the 1830s, i.e., as soon as a host of mass circulation newspapers emerged in Paris and other metropolitan centers. Given the fact that the big picture magazines made their appearance soon thereafter, one might expect to see the establishment of *pictorial* news agencies during the 1850s and 1860s, but no such development occurred. For one thing,

there was only a small number of news-oriented illustrated weeklies, just one or two per country, and since each of these pursued limited national interests, few picture topics would have been in sufficiently broad demand to warrant commercial distribution. Furthermore, as long as most news images took the form of drawings, quick forwarding to a multitude of subscribing papers would have been difficult because of duplication problems. Photographic copying of drawings, for example, would have involved a considerable loss of time and graphic quality. . . .

NOTES

1. For pre-photographic picture journalism see: M. Jackson, *The Pictorial Press: Its Origins and Progress* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1885); C. Thomas, "Illustrated Journalism," in *Journal of the Society of Arts*, vol. 39 (30 January 1891), pp. 173ff.; and P. Hodgson, *The War Illustrators* (New York: Macmillan, 1977).
2. D. M. Kunhardt and P. B. Kunhardt, *Mathew Brady and His World* (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life, 1977), pp. 56ff.; J. D. Horan, *Mathew Brady, Historian with a Camera* (New York: Bonanza, 1955), pp. 35ff.; R. Meredith, *Mr. Lincoln's Cameraman, Mathew B. Brady*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Dover, 1974), pp. 88ff.
3. . . . See H. and A. Gernsheim, *The History of Photography: From the Camera Obscura to the Beginning of the Modern Era* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 539ff.; E. Ostroff, "Etching, Engraving and Photography: History of Photomechanical Reproduction," and "Photography and Photogravure: History of Photomechanical Reproduction," in *Journal of Photographic Science*, vol. 27 (1969), pp. 65ff. and 101ff.
4. W. Knight, ed., *The Poetical Works by William Wordsworth*, vol. 8 (Edinburgh: Paterson, 1886), p. 172.
5. R. S. Schunemann, *The Photograph in Print: An Examination of New York Daily Newspapers, 1890-1937* (University of Minnesota, 1966), pp. 102ff. In the picture magazines, halftone photographs outnumbered engravings by the late 1890s (C. K. Shorter, "Illustrated Journalism: Its Past and Its Future," *The Contemporary Review*, vol. 75, 1899, pp. 481 ff.).
6. *Harper's Weekly*, vol. 55 (29 July 1911), p. 6.
7. E. Jussim, *Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts: Photographic Technologies in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Bowker, 1974, 1983), p. 288; Neil Harris, "Iconography and Intellectual History: The Half-Tone Effect," in J. Higham and P. K. Conklin, eds., *New Directions in American Intellectual History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp. 198ff. Jussim clearly states that she is primarily interested in the modalities of transmission. "The meanings transmitted do not concern us here" (p. 12); that's exactly the problem.
8. Compare Gernsheim (1969), pp. 397ff.
9. L. L. Gould, R. Greffe, *Photojournalist: The Career of Jimmy Hare* (Austin: Univ. of Texas, 1977), pp. 31ff.; C. Carnes, *Jimmy Hare, News Photographer: Half a Century with a Camera* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), pp. 152ff.; *The Russo-Japanese War: A Photographic and Descriptive Review . . .* (New York: Collier, 1905).
10. For Art Photography, see U. Keller, "The Myth of Art Photography: A Sociological Analysis," and "The Myth of Art Photography: An Iconographic Analysis," in *History of Photography*, vol. 8 (October-December 1984), pp. 249ff.; and vol. 9 (January-March 1985), pp. 1ff. For the changing concerns of the 1920s, especially in Germany, see D. Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography, 1927-33* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978).
11. The anonymous album is part of the legacy of Underwood & Underwood. Since this firm did not enter the field of news photography until 1901 and Bain is the only photographer known to have accompanied President McKinley in 1899, it seems likely, though not certain, that the anonymous album is Bain's. J. Price, "Press Pictures Have Come Far in Half a Century," in *Editor and Publisher*, vol. 71 (February 19, 1938), p. 7.
12. Y. Okamoto, "Photographing President LBJ," in R. S. Schunemann, ed., *Photographic Communication: Principles, Problems and Challenges of Photojournalism* (New York: Hastings, 1972), pp. 194ff.