

COLONIAL TIMES

Colonial Officials Continue to Seek The Best Intrest for the American Colonies

In the society we live in today, it is impossible to ignore the news. Humans cannot go about life without a basic understanding of what is going on in the world, which is inevitably reported through the news. This fact raises the question: what was life before newspapers? Before the first newspaper existed, information was carried through word of mouth and colonial representatives. Precursors of news in Colonial America were the Dutch Newspapers called the Corantos and the English-language newspapers printed in Holland. Following this, the first press releases were created and established; in 1638, the Massachusetts Bay colony released the first press. Around 50 years later, the first newspaper in the North American Colonies was established. This publication was assembled by Benjamin Harris in Boston and was called Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick. Harris states that articles would be released around once a month and cover the current events that were “considerable things.” He also noted that everything reported can be found to be the truth. If it was not the truth, it must be corrected in the following publication. Early publications like this do not contain many concepts that newspapers have today. This includes advertising, headlines, images, bylines and datelines. These features would continue to expand and evolve as Journalism expanded through the United States. It should also be noted that publications like these were watched precisely by government officials. Journalists who dared to give a personal or unpopular opinion could be fined, prisoned or killed.

Leaders who helped pioneer journalism are Benjamin Franklin, Ida B Wells and John Peter Zenger. These three journalists all lived significantly different lives. However, they all fought for the same common goal: freedom. Benjamin Franklin spent his entire life advocating for free speech and the free press. Franklin took extreme measures of creating pen names to ensure that his voice and opinions were heard. Ida B. Wells, one of the first African Americans to advocate for civil rights and against lynching, also fought for the freedom of the press by pushing for equality. Although the liberty these two individuals sought was different, it all came down to the same theme of freedom. John Peter Zenger, a publisher who openly criticized the British government, was tried in court for attempting to exercise freedom of speech. Zenger felt strongly about his beliefs and wanted the world to understand the flaws of the British government. Without these three leaders and others mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the freedom the United States had today could potentially not exist.

Before the year 1730, there were no newspapers in the colonies, so official news traveled very slowly from colony to colony. The information was granted by colonial officials or word of mouth. However, as the technological advances began to spike in the 1730s, publishers began creating almanacs annually. Publications during this time came from influential individuals like Benjamin Franklin and William Goddard. This type of news was printed and functioned on a subscription-based revenue that drew people to the printing shop.

The year 1690 marks the first newspaper created in the North American colonies. Published in the Publick Occurrences, there was a new medium for news between the colonies. Publications made by Benjamin Harris created a new foundation for how the news would evolve. Harris stated there would be news published once a month, with the “considerable things” that have taken place. Harris also forms the notion that publishers are expected to have a “faithful relation” between the news and personal opinions. Through sets of rules like these, he ensured it would be the “best fountain for our information.” In 1731, Benjamin Franklin issued an “apology to Printers” when printing and publishing became more recognized. This apology stemmed from him realizing that his publications were causing controversy and differences of opinions to become stronger. His publications created arguments and discussions that had not been present before they were published. In an apology, Franklin states “Printers are educated in the belief that when men differ in opinion, both sides ought equally to have the advantage of being heard by the Publick.” Franklin recognizes that his work has created controversy but argues “that it is as unreasonable in any one Man or Set of Men to expect to be pleas’d with everything that is printed.” Despite all of this, Franklin did agree that printers should not take sides but rather give an authentic and honest opinion.

Two years after Franklin’s apology, John Peter Zenger launched the New-York Weekly Journal. This journal was filled with articles that came from enemies of the Royal Authorities. During this era, Zenger played a strong role as he willingly recognized and accepted that he would be criticized for publishing such controversial material. Zenger would very harshly point out the corrupt royal Governor, William S Cosby. Zenger accused Cosby of extreme crimes like rigged elections and labeled him as a fool. In November of 1734, Zenger was arrested and jailed due to his publications. Andrew Hamilton, a notorious lawyer in the colonies, was his attorney. Hamilton argued in his closing statement that it was “not the cause of one poor printer,” but it was “the cause of liberty.” After the court hearing, the jury found Zenger not guilty in less than ten minutes. Zenger offered the truth, and Hamilton illustrated that to the jury. Although government officials wanted this information disclosed, he could not be found guilty of giving truthful statements. Zenger, Hamilton and Franklin were all clear leaders of the change that took place within journalism; these three leaders pioneered the path through their advocacy for freedom of the press.

At the age of 16, Benjamin Franklin began writing under the pen name of Silence Dogood. Silence Dogood was a created fictional character that protected Franklin’s privacy and identity. Through this character, Franklin could speak freely and was also able to protect his privacy from his brother James Franklin, who refused to publish anything he wrote. On September 24th, 1722, Silence Dogood Published in The London Journal, “Whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freedom of speech.” Franklin stated this intending to help the public recognize the importance of free speech. He follows this statement by explaining that when a man cannot exercise free speech, “A man cannot call his tongue his own.” The bravery Franklin displays through this act is immense; Franklin was able to go to extreme measures to advocate for citizens’ rights. When James Franklin discovered the extent to which his brother Benjamin Franklin had been going just to get published, Benjamin broke off his apprenticeship and ran away to Philadelphia.

Hello, my name is John R. Chris. I would like to first share a little about myself so all my readers can better understand my point of view. I was born in Boston, Massachusetts and grew up there. The most important thing to know about me is how strongly I value freedom and lively writing. Freedom of speech and press freedom are two fundamental beliefs I hold dear. As a journalist, I know that my first obligation is the truth and loyalty to the citizens. However, this is compromised because of the controlling government at hand. The government has entirely brainwashed the citizens, forcing them to believe that every step they have made has been entirely correct. When only half of a story is shared, the citizens are ignorant and are being lied to. I push for a more substantial monitor of power along with compromise. Some works that I have published in the past have been very straightforward, offering simply just the truth. For some of these works, I have had to issue an apology for causing a “ruckus” among the colonies. To an extent, I understand this. However, with so many men, there are so many minds. With all of this being said, it is evident that the right to freedom of speech and the press is critical. I understand my views are controversial, However, I just yearn for independence. The only way for the citizens to gain independence is through open press. The government must let truth and error have fair play. If there is no fair play, citizens will never come to their own opinions. When one is only told one side of the story, the narrative will never be fully understood. Each newspaper should also remain neutral, contributors of the newspapers can have a perspective but it should not be disclosed to the public.

**NEXT:
REVOLUTION AND
REPUBLIC**

**TORY AND
PATRIOT
PRESS**

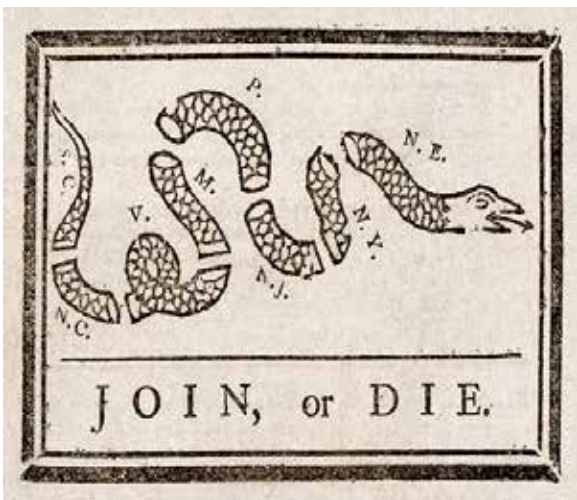
PARTY PRESS ERA

REVOLUTION & REPUBLIC



Join or Die

The masthead above not only contains more than one meaning but was also used by different people throughout history. The severed snake is cut into eight separate pieces, representing the eight different colonies. A book initially used the image in France, where Benjamin Franklin took inspiration. Through this inspiration, he revamped the idea to send a political message through cartoons. The first political message was intended to protest the Stamp Act crisis in the 1760s. The snake acted as a symbol of unification through unfair taxation. Franklin's goal was to unite all the colonies to combat the French and convince the British to support the United States. Around ten years later, Franklin's work was used as a symbol during the Revolutionary War. Paul Revere reconstructed a version that would function as the masthead for The Massachusetts Spy newspaper. The political message behind this version of illustration was to join in unity to fight against British rule.



Displayed above is the original cartoon of Join or Die. Despite all the different interpretations of this cartoon, the one common theme of unity persists.

NEWSPAPER GROWTH

The first Virginia newspaper was assembled and published for the first time on August 6th, 1736. William Parks, a former writer for the Maryland Gazette, created what was needed to allow this publication to occur. The newspaper was named the Virginia Gazette and was published in Williamsburg, Virginia. Twice a week, Parks would use a sheet-fed hand press to create these newspapers. The content itself was known to be well produced and gained popularity quickly. The first newspaper established in North Carolina was the North-Carolina Gazette. The first copy was published on August 9, 1751, by James Davis. Being the last colony to obtain a printing press, North Carolina needed assistance. Because of this, Davis traveled from Virginia to help assemble a newspaper. The first publications were made in the city of New Bern.

NEXT:
PENNY PRESS

Press During the Revolution

Leading up to the American Revolution, most publishers had a joint agreement that they sought Open Press Ideals. After the Stamp Act of 1765, Journalists began to stray away from neutrality and began inviting their personal opinions into their work. Many Journalists leading up to the American Revolution remained anonymous. For publishers to protect themselves, their families and their publications it was best if they stayed anonymous. However there were other pioneers like Benjamin Franklin, Mathew Brady, and William Bradford that did not keep their opinions anonymous. These journalists received backlash and sometimes punishments due to expressing their honest beliefs. When the American Revolution began in 1775, journalists had a crucial job but many were terrified to speak their honest truth. There were 37 active newspaper companies when the war broke out. When the war ended 20 of them remained. Hannah Bunce Watson was a publisher for the Connecticut Courant during the American Revolution. After inheriting the company from her late husband, Watson used her platform to support the patriot cause. Through her defiance of the social norms,

she attempted to aid the country in achieving liberty. Watson was able to publish brave In 1776, a year after the war had begun, Samuel London spoke up defending the other side of the war. In a pamphlet for the New York Packet he called the scheme of independence ruinous and delusive. After publishing this work, the Sons of Liberty boarded up his store and threatened to hurt him if he did not stop publishing. However, the Sons of Liberty had very similar issues while trying to gain positive press attention. William Goddard opposed British rule of the colonies and used his journalistic abilities to speak against it. Goddard published in the Pennsylvania Gazette and The Constitutional Courant fighting for American Independence. Goddards work in the the Constitutional Courant was very opinionated and highly criticized the events like the Stamp Act of 1765. His work gained popularity quickly and made him very successful. After planting a job alongside Benjamin Franklin, he was able to continue his legacy advocating for free speech and independence.

Covering the Creation of the U.S. Constitution

The Contemporary coverage newspapers provided as the constitutional convention concluded was highly opinionated and robust. As the world moved towards ratification, many concepts of journalism were modified. The constitutional convention of 1787 was a pivotal moment that decided how the United States would govern the country. At this meeting, all people involved swore to keep conversations private so that they could speak freely of their opinions.

When the convention began coming to its conclusions, a colony-wide debate occurred, fighting to decide whether or not the United States should be ratified. The Federalist party was in favor of the ratification. They argued that what the constitution would hold would be a positive change for the United States. Together they created a series of 85 essays called The Federalist Papers. Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison were all writers of these documents. These documents were successful in convincing many anti-federalists to consider ratification.

This is because many anti-federalists had doubts. After all, they were not fully aware of what the constitution would state. The people working against the federalists were named the Anti-Federalists; Anti-Federalists feared that ratification would lead to the government holding too much power and would limit their freedom. Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry spoke publicly about their opposition towards ratification. They argued in favor of democracy and thought a strong government could not have a democracy with ratification.

Most Anti-Federalists published under pseudonyms as they feared how people would react. Anti-Federalists who did this were named 'Brutus'. Under this name they published a series of 16 essays against federalism in the New York Journal.

After many years of advocating, Adams finally abandoned his opposition to the Federalist Party. He did this when the Federalist Party pledged to support the amendments and the bill of rights. Adams had finally understood that there was good within the party.

CHANGES IN
THE NATURE OF
NEWS

THE EVOLVING
BUSINESS OF
NEWS

The Penny Press

The Crime, Tragedy, Gossip, and Adventures of this Week



"The Great Moon Hoax"

The theme of consumer entertainment is evident through the shift from the Party Press to the Penny Press. This image, known as "The Great Moon Hoax," published by the New York Sun, displays how this work was strictly for consumer entertainment. The story itself depicts a man who found evidence of life on the moon. The report included information on unicorns, two-legged beavers, humanoids and much more. Being an entirely fictional story, it introduced less serious entertainment to consumers. During this six article story, The New York Sun made an effort to cater to a broader audience and decreased their prices. Sales spiked because of these two efforts, and consumers were fascinated by the story. The shift from the Party Press illustrates a new sense of freedom. The Party Press was funded by political parties who dictated what would be shown in the paper. Additionally, almost all news was heavily political and strictly focused on covering current events before this point.

The Importance of Matthew Brady

Arguably one of the most influential photographers of all time, Mathew Brady captured the truth of the American Civil War. Brady learned the process of making a daguerreotype through classes and used this photography skill to capture pictures of important leaders and photos of the Civil War. The photos Brady captured were gruesome, showing uncleared battlefields where hundreds of soldiers would lie dead. These photos were clear enough that sometimes people would recognize people they knew. The images Brady and his employees captured during the war were something the public had never seen before. No one who was not present during a war knew how graphic and horrid a war was until this point. Although this was a highly aggressive way of reporting casualties and updates, it provided honesty to its citizens. At this time, around the 1860s, photography was not being published in newspapers yet. Therefore, places like the Penny Press did not publish his work. Brady published his work in galleries where thousands of people would see updates each day. In an interview, Brady stated, "I felt that I had to go. A spirit in my feet said 'Go,' and I went." Although what he did was controversial, he defied social norms by showing the public the full story of what had happened at war.

THE BUSINESS OF NEWS IN BLACK AND WHITE

James Gordon Bennett, Sr. John B. Russwurm and Samuel Cornish were all journalists who shared a lot of the same values but were very different characters and were all raised very differently. James Gordon Bennett was a Scottish immigrant born into an affluent home in Newmill, Scotland. He worked as an enterprising reporter during his first job and then became an innovative publisher at The New York Courier and Enquirer. While also working as an assistant editor, Bennet is credited as the first Washington correspondent. Benett's career transformed after gaining coverage on the story of Helen Jewett. While working for The Herald, Bennett published several articles, naming the headline of the case the "Most Atrocious Murder." Bennetts reports for The Herald were graphic, containing explicit conversations, scene reporting, and aggressive newsgathering techniques. Readers were fascinated. It was evident that Bennett was beginning their success. When the steam press was created in the 1830s, The Herald had many problems using it. So many issues arose that they had to apologize for not getting publications out in time. Additionally, The Herald had no kind words on the Newsboys. The company stated they would not work with them until they behaved correctly. While the Herald had gained much traction from the Helen Jewett case, many people found Bennett's work extremely race Greely stated that "Editorially he was

cynical, inconsistent, reckless and infused by his own prejudices." There is not one consistent view on Bennett, some people loved his publications, and others found them short, snappy, and unprofessional. Sr. John B. Russwurm was a native of Jamaica. Russwurm was the second African American to graduate from an American University. Together with Samuel Cornish, they decided to create a publication company. Both men had no experience as journalists but wanted to advocate for the rights of African Americans. In 1827, they created Freedom's Journal, where they would not only advocate for civil rights but would engage the black community in newspapers. Before 1827, there was no inclusion of the African American community unless they committed a crime. In Freedom's Journal, their voices were heard. The first published article of the company stated, "too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the publick been deceived by misrepresentation." This publication gained much traction because there were few options for the Black community. It continued to thrive for almost three years, reaching around 300,000 African Americans in the North and 11 different states.

NEXT:
YELLOW PAGES

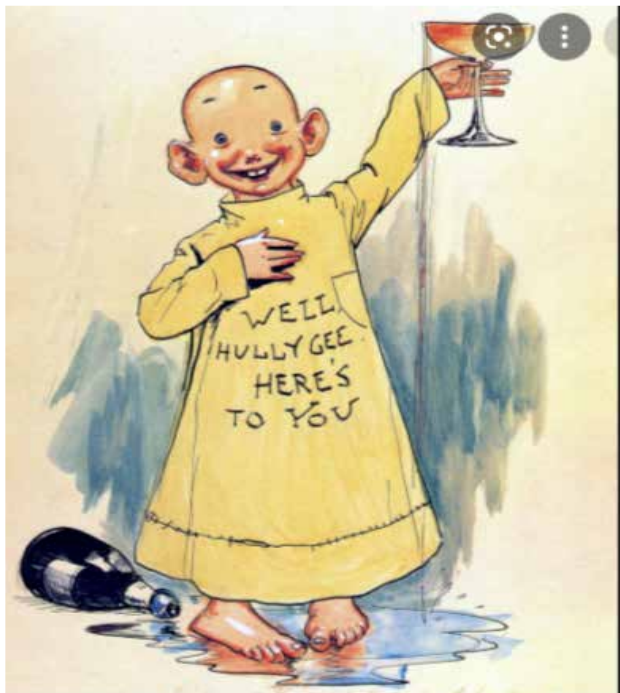
WORKING FOR
THE BARONS

CRUSADERS AND
WATCHDOGS

YELLOW PAGES

The Ultimate Reasons Why No One Should be Inclined to Work for a Press Baron

The Yellow Kid



The cartoon image displayed above is known as the “Yellow Kid.” The Yellow Kid was created by Richard Felton Outcault and was the first American comic strip character to shift into a political message. The Yellow Kid was first widely seen in The New York World in the comic section under the story Hogan’s Alley. At this time, Joseph Pulitzer had hired Outcault to create comics for his publishing company, The New York World. After the cartoon began gaining popularity, William Randolph Hearst recruited Outcault to his publishing company. Hearst wanted to compete with Pulitzers and did this by hiring Outcault. Outcault then worked under Hearst’s, creating a revamped version of the Yellow Kid and published comics for the New York Journal. The competition that arose and the sensationalized stories that became more popular through yellow kid coined the term “Yellow Journalism.” It marked the first period of time where a top story that could cause more circulation became more important than current events and facts. From 1895 until 1898, the Yellow Kid displayed many symbols. The Yellow Kid was a buck-toothed, Irish slum urchin, running around in a yellow nightshirt. He symbolized the present events going on in New York. During this time, immigration to New York was highly present. Thousands of immigrants were arriving each day, trying to find a way to live under these less than ideal circumstances. Outcault saw this and created the Yellow Kid, giving him an international appearance that Americans saw each day. The Yellow Kid depicts what many of the densely populated ethnic neighborhoods could have looked like. The cartoons portrayed in the New York Journal also sent a message to the immigrants themselves; the majority of the immigrants could not read. However, with comics, they could typically understand the general idea. This created the notion of support, allowing the melting pot’s new immigrants to feel seen and heard.

Alexandra Alpert

During the Yellow Press era, journalists would fabricate or lie about current events to make greater profits. Journalists Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst were two influential leaders known for doing precisely this. Yellow Journalism became very popular during the Spanish War when many publication companies realized that more potent headlines and descriptions led to higher revenue. Although there are many elements of journalism, there are a few that stand out to be more critical than others. The obligation to tell the truth, its first loyalty is to its citizens, and it must strive to make the significant, interesting and relevant. During the Yellow Press era, all three of these key elements were utterly dismantled. If I had the personal choice of working for a press baron, I would choose not to. This is because journalism during this era contained no morals or ethics. Journalists at this time were not thinking about the public rather selfishly about themselves. The competition that surrounded publication companies was also incredibly intense. It can be assumed that if press barons were unwilling to fabricate the truth, their sales would not compare to other companies. Another reason I would not consider working for a press baron is because of how it affected the Spanish-American War. It is clear that the media helped fuel the war. If I were to be a press baron, it is possible that my fabrication of the truth could affect human lives. William Randolph Hearst was a journalist at the heart of Yellow journalism. After the explosion of the USS Maine, Hearst published very extreme articles, offering 50,000 to anyone who found the perpetrator of the attack. Following this occurrence, the declaration of war took place. This gave both Hearst and Pulitzer precisely what they needed to fabricate stories. When the reports from both publishing companies became too extreme, it became apparent to most of the public that all media was being fabricated. This leads to another reason I would never work as a press baron - a lying journalist can never be trusted in the same way again. Sensational headlines reached their peak during the middle of the war, but citizens of the United States saw flaws within their work. People began to take every statement made with extreme hesitancy. Many years later, Pulitzer chose to apologize for his role of fabrication. He understood the severity of his actions and recognized why it was wrong. However, Hearst never saw any issue with his actions. Hearst boasted about the war during his entire career and quickly became untrustworthy to all surrounding him.

Two Idas Take on the Powers That Be

Alexandra Alpert

Ida Tarbell and Ida B. Wells- Barnett were two strong independent and courageous women who marked a pivotal point in the history of the United States. They were both African American women who sought the same equality and respect that others had. Being one of the most famous muckrakers, Ida Tarbell yearned and fought for change. Tarbell’s greatest accomplishment came when she exposed John D Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Company. In McClure’s Magazine, Tarbell published 19 different articles going into extreme depth of how Rockefeller had monopolized the oil industry through cheating. Her investigative work on the case led Rockefeller’s business to be tried in court where the Supreme Court found that the company guilty for breaking several different laws. Tarbell was called several different names after her investigative reporting had such a strong outcome. When Theodore Roosevelt learned about her work, he called her a “muckraker”. However, Tarbell objected to the term because she saw it as belittling. Tarbell knew her own worth; she knew this term was not even remotely suiting after all the work she had done. Today, Tarbell is referred to as a watchdog. As one of the first investigative reporters, she spent countless hours studying every miniscule detail of Rockefeller’s oil company. Ida B. Wells shares many similarities with Tarbell but they also have vast differences. Wells was also an investigative journalist that sought the same rights of equality. However, Wells went about achieving equality in a very different way. After being born into slavery, in 1892 Wells was finally able to began her journalism career in Tennessee. Defying all odds, Wells was the first African American woman to secure a job as the co-owner and editor of a black newspaper. Here, Wells published works for Memphis Free Speech. When Thomas Moss, a good friend of wells was lynched she started a crusade against lynching. This gave Wells the title of crusader. When Wells advocated against lynching she experienced heavy backlash. The world did not believe she could do anything to stop what was taking place. Wells continued courage and bravery are extremely apparent with how she acted once her house was burned down by a White mob. Wells did not back down, rather she moved to the North to reestablish her career. As an investigative reporter, Wells understood that she needed strong evidence to bring lynching to an end. While investigating in the north Wells compiled a series of 728 lynching cases and stood behind an anti-lynching bill that would be brought in front of Congress.