



# AMERICAN DECADES

1920-1929



EDITED BY  
**JUDITH S. BAUGHMAN**

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# MEDIA



by MATTHEW J. BRUCCOLI and ARLYN BRUCCOLI

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# OVERVIEW

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**Radio vs. Print.** The shift from a print-based culture to an electronic culture commenced during the 1920s. Nonetheless, the decade witnessed major publishing developments. The print and the sound media did not engage in open combat because radio was not yet a strong threat to the financial well-being of newspapers and magazines. Moreover, radio was not yet an effective news medium. People listened to radio bulletins, but they relied on newspapers to “read all about it.”

**Ad Revenue.** No matter how large their circulation figures are, twentieth-century newspapers and magazines do not survive on income from selling copies, unless the sample-copy price is prohibitively high. (Even *The Reader's Digest* was eventually compelled to withdraw its ban on advertising.) Advertising revenue supports all newspapers and unsubsidized magazines. Ad rates are based on circulation; the larger the circulation, the higher the rates. When a periodical loses its advertising, it dies.

**Commercials.** The first radio commercial — an ad for a New York apartment building — was heard in August 1922. The advertiser reportedly paid \$100. By the end of the decade almost \$20 million was spent by advertisers for network time. Nonetheless, print culture continued to thrive in the early years of radio. Hugely successful new magazines and major book publishing houses were born in the 1920s.

**Phonograph Records.** Other electronic media competed for the time and attention of Americans. Although phonograph recordings had been popular since the turn of the century, the quality of the recordings and the players was so poor that record sales flagged during the early 1920s before the development of electrical recordings and the electrical phonograph. Even so, the phonograph was largely responsible for the demise of the player piano, formerly the pride of American parlors. Although the sound fidelity of the improved equipment was very poor by later standards, phonograph records were influential in enlarging the audience for classical music, making serious music available to people who otherwise could not have heard it. Thus, the 1923 Columbia Records catalogue featured cellist Pablo Casals, soprano Emmy Destinn, soprano Mary Garden, pianist Percy Grainger, pianist Josef Hofmann, soprano Rosa Ponselle, the Chi-

cago Symphony Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra, and the Philharmonic Orchestra of New York.

**Radio Programs.** Radio exerted a stronger appeal than records, and the increase in the number of receivers coincided with a drop in record sales. After the receiver was paid for, radio was free, and listening to radio was more convenient than cranking the phonograph and changing records every four minutes. Initially the radio broadcasters didn't know what to do with their medium. Programming — that is, the quality and appeal of the programs — was not a particular concern. People would listen to anything. There was an abundance of music, but comparatively little air time was given to programs developed for the capabilities of the medium. Radio drama was slow to develop, possibly because the station owners thought that radio drama could not compete with movies, especially after sound was introduced in 1927. The long-enduring American ritual of going to the movies every week was established during the 1920s.

**Tabloid Papers.** All classes of Americans read newspapers, and each paper was edited for its constituency. (One reason for spending two cents on a newspaper was to find out what was on radio that day.) The most striking development in 1920s journalism was the introduction of tabloid-size papers, mainly intended for an uneducated or immigrant readership. The tabs printed material that was not heard over the airwaves. Moreover, radio could not attempt the service features that the working-class papers provided. The advice columns, instructional articles, and pro-bono crusades built reader trust and loyalty. At that time newspapers published short stories and serialized novels, usually in the weekend editions. There were more than a thousand foreign-language periodicals published in America during the 1920s.

**Newspaper Chains.** Newspapers closed or were merged during the 1920s — just as in previous decades — but radio was not to blame. Apart from the rise of the tabloids, the most significant development was the growth of the chains. Frank Munsey, known as the “Grand Executioner” because of his policy of consolidating weak papers, died in 1925. In 1929 the Scripps-Howard chain had twenty-five dailies. The most famous

American newspaper tycoon, William Randolph Hearst, had twenty dailies and eleven Sunday papers in 1922; he also owned wire services, King Features syndicate, magazines, the Hearst Metrotone newsreel, and the *American Weekly* Sunday supplement with the largest periodical circulation in the world. Hearst had been a crusading publisher, even a populist, in the 1890s, but by the 1920s he was widely distrusted or feared as an abuser of power. Whatever was the actual extent of Hearst's political power, he was unable to get himself elected to any major office. His papers were not admired for their journalistic standards; many of them were frankly sensationalist, featuring scare headlines. Smaller chains that operated during the 1920s were those of Frank E. Gannett, James M. Cox, and the Ridder brothers. Starting in 1923 Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. tried to build a chain of respectable tabloids in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Miami — all of which perished.

**Newsmagazines.** New magazines with successful new editorial rationales developed during the 1920s; the most influential innovation was of the newsmagazine with packaged news. *Time*, the pioneer of the type, was not a newspaper in magazine format; it organized the events of the week into topics and summarized the most important events within each topic. The announced intention was to enable busy people to keep up with world news, as well as cultural events. The prodigious success of *Time* and *The Reader's Digest*, also a selector and packager for busy people, signaled a shift in American magazine-reading habits away from long articles that required time and

concentration. Perhaps busy people really were too busy to read much, but it is likely that there were more diverting claims on their leisure time in the new era of mass media.

**Books.** The book publishers were responsible for the most enduring cultural events of the decade. During the 1920s Americans became the most influential young writers in the English language. Great writers require great editors and publishers, and publishers achieve greatness through their authors. The movement inaccurately named Modernism coincided with the formation of new publishing houses, most of which still exist in some corporate form. But much of the best writing of the 1920s had nothing to do with the experiments of Modernism: it was good writing without isms.

**Circulation of Print.** Novels sold well at \$1.75 to \$2 in cloth binding. There were no mass-market paperbacks until 1939, but Grosset & Dunlap and A. L. Burt sold hardbound reprints for fifty cents. Many fiction readers obtained current books from the circulating or rental libraries, which lent books for a nickel a day. Many of these libraries were located in drug stores or other retail businesses. There were many venues for printed matter in the 1920s. Boys sold newspapers and *The Saturday Evening Post* in the streets. Newsstands abounded. Railroad stations had extensive selections of reading material. Despite the rapid expansion of radio networks and the radio audience, printed words continued to dominate American culture and information communication.

# TOPICS IN THE NEWS

## ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

**Buy! Buy!** The 1920s brought a boom in advertising as postwar consumerism and the cult of salesmanship coincided. Existing ad agencies expanded, and new agencies (Young & Rubicam, Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, and Benton & Bowles) were founded. J. Walter Thompson's agency's billings went from \$10.7 million in 1922 to \$37.5 million in 1929. Albert Lasker, the head of Lord & Thomas, worked with George Washington Hill of the American Tobacco Company (Lucky Strike) to increase that company's earnings from \$12 million in 1926 to \$40 million in 1930.

**Slogans.** Most advertising still appeared in print during the 1920s, and ad revenue promoted the growth of the mass-circulation magazines, called slicks because they were printed on paper that would reproduce quality ad art. Cigarette advertising produced a war among Lucky Strike, Camel, and Chesterfield. The untapped market was women; before the 1920s no respectable woman smoked in public. Lucky Strike urged women to "Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet," and the young woman in the famous 1926 Chesterfield ad asked her male companion to "Blow some my way." It was an era of slogans and heretofore-unsuspected maladies: Woodbury Facial Soap "For the skin you love to touch"; Palmolive to "Keep that schoolgirl complexion"; Lifebuoy to prevent "B.O."; Listerine to cure halitosis because "Even Your Best Friend Won't Tell You"; and Absorbine Jr. "Kills Athlete's Foot Fungi on contact."

"Somewhere West of Laramie." Edward S. Jordan's prose-poem for the Jordan Playboy first appeared in the 23 June 1923 *Saturday Evening Post*. The Jordan was an assembled car — put together from chassis and engine supplied by other manufacturers — but Jordan's effusion did not mention his car's mechanical qualities. He sold youth, sex appeal, and the spirit of adventure: "Somewhere West of Laramie there's a broncho-busting, steer-roping girl. . . ."

**Bernays.** The prodigious propaganda efforts during World War I elevated the shady press agent, or publicity agent, into the respectable opinion maker and the public-relations counsel. The leader of this new field was Ed-

## In New York TELL IT TO SWEENEY! —The Stuyvesants will understand—



SWEENEY lives in an apartment in Brooklyn, on upper Manhattan, in the Bronx, or has a house on Staten Island or in Nutley, N. J.

It is Sweeney who swells the Municipal Marriage License Bureau each spring and fall. He marries comparatively early and raises a family—usually a good sized one.

Sweeney's children grow fast. They need baby carriages, foods, medicines, shoes, clothing, books, pianos, bathing suits, Christmas trees, tonsilotomy, tuition, trousseaux, phonograph records—in fact, everything.

Sweeney's sons filled both rear and front ranks in the late war; some of them stood ahead of the ranks. They drive trucks, belong to trade unions, work in offices, sell goods and run businesses.

Sweeney's daughters go to school, some of them to college; some of them work in factories, pound typewriters, sell retail merchandise, design Paris frocks. Eventually 75% of them marry.

SWEENEY and Mrs. Sweeney are ambitious and expectant of Life. They believe in God, the United States and life insurance. They respect education, and want the kids to have plenty of it. They look forward

to grapefruit for breakfast, their own homes, a little car, money in the bank and a better future for the Sweeney juniors. Today some of the Sweeneys are buying Pierce Arrows and Long Island estates; more of them will, tomorrow. The Sweeneys know what they want—and get it. They want the best, and whenever possible—get it.



SWEENEY'S name in New York may be Smith, or Cohen, or Muller, or Nelson, or La Voie—or Sweeney.

There are a million families of Sweeneys in and around New York, with incomes from \$6,000 down.

You men who aspire to sell large bills of goods to New York, remember the Sweeneys. They comprise 75% of any large city's population. Address your advertising, your sales messages, to them, because they are your best customers. They keep right on living and dying, earning and spending money, buying and using merchandise. They are not hard to sell, and they are good folks to do business with. And remember, when you talk to Sweeney, the people of bluer blood and more money who read *The News* will understand; whereas if you talk to Stuyvesants, the Sweeneys won't listen. You can't lose by saying it so Sweeney understands.



**TELL** It to Sweeney—in *The News*, bought by more than two-fifths of all the people in New York City who buy an English language morning newspaper.

This 1922 ad stated the populist editorial policy of the *Daily News*.

ward L. Bernays (1891–1995), who coined the term "public relations counsel" and dignified it in his books and pronouncements.

The public relations counsel supervises and directs the contacts of business and other organizations with the public. He ascertains the state of public opinion toward a given company, product, or idea, and directs his efforts to strengthen favorable impressions or dispel ungrounded prejudices. His function is to crystallize public opinion and to make articulate ideas and events that are already in existence and that are favorable to company policy. It is also an essential part of his services to create the circumstances or the news which will themselves eventuate in the desired expression from the public.

— "The Business of Propaganda," 1928



**PRETTY CURVES WIN!**  
*When tempted to over-indulge*  
**"Reach for a Lucky instead"**

Be moderate—be moderate in all things. Even in smoking. Avoid that fuzzy shadow by avoiding over-indulgence. If you would maintain that modern, ever-youthful figure, "Reach for a Lucky instead."

**Lucky Strike**, the finest Cigarette you ever smoked, made of the finest tobacco—The Cream of the Crop—"IT'S TOASTED."  
**Lucky Strike** has an extra, secret heating process. Everyone knows that heat purifies and so 20,679 physicians say that **Luckies** are less irritating to your throat.

**"It's toasted"**  
**Your Throat Protection—against irritation—against cough.**

\*We do not say smoking Luckies reduces flesh. We do say when tempted to over-indulge, "Reach for a Lucky instead."

Two of the most successful cigarette ads of the 1920s, top and left, were aimed at the new market of women smokers.

Below, Edward Bernays and his wife at the Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, 1927.





## Somewhere West of Laramie

SOMEWHERE west of Laramie there's a broncho-busting, steer-roping girl who knows what I'm talking about. She can tell what a sassy pony, that's a cross between greased lightning and the place where it hits, can do with eleven hundred pounds of steel and action when he's going high, wide and handsome.

The truth is—the Playboy was built for her.

Built for the lass whose face is brown with the sun when the day is done of revel and romp, and race.

She loves the cross of the wild and the tame.

There's a savor of links about that car—of laughter and lilt and light—a hint of old loves—and saddle and quilt. It's a brawny thing—yet a graceful thing for the sweep o' the Avenue.

Step into the Playboy when the hour grows dull with things gone dead and stale.

Then start for the land of real living with the spirit of the lass who rides, lean and rangy, into the red horizon of a Wyoming twilight.



The best-known automobile advertisement of the 1920s sold an unexceptional car.

Bernays was his own best client. Ivy Lee, another celebrated PR figure, represented the Rockefeller family and endeavored to make old John D. likable — or less detestable — by having the robber baron give dimes to children. These manipulators relied primarily on the print media to convey their messages. When a public event was staged, it had to be covered in the newspapers in order to make it effective. They were still press agents.

### Sources:

Edward L. Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1923);

Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Liveright, 1928);

Roy S. Durstine, *This Advertising Business* (New York: Scribners, 1928);

Ivy Lee, *Publicity: Some of the Things It Is and Is Not* (New York: Industries Publishing Co., 1925).

## BOOK CLUBS

**A Book a Month.** Mass-media and mass-marketing stimulated each other during the 1920s. The most successful publishing development was distribution through book clubs. At the start of the decade most Americans did not have access to bookstores. Many potential members of the emerging reading public did not know what to



## The best new book each month selected for you by this committee—

AND SENT TO YOU REGULARLY ON APPROVAL—A UNIQUE SERVICE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE BEST NEW BOOKS AS THEY APPEAR.

**C**ERTAINLY there is nothing more satisfying to a person who loves books, than to keep abreast of the best new works of our present-day writers, as they appear. And, inversely, there are few things more annoying than to miss the outstanding books, when everybody else of intelligence is reading, discussing and enjoying them. Yet how frequently most of us disappoint ourselves in this way!

Think over the last few years. How often have interesting books appeared, widely discussed and widely recommended, books you were really anxious to read and fully intended to read when you "set yourself to it," but which nevertheless you missed? Why does this happen to you so often?

The true reason lies in your habits of book-buying. Through carelessness, or through the driving circumstances of a busy life, you simply overlook absorbing books that you really want to read. Or you live in a district remote from bookstores, where it is impossible to get the best new books without difficulty.

This need be true no longer. A unique service has been organized, which will deliver to you every month, without effort or trouble on your part, the best book of that month, whether fiction or non-fiction. And, if the book you receive is not one you would have chosen yourself, you may exchange it for a book you prefer, from a list of other new books that are recommended. In this way, automatically, you keep abreast of the best literature of the day.

These "best books" are chosen for you, from the books of all publishers, by a group of unbiased critics and writers, whose judgment as to books and whose catholicity of taste have been demonstrated for many years before the public. The members of

the Selecting Committee, who have agreed to perform this service, are listed above. With each book sent there is always included some interesting comment by a member of the committee upon the book and the author.

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### BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB, INC.

218 West 40th St., Dept. 25, New York, N. Y.

Please send me, without cost, your Prospectus outlining the details of the Book-of-the-Month Club of America. This request involves me in no obligation to subscribe to your service.

Name   
Address   
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Advertisement for the Book-of-the-Month Club (*Time*, 1926) read or how to obtain books. The founding of the Book-of-the-Month Club (BOMC) by Robert K. Haas and Harry Scherman filled a well-defined need.

**Judges.** The monthly selections were chosen by a panel of judges — critic Henry Seidel Canby, columnist Heywood Broun, author Dorothy Canfield Fisher, man-of-letters Christopher Morley, and newspaper publisher William Allen White — who exercised complete freedom to pick any current book that was not priced more than three dollars. The first selection, distributed in April 1926, established the integrity of the judges: Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Lolly Willows: or, the Loving Huntsman*, an English feminist fantasy that was hardly a crowd pleaser, went to 4,750 members. Subsequent 1926 selections positioned the BOMC as upper middlebrow. In certain social groups membership in the BOMC was regarded as a badge of intelligence; in others, of pretentiousness; in still others, of intellectual conformity.

**Literary Guild.** The BOMC prospered, rapidly. By the end of its first season there were 46,539 members. Inevitably the BOMC spawned imitators and competitors, of which the most successful was the Literary Guild of America, launched in 1927. The first Guild selection was *Anthony Comstock: Roundsman of the Lord*, by Hey-



## THE 1926 BOMC SELECTIONS

*Lolly Willowses*, by Sylvia Townsend Warner

*Teefallow*, by T. S. Stribling

*O Genteel Lady!*, by Esther Forbes

*The Saga of Billy the Kid*, by Walter Noble Burns (nonfiction)

*The Silver Spoon*, by John Galsworthy

*Show Boat*, by Edna Ferber

*The Time of Man*, by Elizabeth Madox Roberts

*The Romantic Comedians*, by Ellen Glasgow

*The Orphan Angel*, by Elinor Wylie

wood Broun and Margaret Leech. At first booksellers and some publishers opposed the BOMC. Although the club took away bookstore customers, it also brought in new buyers who wanted a book because it was the BOMC selection. Publishers initially resisted making the price discounts required by the club. Nonetheless, it was clear that the BOMC — and its progeny — put books in the hands of readers who otherwise would not have known about them or purchased them. Both the BOMC and the Literary Guild began on a subscription basis. Members paid an annual fee for twelve books. The negative-option system that allowed members to decline selections was a later improvement. Guild members received special inexpensive editions (twelve books for eighteen dollars), whereas the BOMC distributed copies of the trade edition. The Guild also began with a panel of judges, which was dropped.

**Specialization.** The next movement in the book-club industry was from general to specialized selections. The hundred-odd American book clubs that eventually emerged were aimed at professions (lawyers), hobbyists (gardeners), and particular fields (history). Their impact on American readers has been prodigious and salutary.

### Sources:

*The Book of the Month: Sixty Years of Books in American Life* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1986);

Charles Lee, *The Hidden Public: The Story of the Book-of-the-Month Club* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958).

## GENRE MAGAZINES

**Fan Mags.** Movie-fan and movie-romance magazines flourished during the 1920s. These were overlapping categories; both covered the Hollywood scene, but the content of the movie-romance publications stressed the mar-

The World's Leading Moving Picture Magazine

# PHOTOPLAY

July 25c



*Greatest Story of Movie Life Ever Written*

The 1920s were a boom period for movie-fan magazines. This cover depicts Rudolph Valentino.

ital adventures and romantic attachments of Hollywood, much of it invented. Among the many magazines in this field were *Screenland* (1920), *Screen Play* (1925), *Screenbook* (1928), *Screen Stories* (1929), and *Screen Romances* (1929).

**Macfadden.** Health faddist Bernarr Macfadden (1868–1955), who had become wealthy from his magazine *Physical Culture*, introduced what became known as the confession magazine with *True Story* in 1919. It reached a weekly circulation of more than 2 million. The success of this magazine was attributed in large part to its sexual frankness. However, *True Story* was not salacious or intended to arouse erotic feelings; Macfadden treated sexual problems in a quasi-clinical way. *True Story* inspired imitations, including Macfadden's *True Romances* (1923) and *True Experiences* (1925). Fawcett Publications had a success in 1922 with *True Confessions*, which began as a crime magazine but converted to women's romantic experiences. Having discovered that the word *true* sold copies, Macfadden introduced the first quasi-factual detective magazine, *True Detective Mysteries*, in 1924. Other publishers reached the same conclusion, and both *True Marriage Stories* and *True Love Stories* commenced in 1924. (Writers of subliterate popular fiction often used multiple pseudonyms; "true"-magazine writers used a different one for each appearance, author recognition being



A display of Macfadden magazines

a distinct disadvantage.) Bernarr Macfadden's magazines were innovative and very profitable; but his newspaper ventures, including the *New York Evening Graphic*, were failures.

*Better Homes and Gardens.* In the home-magazine field one of the great publishing successes of the decade was *Better Homes and Gardens* — which began in 1922 as *Fruit, Garden, and Home*. E. T. Meredith, its publisher and editorial director, built his magazine on the policy of providing practical information and advice for middle-class families; much of each issue was given over to how-to-do-it instructions that were practicable for non-professionals.

*Whiz Bang.* *Captain Billy's Whiz Bang* was a surprising success in the 1920s magazine field, and its popularity provides a reminder that the literary decade — like any decade — had its vulgar component. *Captain Billy* was Wilford H. Fawcett of Minneapolis, and a *Whiz Bang* was a type of World War I shell. In 1919 Fawcett began

# American Literature

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Contents page for the first journal devoted to American literary scholarship, founded by Jay B. Hubbell

preparing joke sheets that were sold in hotels for twenty-five cents. The jokes were suggestive, lewd, and coarse, leaning heavily on what was then called barnyard and outhouse humor. Whatever else it was, the *Whiz Bang* was a cultural phenomenon; although it attracted imitators, none of them constituted real competition. By the mid 1920s *Captain Billy's Whiz Bang* was selling almost half a million copies of each issue and financed the Fawcett publishing empire, which grew to include *True Confessions* (1922), *Mechanix Illustrated* (1928), and paperback books.

### Sources:

William R. Hunt, *Body Love: The Amazing Career of Bernarr Macfadden* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1989);

Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956);

John Tebbel and Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *The Magazine in America, 1741-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

## SOME LITTLE AND LITERARY MAGAZINES LAUNCHED 1920-1929

1920

*Contact* (terminated 1923), ed. William Carlos Williams and Robert McAlmon. New York.

1921

*The Double Dealer* (1926). New Orleans.

*The Reviewer* (1925). Richmond, Va.

*Broom* (1924). Rome; Berlin; New York.

*Gargoyle* (1922). Paris.

1922

*The Fugitive* (1925). Nashville, Tenn.

*Secession* (1924), ed. Gorham Munson with Matthew Josephson and Kenneth Burke. Vienna; Berlin; Reutte; Florence; New York.

*The Wave* (1924), ed. Vincent Starrett. Chicago; Copenhagen.

1923

*The Chicago Literary Times* (1924), ed. Ben Hecht.

*The Modern Quarterly* (1940), ed. V. F. Calverton. Baltimore.

1924

*The Transatlantic Review* (1925), ed. Ford Madox Ford. Paris.

1925

*This Quarter* (1932), ed. Ernest Walsh and Ethel Moorhead. Paris; Milan; Monte Carlo.

*Two Worlds* (1927), ed. Samuel Roth. New York.

1926

*Fire!!*, ed. Wallace Thurman. New York.

1927

*Hound and Horn* (1934). Portland, Maine.

*transition* (1938), ed. Eugene Jolas and Elliot Paul. Paris; The Hague.

*Exile* (1928), ed. Ezra Pound. Dijon.

1929

*Blues* (1930), ed. Charles Henri Ford. Columbus, Miss.

*Tambour* (1930). Paris.

### LITTLE MAGAZINES

Art vs. Money. Because printing costs were still relatively low in America — and very cheap in Europe — many so-called “little magazines” sprang up during the

1920s. The term “little” did not refer to format but to circulation. The standard work, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography*, states that “A little magazine is a magazine designed to print artistic work which for reasons of commercial expediency is not acceptable to the money-minded periodicals or presses.” Virtually all little magazines existed for the purpose of publishing avant-garde or experimental writing, often by their editors. A writer is not a writer unless he or she is published somewhere, somehow. The little magazines provided a place for writers — typically younger writers — to break in. Ezra Pound was the most important figure involved with the little magazines as editor or adviser during the 1920s. Nearly all of these magazines had a short life span as the editors ran out of money or lost interest.

**University Sponsorship.** The regional literary magazines resembled the little magazines in publishing material that could not find a commercial market, but the regionals were less experimental. Some of these were *Frontier* (University of Montana, 1920), *The Southwest Review* (Southern Methodist University, 1924; previously *The Texas Review*), and *The Prairie Schooner* (University of Nebraska, 1927). Since the regional literary magazines nearly always had university sponsorship, their life expectancies were better than those of the privately funded little magazines. However, the university-sponsored magazines were not necessarily parochial; some, such as *The Virginia Quarterly Review* (The University of Virginia, 1925), were national in scope. The universities also supported scholarly or critical journals that were not actually little magazines; *Duke's American Literature* became the most important journal in its field.

Sources:

Hugh Ford, *Published in Paris: American and British Writers, Printers, and Publishers in Paris, 1920-1939* (New York: Macmillan, 1975);

Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946).

### NEWSPAPERS

**Stop the Presses!** During the 1920s, now-legendary writers worked on papers that aggressively competed for news and readers. *The Front Page*, the 1928 hit play by ex-reporters Charles MacArthur and Ben Hecht, established the public's idea of how newspapers operated. In 1920 there were 2,042 English-language dailies in 1,295 American cities; their total circulation was 27.8 million. Americans habitually read newspapers, which cost two cents; many households took morning and evening papers. Most cities had papers with different ownerships and editorial policies — usually, Republican and Democrat.

**Tabloids.** The most influential innovation in Jazz Age journalism was the successful introduction of tabloid or sensationalized journalism by Joseph Medill Patterson's *The New York Daily News* in 1919. It was followed by William Randolph Hearst's *The New York Daily Mirror*



Composograph from the *New York Evening Graphic* depicting Daddy Browning with child-bride Peaches

and Bernarr Macfadden's *New York Evening Graphic* in 1924. There were also nonsensational tabloids that used the tab size for the sake of convenience. The *Graphic*, the most blatantly vulgar of the tabloids, was inevitably known as the "Porno-Graphic." It ignored most national or world events to concentrate on the coverage of sex and crime — preferably sex crime. Two of the crimes that sold tabloid papers were the 1922 Hall-Mills case (an unsolved lover's-lane murder of a minister and a choir singer) and the 1927 Snyder-Gray case (the murder of a husband by an adulterous wife and her corset-salesman lover). Tabloid journalism also fed on the Kip Rhineland divorce/miscegenation trial and the antics of Daddy Browning and his child bride, Peaches. The most egregious feature of the *Graphic* was the "composograph" — a faked photograph, such as the depiction of actor Rudolph Valentino's arrival in heaven. Jazz journalism was not restricted to New York. *The Denver Post* was not a tabloid, but it was sensational and successful in the 1920s.

Comics. Comic strips (also known as the funnies) were effective circulation builders, especially for the tabloids. The Chicago Tribune–New York News syndicate

and Hearst's King Features syndicate developed some of the most widely printed strips during the 1920s. Three long-running popular strips began in 1919: Frank King's *Gasoline Alley*, Billy DeBeck's *Barney Google*, and E. C. Segar's *Thimble Theatre* — which introduced Popeye in 1929. Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie* began in 1924, as did Roy Crane's *Wash Tubbs*, the first adventure strip. Other popular strips that began during the decade were Martin Branner's *Winnie Winkle* (1920), Russ Westover's *Tillie the Toiler* (1921), and Frank Willard's *Moon Mullins* (1923). Older comic artists whose work remained popular included Rube Goldberg, George McManus, and Tad (Thomas Aloysius Dorgan).

*The World*. By general consent *The New York World* was the best paper in America during the decade, and it had a national influence. Under Herbert Bayard Swope, executive editor from 1920 to 1929, the *World* was regarded as "the newspaperman's newspaper." The *World* did not try to provide broad coverage of the news; instead, it relied on good reporting and writing: "THE WORLD does not believe that all the news that is fit to print is worth reading." The independently liberal editorial page was edited by Walter Lippmann, who became

**FUNERALS HELD** For Gray,  
 Mrs. Snyder  
Story on Page 2



**WHEN RUTH PAID HER DEBT TO THE STATE:**—The only unofficial photo ever taken within the death chamber. (It was remarkable, exclusive picture shows cleanup of Ruth Snyder in death chair at Sing Sing as lethal current surged through her body at 11:08 Thursday night. Its first publication in yesterday's 2,378th issue of THE NEWS was the most talked-of feat in history of journalism. Ruth's body is seen straightened within its conning eyes, her helmeted head, face marked, hands clutching, and electrode strapped to her right leg with stocking down. Autopsy table on which body was removed is beside chair. —AP Wirephoto.)

A reporter violated the rules of Sing Sing prison by taking this photo with a camera strapped to his leg.



Grantland Rice broadcasting the 1923 World Series

one of the most influential political writers in America. The editorial page featured the drawings of Rollin Kirby and H. T. Webster, two of the most widely admired cartoonists of their time. But the glory of the *World* was its op-ed page (the right-hand page opposite the editorial page), featuring Heywood Broun ("It Seems to Me"), Frankin P. Adams ("The Conning Tower"), the theatre reviews of Alexander Woolcott, and other columns. The sale of the *World* to the Scripps-Howard chain by the Pulitzer family and the paper's merger into the *World-Telegram* in 1931 was a black day in newspaper history.

**The Trib.** The glory years of the *World* coincided with the great years of the *New York Herald Tribune* — formed when the *Tribune* purchased the *Herald* in 1924 — an acquisition that included *The Paris Herald*, the best of the three American dailies published in Paris. Although the *Trib* was regarded as the best-written and best-edited paper in New York, it could not match the circulation or advertising revenue of *The New York Times*.

**Grantland Rice.** The sports department of the *Trib* featured columns by W. O. McGeehan and Grantland Rice. McGeehan was an exponent of what city editor Stanley Walker called the "Aw-Nuts" school of sportswriting; Rice wrote "Hurrah" columns, and it was remarked that he covered games as though he were re-

porting on the Trojan War. Rice's account of the 1924 Notre Dame-Army football game had the most famous lead in American sports writing:

Outlined against a blue-gray October sky, the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore they are known as Famine, Pestilence, Destruction and Death. These are only aliases. Their real names are Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden.

He also wrote the most widely recognized couplet of sports verse:

For when the One Great Scorer comes to write against your name,  
 He marks — not that you won or lost — but how you played the game.

**By-Lines.** Columnists and feature writers were celebrities during the 1920s. The line-up included Damon Runyon, Walter Winchell, O. O. McIntyre, Floyd Gibbons, Paul Gallico, Will Rogers, Arthur Brisbane, Westbrook Pegler, Ring W. Lardner, Franklin P. Adams (F.P.A.), Heywood Broun, Walter Lippmann — all of whom had national reputations.

**Sources:**  
 Simon Michael Bessie, *Jazz Journalism: The Story of Tabloid Newspapers* (New York: Dutton, 1938);  
 Sidney Kobre, *Development of American Journalism* (Dubuque, Iowa: Braun, 1969);

Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History, 1690-1960*, third edition (New York: Macmillan, 1962);

Jerry Robinson, *The Comics: An Illustrated History of Comic Strip Art* (New York: Putnam, 1974).

## NEWSREELS

**Silent newsreels.** The first newsreel produced in America was the Pathé Weekly, commencing in 1911. Audiences at first-run movie theaters soon came to expect silent newsreels, especially during World War I.

**Movietone.** There were experimental sound newsreels with synchronized recordings, but the talkie newsreel was not practical until Theodore Case developed his sound-on-film system. The Fox Film Corporation purchased Case's system in 1926 and established the Fox Movietone Corporation. The first Fox Movietone News release showed Charles Lindbergh's takeoff on 20 May 1927. Combined with footage of the Washington ceremonies welcoming Lindbergh, it was exhibited as a special feature five months before the premiere of *The Jazz Singer*. The first all-sound Movietone newsreel was shown at the New York Roxy Theatre on 28 October 1927; it included segments on Niagara Falls, "The Romance of the Iron Horse," the Army-Yale football game, and a rodeo. On 3 December Movietone News was released as a regular weekly feature; this newsreel covered the Vatican Choir at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the blowing of the Conowingo Bridge in Maryland, and the Army-Navy football game.

**Competition.** The great success of Movietone News compelled the other movie studios to produce competing newsreels. Paramount News began in 1927 as "The Eyes of the World" and soon became "The Eyes and Ears of the World." Hearst Metrotone News (later the News of the Day) began releasing through Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1929. Pathé News added sound, and Universal Studios established its own sound-newsreel service. There were other short-lived newsreel production companies. At the peak of their popularity the newsreels ran for ten minutes and were changed twice a week. But the newsreels were not restricted to straight news coverage; human-interest and humorous features were included.

**Newsreel Theaters.** The newsreels were so popular that theaters showing only newsreels opened in large cities. The first newsreel theater was the Embassy at Broadway and 46th Street in Manhattan, which opened on 2 November 1929 and operated until 1949. Some of these newsreel theaters claimed to add new material every day. The movie theater newsreel died in the 1950s, one of the many things killed by television.

Source:

Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel, 1911-1967* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972).

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## COLUMBIA RECORDS

**JOLSON, AL, Comedian. (Exclusive Columbia Artist.)**

Al Jolson can probably make more kinds of people laugh than any other comedian. Financiers in their boxes and the gods in the gallery laugh themselves equally well when he appears. Jolson has never had an audience he could not win. This record makes him the supreme comedian of our day. Jolson's career started in a small vaudeville house in Brooklyn. He was offered a five weeks' booking if he would "black up" and do Negro songs and dialect. Soon after he joined Lew Dockstader's famous minstrels, from which king of the act of black-face Jolson said he learned all there was to learn. Jolson never makes a Columbia record of a song until he has perfected every word of it. For this reason his exclusive Columbia records are in their field what Jolson is in his.



Hixon-Connelly  
AL JOLSON

- |  |       |    |    |
|--|-------|----|----|
| April Showers (from <i>Bombay</i> ) and <i>Weep No More (My Mammy)</i> —Vernon Dalhart         | A3300 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Avalon and Old Pal, Why Doo?</i>  |       |    |    |
| Broken Doll and <i>My Hawaiian</i>   |       |    |    |
| <i>Coo-Coo</i>   |       |    |    |
| <i>Ding-a-Ring a Ring and Home Again Blues</i> —Frank Crumit                                   | A3375 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Down Where Swannee River Flows and They Made It Tactie Yies at Paradise</i> —Harrison, Reed | A3007 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Give Me My Mammy and My Mammy Knees</i> —Hart and Shaw                                      | A2540 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>I Gave Her That and Don't Take Advantage of My Good Nature</i> —Fred Hutchinson             | A2833 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>I'll Say She Does (from <i>Steady</i>) and Just as We Used to Do</i> —Baby Murren           | A2746 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>I'll Stand Beneath Your Window and I'll Be True and I'll Magic Blues</i> —Van and Schenk    | A3394 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>I'm All Bound With Mason Dixon Line and Darktown Strutters' Ball</i> —Collins and Hartman   | A2478 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>I'm Saving Up the Means to Get to New Orleans and Nigger Blues</i> —Geo. H. O'Connor        | A2064 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>No Everything and I've Got My Little Girl</i> —Stirling Trio                                | A2519 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Oh-My-O! and I Won't Go Where the Sweet Daddies Go</i> —Van and Schenk                      | A3361 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Rock, Oogie, Wa Wa!</i>   |       |    |    |
| <i>Rock-a-Bye Baby With a Dixie Melody</i> and <i>Alone, I'm in Wonderland</i> —Stirling Trio  | A3360 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Scandinavia</i>   |       |    |    |
| <i>Someone Else May Be There While I'm Gone</i> and <i>I Ain't Prepared</i> —Geo. H. O'Connor  | A2124 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Tell Me</i>   |       |    |    |
| <i>That Wonderful Kid from Matfield</i> and <i>I'll See You in Cuba</i> —Jack Kaufman          | A2821 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>There's a Lump of Sugar in Dixie and You Can Find a Little Dixie</i> —Campbell and Burr     | A2491 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Foot, Foot, Tootie (Good Bye)</i> and <i>True Blue Love</i> —Frank Crumit                   | A3703 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Where Did Robinson Crusoe Go?</i> and <i>I'm Going Away</i> —Burr                           | A1976 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>Yankee Hoola Hickey Doola</i> and <i>You Can't Get Along With Her</i> —Anna Chandler        | A1956 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>You-Hoo</i> and <i>You Can't Get Along With Her</i> —Broadway Quartet                       | A3313 | 10 | 75 |

- |  |       |    |    |
|--|-------|----|----|
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano.</b>  |       |    |    |
| <i>Cross My Heart and Hope to Die</i> and <i>For Me and My Girl</i> —M. J. O'Connell             | A2190 | 10 | 75 |
| <i>See Stewart, Jones and Peerless Quartet.</i>  |       |    |    |
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano, and IRVING GILLETTE, Tenor.</b>  |       |    |    |
| <i>Kiss Me Good-Night</i> and <i>On the Honeymoon Express</i> —Collins and Hartman               | A1420 | 10 | 75 |
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano, and PEERLESS QUARTET.</b>  |       |    |    |
| <i>Pussy Cat Rag</i> and <i>He'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under</i> —Frank Crumit      | A1457 | 10 | 75 |
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano, and WILL C. ROBBINS, Tenor.</b>  |       |    |    |
| <i>My Little Girl</i> and <i>I Want to Be There</i> —Will Robbins                                | A1724 | 10 | 75 |
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano, and STEWART, CAL, Comedian.</b>  |       |    |    |
| <i>Courtship of Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy and Uncle Josh and the Fire Dept.</i> —Cal Stewart     | A2824 | 10 | 75 |
| <b>JONES, ADA, Soprano, and WALTER VAN BRUNT, Tenor.</b>   |       |    |    |
| <i>It's Nice to Be Nice to a Nice Little Girl and Alexander's Ragtime Band</i> —Collins, Hartman | A1032 | 10 | 75 |

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A page from the 1923 Columbia record catalogue

## PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

**Low Fidelity.** Sales of phonographs and records decreased during the early years of the 1920s after reaching a peak in 1920. The chief cause of the decline was the radio craze, but the poor sound quality of the recordings and the phonographs impeded the growth of the industry. The recordings were made by the acoustical or mechanical system, which did not use amplifiers or microphones. These records did not reproduce the overtones of the sound, and the players used a large horn to magnify the sound. The result was scratchy and failed to provide a realistic sound reproduction. Most phonographs had to be hand-cranked every three or four records. In 1925 the wind-up cabinet-model Victrolas were priced from \$110 to \$250.

**Victor.** The industry was stimulated by the development in 1925 of an electrical recording process by Western Electric Company, which also developed the all-electric Orthophonic phonograph with a loudspeaker. Victor, the largest record-phonograph manufacturer, was the first to bring out electrical recordings for the Orthophonic Victrola. Sales increased steadily until 65 mil-

lion records were sold in 1929, almost half of which were from Victor.

**Inconvenience.** Even at their best, records in the 1920s were fragile, short-lived, inconvenient, and relatively expensive. The lacquer or wax records were easily cracked; they melted in hot weather; they became scratchy after a few playings; the ten-inch records played for four minutes. Popular music and comedy routines were recorded on the ten-inch disks that sold at an average price of seventy-five cents. Classic or serious music was on twelve-inch disks that cost \$1.25 or \$1.50. There were no record changers.

**Recording Stars.** The leading producers were Victor, Columbia, Okeh, Gennett, and Brunswick. The best-selling orchestra leader of the 1920s was Paul Whiteman, whose "Whispering"/"Japanese Sandman" sold more than a million copies for Victor in 1920. Dance-music records were very popular throughout the decade, and Victor had another best-seller in 1920 with bandleader Ben Selvin's "Dardanella." Victor also introduced the yodels of Jimmie Rodgers. Columbia lured Whiteman away from Victor in 1928 and gave him his own label. Singer-bandleader Ted Lewis ("When My Baby Smiles at Me") also had his own Columbia label; one of his hits was "Goodnight" in 1928. The Columbia roster boasted Bessie Smith. Brunswick hits included Isham Jones's "Wabash Blues" in 1921 and Al Jolson's "Sonny Boy" in 1924.

**Race Records.** The major companies developed "Race" series aimed at black buyers. Okeh was particularly attentive to black performers. Mamie Smith's "Crazy Blues"/"It's Right Here for You" sold an exceptional seventy-five thousand copies in 1920. Okeh sought out what was described as "Americana" (music by obscure or local performers) and had country and western and Yiddish record series. Black Swan, launched in 1921, was the first black-owned label. Its biggest success was Ethel Waters's "Oh Daddy"/"Down Home Blues." Records enlarged the audience for black jazz and blues — exposing whites to music they had never before heard and could hear only on records. Gennett recorded some of the most famous jazz figures of the 1920s, including King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Jelly Roll Morton. Bix Beiderbecke made his early records for Gennett.

**Radio Stars.** Most of the recording stars of the early 1920s — for example, Al Jolson, Bessie Smith, and Eddie Cantor — had previously made their reputations on the stage. However, at the end of the decade the reputations of the most popular recording entertainers had been achieved through radio exposure. Billy Jones and Ernie Hare (The Happiness Boys), Moran and Mack (The Two Black Crows), and Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden (Amos 'n' Andy) were obscure vaudeville performers before radio made them national figures.

**Source:** Roland Gelatt, *The Fabulous Phonograph: From Edison to Stereo* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1966).

## PUBLISHING HOUSES LAUNCHED DURING THE 1920S

1920	Thomas Seltzer
1921	Harcourt, Brace (reorganized from Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1919)
1922	Haldeman-Julius
1923	Albert & Charles Boni
1923	Dial
1924	International Publishers
1924	Simon & Schuster
1924	Payson & Clarke
1924	Greenberg: Publisher
1924	Minton, Balch
1925	Viking
1925	Norton
1926	William Morrow
1926	John Day
1926	Vanguard
1927	Random House (reorganized from Modern Library, 1925)
1928	Horace Liveright (reorganized from Boni & Liveright, 1917)
1928	Covici-Friede
1928	Coward-McCann
1929	Cape & Smith
1929	Farrar & Rinehart
1929	University of New Mexico Press

## PUBLISHING

**New Houses.** Writers require publication, and publishers need books. The 1920s were a golden era for American writing and publishing. During the decade twenty influential trade publishing houses and seven university presses were launched. (An influential publisher is one that publishes significant authors and widely read books, good or bad; the longevity of the imprint is also a factor in its influence.) More enduring major American houses were founded during the 1920s than in any other decade.

**Opportunity.** Apart from the availability of ambitious young men who wanted their own companies, the cause for this proliferation was economic. A publishing com-

AMERICAN BOOKS AND AUTHORS PUBLISHED BY SCRIBNERS, 1920-1929

- Conrad Aiken, *Blue Voyage* (1927)  
 ———, *Costumes by Eros* (1928)  
 Edward W. Bok, *The Americanization of Edward Bok* (1920)  
 James Boyd, *Drums* (1925)  
 ———, *Marching On* (1927)  
 Thomas Boyd, *Through the Wheat* (1923)  
 Morley Callaghan, *Strange Fugitive* (1928)  
 ———, *A Native Argosy* (1929)  
 Calvin Coolidge, *The Price of Freedom* (1924)  
 F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise* (1920)  
 ———, *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920)  
 ———, *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922)  
 ———, *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922)  
 ———, *The Vegetable* (1923)  
 ———, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)  
 ———, *All the Sad Young Men* (1926)  
 Ernest Hemingway, *The Torrents of Spring* (1926)  
 ———, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)  
 ———, *Men Without Women* (1927)  
 ———, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)  
 Will James, *Cowboys North and South* (1924)  
 ———, *The Drifting Cowboy* (1925)  
 ———, *Smoky: The Story of A Cow Pony* (1926)  
 ———, *Cow Country* (1927)  
 ———, *Sand* (1929)  
 Ring W. Lardner, *How to Write Short Stories* (1924)  
 ———, *What of It?* (1925)  
 ———, *The Love Nest and Other Stories* (1926)  
 ———, *Round Up* (1929)  
 John P. Marquand, *The Unspeakable Gentleman* (1922) [first novel]  
 ———, *The Black Cargo* (1925)  
 Thomas Nelson Page, *The Red Riders* (1924)  
 Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography* (1920)  
 ———, *Diaries of Boyhood and Youth* (1928)  
 Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt, *East of the Sun and West of the Moon* (1926)  
 George Santayana, *Character and Opinions in the United States* (1920)  
 ———, *Soliloquies in England, and Later Soliloquies* (1922)  
 ———, *Dialogues in Limbo* (1925)  
 ———, *Platonism and the Spiritual Life* (1927)  
 ———, *The Realm of Essence* (1927)  
 Robert E. Sherwood, *The Road to Rome* (1927)  
 John W. Thomason Jr., *Fix Bayonets!* (1926)  
 Arthur Train, *Tut! Tut! Mr. Tutt* (1924)  
 ———, *Page Mr. Tutt* (1926)  
 ———, *When Tutt Meets Tutt* (1927)  
 S. S. Van Dine, *The Benson Murder Case* (1926)  
 ———, *The Canary Murder Case* (1927)  
 ———, *The Greene Murder Case* (1928)  
 ———, *The Bishop Murder Case* (1929)  
 Edith Wharton, *In Morocco* (1920)  
 ———, *A Son at the Front* (1924)  
 ———, *The Writing of Fiction* (1925)  
 Edmund Wilson, *I Thought of Daisy* (1928)  
 Thomas Wolfe, *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929)

pany could be started with comparatively little financing: Richard L. Simon and Max L. Schuster launched their house with a \$4,000 bankroll and hit pay dirt with their first book, the first crossword-puzzle book. The culture of America was print-based. Despite the increasing competition from radio, reading was still the chief source of pleasure and instruction.

**Personal Publishing.** As impressive as the number of new imprints was the range of their editorial rationales. Most of the lists represented the taste and judgment of one or two men — the owner or the partners. Publishing was personal; some of the young owners regarded themselves as crusaders. Thus, Emanuel Haldeman-Julius of Girard, Kansas, published some two thousand titles of the Little Blue Books at ten cents each. These paper-cov-

ered books were 3 1/2" x 5" in format and had from 32 to 128 pages. Some of the titles expressed Haldeman-Julius's socialist convictions, and some had titillating titles (*Confidential Chats with Husbands* by Dr. Lay); but most of the Little Blue Books provided worthwhile literature (Greek and Roman classics) and self-education (*Botany for Beginners*) for millions of readers who would otherwise not have had access to it. Vanguard Press was started by Charles Garland to disburden himself of his inheritance; its purpose was to publish inexpensive books to promote social justice. W. W. Norton organized his firm for the main purpose of educating readers, and it developed into an important trade and textbook publisher.

**Autodidacticism.** The 1920s' concern with education was evidenced by the success of books that made accessi-





If only you knew the first time you made the mistakes in English shown above, what would you think of him? Would he inspire your respect? Would you be inclined to make a friend of him? Would you care to introduce him to others as a close friend of yours?

## What Are YOUR Mistakes in English?

They may offend others as much as these offend you

These errors are bad for you to see. Perhaps, however, you make other mistakes which offend others as much as these offend you. How do you know that you do not mispronounce certain words? Are you always sure that the things you say and write are grammatically correct? To you they may seem correct, but others may know they are wrong. Unfortunately, people will not correct you when you make mistakes, all they do is to make a mental reservation about you. He is ignorant and uncultured, they think. So you really have no way of telling when your English offends others.

Sherrin Cody, perhaps the country's foremost teacher of practical English, has for the last twenty years applied scientific principles to teaching the correct use of our language. He made tens of thousands of tests and found that the trouble with old methods is that points learned do not stick in the mind. In which you were asked to remember rules, and if you forgot the rules you never could tell what was right and what was wrong. Mr. Cody has solved

the problem by creating distinctive habits of using good English through the use of his self-correcting method. A patent was granted to Mr. Cody on his unique device, and now he places it at your disposal. This invention is simple, fascinating, time-saving, and incomparably efficient. You do the lesson given on any page that you see correctly, how Mr. Cody himself would correct it. You mark your errors and check them in the first black column. Next week you try that page again, correct your errors, and check them in the second column. You see at a glance what you have learned and what you have failed to remember, until you have reached the next point in spelling, pronunciation, punctuation, grammar, and expression.

A remarkable advantage of Mr. Cody's course is the speed with which these habit-forming practice drills can be carried out. You can write the answers to fifty questions in 15 minutes and correct your work in five minutes more. You waste no time in going over

the things you already know. Your errors are automatically corrected on the machine, and you are in the habit of making and through constant practice you soon acquire the correct habits in place of the former habit. There is no tedious copying. There is no heart-breaking drudgery.

A command of polished and effective English, the result of education and culture, is essential to success in any career. It is a favorable impression upon those with whom you come in contact. In business, as well as in social life, correct English gives you many advantages and better opportunities. While you are learning, however, you must have a good teacher. And now, in only 15 minutes a day, you can get better—your own excellent teacher—by using the 100% self-correcting method.

A new book explaining Mr. Cody's remarkable method is ready. If you are not sure, however, of the method in general, examine your course, from which this new book has been instantly prepared. The exact words you wish to master are listed in the new book. "How to Speak and Write Masterly English" will prove a revelation to you. Send the coupon on a letter or postal card now. SHERWIN GODY'S SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, 29 South Building, Boston, N. Y.

Please send me the new book "How to Speak and Write Masterly English".  
Name.....  
Address.....

### ADVERTISING AND EDUCATION

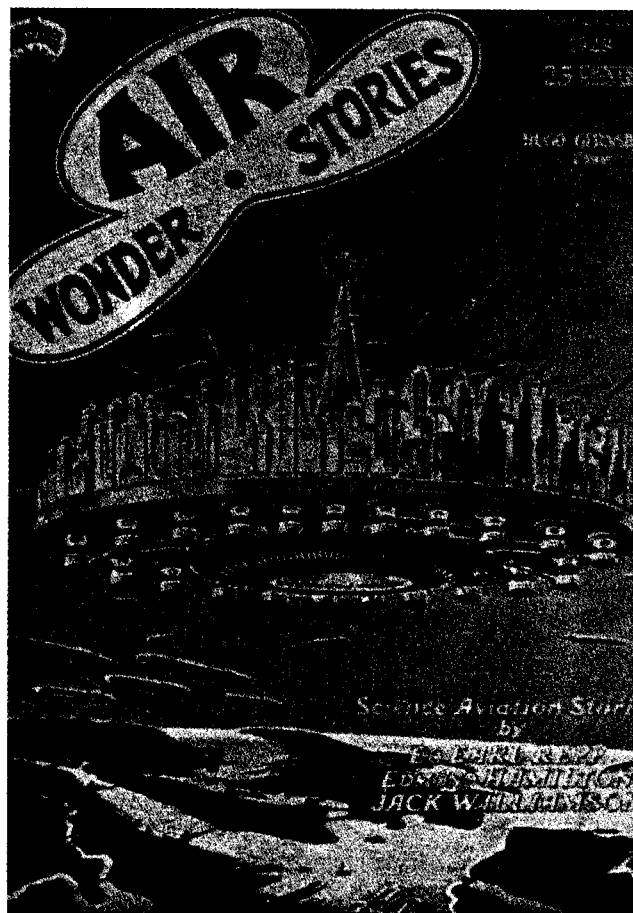
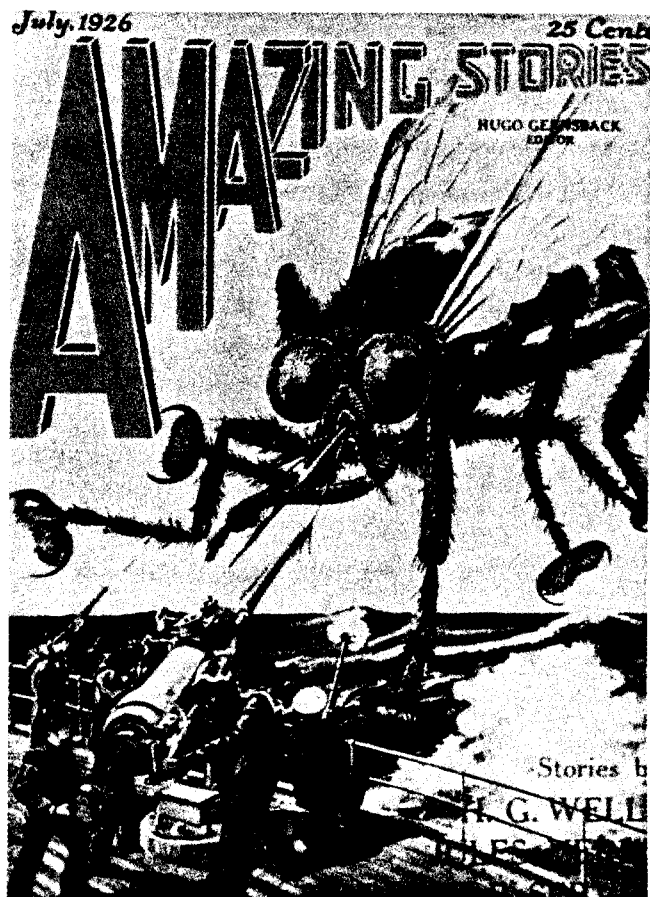
Advertisement for one of the correspondence schools that were popular during the 1920s

ble the things that educated people are supposed to know. The most successful one-volume works were H. G. Wells's *The Outline of History* (1920) and Hendrik Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind* (1921). Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers* (1926) started in the Little Blue Books series and grew into the multivolume *The Story of Civilization*. All of these volumes actually became best-sellers; Van Loon's book — which was originally published for juveniles — earned him \$200,000 in two years. The popularity of these volumes was probably more an indication of the social insecurity of the new leisure class than an expression of a hunger for knowledge for its own sake. The organization of education in convenient, time-saving packages was characteristic of the 1920s. The self-made man and the woman he had married before they had time or money for culture were buyers of books that would allow them to become self-educated. The market for autodidacticism cut across class boundaries. Newspaper and magazine ads offered correspondence courses that would teach salesmanship, piano playing, and grammar. A long-running ad asked, "Do you make these mistakes in English?"

The Five-Foot Shelf. Autodidacticism achieved respectability with *The Harvard Classics*. Having stated

## BONI & LIVERIGHT HIGHSPOTS (1920-1929)

- Sherwood Anderson, *Dark Laughter* (1925)
- Anderson, *Tar: A Midwest Childhood* (1926)
- Gertrude Atherton, *Black Oxen* (1923)
- Djuna Barnes, *A Book* (1923)
- Barnes, *Ryder* (1928)
- Hart Crane, *White Buildings* (1926)
- E. E. Cummings, *The Enormous Room* (1922)
- Cummings, *Is 5* (1926)
- Cummings, *Him* (1927)
- Hilda Doolittle, *Collected Poems of H. D.* (1925)
- Theodore Dreiser, *Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub* (1920)
- Dreiser, *A Book About Myself* (1922)
- Dreiser, *An American Tragedy* (1925)
- Dreiser, *Chains* (1927)
- Dreiser, *A Gallery of Women* (1929)
- Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (1927)
- T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922)
- William Faulkner, *Soldiers' Pay* (1926)
- Faulkner, *Mosquitoes* (1927)
- Ben Hecht, *Gargoyles* (1922)
- Hecht, *The Florentine Dagger* (1923)
- Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time* (1925)
- James G. Huneker, *Painted Veils* (1920)
- Robinson Jeffers, *Roan Stallion; Tamar and Other Poems* (1925)
- Jeffers, *The Women at Point Sur* (1927)
- Jeffers, *Cawder* (1929)
- Jeffers, *Dear Judas* (1929)
- Anita Loos, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1925)
- Loos, "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes" (1928)
- Edgar Lee Masters, *The New Spoon River* (1924)
- Eugene O'Neill, *Beyond the Horizon* (1920)
- O'Neill, *The Emperor Jones, Different, The Straw* (1921)
- O'Neill, *Gold* (1921)
- O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape, Anna Christie, The First Man* (1922)
- O'Neill, *All God's Chillun Got Wings and Welded* (1924)
- O'Neill, *Desire Under the Elms* (1925)
- O'Neill, *The Great God Brown, The Fountain, The Moon of the Caribbees and Other Plays* (1926)
- O'Neill, *Marco Millions* (1927)
- O'Neill, *Lazarus Laughed* (1927)
- O'Neill, *Strange Interlude* (1928)
- O'Neill, *Dynamo* (1929)
- Dorothy Parker, *Enough Rope* (1926)
- Parker, *Sunset Gun* (1928)
- Ezra Pound, *Poems, 1918-21* (1921)
- Pound, *Personae* (1926)
- Upton Sinclair, *Oil!* (1927)
- Sinclair, *Boston* (1928)
- Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1923)



Covers for two of Hugo Gernsback's pulp magazines

that a man could acquire an education in the liberal arts by reading for fifteen minutes a day from books that would occupy five feet of shelf space, Harvard president Charles W. Eliot backed his assertion by editing a set of fifty volumes with selections from hundreds of great books. Sold mainly by mail during the 1920s, the “five-foot shelf” became a fixture in many American homes.

**Sources:**

Peter Dzwonkoski, ed., *American Literary Publishing Houses, 1900–1980: Trade and Paperback*; *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, volume 46 (Detroit: Brucoli Clark/Gale, 1986);

Emanuel Haldeman-Julius, *The First Hundred Million* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1928);

John Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, volume 3 (New York: Bowker, 1978).

### PULP MAGAZINES

*Black Mask*. The terms “pulp magazine” and “dime novel” have become interchangeable, but the two types of magazines had separate histories. The dime novels were paper-covered thin books that resembled magazines and usually had one long story. They became popular during the Civil War, and the contents were mostly adventure or western stories. Ned Buntline’s Buffalo Bill stories were

widely read in this format. Publisher Frank Munsey created the first pulp magazine, *Argosy*, in 1896: a 7" x 10" collection of fiction, printed on wood-pulp paper. Later, pulps featured lurid or exciting covers. Each issue included stories and novelettes; some pulps serialized novels. Most sold for ten cents or fifteen cents. Not all magazines printed on pulp paper were regarded as pulp magazines; the term also indicated content or editorial rationale. The authentic pulps were almost always restricted to a particular subject or setting (the West, sports, crime, aviation) and intended for an unsophisticated readership. Thus, *The Smart Set*, which H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan took over writing in 1914, was printed on pulp paper but was not classified as a pulp because it was a journal of opinion and literature with high editorial standards. However, Mencken and Nathan launched three pulps — *Parisienne* (1915), *Saucy Stories* (1916), and *Black Mask* (1920) — for the purpose of making quick profits. *Black Mask* became the most celebrated mystery-detective-crime pulp under the editorship of Joseph Shaw, who took over in 1926. Shaw and his star contributor, Dashiell Hammett, formulated what became known as the hard-boiled school of writing — stories in which tough characters engage in violent action and use what is supposed to be the vernacular speech. Although

## CRIME/MYSTERY/DETECTIVE PULPS, 1920-1929

*Black Mask* (1920)  
*Love Story Magazine* (1921)  
*Detective Tales* (1922)  
*Midnight* (1922)  
*Midnight Mysteries* (1922)  
*Weird Tales* (1923)  
*Flynn's* (1924)  
*Real Detective Tales* (1924)  
*Real Detective Tales and Mystery Stories* (1925)  
*Clues* (1926)  
*Flynn's Weekly* (1926)  
*Mystery Stories* (1927)  
*Flynn's Weekly Detective Fiction* (1927)  
*Thrilling Tales* (1927)  
*Underworld* (1927)  
*Secret Service Stories* (1927)  
*Sensational Startling Stories* (1927)  
*Crime Mysteries* (1927)  
*Cabaret Stories* (1928)  
*Dragnet Magazine* (1928)  
*Tropical Adventures* (1928)  
*Detective Fiction Weekly* (1928)  
*Gangster Stories* (1929)  
*Fire Fighters* (1929)  
*Best Detective* (1929)  
*Detective Classics* (1929)  
*Murder Mysteries* (1929)  
*Price Detective Magazine* (1929)  
*Spy Stories* (1929)  
*Thrills of the Jungle* (1929)  
*Underworld Magazine* (1929)  
*Zeppelin Stories* (1929)

the pulps were regarded as subliterary, the best pulp writers — particularly in the mystery and science-fiction genres — influenced the material and style of modern fiction. Hammett serialized *Red Harvest*, *The Dain Curse*, and *The Maltese Falcon* in *Black Mask* during 1928-1929.

**Sci Fi.** The pioneer of pulp science fiction was editor-publisher Hugo Gernsback, who launched *Amazing Stories*, *The Magazine of Scientifiction* in 1926. It reached 150,000 circulation at twenty-five cents an issue. Gernsback also initiated *Science Wonder Stories* and *Air Wonder Stories* in 1929.

**Categories.** There is no complete record of pulp magazines because many of them published only one or two issues, but hundreds of new pulps appeared during the 1920s. Each aimed at a particular market. Sports and westerns spawned the most magazines. In the sports field there were pulps devoted to baseball, football, boxing, and other games. Frederick Faust, who wrote as Max Brand among other pseudonyms, was almost certainly the most prolific western writer. There were successful romance pulps aimed at the female market, but the pulp readership was predominantly male. The "spicy" pulps, whose covers promised titillation and eroticism that the contents did not deliver, were obviously aimed at men. The pulps survived through the 1940s.

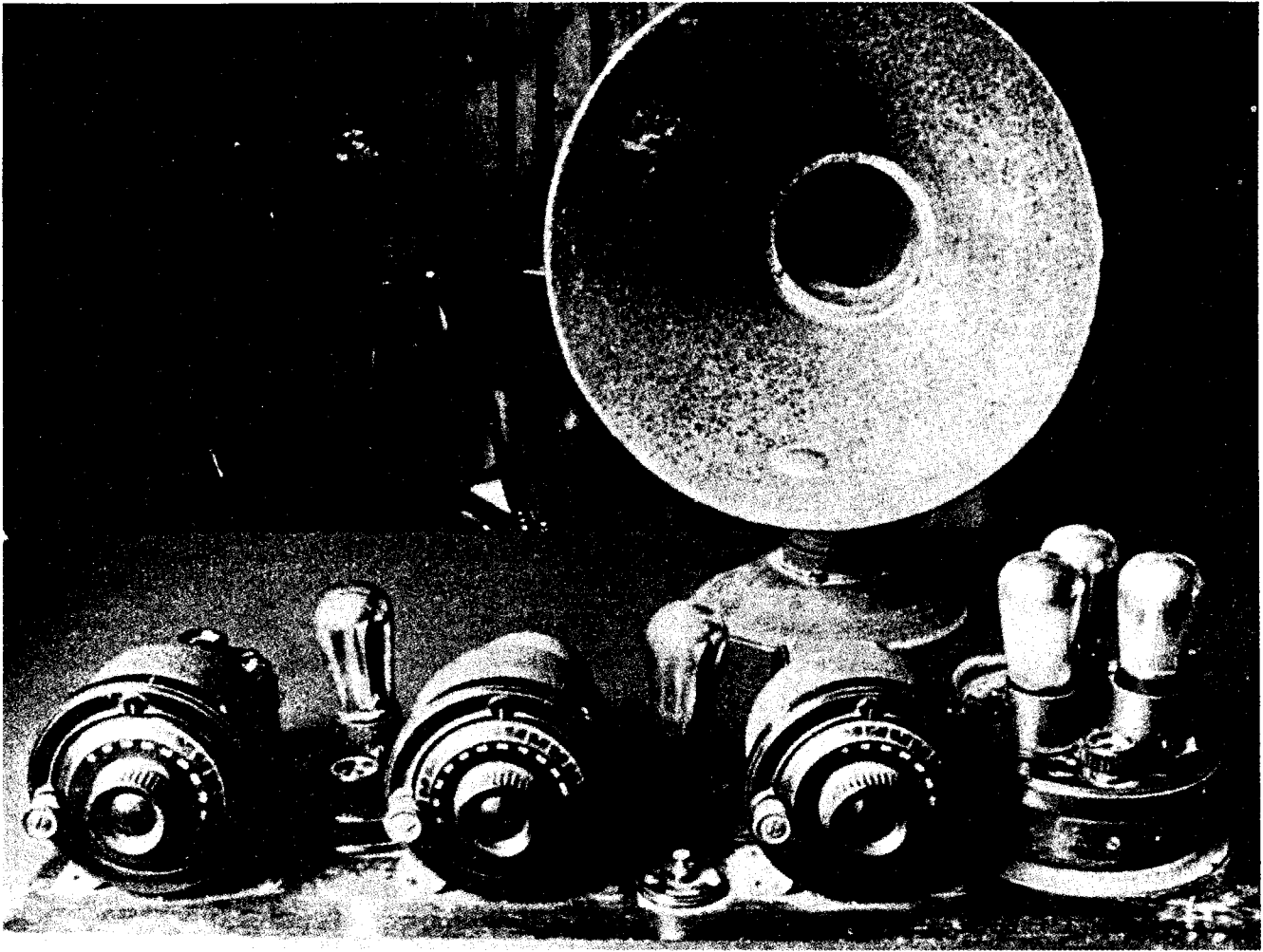
### Source:

Ron Goulart, *Cheap Thrills: An Informal History of the Pulp Magazines* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1972).

## RADIO PROGRAMMING

**Battery Power.** Radios were first marketed for home use in 1920; 5 million were sold annually by 1929. The leading brands were RCA, Atwater Kent, and Crosley — all of which were battery-powered. The batteries were expensive, heavy, and inconvenient. RCA's Radiola was the most widely advertised make; the basic model with earphones, but not loudspeaker, sold for thirty-five dollars (batteries and antenna extra) in 1924. The price range for better models was \$150 to \$350.

**Mostly Music.** Broadcasting began for the purpose of selling radio receivers. Before the later years of the 1920s, radio programming was unimaginative, offering mainly speeches, lectures, and music. The fact of radio was still so remarkable that people would listen to anything just for the sake of hearing sound coming out of the box — just as in 1947 people would watch anything on television, and still do. There were such radio-broadcast anomalies as bridge and basket-weaving lessons. In 1925 more than 70 percent of air time was given over to music, .1 percent to drama, .7 percent to news, and .2 percent to sports. Every week the stations broadcast speeches from meetings of civic and professional organizations, such as The Commercial Law League of America, The Foreign Policy Association, The Pennsylvania Society, The Woodrow Wilson Foundation, The Government Club, and The Advertising Club. Radio tried to be respectable, and the entertainment it provided was presumably high-class. Most of the air time was allotted to music, with a considerable portion of classics and opera. Many orchestras were named for a sponsor: the Ipana (toothpaste) Troubadours, the A&P (grocery chain) Gypsies, the Cliquot Club (soda water) Eskimos, the Champion (spark plugs) Sparkers, the Hoover (vacuum cleaner) Sentinels, the Cities Service (gasoline) Orchestra, the Wrigley (chewing gum) Orchestra, and the Seiberling (tires) Singers. The Goodrich (tires) Silvertown Orchestra featured the anonymous Silver Masked Tenor who wore a mask when he sang. The most popular variety



The Atwater-Kent five-tube receiver was a popular model in 1924.

program was *Roxy and his Gang*, hosted by movie-palace builder Samuel Rothafel (Roxy). Commencing in 1927 on NBC, the opening show included a chorus of 100 singers, a complete symphony orchestra of 110 musicians, and a studio orchestra with 60 musicians. Roxy later broadcast the first complete symphony and the first complete opera. Rudy Vallee's *Fleischmann (yeast) Hour*, a variety show that began in 1929, included drama written especially for radio; previously radio programs relied on recycled stage plays. Yet at the end of the decade there were only a few radio stars — that is, performers around whom the program was organized — Rudy Vallee, who had his own orchestra, being one.

**Comedy and Sports.** There were surprisingly few radio comedy stars. The earliest comedians to have their own network program were Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, a song-and-patter team sponsored by the Happiness Candy Company and accordingly billed as the Happiness Boys, on the NBC network in 1923. They were renamed the Interwoven Pair on CBS when Interwoven Socks became their sponsor in 1929. They invariably opened their program with this song:

How do you do, every-body, how do you do?

Gee it's great to say hell-o to all of you;  
I'm Billy Jones  
I'm Ernie Hare,  
And we're a silly-looking pair;  
How do you doodle-doodle-doodle-doodle-do?

But *Amos 'n' Andy*, which was broadcast six times a week on NBC, outdrew any other program. There were no regularly scheduled sports broadcasts, but major events were covered. The Jack Dempsey-Georges Carpentier heavyweight championship bout was broadcast on 2 July 1921. The first baseball-game broadcast (Pirates and Phillies) was presented by KDKA Pittsburgh on 5 August 1921. The first World Series broadcast came in 1921, facilitated by the circumstance that the Yankees and Giants both played at the Polo Grounds. On 1 January 1927 the Rose Bowl football game provided the first coast-to-coast broadcast. Graham McNamee became the best-known sports announcer of the 1920s. Radio news programs were slow to develop, and news commentators — as differentiated from news announcers — were regarded as a breakthrough. H. V. Kaltenborn began his weekly news commentary or analysis over WEAf New York in

**MAJOR NETWORK RADIO PROGRAMS – SEASON 1926-1927  
ON AIR JANUARY 1927**

Sponsor	Program	Sponsor	Program
General Variety		Iodent	<i>Iodent Program</i>
Eveready	<i>Eveready Hour</i>	Ipana	<i>Ipana Troubadours</i>
Concert Music		Royal Typewriters	<i>Royal Music Makers</i> <i>WEAF Musical</i> <i>Comedy Hour</i>
Atwater Kent	<i>Atwater Kent Hour</i> <i>Boston Symphony Orchestra</i> <i>Capitol Theater Concert</i>	Light Music	
Brunswick	<i>Chicago Civic Opera</i>	Wonder Bread	<i>Jolly Wonder Bakers</i>
La France	<i>La France Orchestra</i>	Happiness Candy	<i>Jones &amp; Hare</i> <i>The Vikings: male</i> <i>quartette</i>
Maxwell House	<i>Maxwell House Hour</i> <i>Midweek Hymn Sing</i>	Smith Brothers	<i>Trade &amp; Mark: songs,</i> <i>patter</i>
Baulkite	<i>National Symphony Orchestra:</i> <i>Walter Damrosch</i>	News, Commentary	<i>Frederick William Wile:</i> <i>Political Situation</i>
RCA	<i>RCA Radiotrons: John</i> <i>Charles Thomas</i>	Religious Talk Programs	<i>Men's Conference: Rev S.</i> <i>Parkes Cadman</i> <i>St. George Vesper Service</i> <i>Synagogue Service</i> <i>Young People's Conference:</i> <i>Rev Dan Poling</i>
Musical Variety		Miscellaneous Talk Programs	
A&P	<i>A&amp;P Gypsies: string ensemble</i>	Work-Whitehead	<i>Auction Bridge Game:</i> <i>panel on bridge</i>
Champion	<i>Champion Spark Plug Hour</i>	Cook & Sons	<i>Cook's Travelogue: travel</i> <i>talk</i>
Cliquot Club	<i>Cliquot Club Eskimos</i>	Daytime Homemakers' Talks	
Coward Shoes	<i>Coward Comfort Hour:</i> <i>familiar music</i>	General Mills	<i>Betty Crocker: food talk</i>
Davis	<i>Davis Saxophone Octette</i>		
Amazo Cook Oil	<i>Don Amazie, Wizard: musical</i> <i>travelogue</i>		
Goodrich Tires	<i>Goodrich Zippers: banjo</i> <i>ensemble</i>		
Hires	<i>Hires Harvesters</i>		

Source: Harrison B. Summers, ed., *History of Broadcasting* (New York: Arno & New York Times, 1971).



Ernie Hare and Billy Jones, the Happiness Boys, were the first successful radio comedy team.

October 1923, and his readily recognizable clipped speech was still heard on radio in 1950.

**Molly and Others.** Serial drama — programs with a continuing story line involving the same characters — was a late development. The longest-running serial, *The Rise of the Goldbergs*, began in 1929 on NBC; it was written by Gertrude Berg, who also performed the role of Molly Goldberg. It was the first major Jewish comedy on radio and was on television a quarter of a century later. Other enduring programs that dated from the 1920s were *The National Barn Dance* (WLS Chicago, 1924), the *Grand Ole Opry* (WSM Nashville, 1925), and *The National Farm and Home Hour*, a public-service program (NBC Blue Network, 1928).

NBC and CBS. The quality of programming improved markedly with the competition between the National Broadcasting Company and Columbia Broadcasting System networks for listeners, affiliated stations, and advertising revenue. In 1926 NBC linked twenty-four stations into the first network, which was inaugurated on 15 November with a four-and-a-half hour show from

## Announcing the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

National radio broadcasting with better programs permanently assured by this important action of the Radio Corporation of America in the interest of the listening public

**WEAF Receives Concession of Authority.** It is the largest distributor of radio receiving sets in the world, handles the entire output in this field of the Westinghouse and General Electric factories.

It does not say this boastfully. It does not say it with apology. It says it for the purpose of making clear the fact that it is more largely interested, more actively interested. If you please, in the best possible broadcasting in the United States than anyone else.

**Radio for 14,000,000 Homes.** The number for receiving sets in the future will be determined largely by the quantity and quality of our program broadcast.

We say quantity because they must be diversified enough so that some of them will appeal to all kinds of listeners.

We say quality because each program must be the best of its kind. If that ideal were to be reached, no home in the United States would afford to be without a radio receiving set.

Today the best available statistics indicate that 1,000,000 homes are equipped, and 31,000,000 homes remain to be supplied.

Radio receiving sets of the best representative quality should be made available for all, and we hope to make them cheap enough so that all may buy.

The key has been by whom the radio receives, but not in a anything. It must ever be an instrument of service.

### WEAF Purchased for \$1,000,000

The Radio Corporation of America, therefore, is announced, just as the public is, in having the most adequate program broadcast. It is announced, as the public is, in having them comprehensive and free from discrimination.

Any one of radio transmissions which causes the public to feel that the quality of the programs is not the highest, that the use of radio is not the broadest and best use in the public interest, that it is not the best advantage of which power, will be detrimental to the public in radio, and therefore to the Radio Corporation of America.

To insure, therefore, the development of the great service, the Radio Corporation of

America has purchased for one million dollars station WEAF from the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, that company having decided to retire from the broadcasting business.

The Radio Corporation of America will assume active control of that station on November 15.

### National Broadcasting Company Organized

The Radio Corporation of America has decided to incorporate that station, which has achieved such a deservedly high reputation for variety and character of its programs, under the name of the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

### The Purpose of the New Company

The purpose of that company will be to provide the best program available for broadcasting in the United States.

The National Broadcasting Company will not only broadcast these programs through station WEAF, but it will make them available to other broadcasting stations throughout the country so far as it may be practicable to do so, and they may desire to take them.

It is hoped that arrangements may be made so that every one of national importance may be broadcast widely throughout the United States.

### No Monopoly of the Air

The Radio Corporation of America is not in any sense seeking a monopoly of the air. That would be a liability rather than an asset. It is seeking, however, to provide machinery which will insure a national distribution of national programs, and a wider distribution of programs of the highest quality.

If others will engage in this business the Radio Corporation of America will welcome their entry, whether it be cooperation or competition.

If other radio manufacturing companies, competitors of the Radio Corporation of America, wish to use the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company for the purpose of making known to the public their receiving sets, they may do so on the same terms as accorded to other clients. The necessity of providing adequate broadcast-

ing is apparent. The problem of finding the best means of doing it is yet unsolved. The Radio Corporation of America is making this experiment in the interest of the art and the betterment of the industry.

### A Public Advisory Council

In order that the National Broadcasting Company may be advised as to the best type of program, that discrimination may be avoided, that the public may be assured that the broadcasting is being done in the fairest and best way, always allowing for human frailties and human imperfections, it has created an Advisory Council, composed of twelve members, in a chosen cross-section of various shades of public opinion, which will from time to time give it the benefit of their judgment and suggestions. The members of this Council will be so named as soon as their acceptance shall have been obtained.

### M. H. Aylesworth to be President

The President of the new National Broadcasting Company will be M. H. Aylesworth, for many years Managing Director of the National Electric Light Association. He will perform the executive and administrative duties of the corporation.

Mr. Aylesworth, while not hitherto identified with the radio industry or broadcasting, has had public experience as Chairman of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, and, through his work with the association which represents the electrical industry, has a broad understanding of the technical problems which measure the pace of broadcasting.

One of his major responsibilities will be to see that the operations of the National Broadcasting Company reflect enlightened public opinion, which expresses itself as promptly the morning after any error of taste or judgment or departure from fact.

We have no hesitation in recommending the National Broadcasting Company to the people of the United States.

It will need the help of all listeners. It will make mistakes. If the public will make known its views in the affairs of the company from time to time, we are confident that the new broadcasting company will be an instrument of great public service.

## RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA

OWEN D. YOUNG, Chairman of the Board

JAMES G. HARBORD, President

Newspaper advertisement announcing the formation of NBC in 1926

New York and other cities. In 1927 NBC formed two networks: the Red Network (anchor station WEAF New York) and the Blue Network (anchor station WJZ New York).

**Who Was Listening.** CBS was launched at the end of 1928 and had forty-nine affiliated stations in January 1929. Radio advertising revenue rose from \$4 million in 1927 to \$40 million in 1929. At the end of 1929 more than 12 million American families — 40 percent of the population — had radios. New York led with 58 percent; only 5 percent of Mississippi families owned radios. Yet while the networks were competing for listeners during the 1920s, they had no clear sense of how many listeners they had or what the listeners were listening to. A radio ratings system, the Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting, was developed in 1929 by Archibald M. Crossley to determine how many people listened to NBC and CBS.

**Early TV.** Through the second half of the decade there were confident predictions of the advent of television, which was successfully demonstrated by 1927. Although there were television broadcasts for the public in 1928 and 1929, the Depression postponed the development of television.



Lila and DeWitt Wallace, founders of *The Reader's Digest*

**Sources:**

- Gleason L. Archer, *History of Radio to 1926* (New York: Arno/New York Times, 1971);  
 Erik Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel*, volume 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966);  
 Samuel L. Rothafel and Raymond F. Yates, *Broadcasting, Its New Day* (New York: Century, 1925);  
 Robert Sobel, *RCA* (New York: Stein & Day, 1986);  
 Christopher H. Sterling and John M. Kittross, *Stay Tuned: A Concise History of American Broadcasting*, second edition (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, 1990).

**THE READER'S DIGEST**

**Small Wonder.** The digest magazine was introduced in the 1920s; the term *digest* applied to both the format (5" x 7½") and the editorial policy. The first and only enduring digest magazine — which gave its name to the category — was *The Reader's Digest*, founded by newlyweds DeWitt and Lila Wallace in 1922. DeWitt Wallace

condensed articles published in other magazines to provide a monthly selection of "enduring value" cut for people who did not have time to read many magazines or long articles; there was no fiction. Because there were no ads, the price of twenty-five cents (three dollars per year) was high at a time when most magazines cost ten cents or fifteen cents. The no-ad policy held until 1955. The first issue, dated February 1922, went to 1,500 subscribers. By 1929 there were 216,000 subscribers, and *The Reader's Digest*, which ultimately reached a world circulation of more than 30 million, was on its way to becoming the most successful magazine in history. From the start *The Reader's Digest* had critics who charged that it was cheerfully lowbrow and oversimplified complex ideas. Nonetheless, the editorial formula worked: readership extended to 163 countries with editions in sixteen languages. The digest concept was widely imitated, but none of the imitations succeeded.

**Editorial Policy.** The extraordinary popularity of *The Reader's Digest* resulted from the nature of the material and the character of the magazine as much as from its readability. Until the operation became too big for one editor to control, DeWitt Wallace was responsible for selecting all the articles: "I simply hunt for things that interest me, and if they do, I print them." In the early years he worked in the New York Public Library, making condensations himself in longhand, and until the 1930s he was not charged reprint fees. The *Digest* began including book condensations in 1934. The overall tone of each issue was optimistic and wholesome, with a certain spiritual quality; the *Digest* was politically conservative, but it had a progressive attitude toward sex education. The *Digest* had a missionary aspect, engaging in medical crusades and campaigning for safer driving. It was among the earliest magazines to publish the connection between cigarettes and lung cancer.

**Sources:**

- John Bambridge, *Little Wonder, or, The Reader's Digest and How it Grew* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946);  
 John Heidenry, *Theirs Was the Kingdom: Lila and DeWitt Wallace and the Story of the Reader's Digest* (New York: Norton, 1993).

# HEADLINE MAKERS

## HEYWOOD BROUN

1888-1939

COLUMNIST



**Apprenticeship.** In an era of brilliant newspapermen, some of whom acquired national reputations and legendary status, Heywood Broun was probably the columnist most respected by his readers and colleagues. Broun was born into a well-off Brooklyn family and attended Harvard as a member of the class of 1910. The extracurricular pleasures of the poker table and the Red Sox and an inability to pass French prevented him from graduating. He went to work as a reporter — at that time the normal move for someone with literary ambition. In 1912 he began covering sports for the *New York Tribune*, and his articles were admired for their detail and vivid description. After going to France as a correspondent during World War I — where he criticized the American leadership — he returned to the *Tribune* as drama critic and literary editor.

**“It Seems to Me.”** Broun’s national fame and influence commenced in 1921 with his daily column, “It Seems to Me,” on the op-ed page of *The New York World*. As its title indicated, Broun’s column had no controlling subject; he often wrote what were identified as “whimsy” pieces, such as “The Fifty-First Dragon,” which has been widely reprinted. A large man who was described as looking “like an unmade bed,” Broun was a member of the Algonquin Hotel Round Table group of wits and a greatly admired figure in the New York literary-journalistic world. Although Broun cultivated a reputation for carelessness and even laziness, he published twelve books.

**Sacco and Vanzetti.** Broun became increasingly interested in social matters and questions of injustice. He was committed to the defense of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, anarchists who were sentenced to death for murder. His 1927 column on the committee — which included the presidents of Harvard and MIT — appointed to review the trial ended with a denunciation: “I’ve said these men have slept, but from now on it is our business to make them toss and turn a little, for a cry should go up from many million voices before the day set for Sacco and Vanzetti to die. We have the right to beat against tight minds with our fists and shout into the ears of the old men. We want to know, we will know — ‘why?’ ” A subsequent column asked: “From now on, I want to know, will the institution of learning in Cambridge which once we called Harvard be known as Hangman’s House?” Although the *World* was regarded as a liberal paper, two of Broun’s columns were withheld. Broun maintained his position that a signed column — particularly one headed “It Seems to Me” — was the writer’s responsibility and could not be required to conform to the newspaper’s policies. After he criticized the *World* and its publisher in print, Broun was fired. In 1928 he moved his column to *The New York Telegram* — later *The New York World-Telegram* — where he enjoyed more editorial freedom. His column was syndicated by the Scripps-Howard chain and had an estimated readership of one million. He has been credited with establishing the syndicated opinion column as a feature independent of the policies of the newspapers that printed it.

**Politics.** Broun became increasingly involved in politics and causes during the Depression. He joined the Socialist Party and ran unsuccessfully for Congress. In 1933 he was one of the founders of the American Newspaper Guild, which fought for improved working conditions for journalists. He was the first Guild president and was reelected to that position for the rest of his life.



Heywood Broun died of pneumonia at fifty-one after writing his first column for *The New York Post*.

Sources:

Dale Kramer, *Heywood Broun* (New York: Current Books, 1949);

Richard O'Connor, *Heywood Broun* (New York: Putnam, 1975).

**BENNETT A. CERF  
AND  
DONALD S. KLOPFER**

**1898-1971, 1902-1986**

PUBLISHERS



**Partners.** Extrovert Bennett Cerf and quiet Donald Klopfer built Random House into the best of the publishing houses founded during the 1920s. It became a commercially successful firm with a commitment to literature and a list of distinguished authors.

**The Modern Library.** In 1925 twenty-seven-year-old Cerf, a Columbia University graduate, had the title of vice president at the publishing house of Boni & Liveright, having acquired that position by lending money to Horace Liveright. Always in need of money, Liveright offered to sell the Modern Library series to Cerf for \$215,000. It was a splendid opportunity because the Modern Library, a list of more than one hundred clothbound ninety-five-cent reprints of classics, sold widely with little attention from Liveright. Cerf's family was prosperous, but he could not raise the purchase price alone. He asked his twenty-three-year-old friend Klopfer to put up half. Klopfer, who had attended Williams College, was working for his family's diamond-cutting business and had no publishing experience. They refurbished the drab Modern Library volumes, added new titles, and aggressively promoted the series. In 1931 they launched the Modern Library Giants series — six-hundred-page volumes that sold for one dollar. The first Giants title was Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, followed by James Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, *The Complete Poems of Keats and Shelley*, *Plutarch's Lives*, and a three-volume set of Edward Gibbons's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. By 1928 they had sold a million copies and established the Modern Library as the standard American inexpensive line before the paperback revolution. The Modern Library became a cultural force, establishing a canon for self-educating readers.

**Random House.** In 1927 the partners changed the name of the imprint from the Modern Library to Random House, indicating a commitment to variety — in subject, format, and price. They began copublishing deluxe editions with the English Nonesuch Press. The first independent Random House volume was a 1928 limited illustrated edition of Voltaire's *Candide*. Publication of trade books (books intended for bookstore sale to general readers) commenced in 1929. During the early 1930s Random House became a literary house with the addition of Eugene O'Neill, William Faulkner, Marcel Proust, and Gertrude Stein to its list. In 1932 Cerf and Klopfer challenged the ban on the importation of James Joyce's *Ulysses* into America. After the case was decided in their favor, Random House published the first legal American edition in 1934.

**Outside/Inside.** Cerf functioned effectively as outside-man/inside-man. Although Klopfer was primarily responsible for management, he earned the trust of the Random House authors and was respected in the publishing world. Through his visibility as a columnist, lecturer, anthologist, and ultimately television panelist, Cerf, Eudora Welty, and John O'Hara.

**Growth.** Random House achieved extraordinary growth and influence when it acquired the house of Alfred A. Knopf in 1960. The company, begun with a \$215,000 investment in 1925, was worth \$40 million when Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer sold Random House to RCA in 1966.

Source:

Bennett Cerf, *At Random* (New York: Random House, 1977).

**CHARLES CORRELL  
AND  
FREEMAN GOSDEN**

**1890-1972, 1899-1982**

RADIO COMEDIANS



**Blackface and Blackvoice.** Two white men, Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden, wrote and performed *Amos 'n' Andy*, a radio program about black characters that was the first radio serial and the most popular program of its time. Correll (born in Peoria, Illinois) and Gosden (born in Richmond, Virginia) had both been vaudeville song-and-chatter performers when they became friends in 1920, as the result of working for the Joe Bren Producing Company of Chicago, which produced minstrel shows. In 1925 they began singing and telling jokes in radio stations. Their breakthrough came in January 1926, when they began nightly ten-minute WGN broadcasts about *Sam 'n' Henry*, two Southern black men who had moved to Chicago. Described as a "radio comic strip," *Sam 'n'*

*Henry* was the first radio program with a continuing story line; previously, every broadcast was expected to complete the narrative.

**Amos 'n' Andy.** The program was a success from the start, and in 1928 WMAQ Chicago hired them away, but WGN retained rights to the *Sam 'n' Henry* characters. Correll and Gosden created Amos Jones and Andrew H. Brown, two residents of Harlem. Amos, performed by Gosden, was hard-working; Andy, performed by Correll, was lazy but likable. They were partners in the Fresh Air Taxi Company, so named because their only car was roofless. More characters were developed, including the larcenous Kingfish and his wife, Sapphire, all of whose voices were provided by Correll and Gosden. *Amos 'n' Andy* was broadcast six nights a week in fifteen-minute installments and was even more successful than *Sam 'n' Henry*. In the era of blackface entertainment, there were no protests against the material of *Amos 'n' Andy*.

**A Radio Institution.** In August 1929 Correll and Gosden moved to the NBC Red Network for \$100,000 a year. *Amos 'n' Andy* immediately became the most popular show on network radio. Movie theaters stopped their projectors and turned on the radio during the 7:00 P.M. broadcast; restaurants played the programs during dinner. The characters' mispronunciations became popular usages — "I'se regusted." The program went to five broadcasts a week in 1931 and then to once a week in 1943. The partners wrote and performed more than five thousand radio broadcasts.

**TV and New Standards.** *Amos 'n' Andy* retained its popularity through the 1940s. CBS bought rights to the program for \$2.5 million in 1948, but the change to television with black actors was not successful, the reality of the image being in conflict with the cartoonishness of the characters. There had been a growing criticism of the program, especially from the NAACP. Correll and Gosden were hurt by the charges of bigotry, insisting that their portrayals were unprejudiced and affectionate; but public sensitivity to racism had become strong, and no new *Amos 'n' Andy* television episodes were produced after 1954.

Source:

Melvin Patrick Ely, *The Adventures of Amos 'n' Andy: A Social History of an American Phenomenon* (New York: Free Press, 1991).

## HORACE LIVERIGHT

1886-1933

PUBLISHER



**Jazz Age Publisher.** Horace Liveright was another of the flamboyant figures whose careers are inseparable from the 1920s. His style of success and his spectacular failure are emblematic of the decade. As head of Boni & Liveright he published an exciting

list of books while hosting a perpetual party and spending himself into insolvency.

**Boni & Liveright.** Liveright did not bother to complete high school. At sixteen he was working for a stock-brokerage office, and at eighteen he wrote the libretto and lyrics for an unproduced operetta. In 1917, after a series of unsuccessful business ventures, he was staked to a publishing partnership with Albert Boni by his wealthy father-in-law. Liveright had no publishing experience, but he had read widely and admired writers. The first Boni & Liveright project, the Modern Library, became the best-known American series of inexpensive classic reprints. Bound in so-called limp leather and priced at sixty cents, the first twelve volumes were Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, August Strindberg's *Married*, Rudyard Kipling's *Soldiers Three*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, H. G. Wells's *The War in the Air*, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Anatole France's *The Red Lily*, Guy de Maupassant's *Mlle. Fifi*, Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Poor People*, Maurice Maeterlinck's *St. Antony*, and Arthur Schopenhauer's *Pessimism*. Always in need of ready cash, Liveright sold the Modern Library to Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer in 1925, thereby terminating a dependable source of income.

**Gambler.** Disagreement about other publishing projects led to Boni's departure in 1918, supposedly after a coin toss. The firm name remained Boni & Liveright until 1928, when the imprint became Horace Liveright. It was Liveright's company during the 1920s; he operated it as a private fiefdom and treated it as a personal bank. He was largely responsible for its brilliant list, and he was solely responsible for its frenzied finances. Liveright was a gambler: he gambled on authors; he gambled on the stock market; he gambled on Broadway shows. He was an alcoholic and a womanizer. He published T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Eugene O'Neill, Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, and Ernest Hemingway. An avowed Socialist, he published Leon Trotsky's *The Bolsheviks and World Peace* (1918) and John Reed's *The Ten Days that Shook the World* (1919). In 1920 he published Sigmund Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, the book that Freudianized America.

**Patron of Writers.** Liveright was a generous backer of writers, and it was asserted that he would make a \$300 advance to anyone with an idea for a book. He provided Anderson and Dreiser with steady incomes to support them while they were writing — a publishing practice Liveright may have introduced. He flouted accepted practice in the way books were publicized and marketed. Before Liveright, books were expected to sell through dignified announcements and word of mouth. He aggressively promoted books and treated them as newsworthy events, employing pioneer public-relations consultant Edward L. Bernays. Liveright also fought censorship — not only of his own books. With little support from other

publishers, he victoriously opposed the "Clean Books Bill" in the New York legislature.

Fall. As long as next year's best-seller could be expected to pay last year's bills, Horace Liveright — the company and the individual — defied insolvency. After the 1929 Wall Street crash, arithmetic destroyed him. In 1930 Liveright left publishing and went to Hollywood as a producer, but he did not succeed there. He returned to New York and failed to make a comeback as a theater producer. Horace Liveright died broke of alcoholism and pneumonia at forty-seven.

Source:

Tom Dardis, *Firebrand: The Life of Horace Liveright* (New York: Random House, 1995).

## GEORGE HORACE LORIMER

1867-1937

MAGAZINE EDITOR



**The Great American Magazine.** During the 1920s *The Saturday Evening Post* was the most successful magazine in America, perhaps in the world. It reached a peak circulation of 3 million; for a nickel its readers bought two hundred pages with fiction and articles by the most popular and best-

paid writers. The man responsible was George Horace Lorimer, a devout proponent of the gospel of business and a good judge of writing.

**Success Story.** Lorimer lived the American success story. The son of a Baptist minister, he dropped out of Yale after one year at the urging of Philip D. Armour, head of the meatpacking firm, and rose to head of the Armour canning department. After his own grocery business failed, Lorimer became a reporter. In 1898 he was hired as literary editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*, published by Cyrus H. K. Curtis, owner of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. The *Post* was moribund, its chief asset a shaky claim to having been founded by Benjamin Franklin. Lorimer was assigned to edit the magazine while Curtis was recruiting an editor in chief. Lorimer did it so well that he was made editor in chief, a position he held for thirty-nine years. For more than twenty years Lorimer's *Post* had a significant influence in shaping American values and American taste through its fiction, nonfiction, and advertising. Lorimer read everything that was printed in his magazine and was personally responsible for the editorial pages, which were probusiness and isolationist. He was the author of three books — one of which, *Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to his Son* (1902), a highly successful work of business fiction, was serialized in the *Post*.

**Contributors.** Lorimer treated writers generously and recruited a corps of contributors who became associated

with the *Post* and thereby built reader loyalty. Although intellectuals dismissed the *Post* stories as escapism and commercial entertainment, the *Post* published Ring W. Lardner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, John P. Marquand, Sinclair Lewis, John Galsworthy, Rudyard Kipling, Booth Tarkington, and Kenneth Roberts during the 1920s. Prominent illustrators worked for the *Post*, and Norman Rockwell's many covers became identified with the magazine. The 6 March 1926 issue had 238 pages with ten articles, ranging in subject from the export trade to the making of dictionaries, and ten stories, including Fitzgerald's "Adolescent Marriage." There were 117 full-page ads, many of them for automobiles or automotive products.

**Loss of Influence.** During the 1930s Lorimer opposed President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and *The Saturday Evening Post*, out of touch with prevailing public opinion, gradually lost much of its political and cultural influence. George Horace Lorimer retired in 1936, the year before his death.

Sources:

Jan Cohn, *Creating America: George Horace Lorimer and The Saturday Evening Post* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989);

John Tebbel, *George Horace Lorimer and The Saturday Evening Post* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948).

## HENRY R. LUCE AND BRITON HADDEN

1898-1967, 1898-1929

MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS



**New Departures.** Henry Luce and Briton Hadden invented the newsmagazine when they launched *Time* in 1923. Their magazine developed innovative approaches to news coverage, such as packaging the news in topical units; utilizing group journalism, by which an article resulted from the work of teams of researchers, reporters, writers, and editors; and replacing standard newspaper prose with a catchy narrative style.

**School Days.** Luce was born in China to Presbyterian missionaries and retained a missionary zeal in his approach to publishing. At fifteen he came to America and attended the Hotchkiss School in Connecticut. At Hotchkiss he encountered Briton Hadden, the Brooklyn-born offspring of a well-connected family. Luce edited

the school literary magazine and was assistant managing editor of the newspaper; Hadden was managing editor of the paper. They went to Yale, where Hadden became chairman of *The Yale Daily News* and Luce the managing editor.

**Prospectus.** College was interrupted when both served as army lieutenants during World War I. At Camp Jackson, South Carolina, they planned a newsmagazine. After graduating from Yale in 1920 — Hadden was voted most likely to succeed and Luce most brilliant — both became newspaper reporters. While working on *The Baltimore News* in 1922 they drafted a prospectus for their newsmagazine and quit their jobs to raise \$100,000.

Their prospectus announced:

People are uninformed BECAUSE NO PUBLICATION HAS ADAPTED ITSELF TO THE TIME WHICH BUSY MEN ARE ABLE TO SPEND ON SIMPLY KEEPING INFORMED.

*Time* is a weekly news-magazine, aimed to serve the modern necessity of keeping people informed, created on a new principle of COMPLETE ORGANIZATION.

**Editorial Bias.** On the subject of editorial bias, the prospectus declared that “the editors recognize that complete neutrality on public questions and important news is probably as undesirable as it is impossible, and are therefore ready to acknowledge certain prejudices which may in varying measure predetermine their opinions on the news.” From the start *Time* was attacked for slanting its coverage, especially in the fields of politics, government, and economics, for Luce and Hadden were conservatives who opposed government interference with business.

**Timestyle.** The partners decided to go ahead with \$86,000 from seventy-two investors. The first issue, dated 3 March 1923, had former House Speaker Joseph Cannon on the cover; it sold for fifteen cents, and there were twenty-two departments in twenty-eight pages. That Hadden was the editor and Luce the business manager was supposedly decided by a coin flip. Hadden was responsible for inventing what became known as *Timestyle*, influenced by Homeric texts he had studied as a schoolboy: compound epithets (jut-jawed) and inverted sentences (“Backward ran sentences until reeled the mind” in a *New Yorker* parody). There were also combined words (cinemaddict), puns (sexsational), and the use of phrases with special connotations (“great and good friend”). In the beginning there was little reportorial work; most of the *Time* articles were written or rewritten from newspaper clippings. The first issue reached 9,000 subscribers and a few thousand newsstand purchasers. Circulation grew to 136,000 in 1927 and 200,000 in 1929.

**Luce without Hadden.** In 1927 Hadden and Luce exchanged responsibilities and titles. Hadden died of a streptococcus infection in 1929. Luce went on to build an international media empire including magazines (*For-*

*tune*, 1930; *Architectural Forum*, 1932; *Life*, 1936; *Sports Illustrated*, 1954), radio (1931) and newsreel (1935) versions of *The March of Time*, and Time-Life books. *Life* developed photojournalism. Luce and his publications remained staunchly Republican, although most of his writers were liberals. “For some goddamn reason Republicans can’t write,” he remarked.

“**The American Century.**” The missionary boy used his publications to deliver sermons, particularly on the theme of the postwar world as “the American Century,” the era in which the well-being of the world would be America’s responsibility. Henry Luce did not exert as much influence over national and international policy as he wanted to — or as much as his detractors thought he did. His major and enduring influence was on the effective presentation of information.

Sources:

Noel Busch, *Briton Hadden: A Biography of the Co-founder of Time* (New York: Farrar, Straus, 1949);

John Kobler, *Luce: His Time, Life, and Fortune*, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968);

W. A. Swanberg, *Luce and his Empire* (New York: Scribners, 1972).

## H. L. MENCKEN

1880-1956

CRITIC & EDITOR



**Great Debunker.** During the 1920s few Americans matched Henry L. Mencken’s influence as a writer and as an independent thinker. He was the decade’s great debunker, aiming ridicule at the cowardice and ignorance of what he called the “booboisee.”

“**The Baltimore Anti-Christ.**” Mencken graduated from the Baltimore Polytechnic School and became a reporter on the *Baltimore Herald* in 1899. He moved to the *Baltimore Sun* in 1906, and was associated with the Sunpapers as editor, correspondent, and columnist (“The Free Lance”) for the rest of his working life. The force of Mencken’s mind and the breadth of his learning enabled him to combine journalism with simultaneous careers as magazine editor, philologist, and literary-social critic. As editor of *The Smart Set* and *The American Mercury*, as well as a prolific contributor to other journals, Mencken had a strong influence on American iconoclasm during the 1920s. He denounced puritanism, censorship, fundamentalism, political corruption, and human folly, among other targets of opportunity. His powerful jeremiads earned him the titles of “The Sage of Baltimore” and “The Baltimore Anti-Christ.” Even when most actively involved in New York publishing activities he commuted from his permanent residence in Baltimore.

And Nathan. With George Jean Nathan, Mencken edited *The Smart Set* from 1914 to 1923 and founded *The American Mercury* in 1924. Nathan's primary interest was the theater, and he was much less concerned with political and philosophical ideas than Mencken; but their combined attacks on the inadequacies and absurdities of American culture, along with Mencken's Germanophilia, led their admirers to coin the slogan "Mencken, Nathan, und Gott." As a literary critic, Mencken ridiculed both popular and academic taste while promoting the work of writers he regarded as truthful and courageous: particularly Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, Joseph Conrad, Arnold Bennett, Henrik Ibsen, and George Bernard Shaw. His support was crucial to the recognition of Dreiser as a major American novelist.

**Prejudices and Philology.** Mencken wrote more than thirty books on literature, philosophy, politics, and women, as well as autobiographies. His articles and essays were collected in six volumes correctly titled *Prejudices*. Mencken's major literary achievement was *The American Language: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Development of English in the United States*, first published as one volume in 1919 but revised and enlarged into three volumes during the next twenty-five years. This extraordinary philological work was accomplished by a self-educated independent scholar without academic or financial support.

**Courage and Independence.** Never pompous or self-righteous, Mencken was at his best when declaring the emperor's nudity. His courageous positions were often expressed by means of irony and hyperbole. He destroyed many of his targets by exposing them to ridicule. A man who acted on his own convictions, Mencken was unimpressed and unintimidated by power or numbers. He opposed America's involvement in both world wars; he attacked powerful religious and political leaders; he ridiculed the cultural poverty of the hinterlands — especially the South, which he labeled "the Sahara of the Bozart" (the desert of the beaux arts); he challenged censorship and risked jail by selling a copy of a banned issue of *The American Mercury* on the Boston Common in 1926; he took on all comers, including Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Mencken consistently fought for American freedom, declaring that "no man can be dignified as long as he is afraid."

**Hero.** H. L. Mencken's reputation diminished during the 1930s and 1940s because his insistence on individualism and self-reliance was perceived as irresponsible or outdated by new generations committed to mass causes. Nonetheless, he was a culture hero in his own time; his work liberated American thought.

**Sources:**

Allison Bulsterbaum, *H. L. Mencken: A Research Guide* (New York: Garland, 1988);

William Manchester, *Disturber of the Peace: The Life of H. L. Mencken* (New York: Harper, 1951);

H. L. Mencken, *My Life as Author and Editor* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

## WILLIAM S. PALEY

1901-1990

RADIO TYCOON



**Conflicting Assessments.** William S. Paley, the head of the Columbia Broadcasting System, has been classified as a genius with an unerring instinct for entertainment and as a megalomaniac motivated by greed. When he died, *Video Age International* published conflicting assessments: "No one

can deny that Paley was a programming genius, and that he was one of the architects of modern society"; and "He had a fine feel for creating a mix of popular and special interest programming, but he took credit for a great many achievements that distinctly belong to others." Undeniably, under his autocratic leadership the Columbia Broadcasting System rewrote the nation's definition of entertainment and news.

**Family Fortune.** William Paley was born in Chicago on 28 September 1901, the son of Samuel and Goldie Drew Paley, Ukrainian Jewish immigrants. Making money was in Paley's blood: his father had been apprenticed to a cigar maker while in his teens; within a decade he owned a cigar factory and had made a fortune. His most popular brand was La Palina.

**Starting at the Top.** William Paley attended the University of Chicago, but when the elder Paley moved the Congress Cigar Company to Philadelphia, William transferred to the University of Pennsylvania. He received a B.S. from the Wharton School and was named vice president and secretary of the cigar company at the then-enormous salary of \$50,000 a year. In 1928 the younger Paley bought \$50 worth of advertising weekly on Philadelphia station WCAU. The sale of La Palina Cigars increased. Some sources claim that William immediately grasped radio's potential and urged his father to invest \$300,000 to buy WCAU and a controlling interest in the struggling United Independent Broadcasters Network. Others say the purchase was Samuel's idea and that William resisted it. In any case, the family bought the network. Paley became president of the network on 26 September 1928, one day before his twenty-seventh birthday, and renamed it the Columbia Broadcasting System.

**Building and Dealing.** In December 1928 CBS bought WABC New York as its flagship station for \$390,000, bringing the Paleys' investment to \$1.5 million. Paley aggressively recruited affiliate stations for the network, and on 8 January 1929 he announced that CBS

had forty-nine stations in forty-two cities. Unlike his rival David Sarnoff of NBC, Paley had little interest in the technical aspects of broadcasting. He was a promoter and a deal maker. While still in his twenties he sold half of CBS to Paramount Pictures for \$3.8 million and reacquired it after the 1929 stock-market crash. Consequently the Paleys and his family retained all of their CBS stock, but Paramount owed them \$5 million.

**CBS News.** In 1933, when newspapers kept wire services from giving radio full access to their news, Paley set up his own CBS news organization. Two years later he hired Edward R. Murrow to recruit on-air news reporters. In 1937 he sent Murrow to London to supervise public affairs programming as the war in Europe neared. Part of Murrow's job was to hire and assemble able newsmen to report and broadcast the news. The names of these men read like an honor roll of broadcast journalism: Walter Cronkite, William Shirer, Eric K. Sevareid, Elmer Davis, Charles Collingwood, Howard K. Smith, and Winston Burdett. In effect they set the course for CBS News, the nation's premier broadcast-news organization until Cronkite retired in 1981. Murrow himself proved a superb newsmen.

**Tastemaker.** Because of the quality of its stars and its programs, CBS became known as the "Tiffany Network," and Paley became renowned as a tastemaker. For twenty-six years CBS led both NBC and ABC in audience ratings. Many credited other CBS executives with the success, notably Dr. Frank Stanton, a longtime CBS executive who labored behind his flamboyant, publicity-conscious, high-living boss. Paley's second wife was the former Barbara (Babe) Cushing, a prominent social figure. At the time of his death Paley's fortune was estimated at \$500 million, including his 8 percent share of CBS, valued at \$356 million.

**Sources:**

William S. Paley, *As It Happened: A Memoir* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979);

Sally Bedel Smith, *In All His Glory: The Life of William S. Paley* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990).

## JOSEPH MEDILL PATTERSON

1879-1946

NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER



**Newspaper Family.** Joseph Patterson published the first and most successful tabloid newspaper in America. A man of eccentricities and contradictions who acted on impulse, he might have been classified as unbalanced — except that he was a journalist with a sure sense of what interested his readers.

Patterson was born into a wealthy and powerful

newspaper family. His maternal grandfather was Joseph Medill, publisher and editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, and his father became editor of that paper. Patterson's sister, Eleanor (Cissy), later became publisher of the *Washington Times-Herald*. Although he dressed carelessly and rejected the requirements of his social position, he was educated at the upper-class Groton School in Massachusetts and graduated from Yale in 1901. All of his life he felt comfortable with the proletariat, living with bums in Chicago's First Ward and New York's Bowery. Patterson was certain that he understood working-class people, and he endeavored to improve their living conditions. Failing that, he wanted to provide them with a newspaper.

**Friend of the Proletariat.** After Yale, Patterson joined the *Tribune* as a reporter, but his proletarian concerns directed him to reform politics — often in opposition to the policies of the *Tribune*. Patterson left the *Tribune* when he learned that his election to the Illinois House of Representatives had been rigged by the paper. In 1906 he joined the Socialist Party and wrote plays (*Dope* and *The Fourth Estate*) and a novel (*A Little Brother of the Rich*, 1908) denouncing capitalism and the corrupt rich. But his experiences as an author convinced him of the validity of the profit motive, and he withdrew from socialism.

**The Captain and the Colonel.** Patterson returned to the *Tribune* in 1910 as coeditor with his cousin Robert McCormick, a conservative and aristocrat. They disagreed about editorial policy. Patterson joined the army during World War I, participated in battle, and earned the rank of captain. McCormick rose to colonel. Both retained the use of their military titles in civilian life.

**The Daily News.** During the war the cousins agreed that they should not continue to coedit the *Tribune*. In 1919 Captain Patterson met with Lord Harmsworth, publisher of the London tabloid *Daily Mirror*, who convinced him that an American tabloid would succeed. Patterson started rush work on a New York tabloid at the same time that William Randolph Hearst was developing one. Patterson published first; *The Illustrated Daily News* appeared on 26 June 1919. The term "tabloid" indicated more than format (11½" x 13¾"): it also indicated content and style. *The Daily News* (*Illustrated* was soon dropped from its name) featured sensational photographs, scandal, crime, sex, comics, and contests. The paper's most famous scoop was the 1928 front-page photo of Ruth Snyder dying in the electric chair for the murder of her husband — a photo taken with a concealed camera. The tabloid size supposedly made it convenient for the subway strap-hangers, but *The Daily News* succeeded because it appealed to people who did not find the traditional newspapers interesting. The critics of tabloid journalism referred to *The Daily News* as "the servant-girl's bible," and advertisers were initially wary of becoming associated with a vulgar publication. Nonetheless, Patterson did know what his readers wanted. In the 1930s *The Daily News* reached the largest circulation in America,

and *The Sunday News* had the largest circulation in the world at over 3 million.

**Competition.** In 1924 both Hearst's morning *Daily Mirror* and Bernarr Macfadden's *Evening Graphic* entered the New York tabloid field. Neither matched the success of *The Daily News*. The *Graphic* tried to out-sensationalize the *News* but lacked Patterson's sure sense of his readers' taste.

**Editorial Policy.** Until 1925 Patterson ran his paper by telephone from Chicago. His principal interests were the circulation-building features and the editorials. He developed comic strips and provided ideas for "The Gumps," "Dick Tracy," and "Little Orphan Annie." He controlled the editorial page and collaborated in writing the editorials. Initially a strong supporter of Franklin Roosevelt, Patterson became a bitter opponent of the president's foreign policy, which he saw as designed to force America into World War II. Patterson's attacks on communism earned the proletariat's friend the enmity of the Left.

**Self-Reliance.** Ralph Waldo Emerson's observation that "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man" was strikingly exemplified by Joseph Medill Patterson. His unlikely collection of qualities and emotions were responsible for the prodigious success of *The Daily News*.

**Sources:**

Jack Alexander, "Vox Populi," *New Yorker* (6, 13, 20 August 1938); John W. Tebbel, *American Dynasty: The Story of the McCormicks, Medills, and Pattersons* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1947).

## MAXWELL E. PERKINS

1884-1947

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER



**Editor of Geniuses.** Maxwell Perkins was the most renowned editor to practice his craft at an American publishing house. It has been remarked that his career was based on a quest for an American Tolstoy, whose *War and Peace* he regarded as the supreme work of fiction. Perkins's reputation is

permanently linked with those of three geniuses he published at Scribners: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Thomas Wolfe. The 1920s were a golden decade for American literature; brilliant writers and great publishers reinforced each other. Boni & Liveright had a stimulating list of titles; but no house matched the distinction of Charles Scribner's Sons, which entered the 1920s as a conservative firm and became the imprint of exciting young fiction writers.

**Allegiance to Talent.** Though raised in New Jersey, Maxwell Perkins came from New England stock and was Harvard-educated. His Yankee reserve and integrity

characterized his relationships with his authors, who depended on him for more than editorial guidance. After working as a reporter on *The New York Times*, Perkins became advertising manager at Charles Scribner's Sons in 1910 and moved to the editorial department in 1914. Because he had the right background and family connections, he was able to persuade his older colleagues to undertake departures from their traditional publishing policies. Although he was unable to convince the firm to take a chance on the novel Fitzgerald wrote in the army during 1918, Perkins compelled acceptance of the rewritten novel, *This Side of Paradise*, by telling Charles Scribner: "My feeling is that a publisher's first allegiance is to talent. . . . If we're going to turn down the likes of Fitzgerald, I will lose all interest in publishing books." Published in 1920, Fitzgerald's novel was a surprise success and initiated Perkins's reputation as a discoverer of literary talent.

**Fitzgerald and Hemingway.** The relationship between Fitzgerald and Perkins grew increasingly close, and Fitzgerald brought two of his friends, Ring W. Lardner and Ernest Hemingway, into the Perkins stable. Hemingway had published a volume of short stories in America in 1925, and Perkins contracted for his novel without reading it in 1926. When the typescript of *The Sun Also Rises* arrived, Perkins again had trouble convincing his colleagues that a book that featured promiscuity and drunkenness should bear the Scribners imprint. And it was in this case necessary for Perkins to persuade an extremely touchy author to make certain revisions and deletions for the sake of propriety.

**Editorial Technique.** As with Fitzgerald, Perkins's working relationship with Hemingway became a warm and lasting friendship, an extraordinary circumstance in view of Hemingway's suspicious nature and history of broken friendships. There were frequent eruptions by Hemingway, but Perkins always placated him, reassuring the writer of the editor's loyalty. Perkins's rule was that "The book belongs to the author." It was the editor's responsibility to help the writer but not to take control of the work. His commitment to his authors' talent was as crucial to Perkins's achievements as his editorial skills. The writers trusted him; therefore, they trusted his advice. He did not rewrite the books; he offered suggestions for improvement. Perkins's particular strength was in suggesting structural revisions, as he did for *The Great Gatsby*.

**Wolfe.** The editorial task for which Perkins became celebrated was his work with Thomas Wolfe on *Look Homeward, Angel*, published in 1929. In a process unusual for Perkins, he was required to become virtually a collaborator as he worked closely with Wolfe night after night to cut and restructure the long, unpublishable drafts. Fitzgerald and Hemingway could have succeeded without Perkins, but *Look Homeward, Angel* would not have been published without Perkins's editorial interposition. The friendship between Wolfe and Perkins was

intense, but in the year after the publication of *Of Time and the River* (1935), the pathologically suspicious writer broke with Perkins and Scribners in reaction to the charges that he could not write publishable books without Perkins. When Wolfe died in 1938, he had not published another novel.

**Role Model.** In addition to the famed geniuses, Perkins's roster of writers included Morley Callaghan, Erskine Caldwell, Taylor Caldwell, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, S. S. Van Dine, Arthur Train, Will James, and James Boyd. He was working with James Jones on *From Here to Eternity* when he died. Because of his connection with some of the greatest figures in American literature and the distorted accounts of his editorial miracles, Maxwell Perkins has inspired aspiring editors and dignified a profession in which the bookkeepers outvote the bookmakers.

**Sources:**

A. Scott Berg, *Maxwell Perkins: Editor of Genius* (New York: Dutton, 1978);

*Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins* (New York: Scribners, 1950).

## HAROLD W. ROSS

1892-1951

EDITOR



Ross of *The New Yorker*. Harold Ross was a tramp reporter from Aspen, Colorado, who conceived and ran a cosmopolitan magazine that developed some of the best American writers for twenty-five years. Ross of *The New Yorker* became the subject of many anecdotes about his eccentricities and alleged lack of sophistication ("Is Moby Dick the Man or the whale?"), yet he was an editorial genius who permanently influenced the rationale of American magazine publishing and developed new literary forms.

who permanently influenced the rationale of American magazine publishing and developed new literary forms.

**Shaky Start.** Ross left high school to work as a reporter at a string of newspapers. In 1918 he became de facto editor in chief of *The Stars and Stripes*, the American expeditionary force newspaper published in Paris, with the permanent rank of private. He had discovered his genius: the ability to run a periodical in accordance with his high editorial standards. After the war he worked for magazines in New York while planning his own magazine. His wife, Jane Grant, whom he married in 1920, encouraged the plan, and they pooled their earnings toward starting his magazine. Their \$25,000 was matched by the same amount from Raoul Fleischmann, a member of a wealthy family who had no literary or journalistic background. Ross wrote the prospectus that included the famous statement: "*The New Yorker* will be the magazine which is not edited for the old lady in Du-

buque." He planned a magazine of "gaiety, wit and satire." His prospectus explained that "It will be what is commonly called sophisticated, in that it will assume a reasonable degree of enlightenment on the part of its readers. It will hate bunk." The first issue, dated 21 February 1925, had thirty-six pages and sold for fifteen cents; it was not well received. Early contributors included Ross's friends from the Algonquin Round Table group: Alexander Woollcott, Robert Benchley, and Dorothy Parker. *The New Yorker* lost money steadily during 1925 and was kept alive by infusions of Fleischmann's personal wealth. At one point Ross lost \$30,000 in a poker game while trying to save the magazine. Fleischmann (publisher and treasurer) and Ross (editor) became permanent enemies. In 1926 the magazine turned the corner as Ross refined the departments and tone.

**Editors and Writers.** Ross's rationale for running a magazine was: "An editor prints what pleases him. If enough people like what he does he is a success." With the help of a brilliant staff of editors and writers — including Katharine Angell White, E. B. White, James Thurber, Wolcott Gibbs, St. Clair McKelway — Ross published the best-edited magazine in America. The high-school dropout was committed to excellence in grammar, syntax, and punctuation. The former tramp reporter enforced factual correctness. During the 1920s Ross encouraged the introduction and improvement of the departments with which *The New Yorker* became identified: "Reporter at Large," "The Wayward Press," the profile, and "Shouts and Murmurs." Gradually the magazine's humorous or satiric content was replaced by factual articles that grew in length. Ross categorized anything that was not a factual piece or a contribution to one of the departments as a "casual." Although *The New Yorker* nurtured some of the best short-story writers of the century, Ross was not personally committed to "casuals"; nonetheless, he was partly responsible for the development of what became known as "the *New Yorker* story" — an elliptical, underplotted work of short fiction that was often introspective. The fiction writers during Ross's tenure included John O'Hara, Sally Benson, Vladimir Nabokov, Clarence Day, J. D. Salinger, John Cheever, and Robert Coates.

**Ross's Masterpiece.** Ross's commitment to editorial integrity was so strong that he eventually sold most of his *New Yorker* stock to reinforce the separation between editorial and business departments. If a magazine can really be the product of one person's work over the course of twenty-seven years, *The New Yorker* was Harold Ross's masterpiece. He retained final editorial control and attempted to read everything that he published; his detailed editorial queries became legendary: "Who he?" "What means?" "When happen?" "Don't get." "Fix." The man who became the subject of anecdotes that emphasized his innocence or imperfect education or bias was the genius who made possible the work of many important talents



and thereby had a permanent effect on American literature.

**Sources:**

Thomas Kunkel, *Genius in Disguise: Harold Ross of the New Yorker* (New York: Random House, 1995);

James Thurber, *The Years with Ross* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1959).

## DAVID SARNOFF

1891-1971

### COMMUNICATIONS TYCOON



#### Radio and Television Leader.

David Sarnoff, an immigrant boy with a grammar-school education, became the most powerful figure in the communications and media industries. As president of the Radio Corporation of America he created the National Broadcasting Company radio network and de-

veloped television.

**Pluck and Luck.** Sarnoff was born in Russia and arrived in America at ten. When he was fifteen he left school to support his family after the death of his father. His first job was as messenger boy for the Commercial Cable Company, and in 1906 he moved to the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America as a \$5.50-per-week office boy. Sarnoff taught himself telegraphy and was encouraged by Guglielmo Marconi. On the night of 14 April 1912 he was managing the experimental radio station on the roof of the Wanamaker Department store in New York when the *Titanic* hit an iceberg. He remained at his equipment for seventy-two hours.

**Radio Music Box.** Sarnoff became manager of the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America, which in 1919 was merged into the new Radio Corporation of America — owned by General Electric, Westinghouse, American Telephone and Telegraph, and the United Fruit Company. As an RCA executive, Sarnoff resubmitted a memo to the Marconi Company in 1915: "I have in mind a plan of development that would make radio a household utility in the same sense as a piano or a phonograph. The idea is to bring music into the home by wireless. The receiver can be designed in the form of a simple 'Radio Music Box' and arranged for several different wave-lengths, which should be changeable with the throwing of a single switch or pressing of a single button." He was allowed \$2,000 to develop the "radio music box," which sold \$83 million worth of units between 1922 and 1924. In 1926 he organized for RCA the first radio network, the National Broadcasting Company, and acquired station WEAJ New York from AT&T, which withdrew from broadcasting. Sarnoff steadily enlarged the scope of RCA activities. He purchased the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1929 and was credited with putting the phonograph and radio in the same unit;

he acquired a major share of the RKO movie studio in 1928; and in 1929 he formed a new company with General Motors to manufacture car radios.

**Advent of Television.** Sarnoff had a knowledge of the technical aspects of broadcasting, but his genius was prognostic. He was able to anticipate developments in communications media, and he possessed the drive and business ability to bring his predictions to successful reality. He became president of RCA in 1930 and was credited with saving the firm when the government ordered GE and Westinghouse to sell their RCA interests in 1932. As president he consistently invested substantial amounts in research, often against the opposition of his associates. A 1923 Sarnoff prediction took twenty-five years to fulfill: "I believe that television, which is the technical name for seeing as well as hearing by radio, will come to pass in the future." As president of RCA he was in a position to provide Vladimir Zworykin with \$100,000 for work on television. The research investment reached \$50 million before black-and-white television was perfected. During World War II, RCA manufactured radar, shoran, loran, and other electronic devices; Sarnoff went on active duty and became a brigadier general. After the war Sarnoff, who retained his rank, devoted his full attention to television, sensing that the consumer market was ready for it. He accomplished the task of persuading radio stations to invest in television facilities. Then he undertook the responsibility to make color television feasible, successfully competing against the Columbia Broadcasting System to develop a system that would receive FCC approval.

**Research and Manufacture.** Although he had financed the NBC Symphony for Arturo Toscanini, Sarnoff was more interested in developing network radio and television than in program content: "Of course we have a certain responsibility for creating programs, but basically we're delivery boys." He often stated that "The heart of RCA is its scientific laboratories." Sarnoff's unrivaled achievements resulted from the circumstance that he was the only network head who was head of a manufacturing operation; RCA made the equipment to send and receive radio and television broadcasts. In many instances RCA scientists and engineers developed that equipment.

**Fulfillment.** David Sarnoff represented one of the great American success stories from the last waves of nineteenth-century immigration. He became rich, but wealth was not his primary interest. His chief ambition was to enlarge the applications of the electronic media through research, development, and production. Consequently he permanently changed not just the means of mass communication but American life and culture.

**Sources:**

Eugene Lyon, *David Sarnoff* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966);

Robert Sobel, *RCA* (New York: Stein & Day, 1986).

## WALTER WINCHELL

1897-1972

COLUMNIST



**Gossip.** The claim that Walter Winchell created the modern gossip column has been disputed, but he was indisputably the most widely known and widely read columnist in American journalism. By various estimates the readers of his column and the listeners to his radio broadcasts totaled between

25 million and 50 million at the peak of his fame.

**Show Biz.** Raised in poverty in Manhattan, Winchell left school in the sixth grade to become a vaudeville singer. He was a song-and-dance man in second-rate vaudeville circuits in 1919 when he began posting pages of gossip and news backstage. In 1922 he began writing the "Stage Whispers" news column for *The Vaudeville News*. This trade paper had a limited circulation, but it provided him connections with people who assisted his rise. His two early mentors were speakeasy hostess Texas Guinan and Mark Hellinger. A columnist and reporter on *The Daily News*, Hellinger is regarded as the first Broadway columnist; but sentimental vignettes — not gossip — were his stock in trade.

**"On Broadway."** In 1924 Winchell moved to the *Evening Graphic*, a sensational tabloid owned by health faddist Bernarr Macfadden. The *Graphic* featured crime and scandal articles. Winchell's column, "Your Broadway and Mine," began as show-business news. In 1925 he inaugurated what became the recognizable Winchell format — short items of personal information about celebrities connected by dots: "It's a girl at the Carter de Havens. . . . Lenore Ulric paid \$7 income tax. . . . Fanny Brice is betting on the horses at Belmont. . . . S. Jay Kaufman sails on the 16th via the Berengaria to be hitched to a Hungarian. . . ." The column proved so popular that Winchell was hired away by William Randolph Hearst's *Daily Mirror*, which was engaged in a struggle with the *The Daily News* for New York morning tabloid circulation. Many readers bought the *Mirror* just for Winchell's "On Broadway," and the column reached a peak syndication to 800 newspapers.

**Winchellese.** The content of "On Broadway" evolved away from bits of show-biz gossip. Winchell included items about politics and business, recommendations or dismissals of movies and books, and predictions; and he conducted his many bitter feuds in print. The material was expressed by means of a punning language that became known as Winchellese: "That Way" (in love), "Closerthanthis" (in love), "Infanticipate" (pregnant),

"Chicagorilla" (gangster from Chicago), "Renovated" (divorced), "Phfft" (broken, ended, or spoiled) and "the Mister and Miseries" (marital difficulties). Some were coined by Winchell and some were provided by a growing cadre of contributors, but he accepted credit for all of the neologisms and thereby acquired a reputation as a language innovator and wit.

**Influence.** The influence of the column became prodigious. A favorable mention in Winchell could make a novel a best-seller; any mention in Winchell could make a person an instant celebrity. Moreover, Winchell's readership cut across several boundaries; he was read by subway straphangers and by intellectuals. Lyricist Lorenz Hart wrote: "I follow Winchell and read every line. That's why the lady is a tramp." Ernest Hemingway allegedly stated that "Winchell is the greatest newspaperman that ever lived." Inevitably, Winchell inspired a journalistic genre. His column was widely imitated as it became necessary for most papers — in and out of New York — to run a column of metropolitan gossip. Winchell's clones included Ed Sullivan (his bitter enemy), Sidney Skolsky, Earl Wilson, and Leonard Lyons, but none came close to matching his influence.

**Radio.** Compulsively driven to seek more influence and more recognition, Winchell appeared in vaudeville and movies, but his greatest media exposure resulted from his weekly radio broadcasts that began in 1930. Opening with "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. America and all the ships at sea," Winchell delivered items of the sort that appeared in his column at the rate of 227 words per minute punctuated by a clicking telegraph key to provide a sense of urgency.

**Runyon Fund.** Winchell developed a devoted friendship with Damon Runyon, another legendary newspaperman. When Runyon had lost the ability to speak and was dying of cancer, he and Winchell sat together in the Stork Club night after night. Winchell raised \$32 million for the cancer research fund named for Runyon.

**Times Change.** During the 1930s Winchell embraced Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal and denounced Hitler, thereby eliciting attacks as a radical from the right wing. When he became a strong foe of communism after the war, he was denounced as a fascist by the Left. By the end of the 1950s Winchell seemed old-fashioned. The world he had written about no longer existed; the things that had seemed scandalous were out in the open; his powerful friends were dead. His style and personality did not translate well into television broadcasting. Walter Winchell died in California without a column and without an audience.

Source:

Neal Gabler, *Winchell: Gossip, Power, and the Culture of Celebrity* (New York: Knopf, 1994).

# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

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Moses Annenberg acquired the *Daily Racing Form* in 1922; it was the start of his racing wire service providing results to bookies and gamblers, which bankrolled his other publishing ventures.

Clarke Fisher Ansley joined Columbia University Press on 1 January 1928 to commence work on the *Columbia Encyclopedia*, which was published in 1935.

Harold W. Arlin of KDKA Pittsburgh became the first full-time radio announcer in 1922.

Edwin Howard Armstrong sold his regeneration and superheterodyne radio patents to Westinghouse for \$335,000 in 1920. He later develops FM.

William Bird's Paris-based Three Mountains Press published its first book — Ezra Pound's *Indiscretions* — in 1923.

Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, prominent minister and syndicated columnist, began a weekly religious program for NBC in 1928.

The Cohn brothers — Jack and Harry — founded Columbia Pictures in 1924.

Poet-publisher Harry Crosby murdered his mistress and committed suicide on 10 December 1929.

Harry and Caresse Crosby's Paris-based Black Sun Press published its first book, her *Crosses of Gold*, in 1925.

Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett, author of *The Sex Side of Life*, a pamphlet for children, was fined \$300 by a Brooklyn federal court in 1929. She refused to pay the fine, and her conviction was reversed by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Philo T. Farnsworth transmitted the first television pictures in 1927.

Milton Feasley and Gordon Seagrove wrote the first "Even your best friend won't tell you" ads for Listerine in 1922.

Robert Flaherty produced *Nanook of the North*, the first documentary, in 1922.

Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed's *The New Testament: An American Translation*, published in 1923, became the best-selling modern-speech Bible.

Ben Gross became radio editor of *The New York Daily News* in 1925.

Warren Harding was the first American president to broadcast a formal address, for the 1922 dedication of the Francis Scott Key monument at Fort McHenry, Baltimore, Maryland.

Director Rex Ingram (*The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*) transferred movie production to France in 1925 in order to evade Louis B. Mayer's control.

Herbert T. Kalmus developed the Technicolor process in 1923.

H. V. Kaltenborn's news commentary is canceled by WEA New York in 1924, after a complaint from the State Department.

Marcus Loew founded the Loew's, Inc., theater chain in 1920. He organized Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1924, thereby providing quality movies for his theatres.

Robert McAlmon's Paris-based Contact Editions published its first book — his *A Hasty Bunch* — in 1922.

Eugene F. McDonald Jr., 33, established Zenith Radio in 1923.

H. L. Mencken is arrested on the Boston Common on 5 April 1926 for selling a copy of *The American Mercury* with Herbert Asbury's "Hatrack"; he was tried and acquitted of publishing obscenity.

A. C. Nielsen founded his market-research service in 1923; the Nielsen ratings subsequently became a standard gauge for broadcasters.

Harry Pace and W. C. Handy established Black Swan — the first record company owned by blacks — in May 1921.

Emily Post published *Etiquette, In Society, In Business, In Politics, and At Home*, followed by *Etiquette: The Blue Book of Social Usage* in 1927.

Julius Rosenwald, chairman of Sears, Roebuck, acquired the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1929.

Actor Chic Sale published *The Specialist*, a booklet about building outhouses. It sold more than 200,000 copies in 1929, and "Chic Sale" became another term for outhouse.

Upton Sinclair addressed two thousand people on the Boston Common on 12 June 1927 to protest the banning of his *Oil!* He subsequently published an edition of the novel with fig leaves over the pages cited by the authorities.

Presidential candidate Al Smith became identified with his pronunciation of the word *raddio* during his 1928 campaign.

Dr. Jules Styne, twenty-eight, established the Music Corporation of America in 1924; MCA became a powerful agency representing orchestras and radio and movie performances.

Horace A. Wade, age eleven, published a thirty-thousand-word novelette, *In the Shadow of the Great Peril*, in February 1920.

The four Warner brothers — Albert, Harry, Jack, and Sam — incorporated Warner Bros. Pictures in 1923.

Ed Wynn's *The Perfect Fool*, the first stage show to be broadcast, was heard over WJZ Newark on 19 February 1922.

Vladimir Zworykin and Westinghouse patented the iconoscope, the first electronic camera tube for a television system, in 1923.

## AWARDS

### PULITZER PRIZES FOR JOURNALISM

1920

Editorial Writing: Harvey E. Newbranch, *Omaha Evening World Herald*

Reporting: John J. Leary Jr., *New York World*

1921

Public Service: *Boston Post*

Reporting: Louis Seibold, *New York World*

1922

Cartoon: Rollin Kirby, *New York World*

Editorial Writing: Frank M. O'Brien, *New York Herald*

Public Service: *New York World*

Reporting: Kirke L. Simpson, Associated Press

1923

Editorial Writing: William Allen White, *Emporia Gazette*

Public Service: *Memphis Commercial Appeal*

Reporting: Alva Johnson, *The New York Times*

1924

Cartoon: Jay Norwood Darling, *Des Moines Register and Tribune*

Editorial Writing: *Boston Herald* and Frank I. Cobb, *New York World*

Public Service: *New York World*

Reporting: Magner White, *San Diego Sun*

1925

Cartoon: Rollin Kirby, *New York World*

Editorial Writing: *Charleston (S.C.) News and Courier*

Reporting: James W. Mulroy and Alvin H. Goldstein, *Chicago Daily News*

1926

Cartoon: D. R. Fitzpatrick, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

Editorial Writing: Edward M. Kingsbury, *The New York Times*

Public Service: *Columbus (Ga.) Enquirer Sun*

Reporting: William Burke Miller, *Louisville Courier-Journal*

1927

Cartoon: Nelson Harding, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*

Editorial Writing: F. Lauriston Bullard, *Boston Herald*

Public Service: *Canton (Ohio) Daily News*

Reporting: John T. Rogers, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*