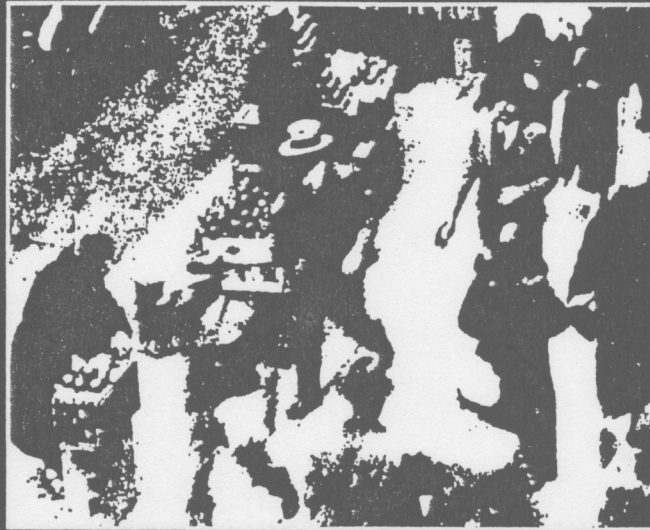


# AMERICAN DECADES

1930-1939



EDITED BY  
**VICTOR BONDI**

A MANLY, INC. BOOK

 **Gale Research Inc.**

*An International Thomson Publishing Company*

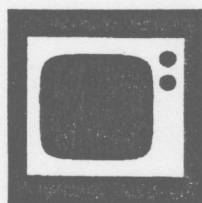
**I T P**

**Changing the Way the World Learns**

NEW YORK • LONDON • BONN • BOSTON • DETROIT • MADRID  
MELBOURNE • MEXICO CITY • PARIS • SINGAPORE • TOKYO  
TORONTO • WASHINGTON • ALBANY NY • BELMONT CA • CINCINNATI OH

TOPEKA & SHAWNEE COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
TOPEKA, KANSAS

# MEDIA



by VICTOR BONDI, DARREN HARRIS-FAIN, and JAMES W. HIPPI

## CONTENTS

### CHRONOLOGY

340

### OVERVIEW

345

### TOPICS IN THE NEWS

Animated Cartoons	347
Comic Strips and the Birth of the Comic Book	348
<i>Big Little Books</i>	349
Communications Act of 1934	350
Esquire Magazine	351
The Golden Age of Radio	352
"Hello America!"	352
<i>Broadcast around the World</i>	355

<i>Crash of the Hindenburg</i>	356
<i>The Debut of Television</i>	357
The Martian Invasion	357
New Magazines	358
Pulp Magazines	359
<i>The First Paperback Books</i>	360
Radical Journals	360
The Rise of the American Newspaper Guild	362

### HEADLINE MAKERS

Moses Annenberg	365
Edwin Howard Armstrong	366
Al Capp	367
Philo T. Farnsworth	368
Chester Gould	369
Joseph T. Shaw	369
Lowell Thomas	370

Walter Winchell	371
Vladimir Zworykin	371

### PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

372

### AWARDS

374

### DEATHS

376

### PUBLICATIONS

380

*Sidebars and tables are listed in italics.*

# OVERVIEW

---

**The Rise of Mass Media.** The 1930s made a lasting impact on American mass media. Despite the Depression several of the mass media in the United States underwent considerable growth during the 1930s. Even though their numbers decreased, newspapers maintained their readership. In 1920 the United States had 2,042 daily newspapers with a total circulation of 27,791,000. By 1930 there were a thousand fewer dailies, but their circulation had risen to 39,589,000. In 1939 the number of papers had dropped to 1,888, but those papers had 39,671,000 subscribers. The enormous growth of radio in the 1920s continued during the 1930s. In 1930 there were radios in 29 million households, less than half the households in the United States. Ten years later 80 percent of American households (35 million) had radios. The 1930s were a heyday for magazines. In 1935 there were 6,546 in the United States — half monthlies and one-quarter weeklies. Pulp fiction, comic books, and the new animated cartoons with synchronized sound were also popular. In the 1930s newspapers and radio were radically restructured, both in their operational foundation and in their content. Federal regulations governing mass media were established and remained in place, with little alteration, until the 1980s. Journalistic ethics and business protocols developed in the 1930s continued to govern mass media in the postwar era. The decade gave American mass media a distinct character.

**Entertainment.** In many ways the American mass media as we know it is a product of the Depression. Mass media provided the Depression-era public with projections of their thwarted ambitions and expressions of their deep frustrations. Mass media was foremost entertainment, even in radio and newspapers, which were well suited for communication of news or other vital information. Like other businesses in the Depression, the mass media were forced to scale down and pay close attention to what the public wanted. Some newspapermen continued to fulfill their journalistic responsibilities to inform and educate the public. Others, such as William Randolph Hearst, understood that sensationalism — not detailed news presentation and analysis — sold papers. Hearst survived the Depression, but many of his idealistic competitors did not. Like other big businessmen, Hearst, David Sarnoff of RCA, Henry Luce of *Time*, William

Paley of CBS, and other magnates of the communications field saw the Depression as an opportunity to expand their holdings, driving competitors out of business. The economics of the Depression and the psychological impact of the downturn on the public thus combined to strip the educational and informational potential from the mass media and turn them almost exclusively toward entertainment. In the early part of the decade the NBC-red network broadcast no news programming; educational radio was virtually nonexistent; pulp fiction presented lurid sex and violence; and newspapers focused on sensational events, simplistic presentation of news, and comic strips. All were well-loved by the public; all were highly profitable; all provided a temporary escape from the misery of the period. Mass media in the early 1930s thus pandered to the lowest — and sometimes the worst — common denominator of the American public.

**Critics.** Many enlightened observers realized that the mass media were not reaching their full potential. Many European conservatives viewed American mass media with contempt, as an expression of democratic politics in culture. To them the mass media created a mass human — unserious, superstitious, disrespectful of tradition and authority. Their fears were echoed by many in the United States who despised the comedy on radio, the thrill of pulp fiction, or the glossy fantasy of the mass magazine. Other critics took a different, but equally condemning, perspective, arguing that the mass media were a modern form of “bread and circuses” — a means whereby the rich and powerful who owned them kept the public entertained and thus politically immobilized. The philosopher John Dewey addressed this problem repeatedly during the decade but never with more precision than in *The Public and Its Problems* (1927). “The smoothest road to control of political conduct is by control of opinion,” he wrote. “As long as interests of pecuniary profit are powerful, and a public has not located and identified itself, those who have this interest will have an unresisted motive for tampering with the springs of political action in all that affects them.” To Dewey and others the aspirations of democracy were thwarted by big business and its ownership of the media.

**A New Culture.** Yet the mass media also had the

capacity to present culture and politics in a new, innovative fashion. While the mass media in the 1930s were diversionary and entertaining, quite often that entertainment was implicitly political. Comedy, the most popular genre on radio during the decade, often got its laughs with the plot line of a poor person disrupting the social occasions of the rich, a technique the Marx Brothers perfected in the movies. As the decade wore on, comic strips became more and more overtly political. To some extent they always had been political: *Blondie* always mocked middle-class mores; *Little Orphan Annie* always supported the economic status quo; *Li'l Abner* always exaggerated the most ridiculous features of American culture. Pulp fiction and comic books were much the same. The crime fighter was certainly a political figure at a time when many were equating the gangster and banker. Batman, Superman, and the Green Hornet suggested the wealthy and the gifted should turn their resources to improving the community. In the 1920s pulp fiction had begun pioneering two types of literature that became representative of Depression-era America: the hard-boiled detective story and the science-fiction tale. Both offered implicit and explicit commentary on contemporary society. Through the cheap and accessible medium of pulp fiction, talented writers such as Raymond Chandler, Robert A. Heinlein, and H. P. Lovecraft offered sobering studies of amorality, self-deception, and social breakdown. Although not "classic" literature, such fiction nonetheless addressed many of the same preoccupations of so-called high-minded novelists. By the middle of the 1930s many were recognizing the emergence of a new, vibrant mass culture in the pulp fiction, radio, and magazines of the decade.

**Recognition and Transformation.** Some of this recognition came from those who had once asserted traditional "high" culture against the culture of the mass media. Many writers of the 1930s had been searching for a "proletarian" literary form that would appeal to the masses and inspire progressive political action. In the sensationalism and amusements of the mass media many discovered new techniques of expression. John Dos Passos literally transcribed pieces of newspaper items and radio stories in his masterpiece, *U.S.A.* With the economic downturn many literary figures looked to the pulps and the movie industry for income. William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald were among the many novelists who had stints in Hollywood, with Faulkner adapting Chandler's *The Big Sleep* for the silver screen. The Federal Artists Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was instrumental in facilitating the fusion of high and mass culture that characterized the late 1930s. Many writers, such as Richard Wright, were supported by the WPA; more important, WPA support for the theater sustained men like John Houseman, Burgess Meredith, and Orson Welles, who took radio drama to new heights of sophistication in the late 1930s. By the outbreak of World War II the mass media had become *the* distinctive

form of American culture: exciting, pluralist, somewhat optimistic, and liberal.

**The New Deal.** In contrast to Dewey's fears, moreover, the mass-media audience had become politicized. Conservatives, rather than dull the sensibilities of Americans through entertainment, had done their best to use the media to maintain the status quo in the early 1930s. Led by *The Chicago Tribune*, American newspapers were quite nearly unified in their opposition to the New Deal policies of President Roosevelt, and the papers continued to criticize him throughout the decade. In the early years of the Roosevelt administration, radio was also opposed to the New Deal. Programs such as *The Crusaders*, *Ford Sunday Evening Hour*, and *Forum of Liberty* hammered Roosevelt. Their editorial efforts bore little fruit, primarily because they worked against the implicit politics of mass-media entertainment — which was paying the bills. The sensationalism and superficiality of the newspapers, for example, played to Roosevelt's political strengths, especially in the election of 1932, when his energetic and colorful campaign appearances contrasted starkly with Herbert Hoover's uncharismatic and dry recitation of his economic philosophy. Radio comedy was peopled with ethnic groups heretofore underrepresented in mainstream culture. These groups recognized themselves in the broadcasts of the time, which portrayed economic and cultural situations markedly different from that of the Anglo-Saxon businessmen who supported Hoover in 1932 and Landon in 1936. Roosevelt built an enormous political base among these various ethnic groups, using the new medium of radio to expert advantage to address Americans in his "fireside chats." Unlike his opponents, he did not talk down to Americans. They could envision Roosevelt in their own living rooms. Roosevelt's radio talks transmitted his personal concern for the average American. He set aside older, individualistic notions of government and economy to help the common man; the mass media of the 1930s set aside older standards of cultural correctness to entertain America. One innovation reinforced the other. Ironically, in their desire to make a profit in mass-media entertainment, the owners of those media undercut their own political agenda.

**Media Planning.** Because conservative owners of the mass media continued to think of politics, entertainment, and culture as distinct entities, they consistently underestimated the power of their products. New Deal politicians did not, and during the 1930s they set out to regulate the mass media in ways that reflected their understanding of how the mass media influenced American politics. Part of their agenda derived from their efforts to plan the broader American economy. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), created in 1934, attempted to bring order to an anarchical situation in the electromagnetic spectrum. Because radio must transmit on a particular bandwidth, stations around the country were interfering with each other's signals. The FCC sought to resolve this problem by assigning specific

bandwidths with specific levels of transmission to specific regions. The Roosevelt administration and its allies in Congress were also concerned with limiting the impact of any one media owner on public opinion. The Depression had forced the buyout and consolidation of many radio stations and newspapers. The FCC sought to limit the number of media outlets an individual could own in a single market, and it forced large companies such as RCA to divest themselves of many of their media holdings. To New Deal politicians the airwaves were a public trust; they sought to plan and administer that trust to public — as well as private — profit.

**The News Drama.** By the middle of the 1930s the greedy and unprincipled businessman had become a staple of radio and the pulps, as well as of Roosevelt's rhetoric. Programs such as Norman Corwin's *Pursuit of Happiness* characterized the United States to Americans as a nation of tolerant, fair-minded people, liberal in their politics and human sympathies. Americans also began to view events abroad as a form of drama — and brought their expectations from radio and pulp drama to these world events. In 1934 and 1935 advertisers realized they could make money by sponsoring news broadcasts, something they had not heretofore believed. Sponsored news began to fill the airwaves, bringing the dramatic events of Europe and Asia home to Americans, who interpreted them much as they did drama — making villains of Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and Tojo Hideki, and heroes of the people they attacked, the Ethiopians, the Jews, and the Chinese. Aware of the influence they had on public opinion, American newscasters debated over how much they should editorialize in broadcasts, with William S. Paley of CBS leading the way by arguing that news broadcasts should be as dispassionate as possible. Yet the public was already interpreting news, no matter

how dry, from the standpoint of entertainment. It was natural enough that they would get the two confused: the news drama of war averted in the September 1938 Munich Crisis was soon followed by the panic inspired by Orson Welles's dramatization *War of the Worlds*, which employed a news-broadcast format. When real war came on 1 September 1939, the radio transmission of the event on CBS was of course followed by an announcement:

We should like to express our appreciation again at this time to the makers of Oxydol, sponsors of *The Goldbergs*; the makers of Ivory Soap, sponsors of *Life Can Be Beautiful*; the makers of Chipso, sponsors of *The Road of Life*; the makers of Crisco, sponsors of *This Day is Ours*. . .

**An American Culture.** To the sensibility of the proponent of high culture, such commercialism diminished the significance of the event. Most Americans, however, accepted it as normal. In the new mass media advertising and entertainment were a given. The question debated then and now was the extent to which advertising and entertainment distracted from the need for media to inform and enlighten. The synthesis that developed in the 1930s suggested that media could advertise and inform, entertain and enlighten, equally well. The synthesis itself was in many ways unprecedented, breaking with cultural values established in the West in the preceding two hundred years. At the time it was unique to the United States; in Depression-era Europe the new mass media was used for state indoctrination, and it made sharp distinctions between high and low culture. Owned by private individuals and regulated by the government in the public interest, the American mass media proved extremely receptive to the public need for both entertainment and enlightenment and set a precedent that would serve Americans well for the next forty years.

## TOPICS IN THE NEWS

---

### ANIMATED CARTOONS

**The Golden Age of the Movies.** Many businesses suffered severe losses during the Depression. The movies were not among them; in fact, they were so popular and so successful that many historians consider the 1930s to be their golden age. Full-length motion pictures were most popular, but short animated films were also audience favorites.

**Adding Sound to Cartoons.** Animated cartoons had existed since the 1910s, and during the 1920s successful silent-cartoon characters included Otto Messmer's Felix the Cat, Max and Dave Fleischer's KoKo the Clown, and Walt Disney's Oswald the Rabbit. In 1928 Disney and Ub Iwerks created a new character, Mickey Mouse, and featured him in *Steamboat Willie*, the first animated cartoon with synchronized sound. As with regular movies, sound rapidly displaced the silent film.

**New Characters and Trends.** As major animation studios, Disney and the Fleischer Brothers were soon joined by Warner Bros. in the 1930s, a decade that witnessed the introduction of several new characters and trends. One of the first new animated characters of the decade was Betty Boop, created by Grim Natwick for the Fleischers. Based on singer Helen Kane, who in the late 1920s included the phrase “boop-boop-a-doop” in the popular song “I Wanna Be Loved By You,” Betty Boop repeatedly found herself in comic predicaments. The character was immediately successful and was highly merchandised. Another popular Fleischer character, introduced in 1933 opposite Betty Boop, was Popeye the Sailor. The character had made his comic-strip debut four years earlier in E. C. Segar’s *Thimble Theatre*. The ambitious Walt Disney began the decade with his remarkable “Silly Symphonies” and ended it with the first feature-length cartoon, *Snow White* (1937). Disney also began work on its next animated features, *Pinocchio* (1940) and *Fantasia* (1940). In between Disney continued to produce popular Mickey Mouse cartoons as well as other shorts such as “The Three Little Pigs” (1933) — whose song, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?” was a Depression favorite. In 1932 Disney won a special Academy Award for his Mickey Mouse cartoons, one of which introduced the immediately popular Donald Duck that year.

**Warner Bros.** Other studios fought to share in the successes of animated cartoons, including Terrytoons and Walter Lantz. Warner Bros., which entered the field relatively late, in 1930, toward the end of the decade began to assume dominance in the short animated cartoon. Porky Pig first appeared in 1935, followed two years later by Daffy Duck and three years later by Warner Bros.’ most famous character, Bugs Bunny. On such popular characters the studio proceeded to build a cartoon empire, owing much of its success to the innovative talents of animators and directors such as Tex Avery, Bob Clampitt, Friz Freleng, and Chuck Jones.

**Sources:**

- Leslie Cabarga, *The Fleischer Story* (New York: Nostalgia Press, 1976);
- John Grant, *Encyclopedia of Walt Disney’s Animated Characters*, revised edition (New York: Hyperion, 1993);
- Norman M. Klein, *Seven Minutes: The Life and Death of the American Animated Cartoon* (London & New York: Verso, 1993);
- Leonard Maltin, *Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons*, revised edition (New York: New American Library, 1987);
- Steve Schneider, *That’s All Folks! The Art of Warner Bros. Animation* (New York: Holt, 1988).

### COMIC STRIPS AND THE BIRTH OF THE COMIC BOOK

**Beginnings.** The first comic strip, Richard Outcault’s *The Yellow Kid*, appeared in the *New York World* in 1895. In the next twenty-five years comic strips became one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the United States thanks to the talents of such writer-artists as Out-



Front cover for the first comic book featuring Superman

cault, who also created *Buster Brown*; Rudolph Dirks with his *The Katzenjammer Kids*; Winsor McCay, particularly with his *Little Nemo in Slumberland*; Bud Fisher with his *Mutt and Jeff*, the first daily comic strip; George Herriman, the genius behind the surreal *Krazy Kat*; George McManus with his *Bringing Up Father*; and many others. Most comic strips in the first decades of the form relied on humor, earning them the names *comics* and *funnies*, and often on fantasy as well. In addition, several adventure strips, including Roy Crane’s *Wash Tubbs* and Richard Calkins and Philip Nowlan’s *Buck Rogers*, began to appear in the 1920s. These trends, along with more-realistic depictions of American life, would prevail in comic strips throughout the 1930s, the decade that also witnessed the birth of a near relative, the comic book.

**New Faces on the Funny Pages.** While many older strips continued to prosper into the 1930s, many of the most popular were introduced during the decade. Chic Young’s *Blondie* first appeared in 1930. Beginning as a lighthearted satire of young people in the Jazz Age, it soon evolved into a popular comic examination of American work and family life. An established strip, Billy DeBeck’s *Barney Google* (introduced in 1919), underwent a striking transformation: in 1934 the eponymous character inherited a cabin in the hill country of North Carolina

and met an equally diminutive character named Snuffy Smith, who then began to steal the show. By the end of the 1930s the strip was named *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith*. After DeBeck's death in 1942 his assistant, Fred Lasswell, took over, and Barney Google was eventually supplanted by Snuffy Smith and his kin and neighbors. Also set in the South, but more sharply satirical than *Barney Google*, was Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*, introduced in 1934, with the denizens of Dogpatch making fun of contemporary social issues. Other strips combined humor and fantasy with adventure, among them V. T. Hamlin's *Alley Oop*, which first appeared in 1933. At first set in a prehistoric land called Moo, the strip began to vary its potential for humor and action when Hamlin introduced a time machine that allowed the strip's caveman protagonist and his friends to travel to a wide range of times and places.

**Action and Adventure.** Some strips of the 1930s seemed to defy the "funnies" label by adhering to action and adventure rather than humor. One example was Milton Caniff's *Dickie Dare*, introduced in 1933. The strip featured a twelve-year-old boy who first imagines himself as part of classic adventure tales, such as those with Robin Hood and Robinson Crusoe, then takes part in real adventures with his globe-trotting writer friend Dan Flynn. At the end of 1934 Caniff left the strip, which continued until 1957 under other hands, to create *Terry and the Pirates*, another adventure strip. The most beautifully drawn adventure strip of the decade, Alex Raymond and Don Moore's *Flash Gordon*, first appeared in 1934. Other noteworthy adventure strips introduced during the decade include Frank V. Martinek's *Don Winslow of the Navy* (1934), Lee Falk and Phil Davis's *Mandrake the Magician* (1934), Falk and Ray Moore's *The Phantom* (1936), and Hal Foster's *Prince Valiant* (1937).

**Reflections of Hard Times.** Not every comic strip during the 1930s provided such escapism. The 1930s was a decade of depression and high crime rates, and several strips reflected the reality that the newspapers in which they appeared described daily. The best-known strip of this kind was Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy*, which started appearing regularly on 12 October 1931. Combining cartoonish art with realistic violence, the strip was instantly popular, its hero taking his place with other popular detectives of the 1930s. In an era obsessed with gangsters, Dick Tracy fought gangsters of every conceivable shape and aspect. While the strip had elements of humor and warmth, the urban setting in which Tracy worked was filled with darkness and crime, a clear reflection of contemporary concerns and moods. Similarly, one of the most popular strips of the decade, Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie* (introduced in 1924), dealt with the hard times of the decade through Annie's unbending optimism and pluck and Gray's increasingly blatant critiques of the New Deal.

**The Creation of the Comic Book.** Reprint collections of comic strips were popular before the 1930s. In 1933 a

## BIG LITTLE BOOKS

The first comic book, a collection of comic strips called *Funnies on Parade*, appeared in 1933, but it was not the first time comic strips had been collected. Books of collected strips had been published for decades, and one year earlier a form of collected comic strips first appeared and enjoyed immediate and substantial success: Whitman's Big Little Books.

Big Little Books were small, thick "novels" alternating a page of text with a captioned illustration. First sold in discount stores for ten cents apiece, the books were extremely popular with children of various ages, who could read them at whatever level they were comfortable. Most of the first Big Little Books adapted stories and characters from comic strips; the first three titles, for instance, featured Dick Tracy, Mickey Mouse, and Little Orphan Annie. Other sources came from movies and radio shows. From 1932 to 1938 Whitman Publishing sold 250 separate titles, by some estimates selling one million books a month at their most successful. The number of titles offered would more than double by 1950, when Whitman stopped creating the books. They have since revived the format at various times.

Source: Ron Goulart, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Comics* (New York & Oxford: Facts On File, 1990).

new type of collection, *Funnies on Parade*, reprinted strips in color in a 7 1/2" x 10" magazine with a slick paper cover and inadvertently created a new medium, the comic book. Its ten thousand copies, given away with Proctor and Gamble products, were extremely popular with the public, and the following year its publisher created another reprint comic, *Famous Funnies*, to be sold for ten cents; it became the first monthly comic book. Its thirty-five thousand copies sold quickly, and it was rapidly imitated. In 1935, starting with *New Fun Comics* (later *More Fun*), National Periodical Publications (later DC Comics) began seeking original stories to publish, and comic books quickly assumed an independent identity. They were especially popular during the next decade, which many historians label the golden age of the comic book.

**The Age of the Superhero.** It is unlikely that comic books would have become as popular as they did, however, without the advent of a new concept in their pages, the costumed crime fighter. The idea of mystery men who took the law into their own hands was not entirely new, having originated during the early 1930s in popular pulp magazines such as *The Spider* and *The Shadow*. With the introduction of Superman in the first issue of *Action Comics* (June 1938) the comic book had a creature all its

own — the *superhero*. Though other kinds of comic books — featuring funny animals, romance, war, science fiction, Westerns, teenagers, and so on — would appear and succeed, it was superheroes such as Superman and Batman (introduced in *Detective Comics* #27 in 1939) that ensured the continued prosperity of the form into the next decade and beyond.

Up, Up, and Away! Superman was created by two nineteen-year-olds from Cleveland, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. An amalgam of pulp-magazine science fiction and comic-book fantasy, the Man of Steel was the first superhero. For a long time he was also the most popular — even with competition from a plethora of costumed crime fighters introduced in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Next in popularity was Batman, created by Bob Kane and Bill Finger, who were influenced from even more directions: pulp-magazine figures such as the Shadow and Doc Savage; radio crime fighters such as the Green Hornet and the Lone Ranger; Zorro and gangsters from the movies; and comic-strip characters such as the Phantom. Superheroes quickly fell into two camps: either they were like Superman in exhibiting unusual abilities, soon labeled *superpowers*, or they were “normal” men (and occasionally women) who fought crime, like their archetype Batman, using a combination of physical strength and skill, intelligence, and fancy equipment. Thus, the comic-book pages were filled with such colorful characters as the Atom, Batman, Blackhawk, Blue Beetle, Captain America, Captain Marvel, Daredevil, Doll Man, the Flash, Green Arrow, Green Lantern, Hawkman, the Human Torch, the Phantom Lady, Plastic Man, the Sandman, the Sub-Mariner, Superman, Wonder Woman, and many, many others. These characters shared certain traits that struck a chord with young readers: they had exciting abilities and adventures, and they almost always had a secret identity — a winning combination for children and adolescents who often felt overpowered by the world and believed that no one understood them. In addition, many of these superheroes had youthful sidekicks — Batman had Robin; the Human Torch had Toro; Captain America had Bucky — with whom youthful readers could identify.

Sources:

Mike Denton, *The Comic Book in America: An Illustrated History*, revised edition (Dallas: Taylor, 1993);

Ron Goulart, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Comics* (New York & Oxford: Facts On File, 1990);

Richard Marschall, *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists* (New York: Abbeville, 1989).

## COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934

The Radio Act of 1927. The regulation of the burgeoning broadcasting industry began with the Radio Act of 1927, which for a few years brought order to chaos. But the 1927 act treated radio broadcasting differently from telephone and telegraph communications and set up a confusing range of federal agencies with control over

different aspects of the industry. During the first few years of the Radio Act of 1927 it became clear that, while the legislation had done a good job with the radio portion of the industry — especially with the formation of the Federal Radio Commission — it had failed by not including the telephone and telegraph industries within its scope.

**Government Regulation.** By 1929 many of the ideas later incorporated into the 1934 act had been discussed and agreed upon by members of Congress but not passed into law. During the first several years of the Great Depression, Congress was more concerned with the economic collapse than with regulatory tinkering. With the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and a new activist attitude toward government regulation, the Communications Act of 1934 took its place among the other regulatory milestones of the New Deal — the Securities Act of 1933, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, and the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938. Like many of these acts, the Communications Act of 1934 was the product of ideas, laws, and negotiations that existed before the Depression.

**Utilities and Regulation.** In a message asking Congress to pass the bill regulating communications, President Roosevelt defined communications vendors as specific utilities and pointed out the singular lack of regulation concerning communications: “I have long felt that for the sake of clarity and effectiveness, the relationship of the Federal government to certain services known as utilities should be divided into three fields: Transportation, power, and communications. The problems of transportation are vested in the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the problems of power . . . in the Federal Power Commission. In the field of communications, however, there is today no single Government agency charged with broad authority.” As the bill was already written, it was quickly passed as the Communications Act of 1934.

**Federal Communications Commission.** The centerpiece of the legislation was the reformulation of the old Federal Radio Commission as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), with little new structure but with new responsibilities to oversee the telecommunications industry as well as broadcasting. According to the act, the role of the FCC was “to make available, as far as possible, to all the people of the United States a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and radio communications service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges.” The act was not intended to make the industry competitive, nor to make the prices charged a function of market mechanisms. The subjects of the six major chapters of the act show the scope and intentions of the legislation:

1. Setting up of the FCC.
2. Common carriers, being the telephone and telegraph companies.



3. Broadcast licensing, general powers of the FCC, requirement that candidates for public office be treated equally and that sponsors be identified.

4. The right to appeal FCC decisions.

5. Enforcement procedures.

6. War emergency powers of the president.

**Public Interest.** The clause that defined the powers of the FCC in relation to the content and structure of the broadcasting industry included the idea of the "public interest" as the measure of whether something should be allowed to be broadcast or someone should be given a broadcasting license. Such a vague and ultimately undefinable term as "public interest" gave almost unlimited power to the FCC. But the FCC exercised those powers in a limited way, controlling advertiser fraud over the airwaves and insuring community standards of decency. The full scope of that power was not made explicit until 1975, when a federal appeals court stated that "since the public cannot through a million stifled yawns convey that their . . . fare is not in their interest, the Congress has made the FCC the guardian of that public interest." Despite that power, and the fear of critics that the FCC would seek to impose a partisan political agenda on local radio broadcasts, the FCC left local stations free to express virtually any opinion.

**Lasting Influence.** The Communications Act of 1934 set up a structure that lasted through the rise of television and the telecommunications giants of the late twentieth century. Its broadcast standards, licensing procedures, and tariff policies withstood almost fifty years without radical change. As with so many of the New Deal-era legislative juggernauts, the Communications Act of 1934 is only in the 1990s facing a fundamental rewrite.

**Sources:**

Sydney W. Head and Christopher H. Sterling, *Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Television, Radio, and New Technologies*, fourth edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982);

Max D. Paglin, ed., *A Legislative History of the Communications Act of 1934* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

## ESQUIRE MAGAZINE

**Born in the Depression.** *Esquire: The Quarterly for Men* made its debut on 15 October 1933, near the trough of the Great Depression. The idea of a new men's fashion magazine for the public came from C. F. Peters, a Scandinavian fashion artist, who told three men associated with the trade paper *Apparel Arts* that a magazine that could be sold or given away to clothing customers would be successful. The three men — David A. Smart, William H. Weintraub, and Arnold Gingrich — worked for nearly a year before coming up with a design for the new magazine, which would combine fashion illustrations and advice with cultural writing.

**Quick Growth.** The 5,000 copies of the first quarterly issue reserved for newsstand sales sold out within five



David A. Smart, publisher (sitting), and Arnold Gingrich, editor of *Esquire*

hours. The *Esquire* staff scrambled to recall 95,000 of the 100,000 copies presold to menswear stores so they could be shipped to newsstands. The success of the magazine was so great and such a shock that Smart, Weintraub, and Gingrich quickly retooled *Esquire* into a monthly, which began publication with the issue dated January 1934. That issue sold more than 60,000 copies. By the end of 1934, sales had reached more than 135,000. With Smart as publisher and Gingrich as editor, sales of *Esquire* rose to more than 700,000 copies in 1938.

**Targeting the Middle Class.** Gingrich marketed the magazine as a guidebook to leisure for middle-class men, a risky idea for a country in the midst of the Great Depression. In addition to its fashion, food, and leisure advice, *Esquire* also featured drawings of scantily clad women, which became used as pinups during the 1940s. Full-page cartoons were also a fixture of the magazine. Yet *Esquire* was best known for its ability to attract some of the best American fiction writers as contributors. The first issue featured work by Dashiell Hammett, Ring Lardner, John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, and others. To get Hemingway's contribution for this issue Gingrich reportedly kept after Hemingway so persistently that the author agreed to contribute a story if

Gingrich could shoot more beer cans than he could. Gingrich did, later saying, "I guess he was drunker than I was." Hemingway not only became a regular contributor but introduced Gingrich to other prominent writers of the time, including Dos Passos and Lardner. *Esquire* soon built a reputation for publishing the best writers of the period, among them William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Sinclair Lewis.

**A Bellwether.** The importance of *Esquire*, besides its literary pedigree, was its influence on the development of future magazines. Shown by the success of *Esquire* that a male magazine market existed, other publishers brought out offerings such as *Sports Illustrated* and *Playboy* after World War II. While successful to a degree even into the 1990s, *Esquire* never regained the singularity it held in the 1930s.

**Source:**

Arnold Gingrich, *Nothing But People: The Early Days at Esquire, A Personal History, 1928-1958* (New York: Crown, 1973).

## THE GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO

**The Broadcast Center.** The 1930s were truly the golden age of radio. Radio had been a nationwide phenomenon during the 1920s, broadcasting jazz; it was a fixture of the 1940s, connecting the home front to the war; but during the Depression era of the 1930s radio was something more than an entertainment or communications medium. It was a source of solace, of relief from everyday troubles; a means of escaping hardship, if only for a few minutes. It also embodied the political tensions of the decade. President Franklin D. Roosevelt reassured the nation by radio during his "fireside chats"; H. V. Kaltenborn's broadcasts from Munich in 1938 focused the nation's anxieties on Europe. During the 1930s radio was at the center of American culture.

**The Depression.** The Depression affected the radio business much as it did other industries. Large radio manufacturers and broadcasters were hurt slightly; small radio manufacturers and broadcasters were driven out of business. Small radio stations, when they did not fold, weathered the Depression by occasionally trading air time to advertisers in return for room and board for their personnel. Wealthy entrepreneurs unaffected by the Depression increasingly bought up local radio stations, forming chains of broadcast sites and radio networks. If anything the Depression was good for the radio business. Advertisers, hunting for maximum exposure for the minimum price, increasingly chose radio over newspapers. Even in the worst years of the Depression the major networks continued to post profits: in 1932 the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) made just more than \$1 million; the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), \$1.6 million.

**The Popular Imagination.** Radio was profitable because it was popular: the *Amos 'n' Andy* program was such a fad that during its broadcast time, between 7:00 and

## "HELLO AMERICA!"

**B**y 1931 CBS radio and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) were regularly transmitting programs across the Atlantic to one another. By far the most controversial of these transmissions was the broadcast of author and all-purpose curmudgeon George Bernard Shaw from London to New York on 11 October. Shaw had just returned from the Soviet Union. In this period Russia was perceived by its admirers as buzzing with activity and purpose while the West sank deeper into Depression. Many writers and intellectuals were impressed with Russia and critical of western economies, including Shaw. His broadcast to America began:

Hello America! Hello, all my friends in America! How are you dear old boobs who have been telling one another for a month that I have gone dotty about Russia? . . . Russia has the laugh on us. She has us fooled, beaten, shamed, shown up, outpointed, and all but knocked out. We have lectured her from the heights of our modern superiority and now we are calling on the mountains to hide our blushes in her presence. . . . Our agriculture is ruined and our industries collapsing under the weight of our own productiveness because we have not found out how to distribute our wealth as well as to produce it.

Shaw went on to chide the American president, Herbert Hoover, who had earned international fame for his war-relief efforts following World War I and subsequently for his inability to feed his own people in time of peace.

Many in America were outraged at the broadcast but none more so than Georgetown University vice president Edmund A. Walsh, who denounced Shaw as "the licensed charlatan of English letters."

**Source:** Erik Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel: A History of Broadcasting in the United States, Volume I, to 1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

7:15 P.M. each evening, telephone use in the country dropped 50 percent and movie theaters interrupted showings to pipe in the program. Enough Americans were listening to radio by 1930 that the first analysis of the listening audience, organized by Archibald Crossley of the Association of National Advertisers, began attempting to rate the popularity of various programs. Social workers reported that some destitute families would give up their iceboxes or furniture before they would part with their radios. In 1933, 3.6 million radio sets were sold, in the depths of the Depression. By 1939 about 80 percent of Americans owned radios. Audiences loved radio because it provided them with an excitement often missing



Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll — Amos 'n' Andy

in their lives: romance, adventure, wealth, and ease. But audiences also loved radio because it invited them to participate in its scripted fantasies. Radio conveyed its message by sound; listeners had to provide the visualizations. Broadcast dramas used various sound effects to evoke slammed doors, automobiles, and telephones, but listeners pictured the majority of the script in their imaginations, filling in the features of the hero or heroine as they pleased. Few in the audience knew that the Lone Ranger's faithful horse, Silver, was actually a couple of coconut shells on a soundboard; even had they known it, fewer still would have imagined Silver as anything but a gallant steed.

**From Vaudeville to Radio.** Radio borrowed much of its broadcast format from other entertainment media. Sports, of course, were a fixture of radio — sometimes even in the absence of actual games. The future president Ronald Reagan, a sports announcer at WHO in Des Moines, Iowa, during much of the Depression, called play-by-play for the Chicago Cubs in a studio three hundred miles from the actual game. Linked to the baseball

field by telegraph relay, Reagan was fed the raw data from the game and invented the remainder of the action — which was in turn reimagined by his audience. Baseball, boxing, and college football were favorites of broadcasters. Radio also borrowed much of its entertainment talent from vaudeville, a type of stage variety show that was in decline. Radio comedies, like vaudeville, were usually performed before live audiences, and audience reactions were considered part of the program — so much so that microphones were hung over the crowd. Vaudevillians such as Eddie Cantor, Ed Wynn, Jack Pearl, Fred Allen, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jack Benny, Fanny Brice, and Edgar Bergen were stars of radio, and the variety show, usually featuring the name of its advertising sponsor in the title (for example, *Texaco Five-Star Theater*, *Kraft Music Hall*, *Maxwell House Showboat*), made the transition to a nonvisual medium by emphasizing singers and comics.

**Amos 'n' Andy.** The most popular radio show of the decade was also borrowed from an older entertainment tradition. Minstrelsy was an old vaudeville genre in which

white entertainers painted their faces black and sang "Negro" songs or poked fun at African Americans. Although minstrelsy was often offensive to blacks, white audiences loved it. Two white vaudevillians, Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, brought this genre to radio, with amazing results. Audiences could not get enough of the escapades of the stereotypically "black-sounding" protagonists — who usually ran into trouble trying to rise above their social "place." Even President Roosevelt listened to *Amos 'n' Andy*.

**Comedy.** Led by *Amos 'n' Andy*, comedy ruled the airwaves during the 1930s. Inevitably the most popular programs offered some levity during hard times. One of the most popular performers was Fred Allen, an intelligent actor whose program featured characters such as the voluble Senator Claghorn and the opinionated Mrs. Nussbaum. Jack Benny, another radio wit, repeatedly offered gags about his penny-pinching and his ability as a violin player. One episode featured Benny being robbed. The thief demanded, "Your money or your life!" After a pregnant silence Benny responded with, "I'm thinking it over." Ratings soared when Allen and Benny met on the air in March 1937, culminating years of good-natured feuding over their acts. The show concluded with an off-air "fistfight" between the two, after which they returned to the studio to deliver the punch line: when Benny's wife, Mary, asked Benny how he got a black eye, he responded by fibbing, "I was writing a letter," to which Allen quipped, "And I dotted his eye." Other popular comedy acts and shows included George Burns and Gracie Allen as a straight-man husband and a scatter-brained wife; *Easy Aces*, on which writer Goodman Ace and his wife, Jane, entertained with puns, non sequiturs, and malapropisms; *Fibber McGee and Molly*, a situation comedy about an accident-prone couple; and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, a ventriloquist act whose suggestive banter with guests such as Mae West and Dorothy Lamour brought many complaints to the Federal Communications Commission.

**Music.** Music, of course, was also a staple of radio, brought from the stage and concert hall to the studio. Live symphonic orchestra performances were common, with CBS sponsoring broadcasts by the New York Philharmonic and NBC building an orchestra around Italian maestro Arturo Toscanini. But the most popular music on radio came from vaudeville and the dance hall, with singers such as Rudy Vallee, Kate Smith, Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, and Dinah Shore leading the pack of audience favorites. Established swing and jazz stars often performed on the radio, especially Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Paul Whiteman, Artie Shaw, and Duke Ellington. Such broadcasts were almost always live, as few records were licensed for radio broadcast — a reflection of a long-standing royalty dispute broadcasters had with the American Federation of Musicians and American Society of



Gracie Allen and George Burns

Composers, Authors and Publishers. The dispute dragged on throughout the decade.

**Soap Operas.** A more original staple of radio was the soap opera, so named because they were usually sponsored by household-products advertisers, such as soap makers. The soap operas were serial melodramas aimed toward a daytime, female audience. They served up heady doses of middle-class family crisis and tepid romance to enthusiastic millions. Typical of the plot dilemmas of soaps was that of *Just Plain Bill*, where Bill, the midwestern protagonist, fears that his daughter, raised in eastern finishing schools, will be "too good for me." *Our Gal Sunday* continued for years, probing the basic question "Can a girl from a little mining town in the West find happiness as the wife of a wealthy and titled Englishman?" *Big Sister* concerned the travails of a heroine in love with a man whose wife was insane. One of the most interesting of the soap operas was *The Goldbergs*, the story of an urban Jewish family. Millions of upwardly mobile families of every ethnic background responded to the Goldbergs' pursuit of the American dream. Regular listeners wrote letters addressed to soap opera characters, offering them advice with their problems. The first soap opera was *The Romance of Helen Trent*, about a widow. It made its debut in 1933 and was still on the air in 1960. Others included *Myrt and Marge*, *Ma Perkins*, *Life Can Be Beautiful*, and *Against the Storm*.

**Amateur Hours, Game Shows, and Advice.** Programming staples of radio were the amateur hour and the game show. *Major Bowes' Amateur Hour* was the most popular of these programs, highlighted by a deep brass gong tolling the end of a performance from the less-than-gifted. Others included *Professor Quiz*, *Information Please*, and *True and False*. The advice and instructional program was drawn in many instances from newspapers. The pro-

gram hosted by Mary Margaret McBride's "Martha Deane" character and other similar shows proved popular, especially with women. McBride conducted interviews with famous and ordinary people and dispensed advice in ad-libs. Other programs, such as *Betty Crocker*, passed along recipes or home-decorating tips.

**Drama.** Radio also developed its own version of the drama, featuring narrators, actors speaking lines, and sound effects. In the early 1930s the most popular of these dramas were crime and suspense stories, sometimes drawn from the pulp fiction or the comic books of the day. They included *The Shadow*, *Charlie Chan*, *Eno Crime Clues*, and *Sherlock Holmes*. Other dramas — such as *Death Valley Days*, *Roses and Drums*, *Soconyland Sketches*, and *Moonshine and Honeysuckle* — were oriented toward adventure. Some dramas were specifically designed for preadolescent and adolescent males and usually featured some variant of the superhero. *Tom Mix*, *Tarzan*, *The Lone Ranger*, *The Green Hornet*, *Superman*, *Buck Rogers in the Year 2430*, and *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy* were among these shows. In 1937 both CBS and NBC began broadcasting Shakespeare plays. The horror drama *Lights Out* was also popular and challenged sound-effects technicians to produce sounds such as the squishing of blood and guts (a bathroom plunger in warm spaghetti) and the crunching of bones (Lifesavers broken between the teeth, very close to the microphone).

**Norman Corwin.** One of the most original dramatists on radio in the 1930s was a young writer, Norman Corwin, who integrated word and sound in an innovative fashion. In 1938 Corwin began to produce "word orchestrations" — programs in which sound effects reinforced the narration. In his production of the Old Mother Hubbard nursery rhyme, for example, the rattling of cups and china is heard as she goes to her cupboard. Similar orchestrations were put to other nursery rhymes and to poetry by Edgar Lee Masters, Carl Sandburg, and Stephen Vincent Benét — often with the assistance of the poets themselves. On Christmas Day 1938 Corwin presented *The Plot to Overthrow Christmas*, a half-hour verse play that became an audience favorite. In 1939 his orchestrations began commenting on political events. *They Fly Through the Air* was critical of fascism. *Pursuit of Happiness*, which made Corwin famous, focused on Americana, featured an orchestra, and starred Burgess Meredith as the master of ceremonies. A variety show with a liberal, nationalist bent, *Pursuit of Happiness* introduced comedian Danny Kaye and balladeer Woody Guthrie, among other folksingers. It also premiered the rousing "Ballad for Americans," sung by African American baritone Paul Robeson, which culminated in a recitation of the Declaration of Independence. In the period just before World War II it thrilled millions. Corwin went on to be one of the most effective radio propagandists of the war. His broadcast on V-E day, "On a Note of Triumph," remained unforgettable to listeners.

**Fusions.** Another interesting use of radio was *The*

## BROADCAST AROUND THE WORLD

By 1930 radio technology had improved to such an extent that simultaneous global broadcasting became possible. In June 1930 General Electric (GE) scientists beamed a popular song, "I Love You Truly," around the world via shortwave pickups and rebroadcasts. "The music you are hearing has gone completely around the world," announced WGY in Schenectady, New York. GE scientists followed that stunt with a radio bridge game between a team in New York and one in Argentina. But the most interesting stunt broadcast by GE scientists was a transmission between Schenectady and Australia. In Schenectady they twisted a cat's tail and it howled into a microphone; in Australia a dog at a loudspeaker heard the cat, backed up, and barked into a microphone; in Schenectady the cat, hearing the dog on loudspeaker, arched its back and ruffled its fur — thus completing the world's first transoceanic dog-and-cat fight.

Source: Erik Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel: A History of Broadcasting in the United States, Volume 1, to 1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966)

*March of Time*, a dramatization of the day's news with fictional dialogue. Produced by *Time* magazine, *The March of Time* featured actors such as Welles and Ray Collins portraying public figures such as Roosevelt, Benito Mussolini, and Huey Long. Audiences were less impressed by the dramatizations than the rich baritone of narrator Westbrook van Voorhis, whose announcement that "Time . . . marches on!" became endlessly parodied in later years as "the voice of doom." Also fusing news and drama, fiction and reality, were the "insider" and "gossip" programs of figures such as Walter Winchell and Louella Parsons. Winchell's breathless broadcasts promised the listener the inside story on world events, calamities, and celebrity marriages and divorces. Parsons's broadcasts on *Hollywood Hotel*, along with other programs such as *Forty-five Minutes in Hollywood*, included both gossip and publicity items supplied by Hollywood studios.

**News.** In the early 1930s news and other information broadcasting were rarely welcomed by radio-station owners. NBC-red, one of the major networks, carried no news programming. NBC-blue had only one news program, as did CBS, although it occasionally carried news commentary during unprofitable hours. Viewing radio essentially as an entertainment and commercial medium, broadcasters were reluctant to enter into news broadcasting. In 1934 they struck a deal with newspaper publishers to limit the number of news broadcasts and delay news releases. The deal failed, but not until advertisers came forward to sponsor news programming — often demand-

ing veto rights over controversial news stories. Nonetheless, some journalists who emerged on radio during the decade set high standards for reporting. Hans von (H. V.) Kaltenborn was a Milwaukeean who had earned a reputation as an insightful commentator on contemporary events for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. His clipped, energetic discussions of world events translated easily to radio. He became famous for his broadcasts from Europe, where he interviewed world leaders such as Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. His broadcasts from Spain during the civil war did much to rally American opinion against fascism. Edward R. Murrow, a young reporter with a rich voice, managed to broadcast from Vienna during the Anschluss and went on to make gripping reports from London during the Blitz. Like Kaltenborn, Murrow was an employee of CBS, which built a large news staff during the latter part of the decade, including reporters such as William L. Shirer, Edgar Ansel Mowrer, Pierre Huss, Frank Gervasi, and Robert Trout. The entire news team participated in the most dramatic news broadcasts of the decade: reports of the Munich Crisis. From 12 to 29 September 1938 American listeners waited by their radios for the CBS broadcasts from Europe, which repeatedly interrupted regular programming with a breathless "Flash!" As Europe was mobilizing for war, Kaltenborn and the others reported on the distribution of gas masks in Prague, Hitler's fiery threats from Berlin, the paralysis of the French cabinet in Paris. Each day war drew closer. Then, at the last minute, British prime minister Neville Chamberlain flew to Germany to meet Hitler and averted war — albeit temporarily. Kaltenborn was there, translating French and German, interpreting events for the American public. The Munich crisis made him the nation's leading broadcast journalist.

**Education.** Educational programming was virtually nonexistent on radio during the early 1930s. During the 1920s educators around the nation urged the government to nationalize the airwaves and provide instructional, informational, and educational programming, as did the British Broadcasting Corporation. But teachers were completely outmaneuvered by commercial broadcasters. By the 1930s there were only two full-time educational radio stations in the United States — and they, like other part-time, college-based radio stations, broadcast from noncommercial bandwidths and were limited to low-power transmissions. Large commercial broadcasters did transmit educational and public-service programs such as *American School of the Air*, *America's Town Meeting of the Air*, *NBC University of the Air*, *Cavalcade of America*, and *University of Chicago Round Table*, but they did so primarily to deflect criticism of their commercial broadcasts. In 1934 educators and politicians mounted an attack on the overcommercialization of radio with the introduction of the Wagner-Hatfield bill in the Senate. The bill proposed turning over one-fourth of all radio allocations to "educational, religious, agricultural, labor, cooperative and similar non-profit-making associations." The bill

## CRASH OF THE HINDENBURG

The crash of the German dirigible *Hindenburg* on 6 May 1937 in Lakehurst, New Jersey, was one of the most spectacular disasters ever captured on film. A total of thirty-six people were killed in the terrible explosions and fire that lit up the evening sky in New Jersey. The coverage of the crash by newsreel and radio brought home the awesome immediacy of the media in delivering information. The images of destruction and death contained in the reports of the crash of the *Hindenburg* were a vision of a coming world that would be more subject to the emotional response of human beings to the suffering of others.

The radio report by Herb Morrison for WLS, Chicago, has become well known for its stark emotionalism, a response not in the later tradition of unemotional reporting.

Here it comes, ladies and gentlemen, and what a sight it is, a thrilling one, a marvelous sight. . . . The sun is striking the windows of the observation deck on the westward side and sparkling like glittering jewels on the background of black velvet. . . . Oh, oh, oh . . . !

It's burst into flames. . . . Get out of the way, please, oh my, this is terrible, oh my, get out of the way, please! It is burning, bursting into flames and is falling. . . . Oh! This is one of the worst. . . . Oh! It's a terrible sight. . . . Oh! . . . and all the humanity.

Morrison's emotional response — he sobbed through most of the broadcast — was seen as a human response to tragedy. It has later been held up as an example of emotion intruding on objective reporting.

Source: Michael Macdonald Mooney, *The Hindenburg* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1972).

floundered because of a provision allowing nonprofit stations to sell commercial airtime to meet their bills, but an important precedent was set. For the remainder of the 1930s the Federal Communications Commission would review the licenses of broadcasters to ensure that they transmitted educational and public-service programs — which they did, primarily during noncommercial hours such as Sunday morning, when few people were listening.

**End of an Era.** By 1939 American radio had reached the height of its creativity and power. News broadcasts were providing a degree of insight and immediacy unprecedented in history. The variety and scale of entertainment programming was tremendous. The profits for advertisers and broadcasters from radio were staggering.

## THE DEBUT OF TELEVISION

Although television technology had been present throughout the 1930s, with competing systems developed by RCA scientist Vladimir K. Zworykin and inventor Philo Farnsworth, the public was for the most part unaware of television, except as a convention in science fiction. Experimental on-air broadcasts of television were conducted during the decade, but the real public debut of television took place 30 April 1939 at the New York World's Fair. The fair's theme was "The World of Tomorrow," and television was just one of the marvels, along with nylon stockings and a cigarette-smoking robot named Elektro. To great public acclaim and much publicity, RCA chairman David Sarnoff opened the fair by addressing the public through television, as did President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who became the first president to appear on television. Sarnoff also took advantage of the fair to display RCA's first television receivers, bulky models with five- and nine-inch cathode ray tubes, ranging in price from \$199.50 to \$600. Regular broadcasts from NBC's studio 3H in Manhattan, featuring plays, bits of opera, comedians, and singers, kept the screens lit. The public was awed, and those who could afford it immediately placed orders for television receivers. They would have to wait. World War II soon intervened, placing television's development on hold. After the war, however, consumer savings fueled a boom in purchases — making the 1950s the first real decade of television.

Source: Erik Barnouw, *The Golden Web: A History of Broadcasting in the United States, Volume II, 1933 to 1953* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

Yet radio was nearing the end of its days as the foremost communications medium in American culture. Royalty disagreements between musicians and broadcasters were about to be resolved, leading radio to recorded music and spelling the end of live broadcasts of orchestras. The federal government was about to order the end of radio-station chains on the grounds that they violated antitrust laws. World War II led to closer government scrutiny of radio, and its focus shifted to news. Most important, at the 1939 New York World's Fair, the public was introduced to a new electromagnetic technology few had seen before: television. Although World War II would delay the deployment of this new technology, it spelled the end of radio. By 1949 many of the stars of radio had gone to television, and the networks focused their resources on the new medium. The golden age of radio was over.

Sources:

Erik Barnouw, *The Golden Web: A History of Broadcasting in the United*

*States: Volume II, 1933 to 1953* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968);

Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel: A History of Broadcasting in the United States: Volume I, to 1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966);

Cabell Phillips, *From the Crash to the Blitz, 1929–1939* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

## THE MARTIAN INVASION

**The Mercury Theatre on the Air.** On 30 October 1938, a Sunday evening, the United States was invaded by Martian hordes — or so hundreds of thousands of people believed. Howard Koch's radio adaptation of H. G. Wells's 1898 novel *The War of the Worlds* was performed on CBS radio by the Mercury Theatre on the Air, directed by twenty-four-year-old Orson Welles. CBS took great pains to ensure that the broadcast seem fictional, including changing real names of institutions to made-up names in the script and announcing at the beginning that the program was an adaptation of *The War of the Worlds*. Nonetheless, the clever narrative strategy of Koch and Welles and the verisimilitude of the production caused listeners who did not hear the opening of the show to panic when they heard that Martians had landed in New Jersey and were spreading across the country.

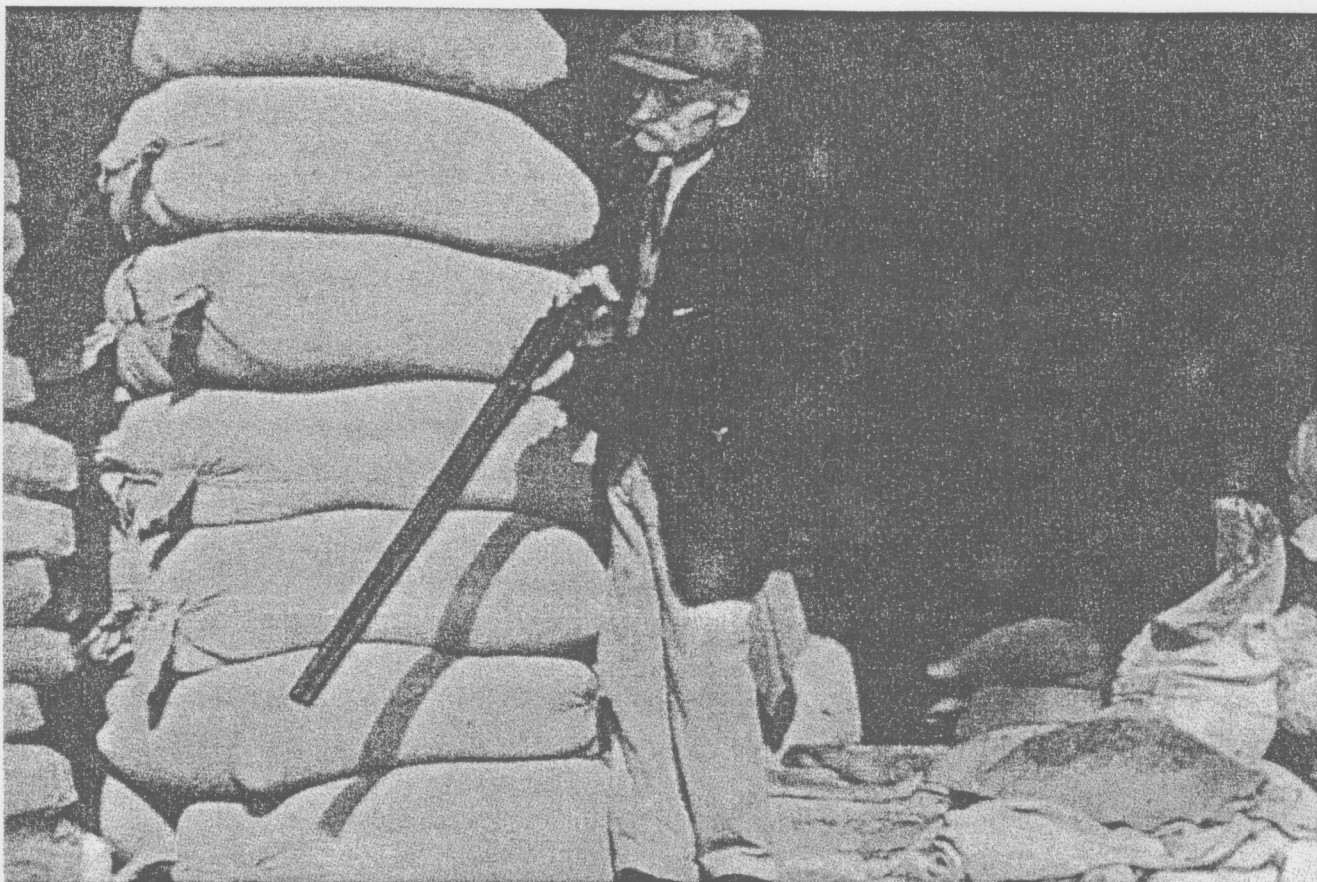
**The Dangers of Verisimilitude.** Welles and Koch so successfully imitated other types of radio broadcasting — weather reports, dance music, news bulletins — that much of the audience was convinced that they were actually hearing a series of news reports, regardless of their patently fantastic nature. Listeners purportedly heard reporters from Grover's Mill, New Jersey, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere describe Martian spacecraft and weaponry; some reports were cut off in the middle, leaving audiences to suspect the worst. Concerned listeners called police stations and newspaper offices; others jumped in their cars to flee what they believed was imminent death at the hands of technologically superior Martian invaders. In New York sailors on shore leave were requested to return to their ships. Many listeners in one Washington town panicked when the broadcast happened to coincide with a power failure.

Many associated with the project thought it would be a failure because listeners would not accept its fantastic content. Yet the broadcast so successfully convinced so many people of its truth that CBS had to promise not to air any more fictionalized news events. Many commentators believed that the astonishing reaction of the public expressed hidden concerns about the prospect of another world war, to which contemporary events in Europe and Asia were then inexorably leading.

Sources:

Erik Barnouw, *The Golden Web: A History of Broadcasting in the United States, Volume II, 1933 to 1953* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968);

Hadley Cantril with Hazel Gaudet and Herta Herzog, *The Invasion from Mars: A Study in the Psychology of Panic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940).



Man in Grover's Mill, New Jersey, prepared for a Martian invasion after Orson Welles's broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* on the Mercury Theatre on the Air, 30 October 1938

## NEW MAGAZINES

**Boom Times.** While the 1930s were a difficult decade for many businesses, magazine publishing flourished during the period. From the pulp magazines to the more respectable "slicks," magazines of widely varying content found a ready market among Americans who wanted either to read about, or, more usually, to distract themselves from, the troubles of the times. General magazines founded before the 1930s, such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Reader's Digest*, did well, as did Henry Luce's newsweekly *Time*. Several narrow-interest magazines also succeeded. Though the Depression would hardly seem an ideal time to launch a new business venture, many magazines that have lasted until the end of the twentieth century got their starts in the 1930s.

**Success Stories.** Luce's business magazine *Fortune*, for instance, made its debut in 1930 and quickly offered some of the best contemporary treatments of the Depression. Its generous use of photographs and stylish design influenced Luce's later creation, *Life*, and many other magazines as well. *Family Circle*, introduced in 1932, was one of the first women's magazines to be distributed exclusively through grocery stores. The marketing strategy worked. Like its similarly distributed competitor *Woman's Day*, introduced in 1937, it offered a combina-

tion of food and entertainment ideas, housekeeping and fashion tips, fiction, and other features.

**Magazine Fiction.** One of the most noteworthy new magazines of the 1930s was *Story*, introduced in 1931 by Whit Burnett and Martha Foley. During the 1930s it was commonly regarded as the best place to find good contemporary short fiction. Other significant literary periodicals introduced during the decade include the *American Spectator* (1932) — with a founding editorial board of Ernest Boyd, James Branch Cabell, Theodore Dreiser, George Jean Nathan, and Eugene O'Neill — and the *Kenyon Review* (1939), initially edited by John Crowe Ransom, who made the magazine a vehicle for advocating the New Criticism.

**Newsmagazines.** At the beginning of the 1930s *Time* reigned as the only noteworthy weekly newsmagazine. It remained in this position throughout the decade, but its isolation ended with the introduction of two more newsweeklies in 1933, *U.S. News & World Report* and *News-Week*. *News-Week* became *Newsweek* in 1937, and — thanks to the financial and marketing expertise brought to the magazine by real estate titan Vincent Astor, railroad heir W. Averell Harriman, McGraw-Hill president Malcolm Muir, and new editor Raymond Moley, a member of Roosevelt's original "brain trust" — it would



mount a serious challenge to the dominance of *Time* in the 1940s.

**Picture Magazines.** In 1936 Luce, always an innovator, introduced *Life*, a general-interest magazine with extensive photographs. The following year Gardner Cowles created a similar magazine, *Look*, as competition. Like *Fortune*, Luce's new magazine featured the work of talented photographers such as Margaret Bourke-White. Both magazines influenced others in ushering in a new era of photojournalism, a term coined in 1938 to describe the telling of a story primarily through photographs. *Life* in particular excelled at this, offering readers stark images of the Depression as well as colorful common-interest stories. Both *Life* and *Look* prospered for decades and were imitated until the market for general-interest magazines began to shrink. *Look* folded in 1971, with *Life* following the next year. *Life* resumed publication in 1978.

**Sources:**

Amy Janello and Brennon Jones, *The American Magazine* (New York: Abrams, 1991);

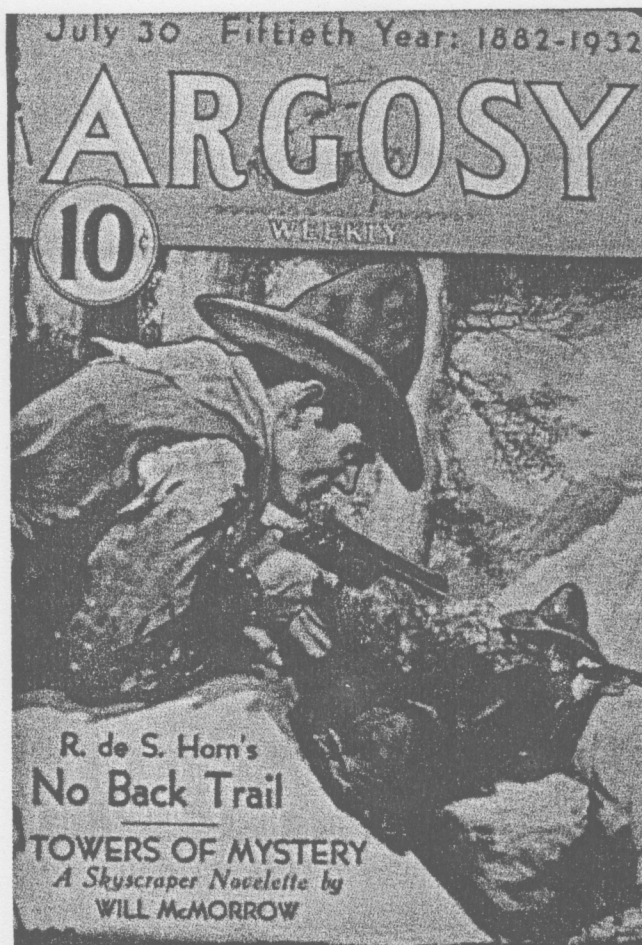
Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, 5 volumes (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938-1968).

## PULP MAGAZINES

**A Popular Medium.** Inexpensive magazines publishing fiction that appealed to a popular audience dated back to the end of the nineteenth century. The pulp magazines — so named for the thick, inexpensive pulpwood paper on which they were printed — got their start early in the twentieth century. The pulps flourished in the 1930s, along with radio shows and motion pictures, as a reasonably priced form of escapist entertainment. Hundreds of these magazines appeared between the 1920s and the 1950s, when they disappeared because of competition from paperbacks and television. At their peak pulps were purchased by millions of readers.

**Violence.** The pulps were more adventuresome than radio or movies, which catered to family audiences. The world of the pulps was generally a violent place, whether the stories dealt with cowboys and Indians, crime fighters and gangsters, spacemen and bug-eyed monsters, or warriors such as Robert E. Howard's Conan the Barbarian in *Weird Tales*. Crime was on the minds of many Americans during the 1930s, and the pulps offered plenty of brave, capable men who could fight it successfully. Colorful heroes abounded, including *The Shadow* (introduced in 1931) and *Doc Savage* and *The Spider* (both introduced in 1933). More down-to-earth were the hard-boiled private eyes who appeared in such magazines as *Black Mask* and *Dime Detective*, including Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade.

**Reputations.** While the pulps were extremely popular, they were often dismissed as a lowbrow form of entertainment by those who did not read them. Such a perception was natural: the pulps generally featured bright,



Front cover of the fiftieth-anniversary issue of the pulp magazine *Argosy*, 30 July 1932

often lurid covers, usually showing men with weapons and scantily clad women cowering in fear. In addition to using the cheapest paper possible, the magazines crammed stories onto pages, using small type and double columns. They catered to the oddest advertisers imaginable, and they published thousands of poorly written stories. But their detractors also missed out on the early work of several writers who went on to make names for themselves, including Hammett, Robert A. Heinlein, and H. P. Lovecraft. While many editors simply bought material to fill their pages, others — such as Joseph T. Shaw at *Black Mask* and John W. Campbell Jr. at *As-tounding Science-Fiction* — took their tasks seriously and made their magazines highly sought-after collectibles for later aficionados.

**Categories and Top Magazines.** Frank Munsey's *Argosy* and *All-Story*, both launched around the turn of the century, were among the first popular-fiction magazines to be printed on pulp paper. Like many of the first pulps, they offered a variety of story types. *Argosy* continued to do so into the 1930s, after most other magazines had specialized. One of the first specializations was the genre of horror and fantasy. Street and Smith's unsuccessful *The Thrill Book* made its debut in 1919, followed four

## THE FIRST PAPERBACK BOOKS

Books published with paper covers had appeared before the 1930s. For instance, in 1929 Charles Boni launched Boni Paper Books, which offered paperbound books first through a mail-order club and then, as Bonibooks, through bookstores. The books were beautifully designed, but the series ended in 1932 because of the Depression. The first books published with stiff covers in perfect-bound format in a size close to that of modern paperbacks did not appear until later in the 1930s. The first were Penguin Books, begun in England in 1935. The first American paperback publisher was Pocket Books, started by Robert de Graff in 1939 with Pearl Buck's novel *The Good Earth*. De Graff followed with such titles as James Hilton's *Lost Horizon*, Thorne Smith's *Topper*, and Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*. Designed to appeal to readers with limited budgets — they sold for twenty-five cents — who desired easily portable books, paperbacks were quickly successful, and Pocket soon had plenty of competition. By the 1940s the popularity of the format was assured.

Sources: Thomas L. Bonn, *Under Cover: An Illustrated History of American Mass Market Paperbacks* (New York: Penguin, 1982);

Piet Schreuders, *Paperbacks, U.S.A.: A Graphic History, 1939-1959*, translated by Josh Pachter (San Diego: Blue Dolphin, 1981).

years later by *Weird Tales*, one of the most striking and respected pulps of the 1920s and 1930s thanks to the contributions of writers such as Howard, Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Bloch, and many others who made names for themselves in horror, fantasy, and science fiction. Hugo Gernsback's *Amazing Stories* was the first pulp devoted to science fiction, but in the 1930s more writers sought to be published in *Astounding Science-Fiction*, founded in 1930. Under the editorship of Harry Bates and F. Orlin Tremaine, the magazine attracted such popular writers as Murray Leinster, Jack Williamson, E. E. "Doc" Smith, Campbell, and others. When Campbell took over the reins in 1937 the magazine, and science fiction in general, entered a golden age. Previous editors of the magazine had stressed good storytelling, in contrast to Gernsback's fascination with technology; Campbell not only sought well-told stories but stories, as he put it, that could be read as realistic stories set centuries in the future. Writers such as Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon, and A. E. Van Vogt gave him what he wanted and changed the face of American science fiction in the process. Founded in 1939, *Unknown* was Campbell's noteworthy but largely unsuccessful attempt to challenge *Weird Tales*. As influential in detective fiction as Campbell was in science fiction, "Cap" Shaw took over the six-year-old *Black Mask* in

1926 and nurtured the creation of a whole new style, hard-boiled detective fiction, during his ten years as editor. He was aided by the work of such talented writers as Hammett, Raymond Chandler, and several others who made *Black Mask* the classiest pulp on the market. Its rival *Dime Detective* also published several noteworthy writers and stories. In addition, pulp magazines devoted to such genres as general adventure, the Western, sports fiction, romance and sexier "spicy" stories, and prototypes of the comic-book superhero were also popular during the decade.

**The Beginning of the End.** The 1930s were the last prosperous decade for the pulps. Media that proved to be serious competitors in the 1940s — paperbacks, comic books, television — had their beginnings in the 1930s, and the paper shortages caused by World War II drove many pulp magazines out of business. By the 1950s the heyday of the pulps had passed.

Sources:

Tony Goodstone, ed., *The Pulps: Fifty Years of American Popular Culture* (New York: Chelsea House, 1970);

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

Lee Server, *Danger Is My Business: An Illustrated History of the Fabulous Pulp Magazines* (San Francisco: Chronicle, 1993).

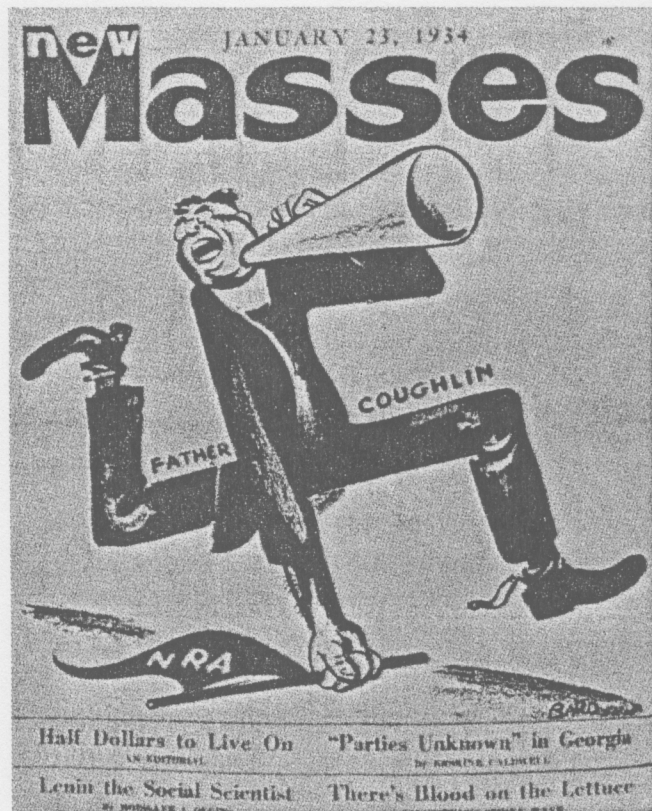
## RADICAL JOURNALS

**Heyday.** The 1930s were the heyday of the radical journal. Magazines and newspapers of political opinion, cultural criticism, science, and literature, the radical journal was an important forum for expression during the decade. Although radical journals never had substantial readership, their influence on American intellectual and political life was great. Published primarily in New York City, journals such as *Partisan Review*, *The New Masses*, and *Modern Monthly* shaped opinion far from Manhattan, even influencing political opinion abroad. The journals also provided many writers outlets for work that might otherwise have gone unpublished during the Depression, and they gave writers and critics who would become well known in subsequent decades their first experience in political journalism. Most radical journals were exceptionally critical of capitalism, and almost all advocated some type of reform. But they also analyzed, criticized, and introduced new art and literature. Especially in New York, the radical journals of the 1930s were at the center of a vibrant literary culture.

**From Masses to New Masses.** Most radical journals of the 1930s followed the stylistic precedent set by the groundbreaking journal *The Masses* (1911-1918). A combination of socialist advocacy, muckraking journalism, poetry, and art, *The Masses* featured illustrations by well-known artists such as George Bellows and John Sloan and established the reputations of important American writers such as John Reed, Max Eastman, and Floyd Dell. The combination of cultural criticism, Greenwich Village bohemianism, and socialist advocacy in *The Masses* was

imitated by other journals such as *Smart Set*, *The Seven Arts*, *The Dial*, and *The Liberator* (the successor to *The Masses*). Few of these magazines survived World War I. Like *The Masses*, many succumbed to government censorship, which became particularly fierce during the red scares of 1919–1920. The 1920s were also profoundly unreceptive to radical combinations of art, literature, and politics. Still some radical journals soldiered on. In 1926 the remains of *The Liberator* and *The Masses* staff launched a new journal, *The New Masses*. Like *The Masses*, it featured art and politics and was important in rallying support for radical causes, such as the protest against the executions of anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, widely believed to be innocent of the murders of which they had been convicted. With the Depression *The New Masses* became an important shaper of public opinion, its denunciations of capitalism keyed to the sentiments of the time. It was also one of the best sources for information on labor activism, civil rights, and artistic innovation. It spawned a host of imitators.

**Party Lines.** The radical journals were some of the best places for American readers to find discussions of cutting-edge artistic and philosophical developments such as suprematism, Futurism, Dadaism, Nietzscheanism, and psychoanalysis. As advocates of political reform or revolution, they were also inevitably caught up in the polarized politics of the 1930s. By 1930 *The New Masses* was firmly affiliated with, and subordinated to, the Communist Party of the United States. Under the leadership of an acerbic intellectual named Mike Gold, it faithfully interpreted the day's events from the perspective of the party leadership, itself parroting the party "line" on events dictated by Moscow. When Joseph Stalin exiled Leon Trotsky from Russia, *The New Masses* condemned Trotsky — even though he had been the darling of leftist intellectuals during the 1920s. When Moscow quit lumping liberals and fascists together in 1935, *The New Masses* also quit the practice; when Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with Hitler in 1939, *The New Masses* warmed toward the fascists. Many intellectuals were less galled by such ideological shifts than by the tendency of *The New Masses* to condemn art, literature, or journalism that was not sufficiently "proletarian." The Depression caused many middle-class intellectuals — including Theodore Dreiser, Waldo Frank, Sherwood Anderson, Edmund Wilson, Granville Hicks, Malcolm Cowley, Lionel Trilling, and John Dos Passos — to endorse communism and socialism as a means of resolving the nation's problems. Some such writers journeyed to Harlan County, Kentucky, early in the decade to report on a bloody miners' strike. Fifty-two of them, including Anderson, Wilson, Cowley, Frank, Dos Passos, Lincoln Steffens, Erskine Caldwell, Countee Cullen, and Langston Hughes, endorsed William Z. Foster, the Communist Party presidential candidate in 1932. Their efforts meant little to Gold and *The New Masses*, who continually castigated such intellectuals for their ideological and artistic deviations from Commu-



Front cover of the communist magazine *The New Masses*

nist orthodoxy. Gold was searching for a journalism that would appeal to the "working stiff" in America and pressured writers to work in a "realistic" idiom appropriate for factory workers. Eventually, he began to favor the writings of factory workers over those of the intellectuals. *The New Masses* and the Communist Party sponsored the John Reed Clubs writers' workshops for aspiring workers. Toeing the party line became too difficult for talented and idiosyncratic middle-class writers. American intellectuals had to "take Communism away from the Communists," asserted Wilson, and they sought a more heterodox forum for their opinions. In V. F. Calverton's *The Modern Quarterly* they found such an organ.

**The Modern Quarterly.** *The Modern Quarterly* (later *The Modern Monthly*) was the almost single-handed production of a Baltimore autodidact, George Goetz, who took the pen name V. F. Calverton. Begun in 1923, the journal reflected Calverton's sweeping interest in just about everything imaginable, from communism to fascism to psychoanalysis, civil rights, anthropology, sex, art history, and literary criticism. The journal was eclectic, exciting, iconoclastic. In its pages leading intellectuals and superb writers debated Stalinism, fascism, the New Deal, romantic poetry, and American history. Unlike *The New Masses*, Calverton boasted that he at one time or another printed something by "almost every left-wing liberal and radical who had artistic aspirations." In 1934 Wilson joined Calverton as an editor of *The Modern Quarterly*, and it became an important journal for anti-

Stalinist and anti-Communist leftists, including Max Eastman and Sidney Hook. When Calverton died in 1940 he took with him one of the most interesting publications of the decade.

**Popular Front.** Tensions between middle-class intellectuals and Communists diminished greatly after Moscow announced the policy of the Popular Front in 1935. No longer did Gold and *The New Masses* suggest that the intellectuals were too middle class; now middle class and working class were to unite to combat fascism. Many of the country's leading middle-class, liberal journals of opinion, including *The Nation* and *The New Republic*, now became repositories for many of the same types of political and cultural analysis appearing in *The New Masses* and *The Modern Quarterly*. Under the editorial leadership of Malcolm Cowley, *The New Republic* featured the same sort of social criticism found in *The New Masses*. The association was too much for many intellectuals who had broken with Gold and the Communists, Popular Front or not. Many protested when Cowley followed Gold and Moscow in representing Stalin's purge trials as legitimate judicial procedures rather than kangaroo courts and in supporting a Soviet Union that had become murderous and authoritarian under Stalin. Cowley argued with his liberal friends until 1939, when he joined them in condemning the Hitler-Stalin Pact. *The New Masses*, naturally enough, approved of the treaty; but liberal journals such as *The New Republic* used the occasion to depart from the Left and rejoin the center.

**Partisan Review.** Another radical journal, *Partisan Review*, broke with the Communists before the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Originally a product of the John Reed Clubs, *Partisan Review* made its debut in 1933. It featured the usual combination of art and politics, but its editors, Philip Rahv and William Phillips, quickly chafed at the restrictions imposed on their journal by Communist orthodoxy. The two were far more interested in literature than in politics, and they admired the innovations of the literary modernists before World War I. Although they originally tried to develop a Marxist/modernist aesthetic in their magazine, they abandoned the project in 1936 and quit the Communist Party. In 1937 they resurrected *Partisan Review* as an independent Marxist quarterly. Thereafter, the magazine enjoyed remarkable growth, becoming notable by the 1950s as a publisher of Delmore Schwartz, Dwight Macdonald, Robert Penn Warren, Stephen Spender, Mary McCarthy, Clement Greenburg, Irving Howe, James Dickey, Norman Mailer, Amos Oz, and many other writers. From the late 1930s to the early 1950s, *Partisan Review* was the foremost journal of literature, criticism, and politics in the United States.

**Writers on the Right.** Left-wing writers were not the only intellectuals publishing journals in the 1930s. Conservative journals of opinion, criticism, and the arts also existed, although they tended toward aesthetic issues far more than politics. H. L. Mencken distinguished himself as America's foremost iconoclast in the pages of *American*

*Mercury*. The *National Republic* called itself "A Magazine of Fundamental Americanism" and advocated military preparedness, high protective tariffs, and fundamentalist Christianity. *American Review*, edited by Seward Collins, embraced almost any antimodern philosophy of the age, from Allen Tate's southern Agrarianism to Irving Babbitt's New Humanism to Benito Mussolini's Fascism.

**Other Journals.** The richness of radical journalism in the 1930s is not only evident in quality journals, such as *Partisan Review*, but in the many lesser journals that circulated throughout the decade. *Menorah Journal* began in 1915 as a magazine designed to promote a nonsectarian and humanist spirit in the university. By the 1930s it was one of the leading journals of political and cultural opinion and gave some of the best writers of the time, including Lionel Trilling, Elliot Cohen, Herbert Solow, and Clifton Fadiman, their start. Catholic intellectuals published four periodicals: *America*, *Commonweal*, *Catholic World*, and the more radical *Catholic Worker*. Protestants sponsored *Christian Century*. Many ethnic and political newspapers published literature, criticism, and art, including *Labor Age*, *The Daily Worker*, *The Communist*, *Challenge of Youth*, *Negro Worker*, *Harlem Liberator*, *Southern Worker*, the NAACP periodical *The Crisis*, the African American *Chicago Defender*, the Jewish *Daily Forward*, the Italian American *Il Mondo*, and Carlo Tresca's Italian-language *Il Martello*. American partisans of Leon Trotsky's version of communism published *The Militant* and *The New Internationalist*; members of the Socialist Labor Party published *The Weekly People*; and the Socialist Party published *Appeal* and *American Socialist Quarterly*. There were also many other journals, including *Americana*, *The New Tide*, *Prolit Folio*, *Rebel Poet*, *Symposium*, *Anvil*, *Miscellany*, *Labor Action*, *New Militant*, *Left Front*, *International*, *Midland*, *New Challenge*, and the superb socialist theoretical journal *Marxist Quarterly*. All such journals and the talented writers who worked for them made the 1930s one of the most exceptional decades for critical and political publishing in American history.

Source:

Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).

## THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPER GUILD

**A White-Collar Union.** A union of newspaper reporters and editors, the American Newspaper Guild (ANG) was founded in 1933 as a result of the Depression; by 1936 it had affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. One of the nation's first white-collar unions in the United States, it protected the job security of members and agitated for higher wages and better working conditions. The rise of the guild was highly controversial and was accompanied by conservative charges that the ANG was a communist agency seeking to take over the nation's press. The growth of the union was nonetheless striking,

and by the end of the decade the ANG had become a permanent feature of the news business.

**Romance and Reality.** Although newspaper work was often romanticized during the 1930s, with movies and novels portraying the reporter's life as adventurous and exciting, the reality was far less glamorous. Most newspaper reporters were poorly paid, with small-town and suburban reporters earning as little as six dollars per week or one dollar per day. Working hours were long, ten to twelve hours per day, six days a week. Reporters were regularly told to "stick with" a story even if it meant working fifteen-hour days or longer. So poor was the pay and so long were the hours that many newspapers discouraged their reporters from marrying, aware that such a schedule could not be followed if reporters had family commitments. Walter Howey, the managing editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, threatened to cut salaries or fire reporters if they married. Firings were simple for management. Reporters rarely had job security or severance pay and were often informed of pay cuts on payday. As a result of these conditions, graft was a constant of newspaper life in the 1930s. Reporters routinely took bribes and kickbacks for stories favorable to wealthy and powerful figures. Sportswriters were especially venal, taking shares of sporting events for their coverage. The boxer Gene Tunney, for example, paid 5 percent of his purse to sportswriters early in his career. Although some newspaper columnists and reporters earned high salaries (newspaper publishers were often fabulously wealthy), for the majority of those in the newspaper business work was long; pay was low; the temptation of corruption was great; and the rewards were few.

**Depression.** The Depression made a bad situation worse. Newspaper revenue from advertising dried up, falling almost 40 percent from 1929 to 1933. Radio increasingly seized the attention of advertisers — as well as their business. By 1933 radio was absorbing almost half the advertising revenues in the United States. Newspapers around the country ceased operations or merged with one another. By 1933 more than 87 percent of the cities with populations less than one thousand had only one newspaper. In most large cities only one morning and one evening newspaper remained financially viable. The newspaper crunch meant that few reporters could choose between employers. And most newspapers, seeking to reduce operating expenses, balanced their budgets by firing reporters and editors, lowering the wages of the remainder, and increasing the workload. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that among thirty-one dailies the number of editorial workers dropped from 1,506 in April 1930 to 1,248 in April 1933. In San Francisco reporters took a 10 percent pay cut from the city's three newspapers; the wages of reporters in Cleveland were cut by 30 and 40 percent. Henry Justin Smith of the *Chicago Daily News* argued that such policies would improve newspaper reporting, leading to "survival of the fittest," but few reporters saw it that way. Job insecurity was

constant. Most reporters feared being dismissed with barely a week's pay, a frightening prospect during the Depression.

**Organization.** Unlike the typesetters, teamsters, and other blue-collar workers in the newspaper industry, reporters were not unionized. Cutting the salaries of typesetters would lead to strikes and undermine production, but dismissing reporters had few repercussions for publishers. Reporters naturally concluded that they could improve their job prospects by organizing. There had been efforts to unionize writers and editors prior to the 1930s. A branch of the International Typographical Union tried to organize reporters in the 1890s. Boston newspapermen organized in 1919. Editorial workers in Scranton, Pennsylvania, unionized in 1907. With the exception of the Scranton union, almost all these efforts failed. Most reporters and editors thought of themselves as professionals, white-collar workers, individualists. "DITCH DIGGERS HAVE UNIONS WE DONT," telegraphed two Chicago newsmen responding to an invitation to join the ANG. Such attitudes were common as the ANG organized, but conditions during the Depression forced a shift in perspective and gave the ANG an intellectual cohesiveness its predecessors lacked.

**The NRA.** The ANG began, essentially, as a professional association. Opposition to it by newspaper publishers turned it toward the trade-union movement. The central issue between the ANG and publishers concerned the relationship of reporters and editors to the industrial codes established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's National Recovery Administration (NRA). The NRA divided markets and granted industries immunity from antitrust laws in exchange for their adherence to industrial codes that mandated a fair price for goods and services and higher wages and improved working conditions for workers. Hoping the NRA would organize the newspaper business and grant them job security and higher wages, reporters and editors began the ANG as a series of independent regional associations designed to bring their case before the government body establishing industrial codes. On 15 December 1933 the ANG established itself as a national body, with noted columnist Heywood Broun its president and foremost spokesman. Broun and the ANG tried to get the NRA administrators to establish several provisions for reporters and editors in its industrial codes for newspapers: a five-day, forty-hour workweek; overtime compensation; restoration of pay cuts; vacations; a minimum wage; and advance notice for dismissals.

**Opposition.** Unfortunately for the ANG, the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) had their own representatives and sought to block the creation of any NRA code that fundamentally altered their business practices. The ANPA was particularly troubled by NRA codes eliminating child labor (hence newsboys), by provisions for unionization and limiting working hours per week, and by governmental licensing of industries (which

was believed to interfere with freedom of the press). Ultimately, the ANPA prevailed on the government to create an industrial code for newspapers that maintained publisher control of the business. While the NRA codes did mandate suggestions forwarded by the ANG, loopholes and temporary exceptions to the code undermined their utility in changing the work conditions of reporters and editors. Publishers also began dismissing ANG leaders from their jobs. Many ANG members agitated for the type of job action typical of trade unions: the strike.

**Strikes and Affiliation.** The first ANG strikes were against New York papers in the summer and fall of 1934. Strikers at the *Long Island Daily Press*, the *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, and the *Staten Island Advance* generally were well paid and well treated. What they struck for was the right to associate with the ANG. Often organized labor lent their support; during the Staten Island strike, the projectionists' union lent the strikers a sound truck. These short strikes accomplished little in the newspaper room, but the better relations between the ANG and the trade unions were a harbinger of things to come. On 17 November the editorial staff of the *Newark Ledger* walked out, angered over lack of job security and low pay. It was the first strike at a major, mass-circulation newspaper. Despite charges of communist subversion and a court injunction, the strike ended in victory for the guild on 28 March 1935. That victory, combined with the 1935 Supreme Court ruling eliminating the NRA, led the guild in a more radical direction. In October 1935 it successfully won a strike against the *New Amsterdam News*, a black-owned New York newspaper opposed to guild organizing. In February 1936 the Scripps-Howard chain of newspapers negotiated new contracts with regional repre-

sentatives of the ANG. In that same month members of the Milwaukee ANG struck the Hearst newspaper, the *News*. Hearst put up a tremendous fight, refusing to meet with Broun and representatives of the ANG. Strikers were fired. Injunctions against picket lines were secured. Strikers, including Broun, were arrested during labor rallies. Strikers responded by calling every number in the Milwaukee phone book and canvassing the city, door to door, in an effort to get subscribers to boycott the paper. ANG members at Hearst's paper in Seattle mounted a sympathy strike. Most important, however, was the ANG's decision in June to affiliate with the AFL, thus gaining enormous political clout with which to force a resolution. On 2 September 1936 the strike ended, fundamentally in victory for the guild. The next year the ANG switched its affiliation to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), extending its membership throughout the newspaper business. Far from being the professional association its original members intended, the ANG had become a part of the trade union movement and a permanent feature of the publishing industry.

Sources:

- John Diggins, *Up From Communism: Conservative Odysseys in American Intellectual History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975);
- Daniel J. Leab, *A Union of Individuals: The Formation of the American Newspaper Guild, 1933-1936* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970);
- Richard Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1973);
- Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left From the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

# HEADLINE MAKERS

---

## MOSES ANNENBERG

1875-1942

NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER AND RACING-NEWS  
ENTREPRENEUR



**Immigrant Beginnings.** The son of Prussian Jewish immigrants, Moses Annenberg rose from poverty to become a powerful newspaper publisher and racing-news entrepreneur. In 1900, after a meager education and jobs as a junkman, a Western Union messenger, a livery stable boy, and

a bartender, Annenberg became a subscription solicitor for the *Chicago Evening American* newspaper, recently purchased by William Randolph Hearst. In 1904 Hearst started a morning newspaper, the *Examiner*, and appointed Annenberg circulation manager to establish a place for the paper in the highly competitive morning market. It was Annenberg's job to obtain prime sales locations on street corners. The competition quickly erupted into gang warfare, and Annenberg, along with his brother Max, were deeply involved in the violence. His involvement colored Annenberg's reputation throughout his life.

**Wisconsin and Success.** In 1907 Annenberg moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and started an agency to distribute all the Chicago newspapers. The agency was successful, and he started similar businesses in twenty other cities. He also earned a large amount of money with a promotion idea devised by his wife. With the newspapers he distributed coupons offering teaspoons decorated with state seals. Annenberg invested the money in Milwaukee real estate.

**Publishing with Hearst.** In 1917 Annenberg became the publisher of Arthur Brisbane's *Wisconsin News* and

quickly tripled its circulation to eighty thousand. Brisbane then sold his interest in the paper to Hearst. After a year Hearst moved Annenberg to New York, where he became circulation manager for all Hearst's New York papers and magazines. In 1924 Hearst named him president and publisher of the newest Hearst paper, the *New York Mirror*.

**Horse-Racing Papers.** In 1922 Annenberg had bought the *Daily Racing Form*, which printed information about horse racing. In 1926 he resigned his position with Hearst to concentrate on serving the horse-race business. He bought many other racing papers, and in 1927 he became involved in racing wire services, which supplied quick information to subscribers, mostly book-makers. He bought interests in competing businesses in the wire-service industry and used his positions to drive out his partners. After 1930 Annenberg had a virtual monopoly in the wire-service business, transmitting information from twenty-nine tracks to fifteen thousand betting establishments around the country.

**Prospering through Depression.** In 1930 Annenberg's net worth was estimated at more than \$8 million. By 1938 that figure had increased to almost \$20 million. He did not forget his roots in the newspaper business. In 1934 he founded the *Miami Tribune*, which he sold in 1937. In 1936 Annenberg bought the respected 107-year-old *Philadelphia Inquirer*. By adding more comic strips and a weekend magazine with photographs he was able to increase circulation by 23 percent during the week and by 55 percent on Sundays.

**Trouble with the Government.** In 1939 U.S. attorney general Frank Murphy announced that a grand jury was looking into Annenberg's tax returns from 1932 to 1936. Annenberg was indicted for filing false returns for those years and for evading more than \$3 million in taxes. The government also began investigating his track-information monopoly. Annenberg immediately sold his wire-service business, and in 1940 he pleaded

guilty to one year of evading taxes. He also agreed to pay nearly \$10 million to settle any and all claims dating back to 1923. In return for the dropping of other charges against him and his son Walter, he was sentenced to three years in prison.

**Death.** In June 1942, after serving two years of his sentence, Annenberg was released from prison. A month later he died of a brain tumor. Even after all his legal expenses, Annenberg's property was valued at \$8 million when it was reorganized after his death into Triangle Publications, under the direction of Walter Annenberg. Walter Annenberg later became the publisher of *TV Guide* and a United States ambassador.

Source:

John E. Cooney, *The Annenbergs* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982).

## EDWIN HOWARD ARMSTRONG

1890-1954

INVENTOR OF FM RADIO



**Last Great Inventor.** Edwin Howard Armstrong ranks with Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison as one of the greatest of American inventors. Like them, he was a gifted and original thinker, as responsible for modern radio as Edison was for the electric light or Bell for the

telephone. Like them, Armstrong worked obsessively and held himself to high moral standards. Unlike them, Armstrong was born in a century when science was rapidly moving from the inventor's shed to the corporate laboratory. In a sense Armstrong was the last of the great nineteenth-century inventors, an individualistic genius who fit poorly into the modern technocracy. While Bell and Edison reaped the rewards of their skills in wealth and prestige and built modern corporations on their inventions, Armstrong spent his life defending his inventions from corporations and had his wealth and prestige stripped from him. By 1954, despondent, bankrupt, his life and marriage shattered by four decades of lawsuits, he killed himself. It was a tragic end for one of the most gifted engineers of the twentieth century.

**Background.** Edwin Howard Armstrong was born in 1890 to a prosperous New York family. His mother was a teacher, and his father was an executive for Oxford University Press. Armstrong grew up immersed in middle-class Presbyterian values, eagerly absorbing tales of thrift, persistence, and honesty associated with successful inventors such as Edison and Guglielmo Marconi. By high school he was consumed with the new "wireless" (radio) craze, building his own receivers and antennas and communicating in Morse code with stations as far away as Key West. He attended the School of Mines, Engineer-

ing and Chemistry at Columbia University, where he learned about the latest innovations in electricity and physics. By the time he was graduated in June 1913 he had earned distinction as a highly unorthodox, inquisitive, and original student. He had already built two inventions that would transform radio technology: a feedback circuit that increased the receptive power of radio receivers, and a feedback circuit that transmitted continuous radio waves. These two inventions made modern radio possible. He followed them with the superheterodyne, a device capable of tuning in and deciphering radio signals transmitted at a very high frequency. Built while Armstrong served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps during World War I, the superheterodyne remains the tuning mechanism used in radio and television today. By the early 1920s the patent rights for the superheterodyne and a superregeneration circuit had made Armstrong wealthy, and he was among the most acclaimed inventors in the United States. By the 1930s his title to his inventions had been stripped from him.

**Patents.** Armstrong filed for a patent on his feedback receiver on 19 October 1913; on 18 December of that year he filed for a patent on the circuit capable of generating continuous radio waves. But he was too late. His circuit worked in a device invented by Lee De Forest, the audion. De Forest filed his own patent for a similar amplification circuit in 1915. Although De Forest did not file for his patent until after Armstrong had filed for his, on the face of it De Forest had a strong claim to have built the refinement to his own invention, which he claimed to have done in 1912. For the next nineteen years Armstrong and De Forest filed infringement suit after infringement suit against one another. The suits demonstrated the strength of Armstrong's claim, and he won several judgments against De Forest. But the regeneration circuit became essential in commercial radio, and large corporations, such as Radio Corporation of America (RCA) and American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T), had vested interests in the outcome of the case, royalties to be gained by their ownership of De Forest's patent. Despite the previous rulings against De Forest, RCA and AT&T appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, and AT&T hired a former associate justice of the Supreme Court, Charles Evans Hughes, to argue for De Forest. Armstrong lost the case and his legal right to royalties from his invention. Similarly, AT&T used a dispute with a former associate of Armstrong's, Lucian Levy, to file a case against Armstrong's patent rights to the superheterodyne. In 1928 the courts awarded the patent to AT&T. Armstrong, however, was undeterred. In 1933 he filed a case on somewhat different grounds to regain his patent to the regeneration circuit and once again won decisions against De Forest in the lower courts. In the Supreme Court, however, Armstrong was again defeated in a decision whose embrace of flawed science was condemned by many engineers and scientists. In 1934 the professional body of the Institute of Radio



Engineers affirmed that, whatever the judgment of the Supreme Court, Armstrong was the inventor of the regeneration circuit.

FM. Chastened by his experience in the courts, Armstrong returned to his laboratory for his next technological breakthrough, FM (frequency modulation) radio. FM radio solved one of the most vexing problems in early radio, the presence of static in the transmission. Caused by electrical interference, thunderstorms, car engines, and sunspots, static frequently interrupted radio broadcasts. Armstrong solved the problem by inventing a technology that most engineers and scientists considered impossible in theory and unworkable in practice. Rather than modulating the amplitude (height) of the carrier wave, Armstrong varied the frequency (length) of the carrier wave. FM required that Armstrong construct a completely new technology of broadcasting, and it worked. FM transmissions were free of static and, moreover, carried a wider range of sound, giving birth to the first high-fidelity transmissions. Once again, Armstrong had revolutionized radio.

Stalled. Armstrong's revolutionary technology, however, was too radical for the times. Despite conclusive tests demonstrating the efficacy of FM, skeptics denied what their own ears heard. Mathematical models had indicated that FM could not work, and therefore they remained convinced that it did not work. Commercial radio, moreover, was becoming slightly less lucrative. The Depression cut into advertising revenues, and technological improvements in AM transmission drove down the profitability of radio receivers. FM technology would entail huge start-up costs and compete with existing AM systems, further eroding profits. Large corporations such as RCA were banking on a new broadcast technology, television, and were scarcely interested in FM, which they considered merely a refinement in AM broadcasting. Armstrong, unfortunately, was contractually bound to offer the new technology to RCA. RCA did not want the new system, but they did not want their competitors to get it either, and they did everything they could to prevent the introduction of FM. Because RCA would not allow him to use their transmitters, Armstrong applied for an experimental broadcast license to begin FM transmissions. Then RCA imposed on friends at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to deny Armstrong a license. With virtually no merit, RCA contested Armstrong's FM patents with the U.S. Patent Office and then imitated his circuits in slightly modified form, arguing that their technology was original and unique. Simultaneously, RCA engineers testified in FCC hearings and in the newspapers that FM technology was unworkable.

World War II. World War II disproved the claims of FM detractors. The new technology proved vital to battlefield communications, becoming standard issue in walkie-talkies, tanks, and jeeps. Armstrong himself modified the technology for use in radar, creating early-warning radar and other applications that remain classified in

the 1990s. In 1946 he successfully bounced an FM-modified radar signal off the moon, inaugurating modern earth-to-space communications. As a patriotic gesture, Armstrong waived all rights to patent royalties on his products for the duration of the war, an act that cost him millions. RCA was not nearly so generous, receiving cost-plus contracts for goods based on Armstrong's inventions and an annual royalty of \$4 million.

Last Battle. The efficacy of FM during the war moved RCA to redouble its efforts to squelch it after the war. In 1945, with prodding from RCA, the FCC moved FM transmissions from the very high frequency bandwidths of the electromagnetic spectrum to the untested ultra high frequency range. The decision immediately made fifty FM broadcasting stations and a half million FM radios obsolete. When the FCC followed this decision with one reducing the wattage of FM transmitters, FM seemed nearly dead. But Armstrong fought on. He modified FM technology for the new transmission bands and continued to challenge RCA in court. Ultimately, in the 1970s, Armstrong's efforts resulted in FM becoming the dominant radio medium around the world. In the 1950s, however, Armstrong was racing against time and money. RCA's efforts to marginalize FM effectively limited Armstrong's royalties and income; patents on some of his technologies were due to expire in 1950, after which his abilities to pay court costs would be further compromised. RCA stalled, tying Armstrong up in court, bleeding his financial resources. Still Armstrong was able to produce technical innovations. In 1953 he and his associate John Bose developed FM multiplexing, the sending of different signals on a single carrier wave, which made stereo broadcasting possible. It was his last invention. By 1954 Armstrong was bankrupt, and his thirty-year marriage had collapsed. On Sunday, 31 January 1954, Armstrong jumped from a thirteenth-floor apartment in New York City. Less than a month later, David Sarnoff, chairman of RCA, announced to stockholders that RCA's profits had reached an all-time high of \$850 million.

Source:

Tom Lewis, *Empire of the Air: The Men Who Made Radio* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).

## AL CAPP

1909-1979

COMIC-STRIP CREATOR



### Famous Comic-Strip Artist.

At age twenty-five Al Capp created the comic strip *Li'l Abner*, which he wrote and drew until he ended it forty-four years later. During his career Capp was one of the best-known comic-strip creators in the United States, and he

courted the media attention that came his way. John Steinbeck hailed him as "the best satirist since Laurence Sterne," adding, "He has taken our customs, our dreams, our habits of thought, our social structure, our economics, examined them gently like amusing bugs. Then he has pulled a nose a little longer, made outstanding ears a little more outstanding, described it in dreadful folk poetry and returned it to us in a hilarious picture of our ridiculous selves."

**Early Life and Career.** Born Alfred Gerald Caplin in New Haven, Connecticut, he grew up experiencing hunger and want, which he made humorous in the hillbilly setting of *Li'l Abner*. At age nine he lost his left leg after being run over by an ice truck; as a result he read voraciously and took an interest in art at an early age. In his mid teens he hitchhiked through the South, visiting Memphis and the Ozarks, where he gained impressions of backwoods life that would later fuel his career. He studied art at several schools before dropping out to join the Associated Press in 1932. Working in New York, he drew a daily strip called *Mister Gilfeather* with little success. He left the Associated Press a few months later and shortly thereafter met Ham Fisher, the creator of the successful comic strip *Joe Palooka*. Fisher hired the young artist to help him with an overdue strip and then hired him as an assistant. Though Capp later referred to Fisher as a leper and "a veritable goldmine of swinishness," he learned a great deal about the comic-strip business under Fisher. He did some writing for *Joe Palooka* as well as some of the artistic chores. In particular, he began experimenting with southern characters and began creating sample strips of his own.

**Success.** After King Features hesitated about accepting *Li'l Abner*, United Features took up the strip, which made its first appearance on 13 August 1934. Capp, as he began to call himself, got less money but more artistic freedom with United. The money soon failed to matter, as *Li'l Abner* steadily grew in popularity — helped by a contemporary fascination with images of backwoods America. Hailed as a skilled satirist, Capp became a wealthy man. Set in the fictional hillbilly community of Dogpatch, *Li'l Abner* presented a broad cast of characters, including the dense but good-hearted Abner Yokum, his Mammy and Pappy, and the beautiful Daisy Mae, who longs to marry the virile but clueless Abner. Through his characters and setting Capp was able to satirize humanity's worst characteristics while keeping humor and occasionally sentiment close at hand. At the height of its popularity in the 1940s, the strip appeared in nine hundred newspapers across the country, and its characters appeared in comic books and movies and even on Broadway. In the late 1930s it also introduced a concept that was practiced in many high schools and colleges during the 1940s and 1950s, the Sadie Hawkins Day, an annual event in which single women would pursue single men.

**Publicity.** With the success of *Li'l Abner* Capp was almost as much in the public eye as his creations. He

appeared in magazines and was interviewed on radio and television, and he increasingly turned over much of the work on *Li'l Abner* to assistants. The strip was always his, though, and in the 1960s his growing conservatism and his satires of liberal causes and figures lost him many young readers. The strip was dropped from several papers in the 1970s before he decided to drop the strip itself.

**Sources:**

- Arthur Asa Berger, *Li'l Abner: A Study in American Satire* (New York: Twayne, 1970);
- Ron Goulart, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Comics* (New York & Oxford: Facts On File, 1990);
- Richard Marschall, *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists* (New York: Abbeville, 1989).

## PHILO T. FARNSWORTH

1906-1971

TELEVISION PIONEER



**The Importance of Technology.** The real pioneers of television were not entertainers or financiers; they were scientists. One of the most important was Philo Farnsworth, who when only a teenager designed the basic system needed to transfer moving pictures over the air waves.

**High-School Prodigy.** Farnsworth was fifteen years old, and a high-school student, when he read of the research being carried out in the Soviet Union by Boris Rosing on transmitting moving images by electricity. He quickly designed a schematic drawing of the required system. Farnsworth entered Brigham Young University the next year and remained for two years until the death of his father. A San Francisco banker named William H. Crocker built a laboratory for Farnsworth so that he could continue his research into the practical development of his television system.

**Patents and Corporations.** Farnsworth developed his laboratory into the Farnsworth Radio and Television Corporation, which later became the Capehart Farnsworth Electronics Company. In 1927 he transmitted his television picture. In 1928 he received his first patent, covering a complete electronic television film.

**Competition.** By working essentially on his own without major corporate backing, Farnsworth was at a great disadvantage. His main competition was the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), whose effort was headed by David Sarnoff and the scientific genius of Vladimir Zworykin. Zworykin had been a graduate student of Boris Rosing in Russia and was working on a television based on a system different from Farnsworth's.

**Public Demonstration and Legal Troubles.** During the 1930s Farnsworth's research costs were borne by the Philco Corporation, whose resources were less than

RCA's. Farnsworth gave a public demonstration of his television system at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia for ten days in 1935. Despite the public success much of the 1930s was taken up with patent litigation. Unable to match the financial might of RCA, Farnsworth finally settled with RCA on a cross-patent agreement in which Farnsworth shared in the profits from the development of RCA's system. In 1949 Farnsworth's company was bought by International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT), which kept Farnsworth as the head of its research unit. During his career Farnsworth held more than 135 patents in television and other fields.

**The Place of Research.** Farnsworth was a throwback to American entrepreneurs such as Henry Ford who developed their technology into large manufacturing businesses. By the 1930s American business had changed, and corporate finances were able to overwhelm individual American genius. Still, American television would not have developed in the 1930s and 1940s without the vision of Farnsworth.

**Sources:**

Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1992);

George Everson, *The Story of Television: The Life of Philo T. Farnsworth* (New York: Norton, 1949).

## CHESTER GOULD

1900-1985

COMIC-STRIP CREATOR



**A Unique Comic Strip.** Introduced on 12 October 1931, *Dick Tracy* quickly became one of the most popular comic strips of the 1930s and beyond. Its creator, Chester Gould, tapped into a contemporary fascination with crime and gangsters through the popular medium of the comic pages to in-

vent one of the most durable characters in American culture. While other comic-strip creators dealt with crime or detectives, none did so with the visual flair for the urban violence and grotesque villains.

**Inspiration.** Gould was born in Pawnee, Oklahoma, in 1900. His father published a weekly newspaper, and although Gould studied business administration in Chicago, where he moved in 1921, he went from college to a job drawing for newspapers. An avid fan of comic strips in his youth, he drew his own strips during the 1920s while working for newspaper art departments. In creating *Fillum Fables* he became one of several cartoonists at the time who offered comic treatments of popular movies, including detective stories. That influence — combined with his youthful admiration for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and his experience with gang-

sters in contemporary Chicago — led Gould to create Dick Tracy, "a comic strip character who would always get the best of the assorted hoodlums and gangsters." Tracy was tough yet honest, a cartoon tribute to contemporary heroes such as Eliot Ness. He also packed a gun and was the first comic-strip character in the newspapers to use one. He got plenty of chances to use it: the hoodlums and gangsters kept coming, and by the end of the decade the villains started becoming as horrid in their appearances as in their crimes. The grimness of the strip was relieved by Tracy's love interest, Tess Trueheart, and his young friend Junior.

**Popularity.** The stories, characters, and distinctive visual style of *Dick Tracy* won it a large audience. It also spread to other media, including Big Little Books and movie serials in the late 1930s and early 1940s. It was parodied in "Fearless Fosdick," Al Capp's strip-within-a-strip in his *Li'l Abner*. Gould accepted the parody as free advertisement. *Dick Tracy* remained popular into the 1960s, when it became too eccentric for many readers' tastes; Gould increasingly was perceived as out of touch, worrying that government was tying the hands of law enforcement and giving more power to criminals. He retired in 1977 and left *Dick Tracy* to other hands, where it has continued, even after Gould's death in 1985.

**Sources:**

Ron Goulart, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Comics* (New York & Oxford: Facts On File, 1990);

Jay Maeder, *Dick Tracy: The Official Biography* (New York: Plume, 1990);

Richard Marschall, *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists* (New York: Abbeville, 1989).

## JOSEPH T. SHAW

1874-1952

EDITOR OF BLACK MASK, 1926-1936



**Influential Editor.** Joseph T. Shaw made *Black Mask* one of the most respected pulp magazines of the 1920s and 1930s. By publishing the early work of such noteworthy writers as Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, and Erle Stanley Gardner, the magazine helped to define a

whole style, commonly known as hard-boiled detective fiction.

**Early Career.** Born in 1874 in Gorham, Maine, Shaw edited the campus newspaper at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Graduating in 1895, he was briefly employed at the *New York Globe* and worked for a wool company. He served in World War I, earning the rank of captain and the nickname "Cap." He was also a champion fencer, and when he later lived in New York he was licensed to carry a sword cane. Shaw remained in Europe

for five years after the war, distributing food for the American Relief Administration. When he returned to the United States, he did some freelance editing and writing for popular magazines such as *Field and Stream* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. From the editor of *Field and Stream* he learned in 1926 that *Black Mask* needed a new editor; he got the job.

**Black Mask.** Founded in 1920 by H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan, both of whom distanced themselves from the magazine, *Black Mask* was a successful monthly pulp periodical specializing in detective fiction, mysteries, and adventure stories. Though Shaw knew nothing about the magazine when he applied for the position, he threw himself into making it the best of its kind and increasing circulation. Dashiell Hammett was among the most popular writers for *Black Mask* before Shaw took over the editorship of the magazine. Hammett had stopped submitting stories when he could not get a pay increase for his work. Shaw convinced Hammett to return to the magazine and then sought other writers of a similar caliber. Before long there was talk of a "*Black Mask School*" of detective fiction featuring tough, street-wise protagonists in grittily realistic urban American settings, a stark contrast to the genteel British detective tradition. The *Black Mask* approach proved popular: circulation soared, reaching a high of 103,000.

**Tireless Advocate.** He set his magazine above other pulps of the time, referring to it instead as a "rough-paper book." While most pulp writers were treated as hacks and expected to crank out stories rapidly for the many magazines that were published in the 1920s and 1930s, Shaw treated his writers like craftsmen. *Black Mask* was one of the best-paying pulps of the period and one of the most difficult in which to publish. Shaw promoted the writers whose stories he accepted both in the editorials and in his efforts to secure book contracts for some of them; he also helped to get some of their works adapted for the movies. Hammett flourished in this environment, serializing his first three novels in *Black Mask*. He dedicated his first novel, *Red Harvest* (1929), to Shaw. After Hammett stopped writing for the magazine in 1930, writers such as Raymond Chandler, George Harmon Coxe, Paul Cain, Norbert Davis, W. T. Ballard, and Horace McCry helped to ensure the continuing popularity of *Black Mask*.

**The End of an Era.** The Depression cut into *Black Mask* sales, and during a salary dispute with its publishers Shaw was relieved of his duties in 1936, sparking an exodus of several of his faithful writers from the magazine. *Black Mask* continued until 1951. By this time Shaw had become a literary agent, a job he held for ten years until his death in 1952.

**Sources:**

Ron Goulart, *The Dime Detectives* (New York: Mysterious Press, 1988);

Goulart, *The Hardboiled Dicks* (New York: Pocket Books, 1967);

William F. Nolan, ed., *The Black Mask Boys* (New York: Morrow, 1985);

Lee Server, *Danger Is My Business: An Illustrated History of the Fabulous Pulp Magazines* (San Francisco: Chronicle, 1993).

## LOWELL THOMAS

1892-1981

NEWS COMMENTATOR



**On the Radio.** Lowell Thomas made his debut as a newsreader and commentator in September 1930 and continued daily broadcasts until 14 May 1976. Before he became a radio personality, Thomas was already famous as an author, traveler, and lecturer, best-known for *With Lawrence in*

*Arabia* (1924), the story of his time with T. E. Lawrence during World War I. Thomas's radio job was the result of CBS Radio president William S. Paley's attempt to convince the *Literary Digest* to sponsor a news broadcast on CBS instead of the news show it had on NBC. Once Thomas made a trial broadcast, *Literary Digest* publisher R. J. Cuddihy immediately fired his present reader, Floyd Gibbons, and hired Thomas. For six months Thomas's fifteen-minute nightly broadcasts were heard on NBC in the East and on CBS in the West. After that Thomas was heard only on NBC until 1947.

**An American Voice.** Thomas had an American voice, without a trace of a foreign or patrician accent. His commentary was balanced politically though always pro-American. His first broadcast included commentary on Benito Mussolini and a little-known German named Adolf Hitler: "There are now two Mussolinis in the world. . . . Adolf Hitler has written a book in which this belligerent gentleman states that the cardinal policy of his powerful German party is the conquest of Russia. That's a tall assignment, Adolf. You just go ask Napoleon." His informed, yet folksy, opinions quickly gained Thomas a nightly audience of between ten million and fifteen million listeners.

**Newsreel Voice.** 20th Century-Fox hired the popular broadcaster for their Movietone newsreels, and through his experience in radio and film, he became an important figure in the development of television broadcasting. In 1939 Thomas broadcast the first televised news program for NBC. During his world travels he did radio and newsreel reports on the coronation of King George VI in 1937 and on the increasing world tensions in Europe during the late 1930s.

**A News Fixture.** Thomas was one of the news commentators who made radio such an important part of the way Americans received information. His tag line, "So long until tomorrow," was a reassuring promise in a world that seemed increasingly strange and dangerous. Thomas and other radio commentators such as H. V. Kaltenborn

laid the foundation of public trust for radio and television figures such as Edward R. Murrow.

Source:

Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992).

## WALTER WINCHELL

1897-1972

JOURNALIST, RADIO COMMENTATOR



**Controversial Columnist.** Walter Winchell was the most famous, most popular, and most controversial "gossip" columnist in twentieth-century American journalism. He made a career of printing scoops about celebrities and making "informed" predictions (many of which did not

come true). In the 1930s he also began to make partisan political pronouncements.

**Background.** Winchell was born in 1897 and left school in 1910 to work as a vaudeville performer. After years of minimal success he enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1917 and worked in New York City as a receptionist for Adm. Marbury Johnston at the New York Customs House. In 1919 he returned to vaudeville and started a newsletter that featured light vaudeville news and punnish quips such as "You tell'em Quija, I'm bored." In 1922 the *Vaudeville News*, a paper run by a vaudeville circuit, hired Winchell at the salary of twenty-five dollars a week.

**Journalism.** In 1924 Winchell became a dramatic critic and Broadway columnist for the *New York Evening Graphic*. He worked for the *Evening Graphic* until 1929, his salary rising from one hundred dollars a week in the beginning to three hundred dollars a week before he left for William Randolph Hearst's *New York Daily Mirror*. The publishers of the *Graphic* credited Winchell with attracting 75,000 of its overall 350,000 subscribers.

**A National Audience.** The move to the Hearst newspaper gave Winchell a tremendous increase in salary. He was signed to the King Syndicate, which distributed features to more than 170 newspapers. His initial contract with King paid him \$25,000 annually. Winchell used his national platform to improve the quality of his gossip. In the early 1930s he also started a weekly radio program, broadcast on Sunday night and sponsored by the Jergens Lotion Company. By the late 1930s he was earning in excess of \$130,000 per year. Winchell's popularity was in no small measure due to his skill at language — he was a constant spouter of flashy phrases. Some of his linguistic creations include *Joosh* for Jewish, *pash* for Passion, *shafts* for legs, *Wildeman* for homosexual, and *the Hardened Artery* for Broadway.

**Political Commentary.** The national audience and his newfound prominence with political figures (he was staunchly pro-Roosevelt and a friend of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover) led him to begin take an interest in national and international affairs. Very early he denounced Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists. On 2 September 1939, just before the beginning of World War II, Winchell sent a cable to British prime minister Neville Chamberlain suggesting that the wording of the expected declaration of war be worded as a declaration of war against Hitler personally and not against Germany in general. When Chamberlain issued a statement worded in that way, Winchell wrote a column seeming to take credit for the distinction between Hitler and the German people.

**A Popular and Trusted Reporter.** The self-importance shown in the episode was typical of Winchell and a key to his success and his controversy. His audience of seven million readers and twenty million listeners considered him someone who would let them know what was *really* going on. During the Depression he was the voice and words of New York City, the entertainment center of the United States. Winchell's slangy language and his secret information made him a great entertainer in the guise of a reporter. In that sense he was a man ahead of his time.

Sources:

Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992);

St. Clair McKelway, *Gossip: The Life and Times of Walter Winchell* (New York: Viking, 1940).

## VLADIMIR ZWORYKIN

1889-1982

TELEVISION PIONEER



**The Importance of Technology.** Along with Philo Farnsworth, Vladimir Zworykin developed the technology that made television possible. Because of the success of his technology and the company who produced it, Zworykin is known as the father of television.

**A Russian Beginning.** Zworykin was born near Moscow in 1889, graduating from the equivalent of high school in 1906. He received his electrical engineering degree in 1912 from the Saint Petersburg Institute of Technology, where he remained to study under Boris Rosing, one of the early scientists who developed the idea of television. Later in 1912 he traveled to France, where he studied physics until the outbreak of World War I. After the war, during which he was a signal officer working on radio, Zworykin escaped the Russian Revolution

by immigrating to the United States. He eventually found work at the Westinghouse unit of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

**Early Television.** Because of his background with Rosing, Zworykin worked at developing television. In 1923 he filed his first patent application, for a transmitting tube called the iconoscope. He displayed his invention to Westinghouse management in 1924, but they informed him that while his "demonstration had been extremely interesting," it would be better if he spent his "time on something 'a little more useful.'" Instead he continued to develop television. Later in 1924 Zworykin filed a patent on the kinescope, the first television picture tube. It was publicly demonstrated in November 1929.

**The Cost of Development.** That same year David Sarnoff, the head of RCA, moved Zworykin from Westinghouse to RCA. Zworykin filed his patent for color television that year, and Sarnoff asked him how much it would cost to perfect his invention. Zworykin said

\$100,000. During the 1930s and 1940s RCA would spend more than \$50 million on its development.

**The Eye of the Public.** Zworykin developed other uses for his technology during the 1930s, thinking that by 1937 the basic issues concerning television had been resolved. He was instrumental in developing early versions of night-vision glasses and radio-controlled missiles, both inventions that aided efforts in World War II. He also developed the idea of the electron microscope. RCA marketed the first television sets in 1939 — \$199.50 for a three-inch screen and \$600 for a twelve-inch model. The scale of Zworykin's achievements reached the headlines, and he was widely hailed as the father of television. His book *Television*, which he wrote with coworkers at RCA, was published in 1940.

Source:

Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992).

## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

---

In April 1930 Frank R. Birdsall, editor and publisher of the *Yazoo City Sentinel* in Mississippi, was shot and killed by Mayor John T. Stricklin because Birdsall had published damaging reports about Stricklin just before the local mayoral election in February.

In February 1937 Walter J. Black introduced *Book Digest* magazine, which published condensed versions of nonfiction best-sellers; he developed the idea after noticing the immense popularity of *Reader's Digest* condensed books.

In 1938 O'Brien Boldt, editor of the *Daily Dartmouth*, developed a plan to send Adolf Hitler a Christmas present of four test tubes containing samples of Jewish, Negro, Mongolian, and "Aryan" blood contributed by undergraduates and to challenge Hitler to tell the difference. The plan fell through when no "pure Aryan" blood could be found.

In July 1939 colorful, well-known *New York World-Telegram* columnist Heywood Broun advertised for a job because his contract expired in December and would not be renewed. With thirty-one years' newspaper experience, he ended up at the *New York Post*, working for one-quarter of his previous salary.

American Fiction Guild President Arthur J. Burks gave encouragement to pulp writers hurt by the Depression when he announced in early January 1933 that Dell Publishing Company's three pulp magazines were accepting new material and that Clayton Magazines were again paying authors on acceptance of their stories.

Seward Collins, editor of the *American Review*, revealed in November 1936 that he and Dorothea Brande, his associate editor, had married secretly in Manhattan.

In October 1938, addressing the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans, Louisiana, Joseph Vincent Connolly, general manager of all Hearst newspapers, condemned the "diabolical paganism behind Nazi and Communist persecutions" and said, "the time to fight in America is NOW."

In August 1939 Eddie Cramer, a reporter for the *Wilmington* (North Carolina) *Star-News*, telephoned his city editor to report on an automobile accident in which he had been injured. A few minutes later Cramer died.

Cyrus Hermann Kotzschmar Curtis's *New York Evening Post* confused and amused readers in March 1933

when it accidentally ran an advertisement for Charles and Mary Beard's *The Rise of American Civilization* upside down.

In January 1930 *The New York Times* ran a full-page testimonial to its reliable reporting from Charles Gates Dawes, vice president under Calvin Coolidge. According to Dawes, "The *Times* stands like a beacon light in what is at times pretty foggy weather."

In May 1932 Rudolph Dirks, creator of the comic strip *The Captain and the Kids* (originally called *The Katzenjammer Kids*), was replaced as cartoonist for the strip by a young understudy, Bernard Dibble, after United Features Syndicate acquired the syndicate contracts of the *New York World*.

In April 1936 Dorothy Dix (Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer), the popular author of the internationally syndicated weekly women's column "Sunday Salad," was honored at several parties by her friends and colleagues at the *New Orleans Times Picayune*, the first paper to first run her column, for her four decades of hard-headed domestic advice giving and commonsense writing.

In Kentucky Jack Durham, city editor of the *Danville Advocate* and local correspondent for the Associated Press, and Wesley Carty, reporter for the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, were fined and jailed in August 1934 after they refused, citing professional ethics, to tell a judge who was responsible for the hanging in effigy of a state representative.

In August 1939 James Lawrence Fly was appointed chairman of the Federal Communications Commission by President Franklin D. Roosevelt after the resignation of controversial Frank Ramsay McNinch, who Roosevelt had appointed two years earlier to "clean house."

In November 1938 Stanton Griffis, executive committee chairman at Paramount Pictures, announced that the company would soon begin telecasting from a highly effective, far-reaching transmitter in Montclair, New Jersey. The transmitter was developed at Allen B. DuMont's laboratories.

In March 1933 chemist Charles Holmes Herty produced the first significant run of newspaper made from southern pine trees at his plant in Savannah, Georgia. Paper made from the pines is cheaper, stronger, and lighter in weight than paper from spruce pulpwood.

Harrison Holliday, manager of Los Angeles radio stations KFI and KECA, challenged social taboos in December 1938 by broadcasting the medical program *Why Not Have A Baby?* During the program an anonymous obstetrician gave plain-spoken answers to questions about prenatal care, paternal and maternal hygiene, sterility, and danger of miscarriage.

In October 1935 *Kansas City Star* editors replaced *Moon Mullins* comic strips that featured a snake charmer

with one of her reptiles coiled around her neck with *Moon Mullins* strips from 1927 and 1929 because publisher George Baker Longan had a snake phobia.

In 1936 cartoonist Reuben Lucius's "*Rube*" Goldberg comic strip gained national popularity after he added a new character: Lala Palooza, a fat, rich, and stupid female clown.

In January 1937 Charles Fulton Oursler, editor in chief of *Liberty* magazine, filed a libel suit against Mary McFadden, divorced wife of *Liberty* publisher Bernarr "Body Love" McFadden, because she had accused Oursler and her former husband of conspiring to kidnap Charles Lindbergh's child as part of a plan to increase magazine sales.

In April 1932, during a presentation of a melodrama from radio station WAE in Hammond, Indiana, sound expert Roland G. Palmer fired a pistol when the script called for a gunshot — and accidentally shot off two of his fingers.

In March 1933 publisher Joseph Medill Patterson promised in his *New York Daily News* that "whatever [President Franklin D. Roosevelt] does or doesn't do, we're going to be for him. We're going to withhold hostile criticism for one year at least."

After his life was threatened by fascists in London, New York publisher George Palmer Putnam returned to the United States in early 1930 with the manuscript for an antifascist book by Francesco Nitti, nephew of former Italian prime minister Francesco Saverio Nitti.

In a March 1931 editorial *New York Herald Tribune* publishers Mr. and Mrs. Ogden Reid condemned New York tabloids and daily newspapers, including the Hearst daily *New York Journal*, for printing sensational and damning speculations about the murdered vice-investigation witness Vivian Gordon. The woman's sixteen-year-old daughter had read the papers and then committed suicide.

In March 1937 First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt announced at a gathering of writers, editors, and critics that *Ladies' Home Journal* would publish the first installment of her autobiography, *This Is My Story*.

David Sarnoff, a Russian immigrant who worked his way up from the duties of messenger boy, was elected president of Radio Corporation of America (RCA) in January 1930. He succeeded James Guthrie Harbord, who became board chairman, and Owen D. Young, who became head of a new executive committee.

When William C. Shepherd, managing editor of the *Denver Post* since 1912, was elected to succeed the late Frederick G. Bonfils as president, editor, and publisher in February 1933, the newspaper claimed that it would "continue to be THE PAPER WITH A HEART AND SOUL."

In September 1934 cartoonist Otto Soglow dressed as his

Little King and made a cross-country tour to celebrate the debut of his well-known *New Yorker* comic strip in *Puck*, a weekly funny paper published throughout the United States in Hearst newspapers.

In October 1935 Scripps-Howard executive editor John Sorrells forced *Indianapolis Times* editor Talcott Powell to resign after Powell's accusing several county officials of corruption led him into personal battles with local politicians.

In March 1937 *New York Times* photographer George Strock helped catch the *New York Examiner* in reprinting *Times* photographs without permission. He snapped an angled shot of Los Angeles district attorney Buron Fitts on a hospital stretcher with cigarette in hand and had the art editor blot out the cigarette; the *Examiner* printed the same photograph, also without the cigarette. The next day *The New York Times* published the retouched photograph alongside the original under the headline, "HERE IS A STUDY IN PICTORIAL JOURNALISM PRACTICE 'FOR PEOPLE WHO THINK.'"

Claiming homesickness for California aggravated by the high cost of living in Manhattan, Edgar Marshall Swasey resigned in June 1932 as publisher of the *New York Evening Journal*, the largest Hearst newspaper, to resume his former work as western advertising representative for the Hearst *American Weekly*.

In April 1931 *New York Herald Tribune* editor Stanley Walker publicly apologized for using the word *Negress*, a word considered inappropriate by leading African American newspapers. In the future, when race must be designated, Walker said only the word *Negro* should be used, unless the reference involves crime; then the description *colored* would be used.

Former *Stars and Stripes* cartoonist Abian Anders "Wally" Wallgren's comic strip *Hoosegow Herman*, based on his misadventures while he was a U.S. Marine private during World War I, began national syndication in October 1938.

In July 1934 William, Edward, and Henry Woodyard became owners of the largest weekly newspaper chain in the United States when they acquired eight weeklies on the North Shore of Long Island, New York, and linked them with their fifteen county-seat weeklies in West Virginia.

In late February 1933 well-known wrestler Stanislaus Zbyszko won a libel suit against the *New York American*, which had printed his picture next to one of a gorilla — with the caption "Stanislaus Zbyszko, the Wrestler, Not Fundamentally Different from the Gorilla in Physique" — as an illustration for an article on evolution.

## AWARDS

---

### PULITZER PRIZES FOR JOURNALISM

1930

Meritorious Public Service: No award

Reporting: Russell D. Owen, *The New York Times*

Correspondence: Leland Stowe, *New York Herald Tribune*

Editorials: No award

Editorial Cartoons: Charles R. Macauley, *Brooklyn Eagle*

1931

Meritorious Public Service: *Atlanta Constitution*

Reporting: A. B. MacDonald, *Kansas City Star*

Correspondence: H. R. Knickerbocker, *Philadelphia Public Ledger* and *New York Evening Post*

Editorials: Charles S. Ryckman, *Fremont (Nebr.) Tribune*

Editorial Cartoons: Edmund Duffy, *Baltimore Sun*

1932

Meritorious Public Service: *Indianapolis News*

Reporting: W. C. Richards, D. D. Martin, J. S. Pooler, F. D. Webb, and J. N. W. Sloan, *Detroit Free Press*

Correspondence: Walter Duranty, *The New York Times*, and Charles G. Ross, *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*

Editorials: No award