Historiography in Mass Communication

The Latest News by Lorenzo Valles, c. 1880

Volume 12 (2026), Number 1

An historian's guide to the hows, whys, methods, schools of thought, and evolution of media history.

Historiography in Mass Communication

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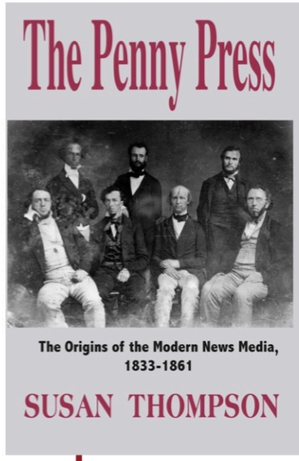

The Penny Press

Scholars have lauded this book as the best ever written focusing on the cheap press before the Civil War.

"Susan Thompson has written the ideal history of the penny press era. The writing is lively and engaging while remaining rooted in sound scholarship and the documents of the period. She has provided a treasure-trove of stories and facts about this pivotal era of media development." — David Copeland, series editor, *Debating Historical Issues in Media of the Time*

"*The Penny Press* provides a comprehensive examination of a previously oversimplified era of mass media development.... While this era was a time of the escapades of larger-than-life men and women, it was also a pivotal moment – when American journalism would reinvent itself in order to fulfill the needs of a rapidly changing audience, as well as lay the foundation for industry operating practices for future generations." — Bernell Tripp, author, *Origins of the Black Press, 1827-1847*

"Susan Thompson uncovers the shenanigans of penny press editors in a concise and entertaining narrative of the newspapers that first defined news and the mass audience in the United States. She reveals hypocrisies and controversies about sensationalism, invasion of privacy, truth in an era of hoaxes, and attempts at political independence." — William E. Huntzicker, author, *The Popular Press 1833-1865*

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From the Editor

The Conundrum of History and Historiography

By Debra Reddin van Tuyll

Back when my husband was a graduate student in history at Texas A&M, he told me about a class he was taking, and he used a word I didn't know: historiography. When he defined it history of history, I teased him unmercifully about historiography being a field created to offer more topics for dissertations. That was at least a decade before I started down the path that led me to become a journalism historian.

Even then, I was skeptical . . . until I really started delving into the literature in preparation for writing my own dissertation. That's when I realized just how important author perspective is. Historians, like journalists, are supposed to be "objective" however that term is defined. In my book, it means a fair assessment of the facts as they stand. That said, I think gatekeeping theory applies as much to historians as it does to journalists. Gatekeeping is a fairly old theory, one that psychologist Kurt Lewin used to understand food consumption during World War II, when he looked at how midwestern housewives made choices about what their families would eat.

Lewin's student David Manning White was the first to apply the theory to mass communication when, in 1950, he examined how editors decided what stories to include in a day's news budget. White's findings were the product of a case study in which he looked at the news choices an unidentified wire editor made, Mr. Gates. White found that Mr. Gates' decisions about what reports to run were highly subjective, based on his personal attitudes and experiences. Some stories were rejected for being "too Red" or because they came across the wire too late to make an already full paper. Mr. Gates told Manning that he was more likely to choose political news, less likely to choose sensationalized news, and that he leaned conservative in his politics. He also was not likely to run writing he considered dull or stories about uninteresting events. In other words, news selection was based less on objectivity and more on personal and practical considerations.

I've always been a fan of gatekeeping theory as an explanation for how information becomes news. And the more I delved into the literature as that Ph.D. student writing a dissertation, the more I came to understand why historiography mattered. In fact, it was a matter of historiography that led me to choose my dissertation topic. I was reading Frank Luther Mott's American Journalism at the same time I was delving into Southern newspaper coverage of the American Civil War, and, well, let's just say his interpretation of the political press didn't jive with what I was seeing in the newspapers. In some ways, I thought then, and still do, up to a point, that political papers serve the public better than allegedly objective papers, for their biases are right up front for everyone to see.

In any case, I've chuckled a good few times recently about what I'm coming more and more to see as the conundrum of history and historiography. By that I mean the tension that exists between the objective past what really happened and the more subjective reconstruction of the past that is common today. There is no way, it seems to me, to achieve an objective retelling of the past so long as it is done by human beings like Mr. Gates who have their own biases and perspectives. History is grounded in analysis, not just a recounting of events. "The narrative" is key. But "narrative" implies the presentation of facts in a particular manner that is grounded in analysis, which will get the author closer to objectivity, I think, or, more problematic, interpretation.

I grappled with this recently when I had to write, for publication, a five-year history of the daily newspaper I helped found, and of which I serve as executive editor. As a founder and owner, there were some elements of our origin story, and of our history, that neither of my partners wanted made public. I had to choose between my journalism historian's hat and my corporate officer hat. My responsibility to the

Debra Reddin van Tuyll is professor emeritus at Augusta University. She is the author or editor of nine books, and the tenth, the Handbook of Transnational Journalism History, will be out in March. Her research areas include the Civil War-era press and the earliest Irish American Press. She is a former president of the American Journalism Historians Association, and she also is a recipient of that organization's Kobre Award for lifetime service to journalism history.

paper, and my unwillingness to air the kind of dirty laundry a journalism historian would absolutely bask in accessing, led me to choose the latter but before I'm thrown out of the profession, let me add quickly I've collected quite an archive of materials about the founding of the paper and its operation in these last five years, and they will go to the local historical society archive when I die. So, I'm working to preserve the facts of the paper's history so that those who come after me will have the bare facts and can make of them what they will.

All of this is to say that I am looking forward to the adventure ahead of me as editor of this journal of working with all of you to disentangle (I hope!) that history/historiography conundrum. I am so grateful to David Sloan for entrusting this work to me, and I hope the work I do is worthy of him and his trust.

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It Began with 'a Terrible Little Book,'

The Historiography of Journalism's Role in Ending Child Labor

By Bruce J. Evensen

Approaching the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding is an excellent time to consider the role that journalism has played in America's continuing journey to create a more civil society. Although journalism historians focused on the historiography of reform movements may know the name Florence Kelley, her role in using journalism to build public opinion that sustained reform remains largely undocumented. Recovering her proper place in ending the scourge of child labor enhances our understanding of how activists and policymakers appropriated journalism as a strategy to mobilize public opinion and create legislative remedies in a multi-generational endeavor to protect the most vulnerable in our nation.

Kelley was drawn to reform at an early age. She recounts in her 1986 posthumously published memoir *Notes of Sixty Years: The Autobiography of Florence Kelley* (originally appearing in the magazine Survey in 1926 and 1927) that she was seven when her father William Darrah Kelley, an ardent abolitionist and Philadelphia congressman, showed her "a terrible little book." Its woodcuts depicted children forced to carry heavy loads of wet clay in the brickyards of England. "They looked like little gnomes and trolls," she remembered, "with crooked legs and large splay feet out of all proportion to their dwarfed frames." Her mother objected to "darkening the mind of a young child," but her father insisted on introducing his daughter "to the lives of the less fortunate."

Florie was nine in 1868 when she stood outside her Grandaunt's Quaker meeting house in Germantown, Pennsylvania one Sunday morning. Sarah Pugh explained the "little skinny girls" they saw entering "a forbidding-looking brick building" were returning to work. These were the hands-girls, Kelley later learned, who labored in a textile mill, where "there was no limit on ages or hours of work by day or by night." At twelve, Florie was the same age as the glass-house boys that she encountered on her father's nighttime tour of reeking furnace rooms. There, she saw the dog-boys who heated steel and scraped molds, blinking back the sparks that flew up into their faces.

Kelley taught his daughter the power of publicity to achieve social justice. "No deeply rooted evil," he told her, "can ever be finally eradicated except by stirring the minds" of her fellow citizens to demand change. His fierce opposition to slavery made him one of the founders of the Republican Party. At forty-eight, William Kelley volunteered as a private with the Independent Artillery Company and fought in the Civil War. During his thirty years of post-war service in the U. S. House of Representatives, Kelley became a leading voice for labor, suffrage, and civil rights. Her father's public career informed Florence Kelley's commitment to the poor and their children.

In 1882, Kelley was twenty-two when she became one of the first women to ever graduate from Cornell University. Her thesis, "Some Changes in the Legal Status of the Child since Blackstone," combined history and social science in arguing that the emergence of case law established the child as an individual with rights worthy of legal protection. The study was published in the International Review and marked the beginning of Kelley's lifelong commitment "on behalf of less fortunate children."

Kelley was denied entrance into the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1882 because she was a woman. She accompanied her father to Europe the following year and wrote eyewitness accounts of her visits to foundries and factories in Britian's West Midlands, where coal extraction left a desiccated landscape black by day and red by night. The pieces were published in the New York Tribune. Kelley returned to the United States in 1886 after studying law and government at the University of Zurich. She made a little money translating French and German children's

Bruce Evensen is a professor of communication at DePaul University. He has written a number of books, including Truman, Palestine and the Press: Shaping Conventional Wisdom at the Beginning of the Cold War *and* When Dempsey Fought Tunney: Heroes, Hokum and Storytelling in the Jazz Age.

books into English, while arguing in The Christian Union in June 1887 that corporate wealth was gained only through "the proceeds of unpaid labor." By July 1889, Kelley helped organize the Working Women's Society of the City of New York that promoted the hiring of women factory inspectors to widen the rights of working women. In The Arena she argued for a law prohibiting employment of children under the age of eighteen.

In 1889, the Temperance Press published Kelley's 40-page pamphlet "Our Toiling Children," designed to awaken public opinion on "the wage slavery of children." Her research showed that for more than half a century child labor thrived as "a legally accepted American institution." She traced its deadly history to the Granite Mill fire in Fall River, Massachusetts on September 19, 1874. Twenty-three women and young children perished on that Saturday morning from suffocation, flames, falling timbers and deadly jumps from fifth and sixth floor spooling rooms. Trapped workers were engulfed in "a sea of flames" ignited by oiled cotton and combustible waste. Many badly burned bodies could not be identified by horrified parents who rushed to the scene. One inspector justified the lack of a fire escape by stating "it would be very little use," since these buildings "burn down so quickly" preventing "all means of escape."

Kelley's review of public records found as early as 1880 more than one million minors were "toiling child slaves" in industrializing America, working days and nights of twelve to fourteen hours, while more than one million men and women could not find work. She reported that parents were often forced to sign releases exonerating employers of any liability for children who might be maimed at work. Employers preyed upon the poverty of parents to put children as young as three to work "picking out basting threads" in tenement sweatshops for the pennies it might make their families. Her research found that kids as young as four stripped tobacco plants in cigar and stogie making, inhaling tobacco dust and other toxins. Sores sprouted on their hands, feet and lips. Some children worked as snappers and roller boys in glass making and cruller bakeries, where heated oil filled their lungs with dense smoke. Kelley's writing took readers to the putrid and airless spaces, where the young labored over bricks, bags, buckles, baskets and boxes. Others made scissors, shoes and snuff, medicinal plasters and wallpaper. The nation's children could be found in woolen, cotton and stamping mills and rubber works. They were woodworkers and match makers. Many were poisoned by the arsenic and benzene used in dying artificial flowers. Kelley cited inspectors who testified it was amazing "that there exists a single human being who could stand it for a month and live."

To kill a man on a highway, Kelley wrote, might be a capital offense, but to kill or maim a child laborer was reported as an "accident." To many employers who relied on child labor, injuries and chronic illness among workers was simply the cost of doing business. "While men insure their property against fire," one factory inspector wrote, they "will not spend a dollar for the security of the lives of those by whose labor they profit." Employers often hired "incompetent men who will work for less money than competent men" to oversee children, "who work themselves into a state of consumption." Kelley concluded since "conscience did not burden every employer," it was a public responsibility to "abolish child labor now and forever through the strong arm of the law." The nation's children were its future, and law should "compel all our children to go to school until the age of sixteen and to make all employers responsible for every injury occurring on his premises." Most states required compulsory education for children, but few enforced it. Kelley resolved that too must change.

Kelley escaped her abusive husband in New York City in 1891 and brought their three young children to Chicago, where she began her work at Hull House, a settlement in its second year of education and advocacy for families in Chicago's impoverished Near West Side. The Hull House experiment in Christian Socialism aimed at improving living and working conditions for immigrant families by offering food, clothing, shelter, showers, training and babysitting services for Chicago's poor. "Appealing to the sympathy of the masses," Kelley argued in February 1897, "for the welfare of helpless working women and children," had to be followed by a legislative remedy and the power to enforce it. What was required was a shared communal responsibility to end "the sacrifice of the weak and defenseless in the search for cheapness."

Kelley and Hull House founder Jane Addams were founding board members of the National Child Labor Committee in 1907. The organization rallied political, civic and opinion leaders to take legislative action by exposing a hidden situation the estimated two million children under the age of sixteen, who worked for their daily bread. The stories of these children were captured in the research of sociologist Lewis Hine, whose 230 photographs at seventeen cotton mills documented the abuses of child labor in the Carolinas. Kelley was initially skeptical of a tabloid tendency to use photojournalism as a sensational means of boosting circulation in Sunday Supplements. She worried the technology might undermine the serious work of social scientists in depicting the plight of the poor. Kelley, however, came to see in Hine's images of sweaty, lint-soaked children at spindles and looms a new weapon to bring relief to the preyed upon.

The NCLC published accounts of Hine's work in Child Labor in the *Carolinas and Day Laborers Before Their Time* in 1909 and *The Children's Burden in Oyster and Shrimp Canneries* in 1911. Hine's achievement is the subject of Judith Maria Gutman's *Lewis W. Hine and the American Social Conscience* (1967), Russell Freedman's *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor* (1994), Juliet H. Mofford's *Child Labor in America* (1997). Vicki Goldberg's *Lewis W. Hine: Children at Work* (1999), Kate Sampsell-Willmann's *Lewis Hine as Social Critic* (2007) and Robert Macieski's *Picturing Class: Lewis W. Hine Photographs Child Labor in New England* (2015).

The Library of Congress has a "National Child Labor Committee Collection," which includes Hine's photographs of newsboys and newsgirls, some as young as nine, along with shrimp-pickers and spinners. A National Archives post and exhibit, "Teaching with Documents: Photographs of Lewis Hine Documentation of Child Labor," chronicles the impact of Hine's photographs. The images of underage garment workers, basket and radish sellers, shoeshine boys, and the children who worked in cigar, glass, box and bottle factories proved powerfully persuasive in the battle for public opinion. So too did his flash photography in canneries and his photographs of children who worked as weavers and oyster shuckers.

Kelley and Addams also made common cause with William Hard, a missionary's son and social reformer, who became a Hull House resident. Hard produced several investigative accounts for the *Chicago Tribune* furthering the work of public education in the fight to end the abuses of child labor. The most dramatic and well circulated of these articles are two that appeared in 1908 editions of *Everybody's Magazine* "De Kid Wot Works at Night," published in January, and "The Law of the Killed and Wounded," published in September.

Several of Kelley's contemporaries also produced significant work in efforts to arouse and channel public opinion to bring legislative remedies to end child labor. Rheta Childe Dorr, later known for her work as editor of *The Suffragist*, began her investigative work in 1902 in a series of stories in the *New York Evening Post* on women and children at work. Other iconic probes of the period include Robert Hunter's *Poverty* (1904) with his attack on "child slavery" and his "The Children Who Toil," which appeared in the December 1905 edition of *World's Work*. John Spargo in *The Bitter Cry of the Children* (1906) deplored "a great nation that in its commercial madness sacrifices its babes." Markku Ruotsila examined the ideology that informed Spargo's work in *John Spargo and American Socialism* (2006).

Alexander J. McElway, Presbyterian minister and southern secretary of the NCLC, exposed "The Child Labor Problem a Study in Degeneracy" in a March 1906 edition of *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. A 1907 series in the *Saturday Evening Post* by Marie Van Vorst and her sister-in-law Bessie McGinnis Van Vorst became in 1908 the widely ready book *The Cry of the Children: A Study of Child-Labor*. *Good Housekeeping* published in June 1913 a probe by Mary Alden Hopkins, titled, "Children in Bondage: Turning Children's Homes into Factories."

Poet and lecturer Edwin Markham contributed to the cause with "The 'Hoe-Man' in the Making: The Child at the Looms," which appeared in a September 1906 edition of *Cosmopolitan*. Markham's follow-up study "Spinners in the Dark" was published in *Cosmopolitan's* July 1907 issue. Assisted by Benjamin B. Lindsey and George Creel, Markham wrote *Children in Bondage: A Complete and Careful Presentation of the Anxious Problem of Child Labor–Its Causes, Its Crimes and its Cures* (1914). His narrative contrasted how "on the beautiful boulevards, pet cats are jeweled and pampered and aired on a fine lady's lap," while the "children of the poor strain under grown up responsibilities."

The efforts of reformers to advocate for the rights of the immigrant poor and their working children have been addressed in Susan Campbell Bartoletti's *Kids on Strike!* (1999), an analysis of the agency shown by children who were mill workers in industrializing America. Two dissertations Marjorie E. Wood's "Emancipating the Child Laborer: Children, Freedom and the Moral Boundaries of the Market in the United States, 1853-1938" in 2011 and Elizabeth E. Gardner's "The Child Labor Movement's Night Messenger Service Campaign: Rights and Reform in the Progressive Era" in 2017 examined how children organized and resisted their forced labor. Vincent DiGirolamo's Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys (2019) won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians by addressing how Gilded Age newspapers preyed upon their newsboys, while publicly claiming to be their benefactors.

Jeremy P. Felt drilled down into a single state's struggle to reform child labor laws in his *Hostages of Fortune: Child Labor Reform in New York State* (1965). Stephen B. Wood analyzed the court battles that ended child labor in *Constitutional Politics in the Progressive Era: Child Labor and the Law* (1968). Walter I. Trattner studied the history of the *National Child Labor Committee in Crusade for the Children: A History of the National Child Labor Committee and Child Labor Reform in America* (1970). In *Raising a Baby the Government Way: Mother's Letters to the Children's Bureau, 1915-1932* (1986), Molly Ladd-Taylor looked at the efforts of the National Child Labor Committee to reform child labor practices. Labor studies Professor Alan Derickson showed how reformers marshalled scientific evidence to advocate an end to child labor in "Making Human Junk: Child Labor as a Health Issue in the Progressive Era," published in the *American Journal of Public Health* in September 1992.

Sociologist Viviana A. Zelizer in *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (1994) analyzed how reformers overthrew the idea that children of the poor were "useless" dependents by emphasizing the emotional bond between parents and child. The following year, social work historian Brian Stadum examined "The Dilemma in Saving Children from Child Labor: Reform and Casework at Odds with Families' Needs (1900-1938)," in the January-February 1995 edition of *Child Welfare*.

Hugh D. Hindman traced the long history of reform efforts to end child labor in coal mines, glass houses, textile mills, food processing plants, sweatshops and street sales in his *Child Labor: An American History* (2002). Frederica Perera's September 2014 study, "Science as an Early Driver of Policy: Child Labor Reform in the Early Progressive Era, 1870-1900," published in the *American Journal of Public Health* showed the success of using scientific arguments in ending child labor. One strategy in keeping underage children working was to keep them unaware of their actual age, as shown in James D. Schmidt's *Industrial Violence and the Legal Origins of Child Labor* (2010). Betsy Wood's *Upon the Altar of Work: Child Labor and the Rise of American Sectionalism* (2020) examined the sectional differences that arose in defending and attacking child labor policy and practices.

What makes Kelley's contributions to ending child labor of particular interest to journalism historians are her twin roles as publicist for laboring children and their rights and as government representative in a position to lay the foundation for nationwide, enforceable child labor laws. Her biographer Kathryn Kish Sklar is particularly interested in Kelley's impact on women's work in her well researched

Florence Kelley & The Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830-1900 (1997). Assisted by Beverly Wilson Palmer, Sklar has also edited *The Selected Letters of Florence Kelley, 1869-1931* (2009).

In an earlier biography by Kelley's co-worked Josephine Clara Goldmark, titled *Impatient Crusader: Florence Kelley's Life Story* (1953) U. S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter called Kelley the woman most responsible for "shaping the social history of the United States during the first thirty years of the twentieth century." He considered her most "enduring" accomplishment was promoting "social legislation that eventually gets on the statute books." This was done by "enlightening the public" through her powers of persuasion in the press.

Goldmark noted that twelve years before women won the right to vote, Kelley's unrelenting advocacy for women and children made her a sworn enemy of "human exploitation in American industry" and a "seminal force in American life." Kelley and Goldmark helped labor lawyer Louis Brandeis create "The Brandeis Brief," which transformed how the U. S. Supreme Court considered cases. The brief's factual argument led to a 1908 ruling in Muller v. Oregon that recognized the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection and due process rights, enabling states to set working hours and conditions for women. Frankfurter believed Kelley's work won "for children the rights of childhood," while challenging those who "exploit the economic needs of women." This made her, in Goldmark's view, "unequaled in her ability to arouse moral fervor" and influence in the fight to end child labor.

Frances Perkins, who was mentored by Kelley on the fine art of civic persuasion, became in 1933 a year after Kelley's death, the first woman to serve as a cabinet secretary when named labor secretary by Franklin Roosevelt. Perkins analyzed Kelley's importance to the reform movement in "My Recollections of Florence Kelley," published in the *Social Service Review* in March 1954. She noted that Kelley's "demand for good work and results" proved an "inspiration" and made Kelley indispensable in the long fight to end child labor. Kelley's "fortitude and tenacity and reliance on facts," Perkins wrote, made her an important opponent of "callous unconcern" and a leader in educating the public and legislators into a "broadened concept of the social obligation of the privileged for the underprivileged. Much of the humane social legislation we have in America today is the direct result of her life and labor."

Kelley revolutionized reporting on child labor by deploying the statistical tools of a trained social scientist and the public relations panache of a committed socialist. Her work drew national attention to a hidden situation afflicting Chicago and many of America's industrializing cities. She defined the sweating system in her memoir as "a tenement-house kitchen or bedroom in which the head of the family employs outsiders, persons not members of his own family, in the manufacture of garments for some wholesaler or merchant tailor." Sociologists would soon see it as "a condition of labor by which a maximum amount of work possible per day is performed for a minimum wage, and in which the ordinary rules of health and comfort are disregarded."

Kelley considered the sweating system "a means of demoralization and degradation" for workers of all ages. Kelley described a system that "deliberately preyed upon the necessities of the poor" in an "extortion practiced on people whose environment prevents their escape." Chicago's needle trades generated 30 million dollars annually, she told Congressional investigators, but little of it went to its 35,000 workers many of them the tenement poor who produced two thirds of the city's inventory. She found these unseen workers in basements, attics, sheds, stables, and cramped spaces above saloons in the poorest sections of the city. They labored ten to fifteen hours daily, seven days a week. A man might make five to twelve dollars a week, a woman three to seven, and a child seventy-five cents to two and a half dollars weekly. When the contractor was paid, workers might be. There were few legal protections. Impoverished employees were daily reminded they were the least important part of the process and could be "easily replaced." She concluded the sweating system's chief manufacture was not clothing but "full-fledged pauperism." The reward for hard work and personal sacrifice was "grinding poverty, ordinarily ending only in death."

Kelley was indebted in her reform campaign to schoolteacher Helen Cusack who went undercover for the Chicago Times to write twenty-one stories under the pseudonym Nell Nelson in the summer of 1888 that revealed the hidden suffering that fueled Chicago's sweatshops. The year before, Elizabeth Cochran had done extraordinary work for the New York World under the pseudonym Nellie Bly by demonstrating how sane, impoverished women were driven to insanity by the abuses they suffered at the Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island in the East River. Cusack followed Cochran's example of going undercover to reveal terrible truths that made the "City Slave Girls" series must reading for those interested in Chicago's shadow world where ready wear clothing was made.

At a jersey company on Market Street, Cusack, posing as a seamstress, found girls of thirteen "in rags with a deathlike pallor." At Princess Knitting, girls were "blanched by confinement and thin as reeds." At a tailor's shop on Sedgwick Street, workers were covered in dust and dye. Most memorably, readers learned of a girl who had "fallen asleep in the lavatory" separated by a single board at the end of a reeking workroom. "The pale face of the sleeper looked ghastly in the darkness." She was sick and sat crying. She had lost her job in a box factory, then labored at a sweat shop for thirty cents a cloak but couldn't please her boss "no matter how hard I worked." She'd been reduced to finishing a black jersey for five cents "in a place only fit to starve in." Workplace sexual harassment was constant. One woman told Cusack every interaction with a foreman "made me wish I was dead." Many of Cusack's 21 stories for the *Chicago Times* were re-published under the provocative title *The White Slave Girls of Chicago* (1888).

Kim Todd's book *Sensational: The Hidden Story of America's 'Girl Stunt Reporters'* (2021), took up Cusack's story on pages 54-66. Cusack's remarkable effect on the circulation of the *Chicago Times* is described by the paper's city editor Charlie Chapin under the title *Charles Chapin's Story Written in Sing Sing Prison* (1920), pp. 126-154. Other accounts of Cusack's reporting include Eric W. Liguori, "Nell Nelson and The Chicago Times 'City Slave Girls' Series: Beginning a National Crusade for Labor Reform in the Late 1800s," *Journal of Management History* 18 (2012), pp. 61-81 and Samantha Peko and Michael S. Sweeney, "Nell Nelson's Undercover Reporting," *American Journalism* 34 (Oct. 2017), pp. 448-469.

Kelley's connection to Hull House led to her appointment on May 23, 1892, as chief investigator for the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics. She immediately generated publicity through her house-to-house canvass of 666 of the city's sweat shops that identified 10,933 workers, many of them children. Reporters for the *Chicago Herald* and the *Inter-Ocean* followed her into the shops, and their stories expanded her reach and influence. They reported that two-thirds of sweatshop workers were young women and girls. Kelley found that underage "hand-sewers had bodies forever bent by their work." Their chronic inhaling of dye dust left many with asthma, eczema and severe allergic reactions. Contact with arsenic used to enhance color produced skin lesions. The inexorable reality of the garment trade, Kelley wanted readers to know, was "the demand for cheap clothing and the influx of cheap labor that left workers wholly at the mercy of the sweater."

Among the overcrowded tenements of Chicago's poorest families, those who made the cloaks, coats, trousers, knee-pants and overalls that clothed Chicagoans, Kelley concluded, were among its most exploited citizens. Many began learning their trade at eighteen months, falling asleep in their highchairs when they could no longer sew a stitch. "Children learned to work after they learned to walk," she discovered. "In the tenement houses, among the finishers the proportion of very young children who work is great, for every member of the family group must contribute to the family's earnings." Two in five children of the immigrant poor in Chicago perished before the age of five from smallpox, cholera, diphtheria, typhoid and scarlet fever. Their departures were hastened by the absence of clean water and flush toilets.

In workspaces entered through lofts, basements, stables and outhouses, the press found "garments that lie about living rooms, across greasy chairs and tables, on filthy floors and vermin-infested beds." For indigent families, Kelley observed, "cooking, sleeping, sewing, and nursing the sick go on simultaneously." They sewed cloaks for eight cents apiece. A couple needed fourteen-hour days to sew ten pairs of trousers at 90 cents apiece. Forty coats a week might net $9.60. She confided in a letter to her mother that the "dreary environment of the sweatshop makes one hopeless of better things."

Publicity from Kelley's work led in February 1893 to a state investigation of sweatshop conditions. She led Illinois legislators and the press on a tenement tour. During the four-day pilgrimage officials found workplaces "unfit for human habitation," which posed a direct threat to the "health and welfare of the public." Many of these garments were sold in the city's most respected emporiums. Committee members found fourteen-year-old Lizzy Champ in a 12 by 7 workspace that "smelled of decay and dirty clothing" that investigators found "unbearable." Lizzy worked 11 hours a day, six days a week, and earned a dollar and a half. The garments were under contract to local clothier A. M. Rothschild. Cloaks commissioned by Marshall Field were made in a shop at 237 Maxwell Street, just above a stable, where a horse lay dying. One woman, whose daughter was dying from diphtheria, wrapped her in a half-finished cloak intended for J. V. Farwell & Co. She didn't have enough money for a blanket. At 100 Ewing Street, investigators interviewed 16-year-old pieceworker Mary Paladino, who made a nickel for stitching and facing armholes for women's jackets sold by Hart, Schaffner & Marx. Her take-home pay was a dime a day or as much as two dollars a week. Two 13-year-old girls made seventy-five cents a week basting pants ten hours a day. Many additional Chicago clothiers Joseph Beifeld, Siegel-Cooper, Simon, Leopold & Solomon, C. P. Kellogg, Meyer, Engel & Co., and the Kahn Brothers all contracted out work to sweatshops. The *Chicago Tribune* reported "foul and crowded" conditions across many of them. Less attention was paid to the health and safety of sweatshop workers.

Kelley's testimony on February 18th before a state commission made headlines. Her inspection of 900 separate sweatshop rooms led her to define the work as "legalized murder." Rooms were overrun with scarlet and typhoid fever cases, measles, malignant diphtheria, and scabies. The work unfailingly ruined the health of those who did it. Kelley reported a clear pattern: "young boys and young girls" went to work for parents disabled by the same work. At the southwest corner of Jefferson and Taylor streets, Kelley found "three little girls" in a fourth-floor walkup over a smoky saloon. None of them could read or write their name. "They sewed buttons and finished knee pants for nothing." Proprietors said they were "learning the trade." The only solution to their plight, she argued, was for Illinois "to prohibit the manufacture of clothing in any dwelling by any woman or child." She submitted to investigators a proposed statute to do precisely that.

The *Chicago Herald* claimed the public was seized with "horror and shame" by Kelley's revelations. The *Chicago Tribune* supported her efforts to force the state legislature "to abolish tenement house shops and end deplorable working conditions" that were "a covenant with death." In July 1893 Illinois became one of the first states to create an inspection regime mandating "goods exposed to contagious diseases be destroyed on the spot." The draft of the law, largely written by Kelley, prohibited employing children under the age of fourteen and limited to eight hours the daily work of women and children. On July 7th, Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld appointed Kelley "chief investigator for factories," the first woman named to that office in any state.

Kelley, buoyed by an enforcement staff of eleven and an annual budget of $12,000, made good copy in almost daily raids on "swarming tenements, where the greatest squalor and filth abound." Human interest stories publicized the predicament of a "temperate and faithful cloak-maker," who began the work as a fourteen-year-old and was an unemployable old man at thirty-four. "No sweater would have

him." He lived in the rear basement of a tenement with four children, who lived on bread and water. Four days after the bread stopped the children were "near death" from starvation and pneumonia. A visiting nurse fed the family on her own income for four months.

Kelley's highly publicized report to the governor identified children "covered with eruptions as a direct consequence of filthy working conditions" and "boys from knee-pants shops covered with vermin." Children who ran button-hole machines with foot-power became "lifelong victims of pelvic disorders" with curvature of the spine and a "rachitic" swelling and protrusion of rib joints. Stamping press workers experienced "daily mutilations" of fingers, hands and arms. Boys working in tin can factories had bandaged hands saturated in blood. "The child who handles arsenical paper in a box factory long enough becomes a helpless invalid," she wrote. "The boy who gilds cheap frames with mercurial gilding loses the use of his arm and acquires incurable throat troubles. The tobacco girls suffer nicotine poisoning." She was bringing an indictment a day against sweatshop contractors who hired underage workers, but when the Cook County District Attorney told Kelley he had more important cases to consider, she got a law degree from Northwestern University in June 1894 to better defend workers' rights in court proceedings.

Carroll Wright, U. S. Commissioner of Commerce, named Kelley the lead investigator of a federal probe into Chicago's sweating system. It expanded into a nationwide initiative to shed light on the abuse of working children in the great slums of industrializing America. On July 25, 1894, the U. S. Labor Department incorporated Kelley's report into its study "The Slums of Baltimore, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia," and submitted it to President Grover Cleveland. The study helped make the issue of child labor a national concern. Poverty in the sweating system, Kelley claimed, "was not the result of crime, vice, intemperance, sloth, and unthrift" but an economic system that broke itworkers and threatened "the safety of the purchasing public."

By 1895, the Illinois Manufacturers Association organized a campaign to blunt the work of Kelley and her team of investigators. The *Chicago Tribune* seemed sympathetic to their claims that Kelley was becoming a public nuisance and labor organizer. The association's Chief Counsel Levy Mayer took Kelley and the State of Illinois to court, arguing, "human liberty" required the state not interfere with a woman's "right to work." On March 14, 1895, the state supreme court concurred, ruling unanimously in Ritchie V. People that limiting women to an eight-hour workday violated the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment that guaranteed every citizen "equal protection of the laws." The court claimed the Illinois law was "an arbitrary and unwarranted restriction on the right to contract" and a gross violation of "the police power of the state." The states that had followed the Illinois law were forced to retreat.

It took thirteen years, but in 1908, as general secretary of the National Consumers' League Kelley joined Goldmark and Brandeis to reverse the results of her Illinois defeat. In Muller v. Oregon, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of a state law limiting a woman's daily work to ten hours in laundries and factories. The case turned on the "Brandeis Brief," a document that used sociological data as well as legal precedent to argue on behalf of protections for working women. The precis had been prepared in one month's time by Brandeis, Kelley and Goldmark. The court on February 24, 1908, issued a unanimous ruling accepting the brief's argument that the right to contract "is not absolute" and that "the physical well-being of a woman is an object of public interest" requiring "special care that her rights be preserved." The 113-page brief served as a model for amicus submissions in the years to come. And, most importantly, it established a precedent that serving the "public interest" was an important consideration in the constitutionality of labor law. That acknowledgement provided a wider scope for future protection of all workers.

The achievement of the Brandeis Brief in protecting workers' rights has been examined in Marion E. Doro, "The Brandeis Brief," *Vanderbilt Law Review* 11 (June 1958), pp. 783-799; Sandra S. Evans and Joseph E. Scott, "Social Scientists as Expert Witnesses: Their Use, Misuse and Sometimes Abuse," *Law & Policy Quarterly* 5 (April 1983), pp. 181-214 and Clyde Spillenger, "Revenge of the Triple Negative: A Note on the Brandeis Brief in Muller V. Oregon," *University of Minnesota Law School* 22 (Spring 2005), pp. 5-10.

The significance of the Muller v. Oregon case is analyzed in Mary E. Becker, "From Muller v. Oregon to Fetal Vulnerability Policies," *University of Chicago Law Review* 53 (1986), pp. 1219-1273; Holly J. McCammon, "The Politics of Protection: State Minimum Wage and Maximum Hours Laws for Women in the United States, 1870-1930," *Sociological Quarterly* 36 (Spring 1995), pp. 217-249; Nancy Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1996) and Nancy Woloch, *A Class by Herself: Protective Laws for Women Workers, 1890s-1990s* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2015), pp. 54-84.

For 30 years Kelley served as general secretary of the National Consumers League to defend and expand the protections of Muller. Her organization introduced the White Label which assured shoppers the clothing they purchased was not produced through child labor. The league's 64 chapters schooled citizens to boycott sweatshops and support businesses that paid a living wage and offered a safe space for their employees. She raised awareness and jawboned legislators to join the cause.

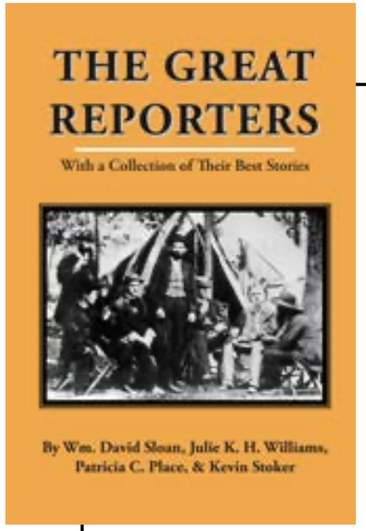
In 1916, Congress relied on the Article One Commerce Clause of the U. S. Constitution to prohibit the sale of goods in interstate commerce produced by children under the age of fourteen. The triumph was short-lived. On June 3, 1918, by a single vote majority the U. S. Supreme Court ruled in Hammer V. Dagenhart that the federal child labor law was unconstitutional. An amendment to the Constitution forbidding child labor passed by a two-thirds vote in the Congress in 1924 but not the states, where legislators disagreed on a single standard.

Although Kelley didn't live to see it, on October 21, 1936, while campaigning for re-election in Bedford, Massachusetts, Franklin Roosevelt was approached by a girl, whose note read: "I wish you could do something to help us girls. We have been working in a sewing factory and up to a few months ago we were getting our minimum pay of $11 a week. Today the 200 of us girls have been cut down to $4 and $5 and $6 a week." When a reporter asked what was in the note, Roosevelt replied, "Something's got to be done about the elimination of child labor and long hours and starvation wages."

On May 24, 1937, President Roosevelt insisted "a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy can plead no justification for the existence of child labor." He urged immediate Congressional action to approve such a bill. The bill's backers charged that a quarter of working children labored 60 hours a week for as little as four dollars. It took thirteen months and debate over 75 proposed amendments, but, finally, on June 25, 1938, President Roosevelt signed the "Fair Labor Standards Act" that set twenty-five cents as the minimum national hourly wage with a maximum work week of 44 hours, while banning "oppressive child labor" for children under sixteen. The act had been drafted by Florence Kelley's long-time protégé Frances Perkins, labor secretary under Roosevelt.

Florence Kelley wrote "the mightiest revolutions are peaceful ones." Her contributions to ending child labor have been chronicled in Lynn Gordon, "Women and the Anti-Child Labor Movement in Illinois, 1890-1920," *Social Science Review* 51 (June 1977), pp. 228-248; Sandra Dee Harmon, "Florence Kelley in Illinois," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 74 (Autumn 1981), pp. 162-178; Brett Clark and John Bellamy Foster, "Florence Kelley and the Struggle against the Degradation of Life: An Introduction to a Selection from Modern Industry," *Organization and Environment* 20 (June 2006), pp. 251-263; Peter Dreier, "Florence Kelley: Pioneer of Labor Reform," *New Labor Forum* 21 (Winter 2012), pp. 70-76; Gabriel Soudan, David Philippi and Harro Maas, "Reform: The Social Crusades of Florence Kelley and Ellen Richards," *Science in Context* 34 (Dec. 2021), pp. 501-525 and Jon Grinspan, "The Father-Daughter Team Who Reformed America," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Nov./Dec. 2022.

How Florence Kelley and other reformers used journalism as an instrument in achieving a more civil society deserves further scrutiny.



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Historian Interview

By Patrick Cox

Dr. Patrick Cox of Wimberley, Texas is an award-winning and nationally recognized historian, author, journalist and conservationist with a background of public service, teaching, administration, and nonprofit work. A sixth generation Texan, he resides with his wife Brenda on their wildlife management property and home. He specializes in historical media and environmental research, broadcasts and publications.

In September 2025, the *American Journalism Historians Association* (AJHA) recognized Dr. Cox with the Sidney Kobre Lifetime Achievement Award for exemplary achievements in publications, teaching, research and professional contributions. The Kobre Lifetime Achievement Award is the national organization's highest honor.

Service and achievement awards include: Distinguished Alumni - Texas State University (2014), Distinguished Alumni - Texas State University College of Liberal Arts (2010); the American Journalism Historians Association President's Award (2014, 2017); Texas Institute of Letters (2019); the Philosophical Society of Texas (2003); Fellow of the Texas State Historical Association (2015); Fellow of the East Texas Historical Association (2017); and the Melvin Jones Fellowship for Dedicated Humanitarian Services from the Lions Clubs International Foundation (2019).

He served as president of the Texas State Historical Association from 2021 to 2022. He is a founding member of the Alliance For Texas History (2024) whose mission is to provide a comprehensive understanding of diverse cultures and people while advocating for intellectual freedom and inclusion.

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

Cox: I grew up and attended public schools in Houston, Texas. My late brother Robert and I were raised by Doris Warren Cox, our divorced single mother who was a registered nurse and by our grandparents Floss and William Bell. After I graduated from Lamar High School in Houston in 1970, I attended the University of Texas at Austin where I earned my B.A. in History in 1974. While at UT I also worked on the Daily Texan newspaper.

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

Cox: With my mother and stepfather Doris and Beven Varnon, we founded The Wimberley View newspaper in 1976. At the Wimberley View we received the Outstanding Weekly Newspaper in Texas from the Texas Press Association in 1981. As editor of The Wimberley View from 1976 to 1981, I also received dozens individual awards for news writing, feature writing, editorials, columns, and photography.

I was an assistant land commissioner at the Texas General Land Office from 1983-88 where I served as associate land commissioner for Public Information. I was the agency's media representative and coordinated all news releases, interviews and activities. I was later the associate land commissioner for Land Management and initiated the first natural resource protection programs and surveys of historical resources for state owned lands.

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

Cox: From 1997 to 2012, I served as the Associate Director of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin - one of the nation's premier research centers. During those years, I taught many courses at the UT College of Journalism and the Department of Histo-

ry: American Media History, the Press and the Presidency, Community Journalism, independent studies and I served on many graduate and dissertation committees. I also was the director of the Texas Media Archives at the Center.

While working on my Ph.D. in History at UT Austin from 1989 to 1996, I taught the History of the South, American History to 1865 and American History 1866 to the 1980's. I taught Texas History at the University of Texas at San Antonio. At St. Edward's University in Austin, I taught Western Civilization and Texas History.

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

Cox: My mother and grandfather provided the earliest influences on my interest in history. As I was growing up before attending college, they took me to historic sites, museums, state and national parks, libraries and historical lectures and programs. They also encouraged me to read at an early age. My favorites were histories and biographies of the Civil War, Texas, World War II, parks and natural areas, and the American West. Many of my teachers in school and in college encouraged me to explore many areas of American and world history political, environmental, social and cultural.

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

Cox: My primary areas of concentration are: American political and cultural history, American media history, western and southern history, Texas history, public history, biography and archival research and historic sites management.

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

Cox: Publications: *Tom Sealy – A Man of Action, Fighting for Justice in War and Peace* (2019); *Picturing Texas Politics, A Photographic History from Sam Houston to Rick Perry (2015); Ranching in the Wild Horse Desert* (2014), a history of the Jones Ranch in South Texas; *Writing the History of Texas* (2013) essays on famous Texas historians; *The House Will Come to Order* (2010), a critical study and oral history of the Texas House Speakers; *The First Texas News Barons* (2005), a book on influential Texas newspaper publishers; *Profiles in Power, Twentieth Century Texans in Washington, D.C.* (2004) and *Ralph W. Yarborough, The People's Senator* (2001), an award-winning biography of the progressive Texas Senator.

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

Cox: The books include: *Ralph W. Yarborough – The People's Senator* (2001) (my first historical work); the *First Texas News Barons* (2005); *Profiles in Power - Twentieth Century Texans in Washington, D.C.* (2004); *Ranching in the Wild Horse Desert* (2015).

Articles include: "Nearly A Statesman, LBJ and Texas Blacks in the 1948 Election," *Social Science Quarterly*, June 1993 (my first scholarly publication); "The 1936 Texas Centennial, Newspaper Promotions and the Creation of the 'Texas Empire,'" in *The News in Texas*, 2005; "'Harry, the President Is Dead,' Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas, Vice President Harry Truman and Congressman Lyndon Johnson at the 'Board of Education'" on April 12, 1945, in *Eavesdropping on Texas History*, 2017;

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

Cox: I began my career in my 20's as the co-owner and editor of The Wimberley View newspaper. In addition to our many awards, we hired students from Texas State University and the University of Texas at Austin to work as reporters and student editors. Many of these became professional journalists and academics in media and have remained in touch with me for years.

I have stayed active in the communications and media field for my entire professional and academic career and in my retirement. Following my retirement, I served as a lecturer on media history and public history at Texas State University. I was a regular contributor and subject matter expert for KUT and KWVH radio. I participated in Podcasts, television and radio news interviews, and contributed Opinion articles and editorials to area newspapers and NPR.

I am also proud to be a founding member and co-chair of the Wimberley Literary Saloon (2024 to present). The organization represents nonfiction and fiction authors in the Wimberley area. The Literary Salon encourages the greater community to stand for democracy and freedom for all, protection of free speech and the First Amendment, and to stand up to the ongoing attacks on our constitution and the civil rights of all Americans, citizens and immigrants. Our mission is to enlist writers to resist censorship in the unprecedented effort to revise history with a biased and inaccurate record.

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

Cox: When I graduated in 1974 with a B.A. in History from UT Austin, two of my favorite professors, Dr. Lewis Gould and Dr. Robert Divine, encouraged me to attend grad school and earn my Ph.D. Both professors were distinguished nationally recognized historians. After four years of working my way through college, I decided I wanted to work and postpone grad school so I could enter the journalism field and earn money.

As events fortuitously evolved, I started my journalism career in 1975 when we launched *The Wimberley View*. Thanks to this decision I remained in journalism. Not until 1988 did I finally decide to pursue an academic career. I started in the Master's History program at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) and graduated with Honors and an M.A. in History in 1989. I contacted Dr. Gould and Dr. Divine, and they encouraged me to enroll in the Ph.D. History program at UT Austin. Dr. Gould chaired my dissertation and Dr. Divine was on my dissertation committee. I earned my Ph.D. in 1996.

I could have earned my Ph.D. at a younger age, but I am fortunate that I decided to pursue a career journalism prior to entering academia. I am very thankful to have Dr. Gould and Dr. Divine serve as mentors for my entire academic and professional career. They also encouraged my research and writing in on journalism history. Although I could have earned my Ph.D. many years earlier, I am pleased with my career and the overall results.

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

Cox: As historians we must have and continue to expand on the expertise and knowledge that we provide to students and to the greater community. This includes social, political, economic, cultural and environmental subjects. We also continue to defend our fundamental right to provide our work to all forums which includes speech, writing, social and electronic media.

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

Cox: We must be advocates for the integrity of journalism history and contribute information to scholarly works, media outlets, and general education on our interpretations. We must strive to distribute our work that is based on scholarship, peer review, and the rigorous processes that we undertake. These professional standards and practices are essential to the integrity of historical interpretation.

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

Cox: We all face the ongoing challenges to academic freedom and press censorship in our nation. The current political environment threatens the foundations of education, citizenship, and intellectual freedom. We must have the ability to conduct research, provide publications and information that are based on the integrity and principles of responsible citizenship and education.

We must stand firm and support our colleagues and institutions who face political repression and censorship. We should contact policy makers and elected officials to insist that historical scholarship, not ideology, guide the presentation of our nation's history.

Historiography: What are your current projects related to media history?

Cox: My current writing project, "Life as a Hill Country Newspaper Editor" (working title), includes selected news, features, columns, and editorial articles during my years as *The Wimberley View Editor* (1976-1981). Well-known and influential people include: Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Lady Bird Johnson, Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski, House Speaker Jim Wright, film star Slim Pickens, musicians Willie Nelson and George Strait, actress Dyan Cannon, author and NFL Star Peter Gent, journalist Molly Ivins, artist Buck Winn, author Dudley Dobie, and entertainer and Luckenbach Mayor Hondo Crouch.

Most of my stories were about local and unsung figures in the area: educators, students, first responders, local volunteers, athletes, artists, performers, writers, ranchers, elected officials, public service workers, business owners and employees, and individuals of all ages working for the community, education, and the environment.

Historiography: What have you been involved with in the American Journalism Historian's Association?

Cox: Since joining the American Journalism Historians Association in 1998, I served in many areas: two terms on the Board of Directors, Conference Committee Chair for 12 years, chaired and participated in numerous committees, conference panels, presentations, and awards. For many years I organized history tours for conference attendees and coordinated conferences with the local host committee and the host hotel. Over the years I made many lasting friendships with AJHA colleagues which I value to this day. I continue to stay involved with the convention/sites committee and serve as a mentor to my fellow AJHA colleagues.

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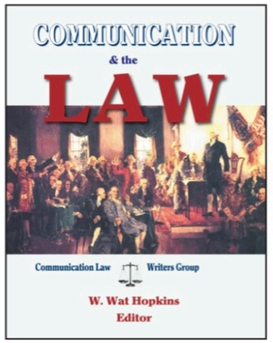

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Book Interview

The Popular Press, 1833-1865

By William E. Huntzicker

Bill Huntzicker is a perhaps best known as one of the most accomplished historians of western journalism, but his book on the development of the popular press has been used as a resource by countless scholars in both their teaching and their research. Bill is retired from St. Cloud University in Minnesota, and his Ph.D.from the University of Minnesota. In this interview, he discusses his book, *The Popular Press, 1833-1865*, Praeger, 1999.

Historiography: Give us a brief summary of your book.

Huntzicker: The book provides an overview of the newspaper industry from the development of the New York penny press in 1833 through the end of the Civil War. In the process it discussed various specialized, diverse and alternative publications, how partisanship persisted despite claims of becoming more authoritative and reliable, how technology, like the telegraph and high-speed presses, promised to bring the nation together even as it grew apart, leading to the Civil War. One chapter explores the role of newspapers in contributing to and covering the conflicts over western expansion of both the nation and slavery. Once the Civil War had begun, correspondents in the field developed relationships with sources that made them independent from and often in disagreement with editors and politicians in New York and Washington.

Q: How did you get the idea for your book?

A: The book's opening paragraphs explain: As the sun rose over Coeur d'Alene Lake in Idaho on a fall morning in 1990, Professors Wm. David Sloan and James Startt invited me to write this book to fit into a series they had envisioned on the history of American newspapers. Significantly, they approached the subject at an annual meeting of the American Journalism Historians Association where I led two discussions on Western journalism history." Coincidentally, Professor Hazel Dicken-Garcia of the University of Minnesota took a leave of absence the following year and invited me to teach a course she had designed on journalism during the antebellum and Civil War era. For the course, Professor Dicken-Garcia had gathered materials, collected bibliography, and prepared notes. She generously shared her comprehensive research and notes with me. Without Professors Startt, Sloan and Dicken-Garcia, this book would not have been written.

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

Huntzicker: As stated in my bibliographical essay: "The mass media are so vast and pervasive that evidence to support a variety of often contradictory theories can be supported at the same time. The media are too liberal, or they are too conservative. The media are apologists for big corporations and commercialism, and they are iconoclastic idealists and reformers. The media fail to question authority, and they promote rebellion. They promote traditional values, and they sell sex and violence, thereby promoting

loose morals and undermining family values. The mass media cover minorities at the expense of traditional leaders, and they reflect the mainstream, ignoring minorities and women. These theories and criticisms from opposite directions can be supported by different samples selected from among the many newspapers, regions, and time periods."

Historian James D. Startt has pointed out that historians tend to read their own time into the past. Like me, many historians looked to the penny papers as influential, but quantitative and qualitive research was just beginning to expand beyond this emphasis on the popular press. "Donald Lewis Shaw's content analysis of more than 3,000 sample newspaper stories found that readability, for example, had not improved in all newspapers as a result of the penny press, even as the sale of news as a commodity increased dramatically." 2 Gerald Baldasty tested trends historians in *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (1992), and he showed that much work could still be done in this area. "In contrast to commercialization, Hazel Dicken-Garcia set a lasting agenda for journalism historians by defining professional standards and ethics in nineteenth-century terms and looking for their origins, especially in the period after the Civil War."

At the time, an estimated 50,000 books and pamphlets had been written about the Civil War. My bibliography delves into examples of memoirs by key players including correspondents, editors and publishers. It looks at histories of individual newspapers and statewide histories of newspapers. Since then, U.S. Senate historian Donald A. Ritchie has provided an entertaining, provocative, and significant look at correspondents in *Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents* (1991). Civil War journalism was best covered in: Bernard A. Weisberger, *Reporters for the Union* (1953); Emmet Crozier, *Yankee Reporters 1861-1865* (1956); and Louis M. Starr, *Bohemian Brigade: Civil War Newsmen in Action* (1954). The definitive study remains J. Cutler Andrews, *The North Reports the Civil War* (1955) and *The South Reports the Civil War* (1970). At the end of each of his volumes, Andrews compiled comprehensive lists of correspondents, their pseudonyms, and their newspapers. Generations of historians and journalists should still be grateful to Andrews.

In 1999, the same year as my book came out, the first of nine books appeared from the Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression. The book, *The Civil War and the Press,* was edited by David B. Sachsman, S. Kitrell Rushing and Debra Reddin van Tuyll, who is also editor of this Historiography publication you are reading. Sachsman opened enormous opportunities for the study of Civil War media- related issues, including the myths that grew up around them. Besides the books published by the Symposium, many participants, including van Tuyll, published books and articles many of which grew out of the Symposium.

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

Huntzicker: Because I worked at small colleges for some of the decade I worked on the book, I didn't have the time and resources of faculty with lighter course loads. Fortunately, I live near the University of Minnesota that has Wilson Library, a magnificent research institution. For some of the decade, I taught at Minnesota with access to actual bound volumes as well as microfilm of the newspapers and magazines. When teaching at Bemidji State University, I used interlibrary loan resources extensively. When traveling to conferences, I'd extend the stay when possible to visit state archives and other resources, including those of Tennessee, Kansas, and Oklahoma.

Resources then on microfilm are nearly all available today through online sources of the various states.

One warning about using original bound volumes. From looking at the bound *Harper's Weekly* at the University of Minnesota for another project, I assumed that there was no cover illustration of the issue with reports of the Wounded Knee massacre. At the Minneapolis Public Library, I looked at a pile of miscellanous loose pages from illustrated newspapers and, lo and behold, a full-page Remington illustration of an Indian scout was a cover for that issue. Individual illustrated pages can sell well online and someone apparently stole the cover page from the U's bound volume. The erratic page numbering made it difficult to tell that a page was missing. Even with the original newspapers, then, be careful about generalizing.

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

Huntzicker: Although she encouraged me throughout the project, Professor Dicken-Garcia said she wished I had covered more about government suppression during the war. She and one of her outstanding graduate students rectified that oversight with a powerful book, *Hated Ideas and the Civil War Press* (2007) that looks at how various publications and government officials handled ideas they hated; the most extreme examples were abolition on one hand and slavery defenders on the other. Of course, many defenders of the First Amendment violated the free press principles even as they expounded on the ideal. Dicken-Garcia's co-author, Giovanna Dell'Orto, has become a national religion reporter for the Associated Press. Here's a link to a standup she did in 2025 at the beginning of Pope Leo's papacy. https://apnews.com/video/pope-leo-begins-papacy-with-message-of-unity-and-peace-ap-explains-fea5b-oda52de4cd6aed234b9e3ee6f84

Of course, online sources have grown enormously since the 1990s. In 2022, I wrote in *American Journalism*: "Forty-three years ago when I began teaching, I discovered *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* as terrific sources of pictorial journalism the earliest, most successful mainstream publishers to add pictures to news in the days before the invention of the halftone made mass reproduction of photographs possible. Using these publications to teach history, I spent years typing up notes and making 35mm slides for classes and academic presentations on stereotypes in visual journalism. Now that Harp-

Week has digitized the complete run of *Harper's Weekly* from 1857 through 1912, students and scholars can locate in minutes the illustrations and text that took me years to find among old newspapers. Now the fragile old publication will not have to be handled. After working with the old bound newspapers, my lap would be filled with crumbs from the brittle pages. My favorite online media history resource is HarpWeek, which I reviewed with links in *American Journalism*, 1 2. https://doi.org/10.1080/08821127.2022.2097841.

Of course, the study of all aspects of the mass media have grown since the 1990s in both content and publications. Appreciation for the power of pictures and the internet has grown enormously. As I write this, the news reports a growing concern for the impact of screen time on children and teenagers.

A recent appreciation of the power of photography is *Flashes of Brilliance* by Anika Burgess (Norton, 2015).

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

Huntzicker: Start right away. Create an annotated bibliography.

Explore what has already been written on your subject and begin compiling a bibliography. Get outside of your discipline and culture. Attend as many academic conferences as you can. Prepare portions of your research results to conferences that provide feedback. The above-mentioned Symposium is a good place to start. It's small; it encourages graduate students and may provide opportunities for publication. Thanks in large part to professor van Tuyll, the event continues as the Sachsman Symposium annually at Augusta State University in Georgia. Students and others participate via Zoom as well as in person on campus. Zoom access allows budding academics and students to attend conferences virtually without travel expenses.

Attend conferences to learn about your own field and others. Journalists must be prepared to write about any subject that could be in the news. Writing about journalism may be improved by knowledge of economics, law, sociology, and social conflicts of all kinds.

Attend professional meetings, like the Minnesota Newspaper Association in my case. These can update you on trends in publication design, audience research and legal issues, including advice covering government and the courts. Unfortunately, some professional groups are expensive, led by people who assume participants work for supportive organizations with deep pockets who support professional development. If you appeal as a poor academic, student or freelancer, maybe you will be allowed to monitor a session or two.

Historiography editor Sloan and others created AJHA (the American Journalism Historians Association) in the early 1970s, to encourage research outside of the then-mainstream elites. Fortunately for me, one of their early meetings was in St. Paul, Minnesota, where I could easily attend and meet people who continue to be friends and associates. The organization has expanded from journalism to include other mass media.

By contrast, the Popular Culture Association is a very large group that covers the widest range of mass-media topics, but be careful not to choose a pay-for-play group that lacks refereed acceptance. They also lack credibility within the academic community by committees looking at hiring and promotions. My first academic presentation was at a PCA meeting in 1974 where I met people with similar interests.

Many more academic opportunities are available these days, even though media history courses are being cut.

Historiography: What challenges did you face in researching your book?

Huntzicker: The major challenges, besides access to resources mentioned above, was time. My perception of the grant-making process is that it would take as much time to write a grant as to complete the project. But I sure could have been helped by more release time, but Bemidji State reduced my teaching load one semester to help me complete the book.

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

Huntzicker: A major challenge, like that of reporters, is to avoid getting too close to your sources. In my effort to demonstrate the diversity of the media, I avoided become too close to any one source. In hindsight, I could have done more storytelling and fewer encyclopedic overviews.

Historiography: What new insights does your book provide?

Huntzicker: My book is primarily a synthesis of the innovations of the mass media at a critical time in their development. My book is a synthesis of many trends, including the power of reporters in the field as opposed to the editors and politicians at home.

Historiography: What findings most surprised you?

Huntzicker: I was surprised at the range of publications and interest. For example, religious and agricultural publications at all levels from national to local issues. At the same time, Horace Greeley's mass-circulated New York Tribune tried to be a resource for homesteaders in the West. When opening a copy of Morrison's Feeds and Feeding a reference book my grandfather had for raising livestock, a clipping from the Tribune fell out. It told how to tell the age of a horse by looking at his teeth.

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

Huntzicker: As recommended above, submit your research to refereed conferences and publications. But don't be dis-

couraged by rejection. Before I understood how the system worked, I hesitated far too long to submit a second paper or a revision. Revise the paper and -re-submit or send it to a different publication.

Take the critiques seriously and use them as suggestions for a written project. But be careful of the word limits. My work was often rejected early on because it was too long and unfocused. My original draft of this book was about one-third longer than the final product. It was published because of the patience and guidance of Startt and Sloan.

Historiography: Do you have any closing thoughts about your book's influence?

Huntzicker: Going back to both its influence and sources I wish I had. At the risk of indulging in presentism, my book both responds to and anticipates the many who claim to have found the origins of objectivity and the inverted-pyramid form of story organizatoin. In contrast to the many who make those claims, a major theme of the book is the persistence of partisanship. Some editors even reprinted their opponents' views before offering their opposition. At the time, type was set by hand with a publisher creating a line of type one letter at a time. Thus, reprinting was expensive in both time and material.

A major step toward nonpartisan (or bipartisan) journalism was the coverage of the debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas in their contest for the Illinois senate seat in 1858. Each side knew the other would be reading so the major differences were in descriptions of the audience reaction. This milestone relies on historians Harold Holzer and Tom Reilly, who saw the Lincoln-Douglas debates as milestones. [Tom Reilly, "Lincoln-Douglas Debates Forced New Role on the Press," *Journalism Quarterly* 56:4 (Winter 1979): 734-43, 752; Harold Holzer, ed., *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete Unexpurgated Text* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).] The government used this bipartisan trend, the inverted pyramid and the Associated Press to promote its war effort as professor David Mindich has pointed out in David T. Z. Mindich, "Edwin M. Stanton, the Inverted Pyramid, and Information Control," *Journalism Monographs* 140 (August 1993).

In his review of *The Popular Press*, Professor Mindich highlights the discussion of abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who permeates the book which states: "When Frederick Douglass started speaking and writing, he was a runaway slave who could have been returned to slavery, but he found publications to carry his inflammatory words calling for freedom for all human beings. At a time when free blacks were denied all other rights and could have been kidnapped and sold into slavery, they still managed to write and publish newspapers. At the same time, female reformers found a variety of publications to advocate increased rights for women and other causes ranging from the abolition of slavery to the prohibition of liquor." Nonetheless, Douglass persisted with his lectures and writing despite threats to his life and the arson that destroyed his home, office and newspaper archives in Rochester, New York. He then moved to Washington, D.C. In my opinion, Douglass was one of the greatest Americans who ever lived.

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Round Table:

Foreign Correspondents and Foreign Affairs History

By Elisabeth Fondren, Steven Casey, and Emil Seidenfaden

The scholars interviewed for this roundtable discuss their approaches to researching diplomatic, military, and foreign history and specifically writing about the dynamics of foreign correspondents, war reporters, and international news. Collectively, the projects discussed below focus on international media- and political history, while also pointing towards the enduring questions of media control, state and government information, and secrecy during times of war and peace. These media historians also explore how messages and individual correspondents have pierced the veil of government secrecy, military doctrine, and censorship, and what happens when new facts come to light that contradict official narratives and efforts to manipulate or manage public opinion at home and abroad.

Steve Casey is a professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His book *The War Beat, Europe: The American Media at War Against Nazi Germany* (Oxford University Press, 2017) won the American Journalism Historians Association's award for best book of the year. His other books include *Cautious Crusade: Franklin Roosevelt, Public Opinion, and the War against Nazi Germany* (2001); *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and the Press*, 1950-53 (2008), which won the Truman Prize; *When Soldiers Fall: How Americans have Confronted Combat Casualties, from World War I to Afghanistan* (2014), which won the Neustadt Prize; and *The War Beat, Pacific: The American Media at War Against Japan* (Oxford University Press, 2021). He received his D.Phil. at Oxford University.

Elisabeth Fondren is an associate professor of journalism & political communication at St. John's University in New York. She holds a Ph.D. in Media and Public Affairs from Louisiana State University's Manship School of Mass Communication (2018). Her research examines the history of international journalism, government propaganda, military-media relations, and censorship during wartime. Her work has been published in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, The *Journal of Military History*; *Journalism & Communication Monographs, Journalism History, Journal of Intelligence History, American Journalism, Journal of Public Affairs, Media History,* in several books, encyclopedias, and in other outlets. She is currently researching the history of propaganda literacy and the concept of propaganda-news in 20th century conflicts.

Emil Eiby Seidenfaden has a PhD in history from Aarhus University (2019). He is based at the Saxo-Institute, University of Copenhagen as the centre coordinator of the Centre for Modern European Studies (CEMES) as well as research coordinator in the ERC-funded project INNER_ LEAGUE on the social history of the League of Nations. He has been a junior research fellow at Linacre College and a visiting fellow at the University of Oxford and taught at the University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University and Roskilde University. Since his PhD project about the public legitimization

strategies of the League of Nations and their legacy in the United Nations, Seidenfaden's interests have revolved around themes of early- and mid- twentieth- century history of media, with a special emphasis on the intersections of journalism and diplomacy. His key works include: "Postwar Journalism according to Postwar Journalists: The Case of Occupied Scandinavia," *Scandinavian Journal of History* (Special issue), under revision following peer review, forthcoming 2026. *Informing Interwar Internationalism. The Information Strategies of the League of Nations*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2024). "The League of Nations' Collaboration with an International Public 1919-1939," *Contemporary European History*, vol. 31. No. 3, 2022. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000473, and "Mobilized for Propaganda: Danish Journalists in British Exile, 1940-1945," in *Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and Persuasion*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). For a full list of works see: ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4850-5668

Question: What makes research on foreign correspondents and foreign affairs important in the field of journalism history?

Casey: The role that these correspondents play in shaping public attitudes. This often occurs through a basic urge to challenge official narratives, but their influence can also operate in more complex ways.

I have recently been working on the 1930s, a time of supposed isolationism when Americans categorically rejected any form of involvement in foreign wars. Even at this moment, media organizations recognized that war sold. They therefore sent large numbers of correspondents to Spain and China when fighting flared in these two countries. Once in Madrid and Shanghai or, as the crisis shifted to Central Europe, in Berlin and London these reporters provided their American audience with vital "windows on the world."[1] Yet the way they gathered stories, and how these stories were then filtered through the editorial process, ensured that the media "windows" often refracted the news in unpredictable ways. Increasingly, their work also acted like a magnifying glass, heightening the sense of horror and danger of what was unfolding in Europe and Asia.

It is impossible to understand how the American public gradually became convinced of the need to stand up to Axis aggression without a sophisticated grasp of the role played by foreign correspondents and war reporters.

Seidenfaden: Foreign affairs journalism, and especially the life and work of correspondents, are interesting for several reasons. First, almost no matter where in the world you look, correspondents seem to have always been considered as belonging to an elite among journalists. In addition, they are both part of, and actively contributing to, a certain mythology about themselves. I recently rewatched Hitchcock's The Foreign Correspondent which is just one (rather strange) example of the heroic character attributed to them. Foreign correspondents are at the top of the editorial hierarchy, they often move on to become editors-in-chiefs or they leave journalism to assume influential positions in politics, diplomacy, literature or even business. Studying them for their own sake as a professional community (rather than simply analyzing their written work) is thus one way of studying elites and the interactions between media and decision-making. They can also make up excellent material for the kind of historical narratives that are enjoyable to read, something I think is brilliantly exemplified by Deborah Cohen's wonderful group portrait of American interwar foreign correspondents Last Call at the Hotel Imperial from 2022.

Fondren: Throughout history, journalists have crossed borders to access information, source a variety of viewpoints, and report information from foreign countries and cultures to audiences who rely on journalists' first-hand accounts. Most international correspondents have to make decisions about story selection, framing, bias, focus on policy issues and storytelling to report news and capture their distant audiences. To me, it is fascinating to understand how foreign correspondents engage in the production of news and also work ith- and around military and state censors. Government propaganda, warfare, changing media policies, correspondents' self-censorship, and, at times, dangerous embedding practices all impact reporters' access and interpretation of international events.

Question: Can you share the overarching research question of your work? What is the central argument of your scholarship?

Casey: I am interested in what shapes American popular opinion toward the rest of the world. My early research focused on the role of the president and his administration, exploring Franklin Roosevelt's leadership in World War II and then Harry Truman's in the Korean War. During the research for the latter book, I became increasingly convinced that whatever message the administration tried to disseminate in Washington was often undercut by news from the battlefield. This simple point had long been a staple of the literature on Vietnam, where the media famously operated without the constraint of formal censorship. I found it also applied in Korea, even after censorship rules were introduced in the wake of China's intervention in late 1950. It also occurred during World War II, when, according to conventional wisdom, the media and military had enjoyed a cozy, consensual relationship.

To understand when, why, and how the media challenged the official line meant addressing a second research question. The literature on war correspondents is dominated by biography. These reporters are often depicted as glamorous individualists whose actions are marked by "initiative, daring, imagination, and audacity"[2] a notion that sits uncomfortably with the idea that, in the big wars at least, they were "embedded" into the military system. So I have sought to uncover how much agency they enjoyed, not just with respect to official structures but also within the hierarchies of their own media organizations.

Seidenfaden: In all my media historical work I have been interested in the porous boundaries between journalism and other professional fields, and the phenomenon of journalists and editors rarely being satisfied with being "just" media actors. They often move their activities into politics and diplomacy and, during times of conflict, into intelligence or propaganda. In my book on the information and publicity work of the League of Nations 1919-1945 I showed how the League drew on the ideas of the period (expressed at the time by Walter Lippmann among others) about the power and dangers of public opinion. They hired a cohort of experienced former foreign affairs journalists to its Information Section, and this section became, at least during the first twelve years of the League's existence, extraordinarily well-funded and powerful and relied very much of what its leading officials called "liaison" work in its publicity strategies the careful networking and collaboration activities with external actors throughout the League's member states.

I worked with something thematically similar, yet quite different when I looked at the Danish journalists and foreign correspondents that "stranded" in London during the Second World War. These news workers could no longer function as journalists and thus became involved in Allied war propaganda to sustain themselves before some of them took on semi-diplomatic roles in cushioning the bad-tempered Danish exile leader John Christmas Møller and attempting to secure a position of importance for him in the postwar Danish cabinet.

Fondren: My research broadly explores the history of international journalism, government propaganda, military-media relations, and freedom of speech during wartime. I research reporters' interactions with propagandists during past conflicts and, collectively, my scholarship argues how important it is to: 1) have journalists as eyewitnesses and foreign news as sources of information during conflicts, and 2) for scholars to dig deep and reveal how governments continue to build proficiency in propaganda and censorship that restrict reporters' access to all sides of the story.

Question: In researching the role of foreign correspondents, coverage of international conflicts or policy, and government-press tensions, what do you find enjoyable and rewarding?

Casey: Although I always try to frame my work in novel ways, I have achieved the greatest satisfaction from unearthing hitherto unused primary sources. Journalists can be quite elusive. Not only do their news organizations not always retain files, but those operating at the front were discouraged from writing diaries, while their letters to friends and relatives were censored. When researching both World War II and Korea, I discovered numerous files kept by the US army and navy, now held in NARA II in College Park, MD, which detailed the movements and actions of US war correspondents in Europe, the Pacific, and Korea between 1942 and 1953.

In cases where news organizations have established archives, I also unearthed some hidden gems. The Time Magazine Dispatches at Harvard are a case in point. Henry Luce's reporters around the world knew that their raw dispatches would be rewritten in New York, to conform to his magazine's distinctive style. They were therefore free to include not-for-attribution insights that placed a new light on events. It was intriguing to discover which officials were briefing against their supposed "colleagues" or leaking sensitive information to the press. During the Korean War, it was particularly fascinating to learn how often some officials spoke off-the-record about the possibility of a "preventive" nuclear strike against the Soviet Union, an option that historians had largely dismissed when it intermittently appeared in policy discussions and papers.

Fondren: In writing international propaganda-press history, or history that involves international perspectives, I think it's really critical to access primary sources and underutilized materials but also to center on diverse voices or underrepresented groups like minority reporters, female and/ or working-class journalists. Journalism historians have shown that not everyone who produces international news bears the label of a 'correspondent' and that professional and amateur or citizen reporters alike participate in the production of global news.

I think in expanding that history, it helps to re-center our focus away from the 'sender' of a propaganda message (often governments, parties, or interest groups) to the 'targeted' audiences, and how, for example, the victims of hate campaigns use mass media to engage in counter-propaganda that seek to dispute the claims made against them. For instance, together with Dr. David D. Perlmutter (Texas Tech University), I published a study in the Journal of Military History that engages newspaper and military sources to show how German-Jewish World War I soldiers engaged in counterpropaganda. These veterans of WWI used their own veterans magazine to create a fact-based counter-publicity campaign in response to the widespread stab-in-the-back myth (Dolchstoßlegende) used by Nazis against Jews in the 1920s and during Hitler's regime.

Seidenfaden: I enjoy in particular delving into personal archives and letters of correspondents and unpacking their self-narrative. With the risk of sounding a bit harsh, journalists and editors have high thoughts of their own importance, and often they are right to but they are nonetheless involved in an continuous construction of the idea of a heroic and daring reporter. Behind this polished façade, whenever you get a glimpse of personal disappointment or conflict it is particularly interesting.

I have also a few experiences of acting as an oral historian. In 2020 when I went to Paris to visit an esteemed Danish academic and journalist who was born in 1918 and had been present in London during WWII. This man, whose CV and experience was filled with the most fantastic encounters and dramatic episodes, was difficult to interview when it came to details about himself, his relations to other journalists, editors and the like. Of course, it was difficult for him to remember events that took place two-thirds

of a century ago, but I think part of the problem was also that journalists think of their own significance in terms of who they have met, what they have witnessed and the like. They do not feel that their existence as a professional community or their emotions or personal viewpoints "matter."

Question: How and why do you choose your projects? Which archives do you consult?

Casey: Seen in retrospect, there has been a clear pattern to my research trajectory although I ought to confess that this evolution was far messier at the time.

My doctoral thesis, which became my first book, focused on my initial intellectual interest: does the government shape or follow public opinion? Entitled Cautious Crusade (2001), it principally used the material at the FDR Library to explore this complex interaction on the subject of Nazi Germany during World War II. My next project aimed to do something similar for the Korean War, but after spending weeks at the Truman Library I found that this president, unlike his predecessor, boasted of never consulting polls. Rather than look at the influence of opinion on policy, I focused on exploring how, when, and why the government attempted to change the popular mood. At first, Selling the Korean War (2008) concentrated on just the White House and State Department, but it soon became clear that how the battlefield was reported had a crucial bearing on how the public perceived this conflict. In the first six months of the Korean War, MacArthur refused to introduce censorship. When he relented after the Chinese intervention, the media complained that his code was too harsh. MacArthur responded that he was simply deploying the regulations he had used in World War II. Trying to confirm the accuracy of this claim, I found a surprising gap in the literature. The result was two books, The War Beat, Europe (2017) and The War Beat, Pacific (2021), which detail how the two different theaters were reported.

As my research questions have expanded, so has the range of archives I have visited. My Korean War book relied heavily on material in NARA II. When I began working on the media in World War II, I used military records to establish which war correspondents were accredited to which theater and then tried to trace which of them left any sort of private papers.

Seidenfaden: My first project my Ph.D. was partly chosen for me in the sense that I applied for and became part of a large collaborative project at Aarhus University, Denmark, led by the excellent diplomatic historian Karen Gram-Skjoldager there. The project was about the League of Nations Secretariat 1919-1945 and its afterlife in the landscape of multilateral organizations that emerged after 1945. My own "corner" became that of studying the League from the perspective of communications and propaganda. I ended up making it about the Information Section. Working exclusively with English and French and using predominantly the UN and League of Nations-archives in Geneva accustomed me to thinking in multi-archival perspective from the get-go. Since I am old-fashioned enough to be mostly interested in people and their networks I prefer the personal rather than the structural viewpoint when producing historical narrative what I took with me was an urge to study the people namely journalists and their self-images, professional culture and so on.

I have, over the time, worked in the League of Nations archives in Geneva, the Library of Congress in Washington D. C, the BBC Written Archives in Reading as well as the National Archives and National/Royal Library collections in Great Britain, Denmark and Norway. I have also sporadically consulted collections from the UN Archives in New York City, the Archives of the Museum for Resistance in Denmark and the Archives of the Labor Movement in Denmark.

Finally, like many historians, I bring some personal baggage, since I have several journalists, editors and foreign correspondents in my family and I have thus been raised within the "world" of journalism. My grandfather was one of the historical actors in my second project, as he was an exile journalist and resistance figure located in Stockholm, Sweden, during 1943-45.

Fondren: I am interested in the truth-dimension of information during war. I research reporters' interactions with propagandists during past conflicts but also how governments build and expand propaganda operations to control narratives or public opinion during times of democratic crises.

My research usually takes place in military, diplomatic, and political archives or in libraries that have large collections of news, propaganda, and publicity records. Typically, I analyze (and often translate) news content and editorial files, telegrams, censored news or other censorship records, and propaganda materials like posters, speeches, staged photographs, flyers, films, and newspapers, maps, organizational charts, shipping labels, among others.

In a recent article, "Real News Arrives From Abroad": Transnational Eyewitnessing in Leonora Raines' War Correspondence for the New York Evening Sun (1914 1918), published in Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly (2024), I backtracked the story and transnational reporting of Leonora Raines, a little-known American female reporter (originally a fashion and music journalist) who covered the Great War from Paris. I used materials from military and diplomatic archives in Berlin and military archives in Freiburg. The U.S. Ambassador to Imperial Germany, James W. Gerard, sent a letter to the German Foreign Office in spring 1915, announcing Raines' arrival. I then found Raines' original scrapbook at the Atlanta History Center, in her hometown, and accessed her collected war news for the New York Evening Sun through the U.S. Library of Congress. I argue that Raines' reporting shows how foreign news was an important source of information in the propaganda vacuum of World War I. Readers in the U.S. but also in Western Europe read her accounts, as foreign newspapers were widely distributed and, surprisingly, uncensored.

In a related project, I use primary sources from Stanford University's Hoover Institution Archives and Library for my ongoing research on propaganda-press history during World War I and II. I am currently working with the collections on propaganda posters 1914-1945, the Paris Peace Conference delegation propaganda, American fascist and Nazi groups in the interwar period, and World War II propaganda and psychological warfare in the European Theatre.

Question: What challenges have you faced when engaged in research and writing media and foreign affairs history?

Casey: In an internet age, it is easy to track down which libraries hold which archival material. The challenge comes when there is an inverse relationship between the importance of the individual and the letters or diaries they have left. Ernie Pyle was a rarity in this way (as in so many others), for he was not only the most widely read American war reporter during World War II but also wrote frequent and revealing letters home. It is far more common to travel long distances, only to discover that the most pivotal figures at the time deposited just the odd postcard or passport photograph in the archives that hold their private papers.

When exploring the interaction between the media and military unevenness can also operate in another way. Military memos are often terse, dry, and filled with details. Letters by reporters who write for a living when they exist are, by contrast, invariably full of colorful insights. I have found that the first drafts of my books tend to reflect the underlying style prose style of the primary sources. One of the challenges when writing has been to smooth out this disparity.

A final challenge has been to demonstrate when, whether, and how media reporting mattered, either in policy debates or in shaping popular opinion. Even when sources are skimpy, it is much easier to document activity where reporters were, the relationships they forged, the sources they used, the stories they wrote than to establish whether this activity had any influence. Fortunately, by the 1940s and 1950s, major government departments invested an enormous amount of time monitoring press and public opinion. Editors were also intensely interested in how their stories landed, both with officials and their readers. So the raw material for trying to establish influence does exist.

Seidenfaden: The challenges lie exactly at the crossroads or points of contact between different fields. Diplomatic or international history is a big field which is undergoing a transformation from having been characterized the most traditional kinds of "big-males" history to going through a methodological revolution that emphasizes a more diverse set of actors and more cultural-historical approaches. A similar divide, not of phases but of disciplines is at stake within media history. Media historians, in my experience, can be quite traditional practitioners of historical research who happen to be interested in media, often because they consider media a key lens through which to observe political history. Media-and communication scholars who happen to study historical topics on the other hand are much more observant of theory and of the importance of structural developments such as media ownership, market concentration or media system theory and less interested in individuals. As a historian you have to navigate these schools and try to resist seeing them as binaries. If you come from history it may take some time to establish a good network among media-and communication scholars

Fondren: The biggest challenge for me is time. Secondly, as my colleagues have pointed out, access to primary sources although that is becoming easier due to digitization efforts. I try to do as much background research about a topic as I can before I work in the archives so that I have a rough overview of what topics, key words, and what names to look for in the files. As traveling to archives can be very expensive and the logistics of getting there can often take longer than expected, I try to be as efficient as I can in the lead-up to my research, when taking pictures of materials on-site, and when analyzing the primary sources once I'm back home.

One recommendation is to create a chronology of the files or events that seem relevant and then filling in the gaps in between. Another recommendation is to contact the archivists and librarians way ahead of time and talk to them about your research, what you are looking for, and what related topics you are interested in since you might have extra time available at a particular archive.

Question: How do you see the contribution that your own work has made to our understanding of media and public affairs history?

Casey: The need to integrate military, political, and media history. Military historians often downplay the political context in which wars are waged, while disregarding how battles are reported. Likewise, historians of the home front invariably ignore how news from often-distant battlefields and the ways that this news is exploited or distorted by politicians shapes what Americans come to believe.

Hopefully, too, I have brought an outsider's perspective to the subject. The American media has never been perfect, but as a Brit teaching in London I think it has much to be proud about. Its actions, underpinned by the First Amendment, frequently compare favorably to the record of other democracies. Which, in turn, is vital, because societies need trusted voices and shared narratives. They also need reporters speaking truth to power, to improve public policy or expose serious wrongdoing.

Seidenfaden: My work combines diplomatic or international history with the history of propaganda and journalism. I show how the history of international organizations and multilateral bodies have shaped the practice and self-image of journalism in Europe and Scandinavia and vice versa. In my 2024- book Informing Interwar Internationalism, I showed how the strong convictions that officials of the League of Nations shared about the positive power of public opinion as a "moral force" guiding the League were translated, because of a fear of being accused of propaganda, into a set of cautious behind-the-scenes-like strategies of trying to impact public opinion "indirectly" in collaboration with significant stakeholders that we would today call NGOs. League officials also attempted to build alliances

with media and press organizations to further the League's "project," which of course was a liberal internationalist project and aligned with the interests of the Great Powers that backed the organization in particular Great Britain and France.

As such, my research also illustrates a paradox of modern journalism as a self-consciously autonomous institution whose only supposed mission is to hold power accountable and produce news, but at the same time its practitioners are also aligned with other causes, commercial, national, party-political or the like, and, in my case, they believed it was possible to fight for some other "higher" aim, such a liberal world-view, European civilization, democracy o even just "peace."

Fondren: Throughout history, we see that propaganda and censorship during war impact how much and what news journalists can report, and which pictures the public is allowed to see. But that is only one part of the story, as propaganda societies, even in authoritarian regimes, are rarely entirely closed-off. As the history of journalism in war shows, reporters continue to find ways to source and access news to write stories, including those that detail governments' obsession to manipulate images, narratives, and restrict press freedom. Propaganda messages and news about war also cross borders, often intentionally, other times secretly. Audiences, as historians have shown, turn to journalism to learn "real" news about conflicts and those involved in home- and war fronts, especially as propaganda can create an information vacuum. In my essay, "The Global Panoply of Propaganda-Press Cultures: Expanding International Journalism History," which was published in American Journalism (2023), I look at the prospect of internationalizing the history of propaganda-press cultures even further.

Similarly, in this historiographical piece, "Propaganda and Military Records as Sources for Journalism History," which appeared in Historiography in Mass Communication (2023), I discuss how there is much meta-discourse between propagandists and journalists, especially as both sides emphasize the "truth-value" of their messages. For example, in an ongoing research project I look at international journalists' discourse about government propaganda and publicity campaigns at the Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920). This period was marked by anxieties about the role of words and images used to 'sell' diplomacy and peace after belligerent countries had relied heavily on propaganda during the Great War.

Question: What are you currently working on? Can you share a brief summary of your next project?

Casey: My next book, *The Skeptic Isle: How the British Government Sold the Second World War*, is currently in production and will be published by Oxford University Press in August 2026. Unlike other works, which either concentrate on Winston Churchill's wartime rhetoric or are institutional histories detailing how the Ministry of Information communicated with the public to sustain morale, it explores the broad array of problems and policies that needed to be defended and explained, censored and concealed. It ranges widely from the battlefield to the football field, from the rubble-strewn cities of Blitzed Britain to the faraway outposts of Empire. Above all, The Skeptic Isle shows how the attempt to mold and manipulate coverage of battles created a major credibility gap that cast a long shadow over the British government's efforts to sell the different dimensions of the Second World War to the home front.

I began work on this book when Covid made travel impossible and I had to put to one side the project I had been working on since 2019. The End of Isolation: The Creation of the Interventionist Consensus in America, 1936-1941, delves deeply into the complex layers of American politics and society during the years before Pearl Harbor to explain not just why Americans gradually became convinced of the need to fight the Axis, but also why they were prepared to support or at least tolerate the growth of a permanent military-industrial complex, as well as the spate of military interventions during the cold war and beyond. Although covering executive-congressional relations, the activity of peace groups and veterans' organizations, and the emergence of an interventionist network between government and universities, it places the media at the heart of the story. Indeed, The End of Isolation uncovers why some voices enjoyed privileged access to channels of communications while others complained of being cancelled. It shows how allegations that news was being "faked" in 1936 gave way to a consensus on how to report conflict by 1940. This is the book I am currently completing.

Seidenfaden: At the moment, I am working as a research coordinator at the University of Copenhagen, and I lecture on broad topics within interwar international history on the side, so I am not pursuing a large research project. But I do have one private project, namely that I am trying to map the entire interwar corpus of Danish and Scandinavian journalists who went to Geneva to report from the deliberations of the League of Nations, and how this first experience of a cohort of "international correspondents" shaped the journalistic profession. It is fascinating to study the social world of Danish foreign correspondence so early in its existence (foreign correspondence existed in the nineteenth century, but as a systematized area that most big newspapers hired permanent personnel for, it is safe to say post-WWI was the consolidation period in Denmark).

Fondren: I am currently working on a study that examines parts of the World War II struggle to fight fascist and racist ideologies via counter-propaganda, including propaganda-news. Using underutilized archival materials from U.S. military and government records, my research argues that the American government apparatus adopted parts of the propaganda literacy methods to counter hate propaganda with educational- and analytical materials.

Expanding on the notions of 'truth' in war and 'fact-finding' in U.S. government propaganda news, I am developing an argument that these actions can be understood as efforts to make enemy audiences more propaganda literate. During 1944-45, Allied military and political propagandists tried to reach German audiences (soldiers and civilians) by presenting political propaganda as news. Stories with large headlines, alongside charts, maps, pictures, and smaller

Endnotes

1 Robert W. Desmond, *Windows on the World: News Reporting, 1900-1920* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1980).
2 Philip Gibbs, "Introduction," Frederic Villiers, ed., *Days of Glory: The Sketch Book of a Correspondent at the Fron*t (New York: G.H. Doran, 1920), vii.

News & Notes

Please note: Announcements are from the activity organizers. Also, some hyperlinks were not available as clickable links.

Call for Papers: Routledge Book Series "Outlaws in Literature, History, and Culture"

The general editors of the Routledge book series "Outlaws in Literature, History, and Culture" invite author queries and book proposals.

https://www.routledge.com/Outlaws-in-Literature-History-and-Culture/book-series/OUTLAWS

This series examines the nature, function, and context of the outlaw and the outlawed people, spaces, practices from the premodern to the contemporary. Its scope also includes the forces of law which seek to define and contain such people, spaces, and practices. Additionally, the series seeks to reflect the transcultural, transgendered and interdisciplinary manifestations in which they may be encountered. Outlaws and outlawry have been a feature of all literatures, histories and cultures, and thus the chronological scope of this series covers all periods medieval and post-medieval up to the present day. The series published monographs, edited collections of essays, and editions of primary texts. For queries and to submit a formal proposal, please contact both of the general editors:

Dr. Lesley Coote, Fellow of the Department of English, Creative Writing and American Studies, University of Hull, UK (L.A.Coote@associate.hull.ac.uk)

Dr, Alexander L. Kaufman, Reed D. Voran Distinguished Professor of Honors Humanities and Professor of English, Ball State University, USA (alkaufman@bsu.edu)

Civil War Podcasts Available from h-Civil War

Here are the episodes from the past six months. Episodes are released on Wednesdays every other week. These are the ones published in the last six months.

"Colonial Reckoning: Race and Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Cuba" with Louis A. Pérez Jr.

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Freedom, Union, and Power: Lincoln and His Party in the Civil War" with Michael S. Green

Spotify / Apple Podcast

Conversation about Gettysburg anniversary events and Re-enactment with Scott Hancock

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Sickly Vapors: Disease and Doctoring in the Old South" with Thomas Helling

Apple Podcast

"A Contested Terrain: Freedpeople's Education in North Carolina During the Civil War and Reconstruction" with AnneMarie Brosnan

Spotify/ApplePodcast

"Waging War for Freedom with the 54th Massachusetts: The Civil War Memoir of John W. M. Appleton" with James Robbins Jewell and Eugene S. Van Sickle

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Of Thee I Sing: The Contested History of American Patriotism" with Benjamin Railton

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Our Onward March: The Grand Army of the Republic in the Progressive Era" with Jonathan D. Neu

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Becoming Lunsford Lane: The Lives of an American Aeneas" with Craig Thompson Friend

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"The Divided Family in Civil War America" with Amy Murrell Taylor

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Of Thee I Sing: The Contested History of American Patriotism" PART 2 with Benjamin Railton

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Kidnapped at Sea: The Civil War Voyage of David Henry White" with Andrew Sillen

Spotify / Apple Podcast

"Debunking the Yule Log Myth: The Disturbing History of a Plantation Legend" with Robert E. May

Call for Papers: Southern Cultures: Death & Grieving Guest Editor: Kami Fletcher (Goucher College)

Southern Cultures, the award-winning, peer-reviewed quarterly from UNC's Center for the Study of the American South, encourages submissions from scholars, writers, and artists for a special issue, *Death & Grieving*, to be published Winter 2026. We will accept submissions for this issue through March 2, 2026, at https://southerncultures.submittable.com/Submit.

In the colonial and antebellum South, a racial system of hypodescent the "one drop rule" that categorized someone as Black followed a person to their grave. Marked by plantation slavery, racialized burial grounds reflected a social order in which people were categorized not only as Black or white but also as enslaved or free. These categories determined who would be remembered and who would be forgotten after death, divisions that became deeply imprinted on southern culture, particularly in the aftermath of the Civil War. Through cemetery rituals, commemorations, and, eventually, the establishment of holidays such as Memorial Day, mourning became a public act that reinforced racial boundaries and competing historical narratives.

This duality that came to normalize southern deathways lays bare the social constructions that shaped death and mourning. It also forces us to contend with our understandings of the living and their influence on death and to consider how racial hierarchies shaped ideas of memory and the afterlife. Although southern death culture has often been framed in dichotomous terms, this special edition encourages readers to move beyond such binaries and consider the heterogeneous nature of death in the South one shaped by Indigenous nations, immigrant communities, and the southern border. Examining the racialized politics of mourning on the borderlands reveals how contemporary death care, death work, and burial practices are shaped by transnational movement of people, cultural hybridity, and the precarious realities of immigration.

Submissions may explore the role racial understandings play in both past and contemporary southern death practices. We seek submissions that interrogate the role of deathscapes in how we understand race, memory, and identity in southern culture, including the ways in which public acts reinforced racial boundaries and historical narratives. We encourage critical perspectives on how death care work, underscored by gender, race, and class, serve as catalysts for change. Submissions exploring the performance of death, loss, mourning, and commemoration are also welcomed.

Submissions may explore any topic related to the theme, and we welcome investigations of the region in the forms *Southern Cultures* publishes: scholarly articles, creative nonfiction, memoir (first-person or collective), interviews, surveys, photo and art essays, and shorter feature essays.

Possible topics and questions to explore might include (but are not limited to):

- Racialized burial grounds and cemetery segregation in the pre-contact, colonial, antebellum, and post Civil War South
- The legacy of plantation slavery in shaping southern deathscapes and memorial practices
- Hypodescent, racial classification, and the politics of remembrance and forgetting
- Gendered labor of mourning: women's roles in death care, memorialization, and remembrance
- The material culture and arts of deathways from grave sites to foodways, visual arts, and music
- Death doulas and death doula-ing in the South
- Southern funeral directors and the Civil Rights Movement
- Jazz funerals and other celebratory commemorations of death and grieving
- Memorial Day, public commemoration, and the racialization of national mourning
- Death care work as a site of racial, class, and gender inequality and resistance
- Indigenous deathways and burial practices in the South, past and present
- Borderland culture and deathways along the US-Mexico border
- The border as a symbolic and material site of death, mourning, and exclusion
- How deathways reveal broader structures of power, belonging, and citizenship in the South
- Resistance, remembrance, and alternative memorial practices that challenge racialized death regimes

As *Southern Cultures* publishes digital content, we encourage creativity in coordinating print and digital materials in submissions and ask that authors submit any potential video, audio, and interactive visual content along with their essay or artist's statement. We encourage authors to gain familiarity with the tone, scope, and style of **our journal** before submitting.

Call for Papers:
Southern Jewish Historical Society
Annual Conference (Oct.2026)

The Southern Jewish Historical Society invites proposals for its 50th annual conference, to be held in Atlanta, Georgia on **October 16 18, 2026** in partnership with Emory University's Tam Institute for Jewish Studies. The theme of this conference is "The Past, Present and Future of Southern Jewish History."

2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Southern Jewish Historical Society. The organization's first conference, held in October 1976 in Richmond, Virginia, gathered scholars, community chroniclers, and others interested in the history of Jewish southerners. For the five decades since, the SJHS has distributed dozens of grants and scholarships supporting historical projects; published a peer-reviewed scholarly journal; and convened an annual conference in cities all around the South.

For the coming conference, we welcome proposals for panels, individual papers, roundtables, and lightning sessions that consider the history not only of our organization, but of southern Jewish history itself. How has our topic of collective examination and interest changed over time? How have methods for interpreting Jewish life in the region evolved over the past fifty years? And what directions might our field take in the future?

We also welcome presentations that explore broader themes of southern Jewish life, with particular interest in the history of Jewish life in Atlanta -- a major population center and economic hub for Jews in the South -- and in Georgia more broadly.

The proposal deadline is March 31, 2026. Graduate students, independent scholars, fiction writers, and artists are encouraged to apply. (A limited number of travel grants may be available for graduate students.) Paper proposals: one-page abstract (250 words)

Panel or roundtable proposals: short (150 words) description, with individual paper abstracts attached for panels

All proposed presenters should also send a short CV or résumé (2 pages)

Please submit all materials via email to Dr. Marni Davis, conference program chair, at **marnidavis@gsu.edu**, with "SJHS 2026 Proposal" as the subject line. All questions and further queries can be sent to Dr. Davis as well.

URL https://www.jewishsouth.org/upcoming-conference

Slavery Past, Present and Future:
10th Global Meeting
June 23 to June 25, 2026

To be held in person at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

https://www.tcd.ie/trinitylongroomhub/events-calendar/events/2026/slavery-past-present--future-10th-anniversary-global-meeting---call-for-paper

Slavery (the treatment of humans as chattel) and enslavement through conquest, birth, gender, race, ethnicity, kinship, and exploitation of indebtedness have been an intrinsic part of human societies.

Slavery and a variety of other forms of exploitation existed in ancient societies across the world, and in many other states and territories. The Transatlantic Slave Trade furnished at least 10 million Africans for slavery throughout the Americas.

Controversial and contested estimates indicate that up to 40 million people worldwide are enslaved today. This modern re-emergence of slavery into public view, following legal abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade over two hundred years ago, is said to be linked to the deepening interconnectedness of countries in the global economy, overpopulation, and the economic and other vulnerabilities of individual victims and communities.

But should we think of these people as enslaved? And, if so, is slavery an inevitable part of the human condition? Like 'consumers' of past eras, such as early industrialization, are we dependent on the exploitation of others? What do the persistence and mutations of different forms of exploitation mean in the context of abolition and recognition of universal individual and collective human rights?

The varieties of contemporary forms of exploitation appear to be endless. This interdisciplinary conference will facilitate a multidisciplinary exploration of slavery and enslavement in all its dimensions.

This conference will be the tenth global meeting of the Slavery Past, Present and Future group, and as such represents a milestone in our history.

In keeping with previous meetings, the format of the Slavery Past, Present and Future Conference this year will be plenary. We intend to hold the meetings in person and expect those who register to attend all the sessions to facilitate a genuine cross-fertilization of ideas across identities, disciplines, and subject areas.

Tentative Schedule:

23rd June, Tuesday: 'Legacies of Slavery in Dublin' walking tour, exploring Dublin's connection to the slave trade, highlighting the historical sites involved and their legacies. The tour will profile a range of Dubliners from investors and philanthropists to widows and profiteers who participated in slave ownership in the Caribbean between the years 1763 and 1833.

24th June, Wednesday: Conference proceedings

25th June, Thursday: Conference proceedings

Military History Chronicles
Call for Papers—Summer 2026 Campaign

The Military History Chronicles is soliciting articles, books, and exhibition reviews for its Summer 2026 Campaign. The theme of MHC is military history exclusively. All historical time periods and geographic regions are welcome, provided they address a topic of historical interest. Book, documentary film, or exhibition reviews should be on recent events, releases, or publications. Students, alumni, faculty from all academic institutions, and unaffiliated independent scholars are welcome to submit their original work. This includes previously submitted and corrected coursework. In either case, submissions should not have been published elsewhere.

All submissions must adhere to the *Military History Chronicles*' submission guidelines which can be located at: https://www.militaryhistorychronicles.org/for-authors

The Military History Chronicles reserves the right to reject, without further review, any submissions that do not follow these guidelines or meet our high academic standards.

Any questions should be directed to Jeff Ballard, Editor, the *Military History Chronicles* at: EICatMHC@gmail.com.

Deadlines
April 15, 2026: Working Title, Abstract (124 words max), and Key-words (8-12).
June 1, 2026: Full Manuscript
Contact Email
EICatMHC@gmail.com

Call for Candidates for the Young Sanders Center Graduate Research Assistantship

The Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University announces the annual competition for the Young Sanders Center Graduate Research Assistantship. The assistantship is designed to encourage graduate student research into Congressman J. Y. Sanders home region of southeast Louisiana and/or the wider Gulf South, and to facilitate management of the Young Sanders Center materials to be housed in the archives of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies.

The renewable award includes full tuition for the fall, spring, and summer semesters at Southeastern Louisiana University beginning in August 2026, along with a full graduate assistantship stipend and a $3000.00 enhancement to be provided in two installments. Submissions will be accepted from existing or entering graduate students in virtually any academic field including: history, cultural studies, art, music, literature, environmental studies, science, psychology, sociology, criminal justice, etc. During the period of the award, the successful candidate will work as a research assistant in the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies. Candidates must also be conducting, or planning to conduct, research centered on Louisiana or the wider Gulf South in anticipation of completing a master's thesis or publishable paper.

Applicants should submit a brief abstract of their intended course of study or research project, along with a cover letter and c.v., to Dr. Samuel Hyde, director of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies, at the address below, or electronically at the email address provided. Candidate applications will be reviewed by an award committee consisting of the director of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies, a representative of the Young Sanders Center, and an independent scholar. Applications must be received by March 1, 2026 to be considered for the award. For additional information, or for electronic submission of applications, contact samuel.hyde@selu.edu.

Contact Information

Samuel C. Hyde, Jr. Ph.D.
Leon Ford Endowed Chair
Director, Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies
Southeastern Louisiana University
SLU Box 10730
Hammond, LA. 70402
Contact Email
shyde@selu.edu

URL
https://www.southeastern.edu/acad_research/programs/csls/student_research_posit...

Call for Papers
The Fourteenth
Winton M. Blount
Postal History Symposium

Sponsored by the American Philatelic Society, the American Philatelic Research Library, and the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, the conference is Dec. 10-11, 2026 at Smithsonian's National Postal Museum in Washington, D. C. The theme is revisiting American postal history.

2026 marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. To mark the occasion, the Fourteenth Blount Postal History Symposium will reexamine key developments and stories of over two hundred and fifty years of American postal history and consider lesser-known stories and new lines of inquiry.

Deadlines:

One-page proposal and brief resume due April 10, 2026. In addition to a one-page proposal stating the question/s to be answered, the basic argument, and the source base, each individual should submit a one-to-two page curriculum vitae or resume that includes contact information (e-mail, phone, address) and information regarding the publication status of the research (already published, planned publication, or unpublished) to NPMResearchChair@si.edu.

Preference will be given to new and unpublished work. Notification of acceptance will be mailed no later than May 1, 2026. Although we are planning to hold the event in person, sessions will be streamed. Presenters should plan to attend the event in person.

Papers due by November 1, 2026. Accepted proposals should result in papers of 5000 6000 words, including bibliographic material and citations. Event organizers are hoping presenters will consider the symposium an opportunity to receive feedback on their papers and are willing to facilitate the placement of publications in postal history and philatelic journals.

For more information and updates regarding the 2026 Postal History Symposium, please see the symposium web page.

Contact Information: Dr. Susan Smith, NPMResearch-Chair@si.edu

Oral History Summer School's March Hop-On Workshops (online)

Join us for Oral History Summer School's March Hop-On Workshops!

Tuesday, March 17, 6pm ET
Tending the Past, Healing the Present: Oral History in Black Community Spaces

Instructor: Dr. Shawna Murray-Browne

This session explores oral history as a tool for collective healing in Black community spaces, drawing from projects centering Black women leaders. Participants will examine how oral history supports sacred remembering, emotional processing, and future imagining, and how deeper storytelling can foster collective repair. **Audience:** Community healers, organizers, oral historians, students, therapists, and others interested in Black women's leadership, ancestral wisdom, and oral history as healing.

Cost: $10-$40 sliding scale
Register: https://www.oralhistorysummerschool.com/all-events/2026/3/17/hop-on-online-tending-the-past-healing-the-present-oral-history-in-black-community-spaces

Tuesday, March 24, 6 PM ET
Oral History and Labor: Rates, Values, and Solidarity with the Oral History Worker Collective

Instructors: Sarah Dziedzic and David Wolinsky

Organizers from the Oral History Worker Collective discuss sustainable oral history labor, introduce practitioner tools and a new workbook, and guide participants through exercises on rates, proposals, scopes of work, and embedding values into professional practice.

Audience: New and experienced oral history practitioners.

Cost: $10-$40 sliding scale
Register: https://www.oralhistorysummerschool.com/all-events/2026/1/27/hop-on-online-oral-history-and-labor-rates-values-and-solidarity-with-the-oral-history-worker-collective

Monday, March 30, 6 PM ET
Forced to Tell, Again and Again: What Asylum Interviews Teach Us About an Ecosystem of Transactional Interviews

Instructor: Fanny García

This workshop examines the impact of repeated, high-stakes storytelling in asylum interviews and similar systems. Participants will explore differences between extractive interview systems and oral history practice, and develop ethical strategies for working with narrators who may have experienced prior harm.

Cost: $10-$40 sliding scale
Register: https://www.oralhistorysummerschool.com/all-events/2026/3/30/forced-to-tell-again-and-again-hop-on-online-what-asylum-interviews-teach-us-about-an-ecosystem-of-transactional-interviews

Contact Information: Emma Brown, info@oralhistorysummerschool.com

Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute Annual Spring Conference

Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute will host its annual spring conference on Saturday, April 18, 2026, on the campus of Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia. The conference, "Quenching the... Embers": Victory, Defeat, and Challenges After Appomattox" will feature presentations by historians Jeffrey Boutwell (author & independent historian), Caroline Janney (University of Virginia), Jonathan Noyalas (Shenandoah University), and Jonathan White (Christopher Newport University). The registration fee of $30 covers the cost of all presentations, lunch, and refreshments. A limited number of scholarships are available for students, educators, and public historians. Anyone interested in a scholarship should send a brief statement (no more than one-page, typed, and double-spaced) about how this conference's theme will support their work to jnoyalas01@su.edu no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on Monday, March 2, 2026. To learn more about the conference please visit: https://www.su.edu/mcwi/upcoming-mccormick-civil-war-institute-events/mccormick-civil-war-institute-spring-conference/

Contact Information: Jonathan A. Noyalas, jnoyalas01@su.edu

Internet Histories Seeks Reviewers

The Reviews editor for the journal *Internet Histories* (www.tandfonline.com/journals/rint20) is seeking book reviewers. Book reviews are generally between 1500 and 2000 words, focused on titles related to the cultural, social, political and technological histories of the internet and associated digital cultures.

Reviewers are currently sought for the following titles:

Archiving Machines: From Punch Cards to Platforms by Amelia Acker mitpress.mit.edu/9780262553247/archiving-machines/

Digital Authoritarianism in the Making: Repression and Resistance on the Russian Internet Edited by Françoise Daucé, Benjamin Loveluck and Francesca Musiani mitpress.mit.edu/9780262553674/digital-authoritarianism-in-the-making/

Healthy Users: The Governance of Well-Being on Social Media by Niall Docherty www.ucpress.edu/books/healthy-users/paper

Influencer Creep: How Optimization, Authenticity and Self-Branding Transform Creative Culture by Sophie Bishop https://www.ucpress.edu/books/influencer-creep/paper

Mourning on Mobile Media: Everyday Affective Witnessing by Larissa Hjorth https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262553551/mourning-on-mobile-media/

The Internet Stack by Amrit Tiwana https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262553629/the-internet-stack/

The Inattention Economy: How Women of Color Built the Internet By Lisa Nakamurahttps https://www.upress.umn.edu/9780816699049/the-inattention-economy/

The Routledge Companion to Transnational Web Archive Studies Edited By Susan Aasman, Anat Ben-David, Niels Brügger www.routledge.com/The-R...497785

Anyone interested in being added to the list of potential reviewers for these or other books in the future, please contact Emily Maemura. Please also note that we do not accept unsolicited reviews, so please reach out to me first -- we may decline a reviewer or book title if determined to not be a good fit for our journal.

Contact information: Emily Maemura, emaemura@illinois.

Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition Fellowships 2026-2027

The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition (GLC), part of the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University, invites applications for its 2026-2027 Fellowship Program. The Center seeks to promote a better understanding of all aspects of the institution of slavery from the earliest times to the present. We especially welcome proposals that will utilize the special collections of the Yale University Libraries or other research collections of the New England area, and explicitly engage issues of slavery, resistance, abolition, and their legacies. Scholars from all disciplines are encouraged to apply.

Applicants MUST have received the Ph.D. prior to the beginning of their appointment. This is a residential fellowship and fellows are expected to spend the majority of their time in residence at Yale. Fellows will be expected to participate in the intellectual life of the GLC and the larger Yale community, and to acknowledge the support of the GLC and the MacMillan Center in publications and lectures that stem from research conducted during the fellowship term. All fellows will be expected to offer one public presentation during their tenure at Yale.

For academic year 2026-2027, we are offering two categories of fellowships:

One-semester (4 months) research fellowships; and One-month research fellowships (be advised we cannot sponsor visas for the one-month appointments). Highest priority is given to applications that are fully complete by March 5, 2026.

For further information and instructions how to apply, visit: https://macmillan.yale.edu/glc/fellowships-o

For additional information, contact: gilder.lehrman.center@yale.edu

Southern Historical Association Grad Council's Southern Exchanges 2026

The Southern Historical Association's Graduate Council invites all grad students working on projects relating to the South to share your research in 5-minutes or less! Developing the ability to succinctly convey your research and its significance is a key networking skill. This is your chance to practice your "elevator pitch" in front of a supportive audience of fellow graduate students and enhance your CV in the process.

"Southern Exchanges" aims to foster a sense of community among graduate students by offering an informal, encouraging space to share work or works-in-progress with peers from a diverse range of institutions. It's also a great opportunity to connect with potential collaborators maybe even your next co-panelists for The Southern!

We welcome presenters at all stages of the research process.

To accommodate as many participants as possible, **sign-ups will remain open until Friday, April 3, 2026**. Spots will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis, so don't wait to sign up! Please register here: https://forms.gle/9v3jAsdwrn4QWxQc9

Event: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 @ 9:00am PST/12:00pm EST/17:00 BST
Location: Zoom

Contact Information: shagraduatecouncil@gmail.com

2026 Covert Award Call for Submissions

AEJMC's History Division announces the 42nd annual competition for the Covert Award in Mass Communication History for entries published in 2025.

The Covert Award recognizes the author of the best mass communication history article or essay published in the previous year. Book chapters in edited collections published in the previous year are also eligible. The AEJMC History Division has presented the award annually since 1985. https://mediahistorydivision.com/history-division-awards/covert-award/

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

Submit an electronic copy in **pdf** form of the published article/essay/chapter **via email** to Covert Award Chair, Elisabeth Fondren, **fondrene@stjohns.edu, by March 31, 2026**.

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

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