

History Of The Media Part I

by Mark Owens
Collegian Staff Writer

This is my first serious work with a newspaper (aside from house training the dog) and I really wanted to understand what I was doing.

I thought "what better way than to study its history?" So I went to the library and checked out the history of the Media According to Morton Downey Jr. Here are some of the main events in media history:

Early cave men told each other news by painting stick figures on walls, throwing dinosaur bones at each other and grunting loudly.

With the invention of the wheel, cave men discovered they could travel from cave to cave and exchange news and dinosaur stew recipes. Many archaeologists think that this was the origin of the mobile news unit.

Man continued this broadcasting method until towns were established, as there was a shortage of dinosaur bones and they had developed speech.

A new technique was developed. The town hired the loudest person in the area to walk around ringing a huge bell all night. Here is an example of a typical broadcast:

"Here ye, here ye! It is four O'clock in the morning and all is well! Mr. Robinton's cow has

given birth to a ninety pound calf. The blacksmith's will be closed at 2 pm and Mr. Gravely was just seen sneaking off to the Widow Naffer's with a bottle of wine and a pint of cooking oil!"

Many historians think this was the beginning of the sleaze tabloid.

With the advent of the printing press, man found he could do away with the town crier and get some sleep.

Newspapers evolved and advertised and developed their own writing style called the inverted tetrahedron, or is it the rhombus? Anyway, no really major changes occurred in newspapers until the rise of sensationalism in the early 1900's.

While this form was easy to use in the East, reporters in the wild west found it more difficult to put into practice. Here are some sample headlines:

Mutant Cow Destroys Miles of Barbed Wire!;
Cowboys from Mars Take Over Saloon; Priest Possessed Spurs Maim 7 Members of His Church!;
He Exclaims "The Devil Made Me Do it!"

In fact, a good example is the story of the death of Jesse James as chronicled in the Gopher Times. Imagine the Twangy drawl of a Texan accent accompanying this story:

"I'm here at the cliff where that vicious desperado Jesse James plunged to his death to avoid capture by the minions of the law.

This reporter was present to quote the dying words of the famous bandit. They were and I quote:

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH ...thump' unquote."

The next huge development in the news communication industry was the invention of the radio. The voices of genetically altered bullfrogs

delivered the news to millions of people.

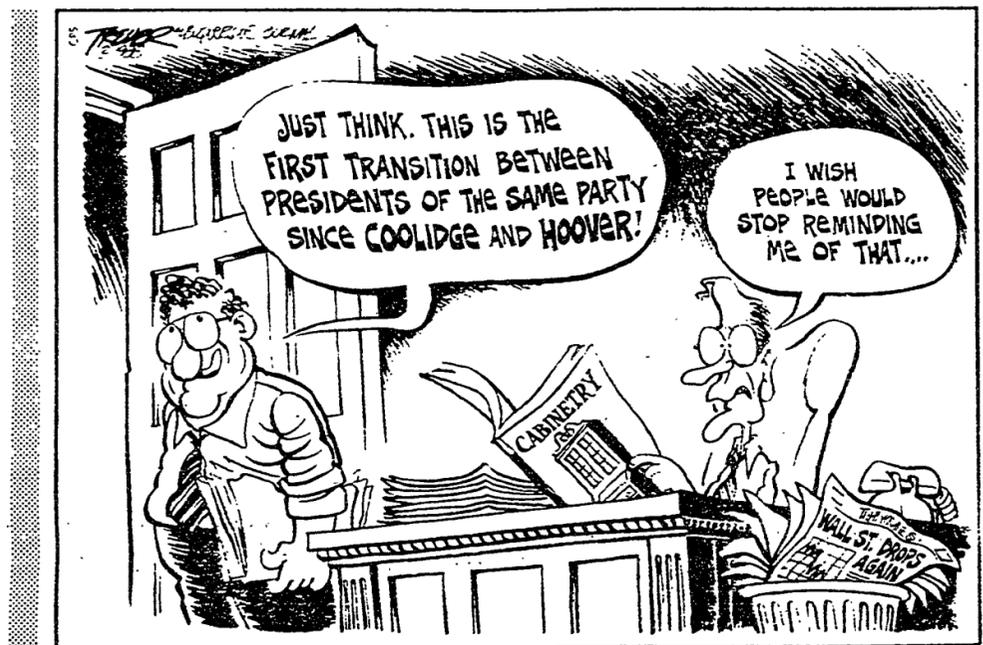
Thus the talk show was created, which involved a bored disc jockey and a gaggle of psychotic people who have nothing better to do but call up or measure how much pocket lint they own.

Most opt for the pocket lint. The interview show was developed. This let millions of people sit around and gleefully listen to a known figure be embarrassed by an obnoxious host.

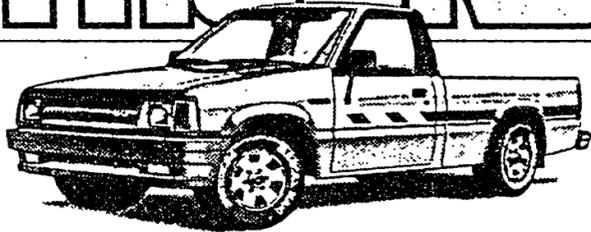
Later, the television came into being and for the first time people could actually see the news. This put a big strain on the medical community, as they had to genetically alter a few humans so they would never get acne to appear on television.

This leads us up to the modern day where the news is delivered by showing computer-generated pictures on walls, throwing chairs at each other and yelling loudly.

We've come a long way baby.



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