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Up in Flames:
How the Media Covered the Iroquois Theatre Fire

Ben Moultrie

Many people in the United States know the tragic story of the Titanic, but few have heard of the Iroquois Theater fire. The story of this disaster is very similar to that of the Titanic; this is because in both events, the persons in charge did not provide an adequate emergency evacuation plan for the victims rushing to safety.[1] In November of 1903, the newly constructed Iroquois Theatre was opened for operation and was regarded as the "safest theatre in Chicago" by many politicians and civilians.[2] Sadly, though, on December 30, 1903, in a sold-out production, the theater's curtain caught on fire due to an electrical error in the spotlight. This error resulted in the death of over 600 people.[3]

Once the fire began, those in attendance realized that numerous fire safety precautions were not operational due to unfinished construction.[4] After the horrific accident, many of Chicago's citizens blamed the local government and specifically Mayor Carter Harrison for the enormous death toll. According to local news sources, the mayor repeatedly overlooked many fire safety protocols throughout the city; protocols that could have saved hundreds of lives.[5] Because the Iroquois Theatre fire in Chicago was such a devastating event, media organizations across the United States covered the crisis in immense detail. The media's initial focus regarding the fire was to inform Americans of the horrific nature of the event. However, news organizations also helped bring about justice for the affected citizens by searching for who was to blame, attracting attention to fire safety reform, and honoring the perished. The media played a critical role in the aftermath of the Iroquois Theatre fire by informing viewers about the nature of the event.

The damages and casualties from the fire were extremely gruesome, but news organizations did not shy away from including every detail for the readers. For instance, the December 31, 1903, edition of the *Tacoma Times* said, "One large truck was so heavily loaded with dead bodies that the horses could not start until the police had helped start the wheels."[6] This article explained how deadly the fire was, even though it lasted only around 10 minutes.[7] The same edition of the Tacoma Times also explained to readers why so many people in attendance perished in the fire. It read, "When they reached the balconies, they found that the ladders had not been put in place, and they were helpless. A struggling mob was behind them and thin air in front. Many were thrown off the balconies and were either killed or maimed by falling into the alleys and streets below."[8]

Many separate newspapers commented on how sad it was that audience members perished due to the theater being opened before all safety features could be installed. The media also kept readers updated on the increasing death toll. For example, the *Minneapolis* (Minn.) *Journal* of December 31, 1903, stated that 564 were dead, 314 were missing, and 157 were injured.[9] In the same edition, the paper commented, "For a brief but terrible ten minutes, its interior was a fiery pit of destruction in which hundreds perished miserably."[10] This quotation elaborated on how disastrous the incident was for the city of Chicago. Overall, the media played a significant role in informing Americans about the horrific nature of the event by providing accurate details on the Iroquois Theatre fire. The media's initial focus regarding the fire was to inform Americans of the horrific nature of the event. However, news organizations also helped bring about justice for the affected citizens by searching for who was to blame, attracting attention to fire safety reform, and honoring the perished.

Ben Moultrie was a freshman at Samford University when he wrote this paper.

In the weeks after the Iroquois Theatre burned, the media shifted from providing information about the fire to focusing on who was to blame. The January 8, 1904, edition of the Highland Recorder mentioned how the operator of the spotlight that caught fire was an essential factor in this case. The newspaper read, "McMullen is considered by the police to be one of the most important witnesses. He oversaw the spotlight, which set fire to the scenery and resulted in the large loss of life."[11] Even though some Chicago citizens blamed operators at the Iroquois Theatre, a substantial number of people blamed Mayor Harrison. Harrison was often blamed because he allowed the theater to be opened prior to the safety features being installed. On January 9, 1904, the *Chicago Eagle* described his guilt by saying, "The mayor should be held responsible for the loss of nearly a thousand lives."[12] However, the mayor was not the only individual blamed for the horrific incident. Many citizens of Chicago also accused the building commissioner, the building inspector, and the fire department. The *Evening Star* in Washington D.C. stated that the mayor, building commissioner, building inspector, and others were awaiting actions of the Grand Jury.[13] On February 21, 1904, a newspaper in Phoenix, Arizona, the *Arizona Republican*, stated that three men were indicted on manslaughter charges while two were indicted for culpable omission of official duty. The part-owner of the theater Will J. Davis, business manager of the theater Thomas Noonan, and stage carpenter James E. Cummings were indicted for manslaughter. Those charged with omission of duty were George Williams, Chicago's building commissioner, and O.L. Williams, the city's building inspector.[14] Mayor Harrison as not charged with anything, and in fact, the spotlight operator was not indicted either. Overall, the media played a crucial role in informing the public about news regarding the trials and accusations made towards politicians and individuals who were blamed for causing the Iroquois Theatre fire.

The *Chicago Eagle* famously ran a story the March 5, 1904, newspaper edition titled "The Iroquois Disaster Is of Course Forgotten, but a Worse One May Happen."[15] This newspaper and others played a huge factor in garnering publicity that supported movements that would begin fire safety reform. These reforms had lasting impacts on fire safety and potentially saved the lives of thousands of people across the United States. For example, after the Iroquois Theatre reopened a few months later, it was required that all shows have at least two firefighters present.[16] Another example of new Chicago fire reform was outlined in the March 5, 1904, edition of the *Chicago Eagle*; it said, "All theatres must be equipped with an automatic water sprinkling system over the stage, supplied from a tank not less than twenty feet higher than the building; the sprinklers to be installed over the stage, under the stage, in paint and property rooms, and other locations back of the curtain."[17] These reforms led to changes in already-established theaters and the construction of future buildings. The same edition of the *Chicago Eagle* said, "Furthermore, all theaters to be constructed in future shall be absolutely fireproof in every particular of its construction."[18] The influence of the media also led to weekly fire drills being performed at Chicago theaters.[19] Overall, the media was essential in bringing attention to fire safety reform nationwide, potentially saving countless individuals' lives.

On the one-year anniversary of the Iroquois Theatre Fire, newspapers in and outside of Chicago honored those who lost loved ones in the fire. The media provided readers information about memorial services for the approximately 600 lives that were lost in the incident. For example, the *Evening Statesman* in Walla Walla, Washington, publicized a town meeting in Chicago that promoted the collection of a large sum for a memorial hospital in honor of the Iroquois fire victims. The newspaper stated, "This afternoon a memorial service for the families and friends of the victims will be held at Willard hall. A movement to raise a fund of $50,000 to start a memorial hospital will be inaugurated by the meeting." The New York owners of a vaudeville troop performing that day at the Iroquois issued an order to cancel the performance during the memorial service.[20] Overall, the media's publicity informed readers on ways the victims lost in the Iroquois Theatre fire were being honored.

Unfortunately, horrific events occur across the globe every day, and the media's job is to provide the panicked readers with facts and evidence about the crisis. The Iroquois Theatre fire was no exception to this. In late December 1903, media organizations across the United States flocked to cover the Iroquois disaster in great detail. The media helped to bring attention to the guilty parties involved in the case, as well as becoming an advocate for fire safety reform in order to prevent deadly events such as this from happening again in the future. Even though the initial focus of the media regarding the Iroquois Theatre fires was to inform Americans of the horrific nature of the event, news organizations helped bring justice for the troubled citizens by searching for who was to blame, bringing needed attention to fire

safety reform, and honoring the perished.

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Fishy Business!

One Feisty Newspaper's Resistance to Cannery Companies in Alaska

Laurel Pack

In the quest to expand, the United States government has frequently focused its attention on the acquisition of Native American territory. An example of this is Alaska, purchased from Russia in 1867 for $7.2 million. At the time, only 430 people were nonindigenous in Alaska's population of 33,426. However, the number of the indigenous population was likely greater; there was no census in the far north of the state to document population numbers there.[1] Eventually, the numbers of indigenous people in Alaska began dwindling due to disease and incursions such as the construction of the highway system in 1942.[2]

In addition to the declining population, the U.S. government began enacting more harmful policies to seize the land that previously belonged to various Native tribes. One of the primary contestations was the right to sacred lakes and submerged land, which many Native Americans relied on for food and the survival of their tribes. Most disputes have been ruled on by the Bureau of Land Management.[3] However, prior to greater legal rights afforded to Native Americans, many turned to protesting, often through media. *The Alaska Fisherman* was a monthly newspaper dedicated to contesting the rights afforded to the state over the indigenous people. As the title may suggest, the focus of the paper was fishing rights. As such, *The Alaska Fisherman* functions as a chronicle of the political and social battles of Native Americans and their right to claimed territory.

A primary function of *The Alaska Fisherman* was political advocacy for Alaskan politicians who were beneficial to the cause of submerged land rights for native fishermen. A very early issue of the newspaper listed different candidates and gave many opinions, some of them scathing.

For example, in the May 1923 edition, the article "Mirrors of Juneau" provided harsh criticisms of the Alaskan governor, Scott Bone. The article began with a purposely misleading compliment. At first Bone was described as a "gentleman" who is highly "courteous, affable," and "polished." Unfortunately for Governor Bone, these qualities—according to *The Alaska Fisherman*—did not make him a quality candidate. In Alaska, a thinly populated territory, Governor Bone was "anything but agreeable," because of his life spent in highly populated urban centers. Furthermore, the author argued Governor Bone was entirely estranged from the will of the proletariat. The unnamed author accused Bone of being unable to "meet them [Native Alaskans] on common ground," or "comprehend their desires and ambitions." Regarding "fishery interests," the author argued Governor Bone's "sympathies are not with the people in the struggle to retain their rights." The author revealed there was no record that any "appointed official has spoken in the interests of the people." This scornful review of Bone was juxtaposed with a more generous promotion of state governor candidate Dan Sutherland. In contrast to the assumed civility of Governor Bone, the author described Sutherland as "undiplomatic and unpolished" whose "frankness verges on the brutal."[4] However, Sutherland did not need Bone's qualities.

Pack was a freshman at Samford University when she wrote this paper.

Otherwise, "he would not be Sutherland" who always acted "in the interest of the majority." For example, Sutherland fought against "the commercial interests of the Pacific Coast" and won while continuing to fight for salmon reservations with the "people of the Territory."[5] The contrast in the descriptions of Governor Bone and Sutherland made the political alignments of *The Alaska Fisherman* well known and mirrored the readers' feelings on the matter of native fishing rights. Additionally, advocating for political candidates allowed the audience to have an outlet for political involvement, another goal of *The Alaska Fisherman*.

To further political involvement, *The Alaska Fisherman* also promoted action and organization, specifically through advertising the Alaska Native Brotherhood, a group devoted to opposing the large cannery companies. For example, in the March 1924 edition, the paper printed an article advertising the efforts to "raise several thousand dollars" for the Brotherhood. This money would be used to "fight against the Trap system," the cannery companies' method of trapping thousands of salmon at once. The article included a letter written by a cannery to garner donations. In contrast to the way the Brotherhood raised money, "in little dabs," cannery men "[got] theirs in big chunks and for avowedly political purposes." The author was disgusted with the cannery's letter, describing it as a "nauseating exhibition of these men who still control Alaskan politics." The function of this advertisement's depiction of the Brotherhood was to encourage the audience to donate money, if only to fight against the "nauseating" corporations.[6]

Another example of *The Alaska Fisherman's* political mobilization was its quest for the electoral involvement of Native Americans. *The Alaska Fisherman* published articles dedicated to improving education about the democratic process. The newspaper published a piece, "How to Judge Candidates," encouraging the audience to have independent thoughts about candidates. It presented the difference between candidates "honestly seeking to do a public service" and "those who have a secret purpose but announce a public one." The author argued the difference is "very simple." A candidate with dishonest interests, working "against the people," could be found "serving the big interests," namely, the "corporation attorneys of Juneau." The author created the image of a secret coalition of interests "you are not in on."[7] The article was intended to raise awareness for the potential corruption in political candidates. The primary goal of *The Alaska Fisherman* was to present opinions on different political candidates. So, for the newspaper to publish an article which called the audience to form their own opinions, it signaled a genuine interest in the wellbeing of Alaskan politics.

Despite how effective this political advocacy was, it would not be enough on its own. Soft power is crucial to leading an effective resistance. It is one thing to win over the minds of the voters but an entirely different battle to win their hearts. *The Alaska Fisherman* walked the line perfectly, devoting time to describing the story behind the struggle for sacred lakes and the thievery of the United States government. For example, in the January 15, 1924 edition, the usual cover page was replaced with a supplemental letter to the president from the Alaska Native Brotherhood. Placing the letter, which outlined each of the goals of the Brotherhood, on the front of the cover functioned as advertising. The letter was highly effective at spelling out the injustices done to the Native American people and advocating the legal course for reconciliation. First, the letter presented the Act of Congress of 1884, which extended "the mineral land laws to Alaska" and claimed land "shall not be disturbed" unless legislated by Congress. However, when the land was disturbed by a "White seining crew" in "an Indian ancestral right of fishery," the District Court ruled the people were in their right because "no exclusive grant will be presumed. Also, as the Brotherhood pointed out, following the Supreme Court ruling, "cannery men" claimed "exclusive rights throughout all our waters" and were "attempting to convince the President and Congress" to legislate exclusive rights to the canneries. Unfortunately, this policy would have continued to force indigenous people and "white independent fishermen" being "driven from their calling," to find new waters and good sources of fish. The letter made a final plea to the president and ongress to "abolish all exclusive privileges: and enforce restrictive measures as shall apply equally to all fishermen." It also depicted the repeated violation of rules by the U.S. government in the interest of large cannery companies. The story presented through the letter was an effective call to action to readers.[8]

The Alaska Fisherman built a narrative about injustices done to Native Americans and the political advocacy. This created a highly effective front for resisting the cannery companies. The newspaper was able to provide a basis for future protest. Although, it did not prevent further US intervention of the government's incorporation of Alaska into the United States. *The Alaska Fisherman* was the first form of protest for the fishing rights of Native Americans, which would

eventually be followed by fish-ins. Fish-ins began in Washington state in 1963, 40 years after the first *Alaska Fisherman* was published. These protests involved forcibly taking control of cannery waters which had formerly belonged to Native American tribes.[9] Thus, the examination of *The Alaska Fisherman* is a case study for the long-standing perseverance of indigenous peoples against corporate and government interests.

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The Dean of Scribes:

The poetry of *Amsterdam News'* Romeo Dougherty

Brian Carroll

Black sports writers of the early twentieth century covered their beats not just with prose but with poetry as well. This paper explores the work of one of those writers, Romeo Daughtery who wrote not only for newspapers but also for theatre.

Black sportswriters of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s regularly wrote poetry to season and spice their weekly columns in the Black press. These same sportswriters crusaded for the desegregation of professional baseball, thus they are important figures. Why, then, has their poetry has been almost completely ignored even while a great deal of attention has been paid to the verse of white sportswriters Grantland Rice and Heywood Broun, among others?[1] To underline the discrepancy even further, Black writers continued to write poetry long after the form was dropped by the mainstream press.[2] This paper is part of a larger effort to recover and pay closer attention to the more literary contributions of these writers, specifically here of Romeo Dougherty. Not only should the long-time sports and theater writer be celebrated for his poetry, but as a writer of dazzling diversity and uncommon intelligence, Dougherty should be considered an important contributor to and participant in the Harlem Renaissance.[3]

Poetry in the United States flourished as mainstream popular culture during the first half of the twentieth century.[4] Radio networks regularly aired poetry readings in their programming, big newspapers published hundreds of poems a year, and the more popular magazines, such as *Good Housekeeping, Saturday Evening Post,* and *Ladies Home Journal*, ran poetry in each and every issue. American poets regularly publishing in newspapers during this period included Dorothy Parker (in the *New York World* and *New York Sun*), Don Marquis (in the *New York Sun*, *New York Tribune*, and *Herald Tribune*), Edgar Guest (in the *Detroit Free Press*), Frank Stanton (in the *Atlanta Constitution*), and Carl Sandburg (*Chicago Daily News*), to name only a few.[5] The *New York Times* alone published 370 poems during 1930, 416 in 1940, and 446 in 1946.[6] By his own tabulation, sportswriter Grantland Rice wrote 7,000 sets of verse during his prolific career of more than half a century.[7] Perhaps Rice's best known of these sets opened one of his roughly 22,000 newspaper columns, a poem about Babe Ruth that in its title crowned the slugger with one of his more colorful nicknames: "The Sultan of Swat."[8]

Rice's unabashedly enthusiastic poem epitomizes the "mythmaker" or "Gee Whiz" era of sports writing of which Rice was a prominent voice, an era that saw American sport's fast rise in popularity.[9] Rice and fellow writers such as Jimmy Cannon, Paul Gallico, Westbrook Pegler, Ring Lardner, and Damon Runyon ushered in the era of the "Big Event" and the "Famous Sports

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Hero."[10] In the mainstream press, professional athletes such as Yankees great Babe Ruth, heavyweight boxer Jack Dempsey, football players Red Grange and Knute Rockne, and golfer Bobby Jones became mythic heroes, which meant that their chroniclers turned a blind eye to their flaws and foibles. History refers to these writers collectively as the mythmakers.[11]

Innovating during this era was the *Chicago Daily News*, which introduced not only the "column," at least as it is known today, but also several humorists in both verse and prose. The newspaper's "stars" included Eugene Field, George Ade, Bert Leston Taylor, Keith Preston, and Carl Sandburg.[12] Preston's regular use of satiric light verse can be read as a model for how Dougherty and other Black sports writers typically used poetry. Typical of Preston's wit is this quatrain published in the *Daily News* in 1927:

> Gather ye minnows while ye may –
> Old Time his net is plying.
> The very fish that swims today
> Tomorrow may be frying.[13]

Exactly a century before Preston, the nation's first Black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, published two anonymous poems reprinted from the *New-York Mirror*, "The Swedish Stranger" and "Retrospection."[14] Though the paper was but four pages, the *Journal* ran a regular poetry column that proved to be very popular with readers.[15] In 1761, Jupiter Hammon, a slave from Long Island, became the first African American to have his poems published in what would become the United States.[16] And Frederick Douglass ensured that every issue of his newspapers *North Star* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* included a column of original poetry. Today, few newspapers, mainstream or otherwise, publish any poetry at all.

The Black press during this period was called a "fighting press;" Black newspapers campaigned for integration, equal access and opportunity, and for full participation in the democratic experiment. The Black press served as the Black community's voice and, by its expression, as a preservative of that community's identity, or what Henry Louis Suggs and Langston Hughes each called "negritude."[17] The newspapers imbued Blacks with a sense of purpose and destiny, functioning as an "instrument of social change, enterprise, artistic self-esteem, and racial solidarity," Suggs wrote.[18] In fulfilling these roles, the newspapers contributed to the development of a "race consciousness" as a response to the injustices of segregation.[19]

The separation of soldiers by race and the systematic racial discrimination in promotions and assignments during World War I set the stage for protest at home, as did the harsh living conditions faced by so many Black Americans during that period. The hypocrisy of wartime rhetoric calling on Black Americans to join the fight to protect democracy in World War I only to face Jim Crow at home not surprisingly embittered many in the Black community. This hypocrisy planted the seeds for a "large-scale social movement to carry forward the Black cause," wrote Black press historian Charlotte O'Kelly.[20] In the so-called "Black belt" of the Midwest centered by Chicago, between 1917 and 1920, a racially motivated bombing or arson attack occurred every twenty days.[21]

It is no coincidence that several significant Black publishing concerns began during this period of Black protest. Both the *Kansas City Call* and the Associated Negro Press started up in 1919, the latter launching to foster cooperation among Black newspapers.[22] One of the Harlem Renaissance's founders, Hubert Harrison, started *The Voice* newspaper in 1917, including in his publication a "Poetry for the People" section and a roundup of book reviews. And Harlem's *New York News* launched in 1913. Almost every Black-owned newspaper of the period reserved space for poetry.

Fueling the expansion of this fighting press was the "Great Migration" of Blacks from the rural South into the urban North and Midwest. Considering that before 1910, ninety percent of Blacks lived in the South, the migration north was numerically staggering.[23] Nearly 800,000 southern Blacks migrated to the North and West by 1920, when, according to the 1920 census, for the first time more Americans lived in cities than in rural areas.[24] Between 1910 and 1920, the Black population in Chicago swelled nearly 150 percent to more than 109,000.[25] These migrations produced ghettos, housing shortages, overcrowded schools, and a dire need for more jobs, among other social ills.[26] The population shifts also meant that Black newspapers in northern cities inevitably grew in reach and power. Historian Martin E. Dann called the Black press of the period the "focal point of every controversy and every concern of Black people, representing as it did the strengths and reinforcements which united the Black community."[27]

Often recalled in the public imagination as a golden era of jazz, nightclubs, and poetry, the 1920s have also been characterized as a golden age for newspapers, including readership, as well as for sports and sports writing. During this decade, one of the biggest beneficiaries of the migration, the *Chicago Defender*,

became the country's largest Black weekly newspaper in terms of circulation. Attorney Robert S. Abbott founded the paper in 1905, drawing up the plans in his living room.[28] By 1920 the *Defender* distributed more than two-thirds of its weekly issues outside of Chicago, primarily via Pullman porters, who were unofficially the newspaper's circulation agents. By 1925 the *Defender* had a circulation of a quarter-million, which set a new standard for Black newspapers, while pass-around readership of between four and five people likely pushed the true number of readers to more than a million.[29]

The *Defender's* success provided a model for other Black papers around the country, including the *Amsterdam News*. Founded by James Anderson in 1909, the Harlem-based weekly became the first Black newspaper entered into the Audit Bureau of Circulation in 1930.[30] Named for Amsterdam Street in Harlem, where Anderson lived, the newspaper became an essential chronicle of the Harlem Renaissance. The thirties and forties, by which time the *Amsterdam News* had been sold to C. B. Powell and Philip Savory, represented the heyday not only for the *Amsterdam News* but for Black newspapers in general. Circulation figures peaked, advertising revenues flowed as Black businesses proliferated, and several important publications printed their first issues. The Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, *Ebony*, and *Jet* magazines all were founded in the 1940s. Combined, these trends in Black publishing gave "the Negro protest its widest currency . . . an orchestrated crescendo just before" the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling in 1954.[31]

Sports quickly gained respectability with the middle class in the early part of the century. In the 1920s, an estimated $4 billion was spent on tickets to sporting events, and the public's passion for sports and stories about sports and the mostly men who played them fueled newspaper sales during this period.[32] Bruce Evenson attributes the surge in popularity to society's interest in "personal regeneration, social renewal, and a 'desire to live forever.'"[33] Paul Gallico of the *New York Daily News* wrote that the creation and cultivation of sports "legends" was a "meal ticket" newspapers could not pass up.[34] In fact, because sports coverage grew so fast – to between forty and sixty percent of local news coverage in daily newspapers – the American Society of Newspaper Editors was established in 1923 in part as a reaction, in order to "protect the integrity of the profession" against the perceived takeover by sports.[35] Managing editors of the period wondered "when the growth in [sports] will cease," reported *Editor & Publisher* in April 1928. "It appears to move in the well-known circle, an increased quantity stimulating more interest and consequently more demand on the part of the readers who constantly ask for more."[36] The Associated Press meanwhile expanded its "segregated" sports department by fifty percent that year, while wire service competitor United Press tripled its sports coverage from 1925 to 1928.[37] Marshall Hunt, a colleague of Damon Runyon's in the early 1920s, said "sports replaced everything in national newspapers. . . . My God, major league baseball was such a big thing then, occupying a third of the front page" of the major national papers. "Everything else was pushed aside."[38]

Coincident with the flourishing of sports and sports coverage was the Harlem Renaissance, both a product of and a contributor to the flowering of Black newspapering and a cultural movement that found expression in blues and jazz music, modernist literature, dance, art, and poetry.[39] A roster of leading Harlem Renaissance poets names Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, Georgia Douglass Johnson, and Langston Hughes, writers who for the most part "adhered to traditional poetics and sought integration into American society," according to scholar Regina Jennings.[40] McKay often wrote sonnets. Cullen wrote his famous "Heritage" in tetrameter, while Johnson used end-line rhyme. Together they protested the legacy of slavery and institutional racism, but in mostly traditional forms that communicated anger without revenge, according to Jennings's findings.

Garnering the bulk of scholarly attention paid to Harlem Renaissance poetry are Cullen, the de facto poet laureate of the movement, and Hughes, perhaps the Renaissance's best known writer, who eclipsed Cullen in the thirties and who was known as "poet laureate of the Negro people" and "dean of Negro writers."[41] Among Hughes's prolific output was a weekly column for the *Chicago Defender* that ran from 1943 to 1966, a column he wrote from the perspective of a fictional Harlem resident named Jesse B. "Simple" Semple. Based on his own observations living in Harlem for more than thirty years, Hughes used "Simple" to present Black America and Black culture in microcosm. Simple and his straight man, Boyd, were composite Black personas that echoed, reflected, and refracted Black identity for the *Defender's* large, national readership. In the foreword to an anthology of these Simple columns, Hughes wrote that "although they are stories about no specific person as such . . . it is impossible to live in Harlem and not know at least a hundred Simples."[42]

The renegotiation of Black identity that was central in the Harlem Renaissance movement was rooted in

and made possible by a rich print culture, of which the Black weeklies were of course a vital part. Despite this, however, most of the Harlem Renaissance's vanguard ignored the important role sports and sporting events played in daily life. As Anderson puts it, "the presence of sports in the everyday life of the Renaissance remains largely unexamined and creatively untouched in the literature of the period."[43]

Born in St. Thomas, the Virgin Islands, in 1885, Romeo Lionel Dougherty wrote during baseball's pre-segregation era from his considerable perch at the influential *Amsterdam News*. For more than twenty-five years, Dougherty served as an editor and writer at the paper, covering and directing coverage both of sports and the performing arts, much of that time also working as an event promoter.[44] Dougherty was also a mentor to another renowned *Amsterdam News* sportswriter, Dan Burley, with whom Dougherty shared so much in common. A caustic critic of Black baseball's administration but a breathless enthusiast of sporting endeavors, Dougherty's writing fit the age: colorful, intertextual, and, above all, freshly original. The complexity and cultural richness of his writing were no accidents; Dougherty curated a personal library of between 2,000 to 2,500 books, all of which he claimed to have read.[45]

Called the "Dean of Negro Sport Writers," the "Sage of Union Hall Street," or simply "the Dean," even by his competitors, Dougherty sometimes signed off his own columns with, "your Dean" or "your Dean of Scribes." A 1922 edition of *Billboard* magazine called him "the most widely known Negro writer on sports and playhouses," while *The Messenge*r magazine featured Dougherty prominently alongside Langston Hughes in an April 1927 edition highlighting luminaries of the Harlem Renaissance. The magazine referred to them as members of the "Aframerican Academy."[46] And yet, in many histories of the Harlem Renaissance, Dougherty is not mentioned.[47]

Importantly for this reconsideration of the Harlem Renaissance, Dougherty considered sports and, in particular, the Harlem-based clubs that played them so well as important cultural institutions. As such, these clubs deserved the Black community's support and patronage, just as Harlem's theaters and music halls did. According to Ted Vincent, who wrote *Keep Cool: The Black Activists Who Built the Jazz Age*, Dougherty wrote in a distinctive way, trying to "instill his theater and sports pages with a broad vision of a better community."[48] Eulogizing his mentor upon Dougherty's death in 1944, Dan Burley wrote that the Dean had "reigned unchallenged as the really big sports and theatre writer of his race."[49]

Dougherty's complicated legacy as a man of letters includes a political protest novella, *Punta! Revolutionist*, which appeared in seven installments in *The Crusader* magazine in 1918 and 1919; Dougherty himself would briefly join the leftist *Crusader* staff in 1921 alongside Cyril Briggs, who would replace Dougherty at the *Amsterdam News* more than a decade later. The unfinished book chronicles the odyssey of a newspaperman who migrates from Savannah, Ga., to New York City before ultimately becoming a revolutionary fighting on the side of nationalists in the West Indies.[50] The newspaperman's odyssey, which was part biographical, can be read also as a parallel to Blacks in America struggling to claim identity while being marginalized by the mainstream.[51] The Black nationalism Dougherty embraced in *Punta! Revolutionist* he consistently promoted also in his columns, lending his support to labor unions, self-defense leagues, and Black nationalist movements throughout the world.

More generally, readers could see Dougherty's love of travel and, with travel, encounters with the indigenous peoples of foreign lands. When he traveled to Puerto Rico, which he refers to in the poem below as "Porto Rico," to cover a boxing match, the writer paid homage to his own island origins.[52] The untitled poem ran as part of his weekly column in August 1933:

> Oh, I sailed on the "Vigilant" once
> Those foreign shores to see:
> They say my mother was born out there
> In the shade of a maumee tree.
> The clipper ship was sturdily built
> And had roamed the Spanish main:
> Her shrapnel once raked fore and aft
> The barks of the Queen of Spain.
> They tried to make a fighter of me
> But the trip indeed was rough:
> My legs just buckled when on land,
> And fighting a fighter was tough.
> And so I'm glad I've lived to tell
> Of my exploits on land and sea:
> Of the days when I roamed, a carefree lad
> In the land of the maumee tree.[53]

It's not clear to what precisely "the maumee tree" refers, but the term likely celebrates the prevalence and popularity of a species of evergreen tree in the West Indies and Virgin Islands that produced a version of apricot. Variously called "Mammea Americana,"

"mammee," "mammee apple," and "mamey," the tree also grows in Jamaica and the Bahamas, among other places, and, specific to Dougherty's Virgin Islands, was used to produce a liqueur used by locals as a tonic and digestive.[54] Maumee is also likely a tip of the cultural cap to Granny Maumee, a short play about southern Black life written by Ridgely Torrence, a white man. Carl Van Vechten, an influential participant in the Harlem Renaissance as a press agent for book publisher Alfred A. Knopf, called Granny Maumee "the most important contribution which has yet been made to the American Stage."[55]

Punta! Revolutionist helps to appreciate another of Dougherty's poems that re-lives historical events especially important to the Black community, a poem remembering the slave labor that helped build the Sans-Souci Palace in Haiti in the early nineteenth century. Construction on the palace, the most elaborate of several royal residences built for King Henri I, began in 1810 and finished in 1813. Importantly to Henri Christophe and probably to Dougherty, as well, was the project's importance as part of a larger program to show Europe and America just what Black Haitians could achieve. That the palace was "erected by descendants of Africans, show that we have not lost the architectural taste and genius of our ancestors who covered Ethiopia, Egypt, Carthage, and old Spain with their superb monuments," wrote Pompée-Valentin Vastey, a baron and advisor to the king, of the palace's importance to African pride.[56] Dougherty wrote his poem to mark new performances of "The Emperor Jones" at New York's Metropolitan Opera, an opera set in the West Indies that tells the story of an African-American who sets himself up as emperor only to exploit the natives. The Met production featured "the constant beat of the tom-toms," or drum music "[t] ransplanted from the 'Dark Continent' to the island of Haiti," Dougherty wrote. His poem:

> In tropic seas, 'neath beauteous moon,
> Where Afric's sons and maids doth spoon,
> Ancients still doth hum and croon
> That weird, entrancing, mystic tune:
> Bamboula.
>
> 'Neath bastions built by Ethiopia's son,
> Where Pétion and Toussaint their battles won,
> Defeating here Frank and dark-skinned Don,
> The war drums beat at setting sun:
> Bamboula.
>
> Yon Warriors often heard the frenzied call
> To stem the tide against San Soucci's wall.
> Where Christophe's legions fought and stayed its fall,
> That air was also heard at masquerading ball:
> Bamboula.[57]

"Bamboula" here serves multiple purposes. As a West African term, it can refer to a type of drum made from a rum barrel or to a syncopated dance to music played on a bamboula drum. With origins in Africa, the Bamboula dance was popular in Haiti in the mid-eighteenth century as part of festivals, galas, and celebrations before making its way to the United States via New Orleans; slaves and free Blacks deported from Haiti to America brought Bamboula with them.[58] By the time Dougherty used Bamboula in his poem, the term could also refer to one of the first swing- style pieces, "The Bamboula," by Louis Moreau Gottschalk, or, if spoken in French, as an ethnic slur referring to Black people. Any or perhaps all of these references could be intended by a writer describing events in Haiti to venerate the cultural contributions of Blacks who trace their origins to West Africa. A safe interpretation would seem to read Bamboula as a marker of otherness and even as a defiant celebration of it. If read or heard as French, the term in this poem could be interpreted as an appropriation of a slur in order to invert the insult in an expression of pride and self-assertiveness. His writing throughout his career was indirect; he made a great number of assumptions about his readers, including that they read the rest of the Amsterdam News and could follow his frequent, sometimes opaque literary, cultural, and geographic allusions.

Dougherty's column in which the poem appeared explained that at the time of Sans-Souci and Henri Christophe, tom-toms were used to send warnings of war, uprisings, and "the mysticism of 'voodoo,' but were brought down from the hills on certain occasions for the people to dance that wild, exotic and, to many, entrancing dance called the 'Bamboula.'"[59] This dance inspired a musical comedy in 1921, Bamboula, performed in Harlem and elsewhere, and in 1929, a Black musical revue called Bamboola.[60] Dougherty also explained that more than a century after its completion, Sans Souci still commanded the admiration of Europeans and Americans, who "gaze with wonder upon the castle of San Soucci and give credit to the ingenuity and vision of the Black Emperor who erected the famous fort."[61]

A year later, Dougherty returned to the theme of African dance in painting an intimate portrait of dancing and dance-halls in New York, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. For a column titled, "On Dancing and

Life's Serious Side," he opened with, "'Don't you ever dance,' inquired a pretty little miss of me, almost antagonistically." This personal memory set up a critique of Black social clubs that had sublimated their greater cultural and civic mission to "the all-important dance" and profit-seeking.[62] Anticipating criticism for this view, Dougherty must have felt he had to demonstrate his life-long love of dancing, inspiring him to write as part of the column this ode to various dance forms:

> In the dance I found romance
> When youth was gay and carefree:
> Encircling arms, enchanting charms
> I think they nearly got me.
> Vienna waltz, at Berlin Paltz,
> Apache too, in Paree:
> In sunny Spain that sweet refrain
> I think it nearly got me.
> Rhumba prance, that doth entrance.
> In that dear old San Turcee;
> Believe me, kid, it was a bid
> To take my fill at Poncee.
> And here it nearly got me.
> Raise your coat, hang the goat
> Bamboula done in Haitee;
> Mem'selle Zaza at some bazaar,
> She too nearly got me.
> Maria mine, with eyes divine
> And not a passing fancy:
> Held me tight, that moonlight night,
> And made me wish she had me.
> Do I dance? Say, I just prance;
> No rocking chair has got me.
> But, hang it all, why should a ball
> Be such that it must get me?

Bamboula makes a return, and hinted at in the last line is his concern for Black institutions generally that in pursuing the "almighty dollar" they lose their credibility and sacrifice cultural authenticity. This idealism, which leaned toward moralism, marked Dougherty's race-first writing throughout his career, and it is perhaps this same idealism that attracted him to leftist causes, at least early in his career. But nothing about Dougherty was simple. Though a moralist and, by some definitions, an activist, he flatly stated in at least one column that he did not endorse Marcus Garvey's program for the uplift of Blacks, a program centered on emigration to West Africa, and later in his career as a promoter, he took the side of management against theater workers.[63]

Dougherty's moralism was refined, however. Rather than launch frontal attacks on the racism of his day, he used his vast knowledge of literature, geography, and culture to weave careful critiques of what he found objectionable in behavior and discourse. Stepin Fetchit and the "trickster" act of outwitting oppressors by feigning laziness and a slow wit were frequent targets of his sophisticated, intertextual backhanded criticisms, as were the pejorative nicknames assigned to Black entertainers by their white producers, handlers, and audiences.[64] In a February 1934 column, for example, he recalled taking exception to the nickname commonly used to refer to then-deceased vaudeville star Aida Overton Walker, part of a broader reaction to Will Rogers's then recent public apology for using "nigger" on a radio show while promoting his upcoming film, "Steamboat 'Round the Bend." Rogers apologized at Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles, a Black church, but met fierce criticism in the Black press long after, even up to his death eighteen months later.[65]

Referring to Rogers, Dougherty wrote that "the poor fellow was born in an environment which made it hard for him to understand, and when he got older, like Adam, he had no dear old mammy to teach him right from wrong."[66] Thus, as part of his nuanced but sustained condescension toward people who insulted Blacks but smiled and even laughed while doing it, he invoked the memory of Walker, who performed regularly with Bert Williams, a frequent co-performer with Fetchit and Rogers, along with Walker's husband, George Walker. When she died, Walker was front-page news.[67] Dougherty set up his column-closing poem this way, "hoping that I am understood," and, as befitting a writer named Romeo, by borrowing from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet:

. . . thinking how the late Aida Overton Walker used to tell us in song what she did or would do when they called her that nickname of "Shine." Here 'tis:

> A rose, they say, by most any
> Other name would smell as sweet;
> Then, why should a nickname
> Take me off my feet?
> For everything that's precious,
> From a gold piece to a dime,
> And diamonds, pearls and rubies
> Ain't no good unless they shine.
> So, when you clever people
> Call me coon, or shine, or smoke,
> I simply smile, then smile some more
> And vote you all a joke.
> But I'm thinking, just the same,
> What is there in a name?[68]

Dougherty performed a great service to the newspaper's readers in remembering the past and recalling the Black greats in all spheres of life. African-American notions of heroism and heroic figures are significant because of the institutionalized racism that defined life in the 1930s. These figures had to demonstrate an uncommon strength merely to survive. Finding ways to endure, in fact, is one of the hallmarks of Afrocentric heroes throughout the last 300 years, thus, as Andrew Kaye noted, for Blacks the triumphs and trials of their heroes "carried extra significance, in that these challenges often took place under the same Jim Crow conditions with which they grappled on a daily basis."[69]

For example, in 1920, Dougherty wrote a dedication to the memory of George Gilmore, a former standout center at Howard University and one of the country's best basketball players of any color. When he died very young in September of that year, Gilmore was a star in his prime playing for Pittsburgh's Loendi Big Five, a team owned and managed by Cum Posey, owner and manager also of the powerhouse Black baseball team, the Homestead Grays:[70]

And rushing down the court they came
Five husky men in all;
To stop his brilliant charge that night,
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

His well-trained eye had gauged the time;
Wild cheering filled the hall;
He made his jump, they roared again,
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

Again he stops and tricks the boys,
He's pulled his famous stall;
In vain they try to counter him,
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

See! As he prances down the court,
No moments here that pall;
That same old cry is raised again;
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

The famous Howard quint of yore
With him could never fail;
And thousands cheered when rivals said:
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

With Alpha 'twas the same old thing;
At Waldron's famous hall;
While Spartan and St. C. agreed:
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

With Pittsburg's crack Loendi team
He answered his last call;
Unflinchingly he heard again,
"Get Gilmore and the ball."

Farewell, good friend, a fond farewell,
From players, fans and all;
No more we'll hear that well known cry,
"Get Gilmore and the ball."[71]

Similarly, in his poem, "The Boys of Yesteryear," Dougherty pays tribute to bygone Black athletes who together gave New York City a sports renaissance in basketball, football, boxing, and track and field. This December 1931 poem hails the city's athletic associations that provided memorable action on the basketball courts and a steady supply of community "heroes" around whom to rally. The poem is a product of the age, a presentation of the mythic hero that so frequently characterized portrayals of professional athletes in journalism of the 1930s:

A down the path of Time they come
With memories of the past:
A jolly bunch that can't forget
Those glories that will last.
You see them as if but yesterday
Upon the court and field;
And we must pay our tribute, too,
To men that did not yield;
For when in battle line they formed,
They faced the foe sans fear;
And thousands made the welkin ring
With cheer and cheer and cheer.
All honor to you, gentlemen.
For the thought that prompted this;
Ingratitude is not your forte,
No snakes among you hiss.
Let's bow our heads, if only once,
To those who went before
To rest beneath the silent nod
From us forever more.[72]

The poem appeared in the first of three weekly columns drawing readers' attention to a series of events that reunited members of the city's many athletic clubs, including the Alpha Physical Culture Club, St. Christopher Club, the Smart Set Athletic Club, Salem-Crescent Athletic Club, and the Spartan Field Club, among others. Dougherty takes readers back to the "Black Fives Era" of these powerhouse amateur clubs, which in addition to basketball "fives" also typically fielded track-and-field, boxing, and in some instances baseball and cricket teams. As such, the columns furnish Amsterdam News readers with important history of

segregated Black America's glorious athletic and cultural past.

A week after the poem appeared, Dougherty published in his column a letter from a reader providing a catalog of the many female sports "stars" Dougherty had left out of his glowing tribute, more than fifty in all. Also in the column was another poem by Dougherty that lyrically provides historical context to Black sporting achievement, in this case in a particular basketball game between St. Christopher and Howard University played a decade earlier. In the game that inspired this poem, the "Red and Black Machine," a reference to St. Christopher for which Paul Robeson sometimes played, soundly defeated the "Blue and White," almost certainly a reference to Howard. According to some accounts, it was even Robeson who led the St. Christopher five in a dance that had become a tradition for the club. Of particular interest here is Dougherty's playfulness with the many nicknames of St. Christopher, including St. See, St. C, and the Red and Black.[73]

See! Two minutes more they have to go,
Five thousand fans receive the thrill:
"St. See" grabs the ball-out-tricks the foe,
Adown the court come charging to a spill.
Right near now stands the "Headache Band" of fame
Who reaches down and grabs the sphere:
But as he made his thoughtful, winning jump,
Came "Perky," oh, you "Little Perky," from the air.
Red and Black Machine begin to toot her horn,
While Blue and White go in the dump:
But formidable "Babes"— those Thomas – Wiggins boys,
Blue and White revives to cheer and cheer
Whiles Wilson sings – no slump tonight, no slump.

And so it was on track and field
And on the football ground;
And also in the boxing ring,
While thousands stood around.
They've done their share-paved the way
And blessings should receive
From those who came but yesterday
Inspiration to achieve.

And Rollo came from "Smoky Town"
To write 'em up so good and brown.[74]

The poem's closing lines salute long-time *Pittsburgh Courier* writer, one-time Negro league baseball commissioner, and Pittsburgh pharmacist W. Rollo Wilson. Black press columnists often referred to each other by nickname, as this column illustrates, not unlike the veiled references contemporary rap singers make to each other in their music. More generally, Black slang during the Harlem Renaissance can be seen as a precursor to rap and hip-hop, a richness of language with origins in the Deep South.

The last poem that appeared in that series of three weekly columns, "A Sportsman's Prayer," is something of a mystery. While it is perhaps Dougherty's best known poem, one that is quoted in several places, it is not certain that he penned it himself. Though usually credited to Dougherty, the poem appears in his column with the credit line, "N.Y. Morning Post," perhaps signaling that he was merely reprinting it from the late eighteenth century *Post* newspaper. He uses the rhyme to celebrate what truly was a renaissance of sporting achievement in Harlem. The Harlem Rens basketball team, to cite the most dramatic example of this achievement, compiled a record of 120-8 in 1932-33, a slate highlighted by a run of eighty-eight consecutive victories – still a record for the sport. The Rens so completely dominated basketball that Kareem Abdul-Jabbar cited them as inspiration for his own hall of fame career first at UCLA and later in the National Basketball Association.[75] The mystery poem:

If I am victor in the fray,
Let me not boast about how good
Or great I am, but grant I may
Take victory as a sportsman should;
And if defeat's hard road I tread,
If fate and fortune serve me ill,
Then let me raise my battered head,
And smile, and be a sportsman still.[76]

Importantly, later in this same column, Dougherty noted that "someone" inquired why Frank "the Strangler" Forbes had not appeared in the writer's tributes, a mention Dougherty cited as inspiration for this ode to a Negro leaguer who also established himself on the football field and as a track star. The poem neglects to mention the Philadelphia native's eight seasons in Black baseball:

I used to fancy "Strangler" Forbes
Until he made the crack
That he was just a little boy
When he made both grid and track;
It was on Howard's campus when
We saw his rushing, bruising play,
And as a child we loved to see
Him play Thanksgiving Day.
And as we grew to young manhood
We saw him with the Lincolns

From our place among the throng,
With our dear little shorty pants on.
And when as Spartan man
He used to "strangle" players;
We used to tremble when he spoke
And offer up our little prayers.
Those childhood days, we can't forget
For we always called him "For-Bees";
To buy some special candles.[77]

Incorporated into this loving tribute are references to Forbes's college career as a running back for Howard University in Washington, D.C., including his starring roles in the big Thanksgiving Day matchup pitting Howard against Lincoln that, for the Black community, were akin to the Yale-Harvard football game each season. For example, writing about the 1922 Howard-Lincoln game played just four days after Harvard-Yale, in coverage that began on the newspaper's front page, Dougherty noted the 20,000 who turned out, many in fur coats and enough to produce eight hundred automobiles in the parking lots, including a Rolls-Royce and a Mercedes.[78] The crowd "represented the civilization of the American Negro at its highest water mark," wrote William Ferris, for Garvey's Negro World newspaper. "They represented colored society at its best, the men and women who have gone out into the world and won their spurs and the youth who will be the future leaders of the race."[79]

Perhaps it shouldn't surprise that in one of his last columns before retiring in 1935, when an organizing idea or topic for the column seemed to elude him, Dougherty returned to thoughts of home. His best poetry evoked images, impressions, even particular smells of the Caribbean. Closing out the wandering, musing mid-summer column that seemingly inevitably became a fish tale, an epic narrative about a fateful battle at sea with a barracuda, he dedicated a poem to Dr. Binghley Richardson, his friend and fishing partner that day. His inspiration was to wonder what might have become of the lime trees Richardson and Dougherty planted on St. Thomas twenty years prior:

Oh, whispering breeze, oh, murmuring trees,
Oh, waving, whispering limes;
Oh, there to be again with thee again,
My love of olden times.[80]

Dougherty seemed to be fascinated with nature and with the outdoors in ways conspicuous for someone living in such a densely populated urban area. A 1934 column about the removal of a large tree that abutted Harlem's Lafayette Theatre served for Dougherty as a metaphor for the famous theater's role in the community and for its "glorious past." Known in Harlem as "the House Beautiful," the Lafayette on the east side of Seventh Avenue between 131st and 132nd streets opened in 1912 and became the first major theater to desegregate just a year later.[81] Two years after Dougherty's tribute to the felled tree and, therefore, to the Lafayette, then twenty-year-old Orson Welles brought his production of Voodoo Macbeth to the venue and cast only Black actors. The poem, "'Tree of Hope' No More":

NO ERRANT ax it was
That felled the "Tree of Hope,"
But careful pucks that saved its roots
To give it wider scope.
Yea, wider scope in time to come,
In ages that will claim
A knowledge of its history
With all its widespread fame,
A thousand thespians here hath found
Some solace from their palm;
And legend says they touched its bark
To bring them added fame.

AND what care I about the songs
Of nations mild and bold.
When from its infancy I gave
That legend that they mold!
Beneath its branches hundreds found
Relief from mid-day sun:
And many jests from Black-faced men
Were born there in a pun.
The spot on which it stood, they say
Is hallowed ground at last;
For history indeed it made
And left a glorious past.[82]

Describing the city's removal of the tree in order to widen Seventh Avenue in 1933, Dougherty noted the "scores" who tore off bark, roots, branches, and leaves as souvenirs. In recounting the history of the tree, Dougherty touchingly relates a kind of history of the block on which the tree grew, including Mrs. Odessa Morse's "large millinery store," "Connie's equally famous inn," and the many Black actors that gathered under the tree to network and talk about the "questions of the day," meetings that gathered, according to Dougherty, "Bert Williams, Jesse Shipp, Alex Rogers, and Jack Givens."[83] In fact, it was these informal actors' meetings under the old elm that inspired its name. Dougherty credits Leigh Whipper, in 1913 the first Black member of the Actors' Equity Association, with coining "Tree of Hope,"

an allusion to the actors' hopes of finding work when gathering underneath.[84] Thus, in columns and verse such as this 1934 dispatch, Dougherty can be seen writing microhistory and in doing so providing a texture and nuance not available anywhere else. A large piece of the tree was recovered, shellacked, and installed at the Apollo theater, where it was touched by performers such as James Brown and Sarah Vaughan before taking the stage to bring them good luck.[85]

If there is one unifying theme in Dougherty's poetry it is pride. So proud of Black achievement in the arts and on the fields and courts of sport, so nostalgic about island life in the Caribbean, Dougherty found his muses by fondly looking back rather than looking forward. Perhaps it is this same pride that explains his inspired, eloquent but cruel, withering attack of a rival writer, Wilfred Bain of the Inter-State Tattler, for what Dougherty viewed as plagiarism. In late 1929, after the stock market had crashed, Dougherty ran as a six-column, section-leading headline, "DRAMATIC EDITOR TRAINS GUNS ON WRITER.[86] *Amsterdam News* writer Vere E. Johns described the war of words as "spirited and (to my mind) regrettable controversy . . . that has filled me with surprise and sorrow: surprise at the audacity of the deed that has apparently been perpetrated and sorrow that the fine art of journalism should be dragged through the mire."[87]

The "deed" was a simple one: Bain plagiarized Dougherty's eulogy of Paul Robeson, including in the Tattler a long quote from the *London Daily Express* newspaper that Dougherty had incorporated. Replete with the same introduction to the quote Dougherty had penned a week prior, Bain's piece failed to cite the *Amsterdam News*, presenting itself as original. In Johns's analysis, "had Mr. Bain been Mr. Dougherty and Mr. Dougherty been Mr. Bain this article would have been written just the same."[88] The theft, and the brushoff explanation Bain gave in the *Tattler* in response, sent Dougherty into lyrical overdrive.

First, the *Amsterdam News* offered to donate $500 to the charity of Bain's choice on the condition that Bain provide evidence that any of the words under Bain's byline weren't in fact either Dougherty's or those of James Douglas of the *London Daily Express*.[89] Second, Dougherty wrote a lengthy takedown of Bain's violation of journalistic norms and the rival writer's "weak attempt to camouflage the entire matter" by saying, essentially, that imitation is a form of flattery.[90] Two weeks after Johns's "unasked, unbiased" analysis and verdict, on Christmas Day, Dougherty published another takedown, this one in the form of a Roman tragedy, which allowed Dougherty to have fun with the Roman origins of his name, Romeo/Romulus. Bain became Bainus Wilfredus, "who posed as a scribe among the tribe known as Jigwalks, but it was discovered he could not write upon the parchment without stealing the thoughts of other men."[91] Referring to Johns's published investigation, Dougherty wrote that "Noble Johns of the town of Vere in Jamaicus hath almost dispatched [Wilfredus] with one thrust of his trusty sword," noting Johns's native Jamaica as a fellow islander might. Starring Romulus, Dean of the Scribes, a prophet, the allegory finished with, of course, a snatch of verse that provided a final flourish to Dougherty's ridicule and literary banishment of Bain, written from Bain's perspective for a final ironic twist:

> Oh solitude, where are the charms
> That sages have seen in thy face?
> Better dwell in the midst of alarms
> Than reign in that horrible place.
> I'll be out of humanity's reach,
> I have pulled a terrible bone:
> Too bad I had words with the Dean.
> Wish I had let him alone.[92]

Dougherty's coup-de-grace, however, was his column in the January 8 issue, the entire space of which was devoted to a poem extending the writer's appropriation of Roman classicism, history, and mythology. Addressing Bain as the "fool," the poem allegorically describes Bain's newspaper as "a parchment . . . upon which Romans spit," and Bain himself as a minnow, slob, lowbrow, and he of inferior tribes. Dougherty first set up his five-stanza poem this way: "A sage hath truly said that evil springs from the dark core of the world and brings with it life. And things without flesh and blood, THINGS VOID AND DEAD, begin to stir."

> And so, fool, thou wouldst join thy friend,
> This sword in grip of steel to bend?
> Nay, nay, thou are a minnow in the sea of life;
> Thou canst not join with MEN in strife;
> For it is written in the stars
> Thou standeth yet behind the bars
> Of ignorance forged by weakling mind
> Made thus by fate, cruel and unkind.
>
> WHEN men disport upon the stage,
> By valor in their parts become the rage,
> Then offer but a thinking part
> Befitting those without the art;
> The spear thou hold in trembling hand
> Proclaim thee but a member of the band

Picked up for numbers in the mob –
A hero never was a slob.

THOU head of such enormous size
Should hold those things men always prize;
But nature went on rampage wild
And made of thee a poor step-child.
Behold! Just once thou had a noble thought.
And battling for release it sought
An outlet to attract the thespian hold,
Which made thy cranium but a puttied mold.

AND such as thee would valor claim!
Avaunt, we do not fight the hail, the lame;
We reigned in Rome's Imperial Day,
Nor hearkened to such roundelay
As sung upon the streets of Greece
By lowbrows who, when stabbed, say: Peace.

WHAT manner of a parchment thou edit?
A thing upon which Romans spit.
Bold Romulus, the Dean of Scribes,
Hath never mingled with inferior tribes.
For ages thou hast tried to stand
Upon that Mount – OLYMPUS – grand;
But only men found tried and true
Can stand beneath Rome's azure blue.[93]

Dougherty's craft in chronicling and advocating for the Black community and his dedication to that craft are worth far more than the footnote to American history to which they have been relegated. This project of recovery is part of a much larger effort to rescue from undeserved obscurity the legacy and artistry of writers like Dougherty, who died at his Long Island, N.Y. home in 1944, at the age of 59. Black sportswriters have been doubly silenced, first by virtue of their race and secondly by working in sports, an area of journalism that often is minimized or otherwise discounted, regardless of race, as something less than true journalism. After writing for no fewer than five Black newspapers over his career, Dougherty's obituary in the *Amsterdam News* in 1944 aptly described him as the "once famous journalist of Harlem whose prolific pen was a mighty power in wielding his ideals in the principles of Democracy for his race."[94] After leaving the newspaper business, however, Dougherty "unfortunately was unable to find himself," the obituary's writer, Floyd G. Snelson observed, instead living his twilight in relative obscurity. Sadly, Snelson lamented, "his pen was dormant."[95]

Endnotes

1. For more on the crusades and campaigns of these sportswriters to integrate baseball, see Chris Lamb, *Conspiracy of Silence* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2012); Brian Carroll, *When to Stop the Cheering? The Black Press, the Black Community, and the Integration of Professional Baseball* (New York: Routledge, 2007); and Brian Carroll, *The Black Press and Black Baseball, 1915-1955: A Devil's Bargain* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
2. Sam G. Riley, *The American Newspaper Columnist* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 47. It is worth noting that Riley's history makes no mention of black writers or editors or even of the black press.
3. In making this argument, I join Daniel Anderson, who also makes a case as part of his book, *The Culture of Sports in the Harlem Renaissance* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland Publishing, 2017).
4. John Spalding, "Poetry and the Media: The Decline of Popular Poetry," *Journal of Popular Culture* 33, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 147-153.
5, To see more on daily newspaper poet-columnists of the period, see Sam Riley's chapter, "Column Poetry," in *The American Newspaper Columnist*, 47-77. One of the better-known sports poems from Guest, who was nationally syndicated, celebrated Hank Greenberg, Jewish first baseman for the Detroit Tigers in the 1930s, a poem that contributed to the myth of Greenberg as a practicing Jew: "Come Yom Kippur – holy fast day worldwide over to the Jew –/And Hank Greenberg to his teaching and the old traditions true/ Spent the day among his people and he didn't come to play/ Said Murphy to Mulrooney, 'We shall lose the game today!/ We shall miss him on the infield and shall miss him at the bat,/ but he's true to his religion—and I honor him for that!'" (in Mark Kurlansky, *Hank Greenberg* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2011], 11).
6. Spalding, "Poetry and the Media," 149.
7. Grantland Rice, *The Tumult and the Shouting: My Life in Sport* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1954), xv.
8. Rice, *The Tumult and the Shouting*, 104-105.
9. Post-war enthusiasm for the sport surprised everyone as baseball became "a mass consumer product," according to Rice's biographer, William Harper (*How You Played the Game, The Life of Grantland Rice* [Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999], 246).
10.Harper, *How You Played the Game*, 18.These writers divided between two basic styles of sports journalism: the "Gee Whiz!" style and the "Aw Nuts!" style. The former celebrated the athletes and the games, sometimes with fanatical support, while the latter covered sports the same way they might cover a criminal trial (see Stanley Walker, *City Editor* [New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1934], 115-133). See also Robert Blackwell Kilborn, "Sports Journalism in the 1920's: A Study of the Interdependence of the Daily Newspaper and the Sports Hero," Ph.D. dissertation (Michigan State University, 1972).
11. Charles Fountain, *Sportswriter: The Life and Times of*

Grantland Rice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 343.
12. Harriet Monroe, "Comment: In Lighter Vein," *Poetry* 30, no. 6 (September 1927): 333.
13. Monroe, "Comment: In Lighter Vein," 331.
14. *Freedom's Journal*, May 18, 1827, 4.
15. Erika DeSimone and Fidel Louis, *Voices Beyond Bondage: An Anthology of Verse by African Americans of the 19th Century* (Montgomery, Ala.: NewSouth Books, 2014), xx-xxi. According to the authors, one of these first poets was George M. Horton, a North Carolina slave and "one of the finest wordsmiths." Horton brought attention to how "bondage ravaged the lives of the enslaved." When the *Journal* failed to survive a rift between its founders, co-founder Samuel Cornish started *Rights of All*, a paper "widely sought after by poets," according to the authors (xxii).
16. DeSimone and Louis, *Voices Beyond Bondage*, xix.
17. Henry Lewis Suggs, *The Black Press in the Middle West, 1865-1985* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 1.
18. Suggs, *The Black Press in the Middle West*, 1.
19. See T. Ella Strother, "The Race-Advocacy Function of the Black Press," *Black American Literature Forum* 12, no. 3 (Autumn 1978): 92-99. Strother included a content analysis of the *Chicago Defender* demonstrating that paper's advocacy and development of what she calls "race consciousness" (92).
20. Charlotte G. O'Kelly, "Black Newspapers and the Black Protest Movement: Their Historical Relationship," *Phylon* 43, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 5.
21. Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 41.
22. Lawrence D. Hogan, *A Black National News Service: The Associated Negro Press and Claude Barnett, 1919-1945* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984).
23. Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), vii.
24. U.S. Census Bureau, "Fourteenth Census" (Washington, D.C., 1921), available https://archive.org/details/1920_census.
25. U.S. Census Bureau, "Fourteenth Census" (Washington, D.C., 1921), available https://archive.org/details/1920_census.
26. Henry La Brie III, *The Black Newspaper in America: A Guide* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1970), 112.
27. Martin E. Dann, *The Black Press, 1827-1890: The Quest for National Identity* (New York: Putnam, 1971), 8.
28. For more on the *Defender*'s founding and about Abbott, see Roi Ottley, *The Lonely Warrior: The Life and Times of Robert S. Abbott* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1955).
29. Armistead S. Pride and Clint C. Wilson II, *A History of the Black Press* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1997), 137.
30. Molefi Kete Asante, Ama Mazama, eds., *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2005), 8.
31. Pride and Wilson II, *A History of the Black Press*, 155.
32. See Harry Edwards, *Sociology of Sport* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1973), 32-34.
33. Bruce J. Evensen, *From When Dempsey Fought Tunney: Heroes, Hokum, and Storytelling in the Jazz Age* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996), xiii.
34. Evensen, *From When Dempsey Fought Tunney,* xiv.
35. Minutes of ASNE's first organizational meeting, held at Chicago's Blackstone Hotel on April 25, 1922, ASNE Archive, Newspaper Center, Reston, Va.
36. E. Robert Stevenson, "Sports Dig Ever More Deeply into Newspaper's Editorial Space," *Editor & Publisher* (April 1928): 44.
37. Stevenson, "Sports Dig Ever More Deeply into Newspaper's Editorial Space," 44.
38. Tom Clark, *The World of Damon Runyon* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 96.
39. See Caroline Goeser, *Picturing the New Negro: Harlem Renaissance Print Culture and Modern Black Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007). The Harlem Renaissance period is defined differently by various scholars. Edward E. Waldrom (*Walter White and the Harlem Renaissance* [Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1978], 23) noted agreement on a period roughly between 1919 and 1929, but others have included more inclusive beginning and end dates.
40. Regina Jennings, "Poetry of the Black Panther Party: Metaphors of Militancy," *Journal of Black Studies* 29, no. 1 (September 1998): 107.
41. For more on Cullen, see Jane Kuenz, "Modernism, Mass Culture, and the Harlem Renaissance: The Case of Countee Cullen," *Modernism/modernity* 14, no. 3 (September 2007): 507-515. For more on Hughes, see John Edgar Tidwell and Cheryl R. Ragar, eds., *Montage of a Dream: The Art and Life of Langston Hughes*, (University of Missouri Press, 2007). For Hughes's titles, see J. O. Hodges, "Wondering About the Art of a Wanderer: Langston Hughes and His Critics," in *The Langston Hughes Review* 5 (1986): 19; and C. H. Rollins, *Black Troubadour: Langston Hughes* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), 121.
42. Langston Hughes, *The Best of Simple* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), vii.
43. Daniel Anderson, *The Culture of Sports in the Harlem Renaissance*, 58.
44. For more on Dougherty's career, see Anthony Hill, *Pages from the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: P. Lang, 1996).
45. Ted Vincent, "The *Crusader* Monthly's Black Nationalist for Nationalism," in Cary D. Wintz, ed., A*nalysis and Assessment of the Harlem Renaissance, 1980-1994* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 262.
46. James A. Jackson, "Here and There among the Folks," *Billboard*, August 6, 1921, 62-64; "The Aframerican Academy," *Messenger* 9, no. 4 (April 1927): 115.
47. See, for example, Steven Watson, *The Harlem Renaissance: Hub of African-American Culture, 1920-1930* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995). Jervis Anderson's *This Was Harlem: A Cultural Portrait, 1900-1950* fails even to

include Dougherty in naming the Renaissance's leading journalists, going instead with Fred R. Moore, Jerome B. Petersen, George Harris, T. Thomas Fortune, James Weldon Johnson, Lester Walton, and William Melvin Kelly, Sr. ([New York: The Noonday Press, 1981, 1982], 62). Missing also, therefore, is Dan Burley.

48. Ted Vincent, *Keep Cool: The Black Activists Who Built the Jazz Age* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 80.

49. Dan Burley, "Grand Old Man of Press Row Passes On," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 16, 1944, 8B. According to the *New York Times*, the cause of death was heart disease ("Romeo L. Dougherty," *New York Times*, December 10, 1944, 53).

50. It is not clear why Dougherty failed to finish the novella.

51. Shelley Streeby, *Radical Sensations: World Movements, Violence, and Visual Culture* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013), 190.

52. The concentration of writerly talent in Harlem tracing its roots to the Caribbean is remarkable. In addition to Dougherty, the region produced Marcus Garvey (Jamaica); Claude McKay (Jamaica); Cyril Briggs (Leeward Islands); Hubert Harrison (St. Croix), founding publisher of *The Voice*; W. A. Domingo (Jamaica) and Richard B. Moore (Barbados), founding publishers of the *Emancipator*; Arturo Schomburg (Puerto Rico), founder of the library that now bears his name.

53. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Sports," *New York Amsterdam News*, August 30, 1933, 8.

54. Ken Love, Richard Bowen, and Kent Fleming, "Twelve Fruits with Potential Value-added and Culinary Uses," (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2007). Publication part of the "12 Trees Project" that sought to increase profitable diversification of high-quality, year-round fruits for local markets.

55. Steven Watson, *The Harlem Renaissance*, 98.

56. Pompée-Valentin Baron de Vastey, "An Essay on the Causes of the Revolution and Civil Wars of Hayti, Being a Sequel to the Political Remarks Upon Certain French Publications and Journals Concerning Hayti" (Exeter, England: Western Luminary Office, 1823), available in full text at https://www.loc.gov/item/10003112/.

57. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January18, 1933, 18.

58. Harold Courlander, *A Treasury of Afro-American Folklore: The Oral Literature, Traditions, Recollections, Legends, Tales, Songs, Religious Beliefs, Customs, Sayings and Humor of Peoples of African American Descent in the Americas* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2002), 94–95.

59. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 18, 1933, 18.

60. Bernard Peterson, *A Century of Musicals in Black and White: An Encyclopedia of Musical Stage Works By, About, Or Involving African Americans* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing, 1993), 25.

61. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 18, 1933, 18.

62. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 10, 1934, 7.

63.In a January 1934 column, Dougherty states, "I have never subscribed to the ideas of good old Marcus" (Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 17, 1934, 7).

64. See Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 3, 1934, 7.

65. Champ Clark, *Shuffling to Ignominy: The Tragedy of Stepin Fetchit* (New York: iUniverse), 53.

66. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, February 7, 1934, 8.

67. "Aida Overton Walker Is Dead," *New York Age*, October 15, 1914, 1.

68. Romeo L. Dougherty, "My Observations," *New York Amsterdam News*, February 7, 1934, 8.

69. Andrew Kaye, "The Canonisation of 'Tiger' Flowers: A Black Hero for the 1920s," *Borderlines: Studies in American Culture* 5 (1998): 156.

70. The team was named for its sponsor, the Loendi Social and Literary Club of Pittsburgh.

71. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Get Gilmore and the Ball," reprinted in the *Chicago Defender*, 9 October 9, 1920, 6.

72. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Sportopics," *New York Amsterdam News*, 23 December 23, 1931, 12.

73. Sheila Tully Boyle and Andrew Bunie, *Paul Robeson: The Years of Promise and Achievement* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 57.

74. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Sportopics," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 30, 1931, 12.

75. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, with Raymond Obstfeld, *On the Shoulders of Giants: My Journey Through the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010). The book also was made into a documentary directed by Deborah Morales (2012). The Rens name came from the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom owned by Robert Douglas, who also owned and coached the team.

76. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Sportopics," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 6, 1932, 12.

77. Dougherty, "Sportopics," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 6, 1932, 12.

78. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Thousands See Howard-Lincoln Football Game," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 6, 1922, 1.

79. William H. Ferris, "Impressions and Reflections of Lincoln-Howard Game, Coliseum Reception and Howard University Affairs," *Negro World*, December16, 1922, 4.

80. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Sports," *New York Amsterdam News*, July 28, 1934, 10.

81. Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes: Harlem's Lafayette Theater; Jackhammering the Past," *New York Times*, November 11, 1990, available: https://www.nytimes.com/1990/11/11/realestate/streetscapes-harlem-s-lafayette-theater-jackhammering-the-past.html.

82. Romeo L. Dougherty, "'Tree of Hope' No More," *New York Amsterdam News*, 25 August 25, 1934, 7.

83. Connie's Inn was, with the Cotton Club and the Savoy

Ballroom, one of the premier night clubs in Harlem during the Renaissance that, ironically, catered to a mostly white clientele. Connie's was known for its revues, including *Keep Shufflin'*, *Hot Chocolate*, and *Bamboola*. Other popular black revues of the twenties included *Liza, Runnin' Wild, How Come?, The Chocolate Dandies, In Bamville, Lucky Sambo, My Magnolia, Rang Tang, Bottomland,* and *Blackbirds of 1928.*

84. Whipper had a long and versatile career on the stage and screen. For more, see Leigh Whipper Papers, 1861–1963, Schomburg Collection, New York Public Library; "Leigh Whipper, 98, Character Actor," *The New York Times,* 27 July 1975, 35.

85. Ted Fox, James Otis Smith, illustrator, *Showtime at the Apollo: The Epic Tale of Harlem's Legendary Theater* (New York: Abrams Books, 2018), 74.

86. *New York Amsterdam News*, 20 November 1929, 9. The centerpiece story on the theater page was Dougherty's article, "Wilful Wilfred or 'The Great English Journalist,'" an article that rather laughably analogizes Bain's treatment of Dougherty with France's handling of Alfred Dreyfus during the Third French Republic.

87. Vere E. Johns, "Guilty Or Not Guilty," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 11, 1929, 8.

88. Vere E. Johns, "Guilty Or Not Guilty," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 11, 1929, 8.

89. "Put Up or Shut Up! Amsterdam News Editor Offers Five Hundred Dollars to Charity," *New York Amsterdam News*, November 20, 1929, 15.

90. The Editor, "Muddled And Befuddled or The Dilemma of Wilful Wilfred," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 4, 1929, 8.

91. Romeo L. Dougherty, "Bye-Bye, Blackbird; It Was Worth It," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 25, 1929, 8.

92. Dougherty, "Bye-Bye, Blackbird; It Was Worth It," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 25, 1929, 8.

93. Romeo L. Dougherty, "To a Spear Bearer," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 8, 1930, 8.

94. Dougherty began his career at the Brooklyn *Eye* in 1906. In addition to the *New York Amsterdam News*, he wrote also for the *New York News*, *The Crusader*, and the short-lived Washington *Sun*.

95. Floyd G. Snelson, "Boys of Yesteryear Pallbearers at Funeral for Romeo Dougherty," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 23, 1944, 16A.

Book

Reviews

Not Exactly Lying:
Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History.
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The Revolutionary Samuel Adams

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Not Exactly Lying:

Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History

Book by Andie Tucher

Not Exactly Lying: Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History. By Andie Tucher. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023, 384 pp. ISBN: 978-0-23118-6-353.)

This is a very timely and fascinating book, as fake news and fake journalism play what seems to be an increasing role in American and world politics, manipulating voters and misleading citizens to believe the worst about the innocent, the best about the guilty, and the best as well as the worst about characters of decidedly mixed character and abilities.

The book makes clear fake news is not a new phenomenon. Disinformation, misinformation, purposely made-up stories have almost always been a part of America's freewheeling political and journalistic cultures, going back to 1690 when *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick*, the first newspaper in the British North American colonies, was published.

In that first issue, editor Benjamin Harris promised to expose anyone found to be spreading fake, false, and malicious reports. "Trust me," he seemed to be telling his readers, as a bearer of truth and a exposer of falsehood. But in the same issue, Harris solemnly reported that the powerful French Catholic King Louis XIV was such a libertine that he was sleeping with his daughter-in-law. That was fake news; the king did not have a daughter-in-law and had dropped his libertine habits when he got married.

Harris, a devout Protestant, had an agenda. He knew that the Catholic king was persecuting French Protestants, and he wanted to undermine this much-detested monarch.

Each of the eleven chapters in this book begins with a startling quote from a so-called journalist or public official, such as "I believe in faking," "We did not call it propaganda," "Nothing that is not interesting is news," and "Fake but accurate."

Tucher points out that for the first 200 years of American newspapering, truth was not a consistent value of publishing, and the public did not really expect newspapers to be factual. Publications had few resources to fact-check. There was no telephone in those days. The *Star and Banner* of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1831, for example, published a column called "Important if true," which consisted of letters that claimed certain events happened but that could not be verified. Readers would have to decide for themselves if they believed the rumors.

Newspapers of that time contained entertainment, even whoppers and unbelievable tales, as well as partisan political news. Objectivity was not valued because the whole point of a newspaper was frequently to function as a house organ or vehicle for certain political factions, parties, or candidates. Newspapers were expected to make incendiary hyper-partisan attacks on the other side.

A trade journal for writers in 1887 even bragged about how much fun it was to fake, or make up stories. It insisted that faking was "not exactly lying," meaning that adding juicy details, filling in interesting atmospherics that may or may not be true would entertain the reader.

This changed in the 1890s when journalism emerged as a budding profession with standards of fact-checking and objectivity, with ethical guidelines on how to do proper reporting.

For journalism educators, I do not need to recount the long history of sensationalism and exaggeration, beginning with the Hearst-Pulitzer Yellow

Journalism battles that contributed to the Spanish-American War; the abject racism that fomented the Wilmington, North Carolina, white supremacist coup of 1898; the suppression of lynching reports by "respectable" mainstream publications; or World War I and World War II propaganda, including bitter denunciations of German and Japanese American citizens who might be disloyal.

Nor do I need to recount, for journalism educators, in detail, more recent examples of "fake news" that have contributed deeply to public cynicism, such as: *New York Times*' reporter Judith Miller's "scoops" in late 2001 and 2002 that weapons of mass destruction found in Saddam Hussien's Iraq justified a U.S. invasion;[1] and CBS News' and 60 Minutes correspondent Dan Rather's 2004 report that President George W. Bush, as a young man, had his family pull strings so he could avoid service in Vietnam, and that he dodged his pilot duties in the National Guard with impunity, based on documents that could not be verified.[2] And during Donald Trump's first term, over-eager reporters "turned out to be downright wrong," Tucher noted, about Trump's alleged conspiracy with the Kremlin to manipulate or even steal the 2016 election.[3]

What's new in Tucher's comprehensive account is the breadth and pervasiveness of fake news throughout American history. She believes that it is worse than it's ever been, and that it poses existential threats to democracy. American public life is "awash in toxic mendacity on an unprecedented scale," she writes.[4] Too many news organizations now give their readers, viewers, and consumers what they want and fake journalists write the endings of their stories first.

Attempts at rational conversation are frequently undermined today by "filter bubbles, lost in echo chambers, and overwhelmed by trolling, flaming, hacking, scamming, sock puppeteering, algorithm manipulation, and other online misbehaviors…"[5] "Fake journalism has now solidified its status as an essential driver of the political polarization of public life, rooted in a burgeoning eco-system of right-wing media activists and organizations that exploit the swift, lightweight affordances of the online world…"[6]

Yet Tucher offers no definitive solutions to these problems. Rather, she writes: "Maybe education in media literacy will help. Maybe stepped-up institutionalized fact-checking. Maybe a labeling system for dodgy posts on social media. Maybe transparency. Maybe public shaming, boycotts, or pressure campaigns. Maybe some kind of official credentialing for journalists. Maybe the regulation of Facebook and other immensely powerful and unaccountable platforms."[7]

But none of these proposals have produced measurable success that yet made a big difference to America's political culture, she writes. She fears that objective, unbiased fact-based journalism could be killed by fake journalism, at least on the national level, commenting: "If the sole measure of credibility for responsible professional journalists becomes their willingness to openly express attitude, be 'transparent' about their individual convictions, and embrace activism, then Fox News and the whole empire of fake journalism that insists it is the only source for unbiased and impartial news will have won the day." If mainstream media flaunts its subjectivity and right-wing media denies its own, then she notes "all hope is gone that the two sides can ever offer a common place for news consumers to stand."[8]

Fake journalism could be left in a far stronger position than real journalism, and may in fact eventually define what real journalism is. In that case, Americans will no longer know nor understand what objective truth is, she writes.

I would recommend this fascinating and well-written book to both journalism educators and lay readers who care about the current state and future of journalism as well as its past. I would also recommend Tucher's lectures and interviews, which can be found on YouTube and may be of use in classes on media history and ethics.

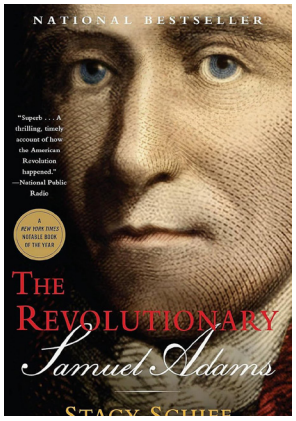
-- James Buie
Augusta University

Notes

1. Andie Tucker, *Not Exactly Lying: Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023, 259-60.
2. Ibid., 263-264.
3. Ibid., 286.
4. Ibid., 278.
5. Ibid., 281-282.
6. Ibid., 278.
7. Ibid, 284-285.
8. Ibid., 290.

The Revolutionary Samuel Adams

Book by Stacy Schiff



The Revolutionary Samuel Adams. By Stacy Schiff. (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2022, 422 pp. ISBN: 978-1-316-44111-7.)

Samuel Adams may not have been the face of the American Revolution. That's more likely to be George Washington or even Paul Revere. Rather, Adams was the voice of the revolutionary. Or, rather, Adams was a revolutionary voice, as Stacy Schiff shows in this latest biography of the man's words who inflamed the colonists into seeking a divorce from London. And Schiff's *The Revolutionary Samuel Adams* helps us understand further the significance of this Bostonian, even though there are limited primary sources to mine for assembling a comprehensive portrait of the American firebrand.

One lesser known aspect of Adams's rise to political significance was his starting a newspaper in Boston, *The Independent Advertiser*, in January 1748 when Adams, a Harvard-educated government clerk, was only 26 years old. It was not overtly a partisan newspaper, but, as Schiff notes, the mission statement focused on defending "the liberties and rights of mankind" and to show to its readers their own self-interest.[1] However, from its first edition, *The Independent Advertiser* criticized Massachusetts colonial governor William Shirley, who witnessed Boston losing ground to New York and Philadelphia as the most robust cities in America. Shirley's house had been attacked after the British Navy had gone through Boston docks, attempting to force dock workers to join a naval squad that would be tasked with keeping law and order in the city. Adams was no supporter of Shirley, who had vetoed his father, Samuel Adams Sr., from serving on the governor's council.

The Independent Advertiser also carried news from New York and Philadelphia, international news, and local items. However, it also offered plenty of invective against Shirley—as well as commentary or quotations from Enlightenment heavyweights including John Locke and John Milton. Most of all, it published editorial pieces that pumped up liberty as the key topic of the day. Soon enough, as has often been the case of American newspapers, *The Independent Advertiser* was no more and a new journal came to take its place, the *Boston Gazette*.

Beset with serious debt and far too helpful with his siblings' struggle to pay their bills, not to mention running his father's malt house business in the ground, Adams was on the verge of total financial collapse. Thus, in his *Boston Gazette*, he began to court public opinion in his favor. First, he attacked the sheriff who was charged with confiscating his estate. Oddly, his words in the *Gazette* elicited some sort of sympathy as he would be elected a tax collector for the city soon thereafter, but it was a thankless job that most Bostonians wanted to avoid. He did a variety of jobs, including the inspection of schools and helping with the city's census. About this time, his first wife, Elizabeth (the daughter of Adams's pastor), died after having a stillbirth son. It seemed that he had little good fortune in his life, but one thing he did well was radical politics. Yet the tax collector job, which he did in a mediocre way at best, sustained, or, rather, as Schiff observes, his mediocrity as a tax collector made him a rather popular tax agent—and that made him popular. All of which made the citizens of Boston

pay attention to his words when he wrote in favor of independence from Great Britain. Indeed, he was popular enough that his fellow citizens helped him settle his debts. This effort was led by John Hancock, who would become an ally in the fight for independence.

Then Parliament passed the Stamp Act, and the gulf between the colonies and the homeland grew even further. Adams would have a key journalistic role in the events that led to the final rupture. Adams wrote under several aliases in the *Boston Gazette*, skewering the colonial government, but not Parliament, the prime minister, or the king.

On March 5, 1770, a mob of Bostonians harassed Redcoats, who eventually fired into the crowd, killing five. The city was on the precipice of a full-blown riot in the hours that followed. In the *Gazette*, Adams would use the term "massacre," not riot, to characterize the events of the night. The British, as Schiff points out, believed Adams's language was hyperbolic. One British writer called the event a "'ridiculous fray.'"[2] The verbal frame Adams provided complemented the Paul Revere engraving of Henry Pelham's artwork of the incident titled "The Bloody Massacre Perpetrated on King Street," in which three bloody men are shown lying on the street as a line of Redcoats fire away. There is no sense that the Boston mob had provoked the British soldiers. The Pelham print could not be reproduced in newspapers in the eighteenth century, but Revere sold copies all over town. The print, which Revere had advertised in Boston newspapers, and the words Adams wrote about the massacre in the *Gazette* galvanized public opinion against the British, who would remove two regiments from Boston to settle things down. Additionally, Schiff shows that Adams compiled a document of ninety-six depositions published under the title *A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre in Boston* that was exported to London in an attempt to find sympathetic readers, although a pro-British deposition also made its way to London. The author also notes that Adams pushed for a speedy murder trial of the soldiers who shot dead the five Bostonians in order to obtain guilty verdicts while the massacre image pump was primed.

Adams' written attacks on London were critical to the Revolution, especially in selling taxation without representation as a central rationale for the separation. In the long run, though, Samuel Adams would not be the face of the Revolution—that would belong to Washington, the military hero, and the political agents, including Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Adams's cousin John Adams. Schiff closes by stating that it was Jefferson who best captured Samuel Adams, as the "'patriarch of liberty.'"[3] Indeed, with his published words in the Boston press, he is the father of the Revolution, who fomented dissent and pushed for a defense of the natural rights and liberties that Adams and the other colonists believed to be God given. Like Ulysses S. Grant in the next American revolution, Adams, as portrayed by Schiff, was a man of little success in his business endeavors, but he was the right man for his times—a man who combined action and words to the fullest effect.

-- David W. Bulla
Augusta University

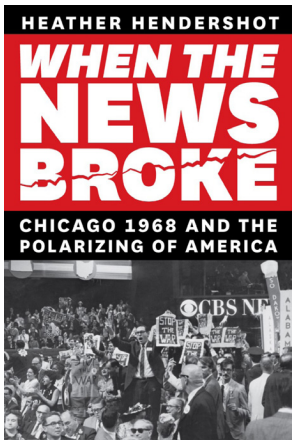
Notes

1. Stacy Schiff, *The Revolutionary Samuel Adams* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2022), 49.
2. Ibid., 191.
3. Ibid., 327.

When the News Broke:

Chicago 1968 and the Polarizing of America

Book by Heather Hendershot



When the News Broke: Chicago 1968 and the Polarizing of America. By Heather Hendershot. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2023; 400 pp. ISBN: 978-0-22676-8-526.)

Heather Hendershot, author of *When the News Broke: Chicago 1968 and the Polarizing of America*, is a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the comparative media studies/writing program. She specializes in American film and television, particularly in the 1960s-1970s, with a focus on conservative media, television news, and television history. Based on Hendershot's rigorous analysis of an extensive array of archival and secondary sources, Hendershot interrogated the origins of the biased liberal media narrative that has become a stronghold of contemporary conservative news. Hendershot explicated how journalists and politicians contributed to the public's understanding of the role of journalism and the free press through an analysis of the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. *When the News Broke* challenges modern conceptualizations that conservative communities and media solely contributed to the attack on an American free press.

The book encapsulates how journalists, including famous figures such as Walter Cronkite of CBS, negotiated their roles as objective and neutral reporters for fear of being accused of advocacy reporting. The DNC in Chicago illustrates a shift in viewer responses and politicians' discourse concerned about liberal media bias. While the network era was marked by the ideal of unbiased and balanced reporting, a result of "an imperfect notion of 'public service,'" the 1960s-70s ushered in greater criticism of the individual reporters rather than criticism of stories and coverage.[1]

Hendershot explained that Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and President Lyndon B. Johnson, upset with news networks' coverage of police overreach and Democratic leaders, led cries of unfair representations of Chicago security measures, which included a wall surrounding the convention center and increased police interventions for organized protests. News networks became subjects of criticism across the country, as the Nixon administration regularly attacked journalists, networks, and newspapers.

Hendershot draws upon cultural[2] and socioeconomic[3] scholarship to evaluate the value and meaning-making of media discourses that continue to resonate in the journalism field. Interweaving wider cultural debates on the Black community's erasure in the Democratic party of the 1960s, the civil rights movement, the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and the presence of women in the workforce, Hendershot identifies important historical context for the DNC convention and long-lasting outcomes for public trust of the news.

Chapter One, "The Storm Before the Storm," recounts Mayor Daley's preparations for the convention, spending millions on air conditioning inside the building to accommodate heat from the bright lights for cameras, constructing fences, and placing flyers commending Daley outside the building. Television coverage of live events could influence public understanding of live events, thus Republicans and Democrats understood that a "controlled show was ideal."[4] Archival footage and correspondence indicate efforts to control narratives created barriers to press freedom. As journalists focused on preparations for the convention, their reporting largely overlooked non-white protestors and delegates, which Hendershot connected to Daley's limitations and accu-

sations that networks had given free publicity to Black activists.

Tensions between convention planners, delegates, and reporters increased by the first day of the convention, detailed in Chapter Two, "Day One." The chapter primarily focuses on the Big Three networks and their major reporters: CBS (Cronkite and Roger Mudd), NBC (David Brinkley and Chet Huntley), and ABC (Ralph Schoenstein). Issues such as expanded security and the inability to report on events live were openly discussed by networks, although ABC and NBC took slightly less critical tones in opening coverage. Networks relied on "fairness" principles, viewing journalism as a public good.[5] Hendershot illustrated how this led to missed opportunities to explain complex challenges from delegates, especially the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party's focus on Black disenfranchisement. Protests escalated inside and outside the building, and a reporter was attacked by police after refusing to surrender his camera.

Hendershot reflected disillusionment with the convention in Chapter Three, "Day Two." She explained a "nationally televised" political failure that networks, devoted to neutrality, tried to cover as news rather than political theater.[6] Contentions between Democratic party factions devolved into filibusters that reflected a lack of unity in the party. Yet, when the Minnesota Black delegation walked out due to unfair representation, network responses were limited due to concerns that the reporting would be viewed as "advocacy."[7]

Chapter Four, "Day Three," presents challenges to journalists' attempts to follow professional standards for neutrality as they covered police brutality toward protestors. Hendershot provided a highly readable description of news presenting Vice President Hubert Horatio Humphrey celebrating his political success as a candidate hours after tear gas had reached his hotel suite. Police battles with Chicago protestors had escalated to the point that hospitals warned wounded protestors that police waited near emergency rooms to round up protestors. Hendershot's graphic description showed that news images of wounded protestors conveyed powerful truth about police conduct, as the narrative of liberal media bias was spreading.

Chapters Five and Six, "Day Four" and "The Storm After the Storm," analyze network coverage of protests, the famous Daley interview with Cronkite, and Daley's response to network coverage of the DNC convention, respectively. Focusing on fairness and balance, networks refrained from showing "the most gruesome" police violence and police targeting of journalists.[8] Hendershot quoted Cronkite's statement to Daley that he and others had commented on the friendliness of Chicago police "*before the unhappiness began*."[9] Cronkite indicated he and Daley might not agree as to how to handle such matters, and Daley said they never would.

Hendershot vividly described police violence, political missteps, and networks' frustration as political and media failures. Although networks strove to provide objective coverage, their coverage inspired vitriol regarding liberal media bias in the network news era, as more recent vitriol regarding media coverage has been associated with "fake news" in an era with social media and cable news.

Hendershot's clever analysis is grounded in the network era's key principles of unbiased and fair reporting. These standards for journalism were meant to inspire public trust. Yet, attacks against individual reporters and networks became more commonplace despite networks' attempts to provide objective coverage of the violence surrounding the convention. Hendershot's comprehensive narrative about the 1968 convention provides important context for how networks' attempts to provide fair and balanced reporting in the 1960s and sheds valuable light on other topics that remain important for journalists to cover today, including threats to press freedom and police brutality.

--Annette Masterson and Erin K. Coyle
Temple University

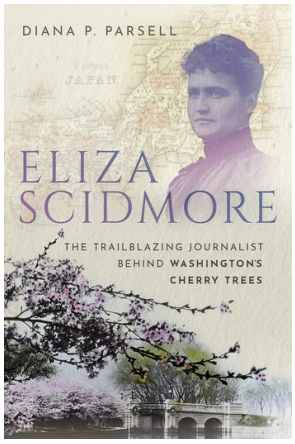
Notes

1. Heather Hendershot, *When the News Broke: Chicago 1968 and the Polarizing of America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2023), 321.
2. Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsh. 2006. "Television as a Cultural Forum," in *Television: The Critical View,* ed. Horace Newcomb. New York: Oxford University Press.
3. Michael J. Socolow. 2010. "'We Should Make Money on Our News': The Problem of Profitability in Network Broadcast Journalism History," *Journalism* 11, no. 6.
4. Hendershot, 53.
5. Hendershot, 83.
6. Hendershot, 97.
7. Hendershot, 125.
8. Hendershot, 143
9. Hendershot, 225.

Eliza Schidmore:

The Trailblazing Journalist Behind Washington's Cherry Trees

Book by Diana Parsell



Eliza Scidmore: The Trailblazing Journalist Behind Washington's Cherry Trees. By Diana Parsell. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2023, 448 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19886-9-429.)

Every spring, hundreds of thousands of people enjoy the colorful cherry blossoms on trees in Washington, D.C. The 3,000 cherry trees came from Japan in 1912 and have thrived over the years. (It should be noted that the original trees were infested with bugs and were destroyed. A second set of trees were planted and proved successful.) The presence of these trees is largely due to the efforts of journalist Eliza Scidmore.

Scidmore is worthy of a biography. She had a four-decade career as a journalist, beginning as a correspondent in Washington during the Gilded Age and built on that experience to explore the world. She was born in the Midwest in 1856 and initially grew up in Madison, Wisconsin. Later, she relocated to Washington. During her career, she had the advantage of being a white, educated (she briefly attended Oberlin College) and sister of a U.S. diplomat. She began as a society writer—a common career path for women journalists at the time—but soon became a travel journalist. By 1885, she visited Japan, a country that she would long be connected to during her life.

The book's author, Diana Parsell, is a writer in the D.C. area. She discovered the story of Scidmore while working in Southeast Asia. It led her to write the biography *Eliza Scidmore: The Trailblazing Journalist Behind Washington's Cherry Trees*. Parsell spent a decade researching and writing the book, uncovering 800 of Scidmore's articles for analysis. The book is an impressive read.

While Scidmore was more of a travel writer than an environmental journalist, she did pen conservation articles. For example, she wrote about the national park reserves and wilderness preservation. These stories were ahead of her time and laid the foundation of environmental reporting today. Her career shows that at least some women journalists had beats that went beyond feature stories.

To research Scidmore, Parsell spent considerable hours in the Library of Congress and also conducted "walk in her footsteps" adventures, including travels in Alaska. She refers to Scidmore as a kind of "Forrest Gump" for being a witness to so many important moments in history. For example, Scidmore visited the Dakota Territories near the end of the Indian Wars and toured POW camps during the Russo-Japanese War.

It was her travels to Japan that inspired her crusade to introduce the beautiful cherry trees to Washington. Initially, in the 1880s, the men in charge of the city's parks did not appreciate her vision. Many years later, it was her partnership with First Lady Helen Taft that made the cherry tree project a reality.

Scidmore also wrote several travel books, including those about Alaska, China, and India. In 1892, she was the first female board member of the National Geographic Society, and she published several articles in its magazine. As of 2024, the organization continues to give out an award in Scidmore's name for storytelling.

Parsell's book is an engaging read and includes significant references. The primary sources are especially impressive because a relative had destroyed many of Scidmore's papers at her directive. For historians, the prologue is especially powerful as Parsell explains how she conducted her research and how she got to understand her subject.

This is an important book to include in journalism and women's history. Scidmore's story adds to the many women journalists who have been left out of history. Often, the history of women journalists at the time is limited to society writers or stunt girls. While not always common, there were many women journalists who covered important news over the decades. Too often, women's contributions to history are overlooked. This book helps fill in that space. The many locals and tourists who admire the cherry trees in Washington, Scidmore should be recognized.

--Kimberly Voss
University of Central Florida

Instructions to
Contributors

The *Southeastern Review of Journalism History* is a bi-annual peer-reviewed journal inviting research papers on any facet of U.S. and international journalism history. We accept papers that employ a variety of approaches to journalism history (straight narrative, quantitative, theoretical, etc.).

The *Review* encourages both undergraduate and graduate students to submit papers that they have presented at mass communication conferences. Such conferences include, but are not limited to, those of the American Journalism Historians Association, AEJMC, AEJMC History/AJHA Joint Conference, ICA, Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression, and regional or mid-winter AEJMC conferences.

The *Review*, founded by Dr. Leonard Teel at Georgia State University (as *The Atlanta Review of Journalism History*), sees journalism history broadly and will consider all forms of mass communication that have had impact on any area of journalism's past. Topics in past editions have included column writing, coverage of major topics and events in national and international history (such as civil war, economic policy, frontier society, immigration, national liberation, racism, and slavery), muckraking, reporting arts, leisure, and sports, sensationalism, and travel writing, among others.

Papers are accepted on a continuing basis for publication in future issues. Papers should be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font, with endnotes, and submitted in Microsoft Word format. Please limit article size to around 7,500 words (25 double-spaced pages in 12 Times New Roman), not counting the title page, abstract, and endnotes. Please use of the Chicago Manual of Style for formatting and citations. Please included the following:

- An email with the attached paper, with the author's name, the date, and her/his affiliation.
- In the attached paper, please include the title page, a 200-word abstract, body of the paper, and endnotes.
- Also include the author's information (email address, telephone number, institutional affiliation, student or faculty status) in the text of the email.
- An undergraduate student submitting a paper needs to also send a statement that her/his paper has been presented at a research conference (confirmation email or PDF of a conference program will do).

The journal is also accepting book reviews of recently published books. Reviews should be no more than 1,000 words in length and focused on books that deal with some aspect of journalism history.

Editors Debra Reddin van Tuyll and David W. Bulla of Augusta University coordinate paper submissions. They try to notify authors within three months of the outcome of the review process.

For submission of a research paper, please email Dr. van Tuyll at: dvantuyl@augusta.edu or (706) 339-0178

For submission of a book review, please email Dr. Bulla at: dbulla@augusta.edu or (706) 729-2416

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