

History of the United States Press

The Press of the United States has been a powerful entity in American society for a major part of the United States. The press was started after the Civil War in 1865 and has had many different forms. For instance newspapers, digital media, 24 hour news cycles etc... However all of these changes have had many effects on politics and the psyche of the American people. Over the years the press has had many changes over its existence and many effects on people.

With the technological advances starting in the early 1900s the media began to become more factual and not as based on one's opinion. This change occurred due to the technological advances that started in the early 1900s. The revolution started with the rise of the telegram which allowed for communication and news to be more widespread and get to larger audiences. Then shortly after the rise of the telegram, the radio started to become widespread. "1920, KDKA, Pittsburgh, first radio station was produced¹". With radio becoming widespread news and information was able to be produced and put out quicker and the spread of information increased. Also, with the radio becoming more popular people were able to listen from their homes or anywhere the radio would receive the signals. All of this technology allowed for the U.S. press to get their messages out to more people in a more timely manner. Another invention that helped the grip of the U.S. press is the Television. The television, also known as tv, took the United States by storm and ended up being in almost every household. The U.S. press took this new technology and used it to show a more visual perspective on the news and allowed for viewers to be able to see what was occurring. An example of this is , "Following WWII, politicians had less control over reporting. (FDR compared to Nixon), 1960, Kennedy-Nixon presidential debate, and Graphic reporting on the Vietnam War fueled anti-war protests²". This technology allowed the press to convey their images and their opinions all over the United States and helped them fuel their own interests and to help spread their opinions. This was used during the Watergate scandal, a scandal that ended up with President Nixon stepping down in office, and also used over election periods to help promote certain candidates.

News is still shown over television all these years later and is still one of the primary sources for information to the public. However now news has its own stations and channels. These channels started in the 1980s after "Deregulation allow(ed) FOX and CNN to join the 'Big Three'. (CBS, ABC, and NBC)³". These news sources have had a major impact on the citizens of the United States through the U.S. press with news being available almost any hour of the day. The big three use their platforms to get on going and current events out to the public, however these forms of press allow for opinions and agendas to be given out as well. For instance Fox is

¹ Robert Fuller, "The American Press since 1865," lecture at Arizona State University, Spring 2023.

² Robert Fuller, "The American Press since 1865," lecture at Arizona State University, Spring 2023.

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credited to be more of a right wing network due to its takes on presidential debates and the information it gives out to the public. Overall the television has helped the U.S. press increase its effectiveness and also allowed for it to reach the masses. Another form of media that has helped the U.S. press expand is the internet. The internet is connected to everyone in recent times and has allowed for the press to be available 24/7. Everyone can write and post on the internet primarily through social media such as reddit, twitter, instagram, facebook, snapchat, forums, etc... This has allowed for everyone's opinion to be heard but has also hurt the spread of information through misinformation, fake news, and malicious news. When you give the power for everyone to give their opinion it doesn't allow for the facts to be facts. Everyone can make up a fact or interrupt a fact in their own way even if subconsciously. Overall this has helped the U.S. press diversify and allow for everyone to be heard.

In conclusion, the United States press has expanded and evolved since its start to where it is today. Through the many avenues of innovation the press has prevailed in many ways. In this reflection I didn't follow a key author because history is messy and it is all over the place. Overall, The U.S. press has been here for a long time and will continue to be here for a long time to come.