

**The Birth of Modern Journalism
&
The War Between the States**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral
Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Communication

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-83107-6
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-83107-6

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Abstract

This thesis examines the implications that the 1861-1865 American Civil War and its newspaper coverage held for the development of modern American journalism. By using a content analysis of four popular newspapers of the day, it will demonstrate how many journalistic practices appeared and evolved over the course of the war and the subsequent Reconstruction Period.

This thesis maintains that the press' increasing use of the electric telegraph to gather and relay news played a role in changing the face of communication by separating it from transportation, by eroding the balance between space and time as well as by altering the very format of antebellum journalism on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to several people who have helped this thesis develop from an idea on a post-it note to the finished product you have before you. I should begin by thanking my thesis advisor, Andre Turcotte, for his guidance and feedback on the winding road to completing a Master's thesis. I am very grateful for the new perspectives and valuable insights offered by both Stuart Adam and Michele Martin throughout this learning experience. I also want to extend a special thank you to Heather Pyman for her generous help and, of course, her patience during the challenging data-entry and analysis process. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional love, unwavering encouragement and unshakable support over the course of these past two years.

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I

The American Civil War is viewed as one of the single most defining events in American history. Robert Luther Thompson (1947) says it best when he claims that, “[It] had a profound effect upon nearly every phase of American life” (p. 373). Although the last shot of the War Between the States was fired some 145 years ago, the legacy of this epochal event still plays an important role in the American experience. As Brian Holden Reid (1996) puts it, “The Civil War forms a fundamental touchstone, a symbol of wisdom and inspiration, which is invoked during any polemical controversy or national crisis” (p. 1). While countless books have been written about most aspects of the Civil War, many have neglected the implications of the war for the field of journalism, an under-examined chapter in media history which will be addressed by this thesis. In so doing, the goal will be to show how much of the foundation for the modern practices and products of journalism taken for granted today was in fact established during the American Civil War.

It is surprising to realize that the Civil War’s impact on journalism is often overlooked in media history since the link between the Civil War and journalism was evidenced in countless ways throughout the course of the five-year conflict. In fact, as Debra Reddin van Tuyll (2008) points out, in the early morning hours of April 12, 1861, it was a Virginia newspaper editor, Edmund Ruffin, who pulled the canon trigger and fired the first shell at the Fort Sumter Union army outpost in the Charleston harbor, thereby beginning the war (p. 135). In essence, not only did journalists play the important role of covering the war and relaying their information back to the nation’s readers but, unlike many other wars before and after, journalists were instrumental in initiating the

conflict itself. Accordingly, before going any further, it is pertinent to review briefly the historical context of the events which are the focus of this thesis. In doing so, one crucial question must be asked: how could a nation that had been in existence for less than a century spawn a war that would split the United States in two, pitting neighbor against neighbor and resulting in more casualties and destruction than has ever been seen on North American soil even to this day?

Splitting the Union in Two: Why Civil War Came to America

Countless books, theses and dissertations have examined the causes of the Civil War and the reasons why it proved to be as destructive as it was. Yet, providing an exhaustively detailed answer is not the purpose of this thesis. Rather, the intent is to focus on journalism in the Civil War and the way that it contributed to the development of what we would consider modern journalism today. Nonetheless, the turbulent socio-political climate of mid-nineteenth century America should be discussed here so that readers unfamiliar with the topic can have a better understanding of the events to be examined in subsequent chapters. To do so, the “peculiar institution” of slavery must be our starting point.

Slavery as an institution had existed in the United States since before the drafting of the Declaration of Independence and it remained in place long after the United States of America was founded and the Constitution was ratified. By the mid nineteenth century, the Atlantic slave trade had ended and chattel slavery in America was confined to the Southern states. But despite the fact that, in the 1830s, slavery may not have existed in the North, that institution was anything but insignificant. James L. Huston (2003) puts this into perspective when he notes that, “Slaves accounted for approximately

18.75 percent of the national wealth [... and] slaveholding comprised far more national wealth than railroads and manufacturing combined” (p. 27). The sheer size of the institution of slavery becomes even clearer when it is given a monetary value. In 1860, slavery as an institution was worth approximately \$3 billion which “was almost 50 percent more than the \$2.2 billion invested in railroads and manufacturing” (p. 27). Not surprisingly, since slavery as an institution was worth so much economically, Southerners saw slaves themselves as a form of property yet the nation as a whole remained divided on this issue (p. xiv).

Northerners and Southerners diverged in terms of what they thought could be considered property (Huston, 2003, p. 40). For instance, “In the South, acquiring property to climb the social ladder meant acquiring slaves [...yet,] for Northerners, property was either inert matter, some form of currency, animals, or land—but it was not people” (p. 40). Despite the fact that most Northerners could not conceive of people as property and that slavery no longer existed in the North, racism was rampant both above and below the Mason Dixon line (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 2003). However, there remained a consensus among Southerners about what constituted the purpose of the states: “to protect property rights in slaves, and the purpose of the Constitution was to stop all others from meddling with those rights” (Huston, 2003, p. 52). Despite the clear difference of opinion about what constituted property, as well as the occasional sectional tensions that these differences created, in the early nineteenth century slavery appeared not to be a divisive issue. However, that would soon change.

According to James W. Davidson et al (2006), “It was only in the mid-1840s, when the United States embarked on a new program of westward expansion, that the

slavery issue began to loom ominously in American life and Americans began to question whether the Union could permanently endure, half slave and half free” (p. 421). For the most part, when they did grapple with this issue, it was not based on the moral grounds that we would imagine (Huston, 2003, p. 62). Instead, “the debate over slavery in the antebellum years was about the effects of slavery on the white population nationally, not about the injustice done to Africans” (p. 62). Many Northerners worried that an expansion in the number of slave states would inevitably initiate a clash between slavery and “free labor” (wage labor) and they were determined to ensure that Free states held majorities in both Houses of Congress to prevent this clash from occurring (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 1987; Huston, 2003). However, this proved difficult to do as America acquired new territories and expanded westward.

In 1846, the task became even more difficult when the Wilmot Proviso was introduced (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 2003). Essentially, the Wilmot Proviso was an amendment to a monetary bill aimed at purchasing new territories from the Mexican government (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 2003). The amendment proposed by David Wilmot initiated a previously unimaginable explosion of sectional tension between the North and the South since it proposed to “bar slavery from any territory acquired from Mexico” (p. 440). Although the bill including the Wilmot Proviso would pass in the House of Representatives only to be killed in the Senate, Southern Democrats immediately realized that their \$3 billion dollar industry was under attack. They took evasive action to ensure that Northern Free States would not prohibit the expansion of slavery (p. 440). American politics had become polarized and sectionalized.

Political bargaining was the only option to diffuse this new sense of partisan tension and gridlock between North and South. But things did not always go smoothly. The introduction of “popular sovereignty” to determine whether or not the state of Kansas would be admitted to the union as a free or slave state only heightened these sectional tensions throughout the nation and especially in Congress (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 2003; O’Brien, 2007). Cormac O’Brien (2007) sums things up when he states that, “Political bargains—particularly [...] the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854)—were arranged with the intention of balancing the relative territory and power of slave and free factions, but usually pleased neither” (p. 9). Although slavery, including the wealth and problems it caused, planted the seed for civil war, there were other determinants for the coming war.

Regional economic specialization was another important force that played a role in splitting the union in two (Beckett, 1993; Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 1987; Reid, 1996). By the 1850s, many thought that America looked like two different nations stitched together. The Southern states were mostly rural and were driven by largely agrarian economies. Agriculture was the engine of the Southern economy and chattel slavery was seen as necessary to maintain the Southern way of life despite the fact that the majority of Southerners were not slave owners (Davidson et al, 2006; Huston, 1987). Nonetheless, the Southern states generated the majority of their income from harvesting cotton, tobacco, rice and sugar (Huston, 1987, p. 3). The Northern states scarcely resembled those south of the Mason Dixon Line. For instance, “Northerners did not have the single dominating economic and social institution that Southerners had, but they were heavily influenced by two mighty forces: industrialization and urbanization” (p. 8).

Agriculture was still important in the North, but it was not nearly as important as industrial manufacturing and commerce (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 462). In fact, this regional economic specialization was so entrenched that quite often, “the South relied on the Northeast for financial and mercantile operations” (Huston, 1987, p. 4).

The fact that the economy in the South was predominantly agrarian while that of the North was based on commerce and manufacturing alone did not exacerbate the differences between these two regions. But when slavery was added to the equation as the institution which allowed the South’s economy to thrive, economic specialization began to appear less sustainable and seemed to contribute to political sectionalism (Huston, 1987). To make matters worse, the Panic of 1857 and the subsequent collapse of the financial system made the differences between these two regions clearly visible to the naked eye (Huston, 1987). Unlike the North, “the South almost totally escaped the ravages of the Panic. Indeed, many Americans acknowledged that the South was seemingly impervious to economic fluctuations and that the prosperity of the Atlantic economy rested upon southern production of cotton” (Huston, 1987, p. 262). During the aftermath of the Panic of 1857, the South prospered while the North floundered due to the simple fact that that the dominant purchaser of Southern cotton, as well as other agricultural products, was not the northern states but England and, to a lesser extent, continental Europe (Beckett, 1993; Huston, 1987). The limited exposure of Southern exports to the northern United States allowed the southern states to isolate themselves from the hardships faced by those in the North (p. 262). Moreover, the fact that this disproportionate prosperity was secured solely through the use of slavery was yet another

reason that slavery was fast becoming the most divisive issue in American politics (p. 261).

Though the foundation for a divided nation was laid by the continuation of the nearly century-old institution of slavery, 1860 was the year which would decide the future shape of America, shattering any possibility of reconciling the sectional tensions created by the “slavery issue” (Reid, 1996, p. 308-9). As Brian Holden Reid and many other historians have pointed out, “It was 1860, and not 1857 [...] that was the crucial year of decision. It was the presidential election that triggers off the secession crisis that provides the issue between the secessionists and the Federal government” (p. 398-9). The 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln on the Republican Party ticket occurred without any Southern support (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 479). To say that Lincoln’s election further polarized America would be an understatement. For instance, “Representing the relatively new Republican Party, Lincoln—though a moderate—was known as a critic of slavery. His victory was a worst-case scenario for fretting Southern secessionists, representing all the requisite horrors: A free state candidate from the party of abolitionists had acquired the very pinnacle of political power. The long years of compromise were over” (O’Brien, 2007, p. 10). Things went from bad to worse when, on December 20th, 1860, South Carolina seceded from the Union (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 480). Within two months, the other Deep South states left the Union and formed the Confederate States of America, electing Jefferson Davis to the office of the President of the CSA (p. 480).

By February of 1861, what had once been the United States of America was now split into two halves—although the Confederacy was never recognized as a nation by the

international community (Beckett, 1993; Davidson et al, 2006). That said, it is important to point out that:

The act of secession itself did not lead inevitably to war. Secessionist acts do not intrinsically carry the seeds of civil war—although there are few secessions carried out peaceably [...] the real cause of organized violence was the way that secession had been carried out. The seceded states were unconsolidated, uncoordinated and ill-prepared for independence materially and psychologically. The same was true of the northern states and the Federal government. (Reid, 1996, p. 311)

This state of disorganization culminated in an overnight military expansion and armament of the Confederacy (p. 399). With the rapid increase in the Confederate arsenal and the repeated failures of diplomatic attempts to restore the union, armed confrontation now seemed inevitable. In the early morning of April 12th, 1861, the Confederate army started shelling the federal (Northern) outpost of Fort Sumter located in the Charleston harbor in Charleston, South Carolina. The shelling continued uninterrupted for some thirty-four hours before the Union soldiers stationed there surrendered (p. 354). The Confederate President, Jefferson Davis, gambled by issuing the order to fire on Sumter. Davis's motivation for attacking the Northern outpost was purely strategic since, "He thought an energetic exercise in belligerence would frighten the North and allow him to assert Confederate rights and territorial integrity without loss of life. He calculated wrongly, even though the bombardment of Fort Sumter led to a significant accretion of Confederate power and the secession of the Upper South" (p. 357-8). Shortly after the Northern forces at Sumter surrendered, war was declared. Although no one was killed as a direct result of the shelling of Fort Sumter, more than 620,000 would lose their lives in the war that followed (Davidson et al, 2006; O'Brien, 2007; Reid, 1996). The "slavery issue" had finally brought civil war to America.

Throughout this turbulent period, much of the news that was printed in the newspapers in the North and the South could be classified as a form of “journalistic agitation” (Schivelbusch, 2001/2003, p. 28). As America expanded towards the Pacific coast, many thought that the growth in the number of newspapers accompanying this geographical expansion would “bring the nation closer together and expand the area of ‘civilization’” (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 110). While it may be true that the number of newspapers grew dramatically during the antebellum era with newspaper readership following suit, the end result was anything but a stronger sense of national unity (Huntzicker, 1999; Lloyd, 2006; Starr, 2004).

Rather than bringing about national unity, the expansion in newspapers and their readership during this era heightened tensions between those who held differing opinions on many of the divisive issues of the time (Huntzicker, 1999; Lloyd, 2006; Starr, 2004). For instance, William E. Huntzicker (1999) maintains that, “instead of a unified nation following its manifest destiny, the nation broke into many factions; all of them claimed God on their side. Newspapers contributed to this factionalism by supporting small, specialized constituencies of interest-oriented communities across geographical lines” (p. 173). In essence, the diversity that had resulted from the expansion of distinct newspapers catering to nearly every segment of the population during the first half of the nineteenth century accentuated sectional tensions (Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996; Huntzicker, 1999; Reid, 1996). Carol Sue Humphrey (1996) concisely sums up this state of affairs when she states that, “Variety often results in fragmentation, and the American press experienced fragmentation” (p. 129). The fragmentation of the antebellum press to which Humphrey is referring came about through the establishment of a type of hyper-

polarization in which a newspaper would adopt a specific stance on a particular issue and it would use the rhetoric in its columns to bolster support for its cause while vehemently attacking the opposing point of view (Humphrey, 1996; Huntzicker, 1999; Pasley, 2001; Schudson, 1978).

What was discussed represented some of the most divisive issues with which the nation was struggling. For instance, “Between their editorial debates over tariffs, the westward expansion of slavery, abolition, and states’ rights, the South’s 800 or so newspapers had, as a whole, done much to help bring the country to the brink of war” (Van Tuyl, 2008, p. 135). As well, the Northern press in antebellum America was just as likely to heighten the tensions between Northerners and their Southern neighbors. While such complex and divisive issues provided Northerners and Southerners with ample material about which to spar, the nature of journalism in antebellum America requires further exploration in order to lay the foundation for the analysis that will follow in this thesis.

An Unfamiliar Breed: Journalism in Antebellum America

Journalism in the antebellum era looked very different from what we would associate with the news in the twenty-first century. The press in antebellum America could broadly be viewed as openly partisan (Copeland, 2003; Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996; Huntzicker, 1999; Pasley, 2001). As David Copeland (2003) explains, “Newspapers began to support and promote the ideologies of parties and their chief spokesman. The resulting partisan press, while not specifically owned by the political parties, advocated and promoted what their respective party leaders said” (p. 6). This pattern was nothing new. It had begun in the late eighteenth century even before the

Thirteen Colonies broke from British rule, at a time when, “newspapers divided into Patriot and Tory factions. The Tory faction was never large, and Americans who favored independence coerced the Tory printers into silence” (p. 6). Nevertheless, America’s press remained blatantly partisan well into the antebellum era (Copeland, 2003; Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996; Pasley, 2001).

In that highly partisan press, newspapers fulfilled the task of providing their readers with “a common rhetoric and common ideas,” although both were one-sided since they did not offer the other parties’ perspectives (Pasley, 2001, p. 12). It was through newspapers’ ability to offer this “common rhetoric and [these] common ideas,” that individuals were able to develop a sense of party affiliation in the first half of the nineteenth century (p. 12). For instance, unlike modern day American politics, “There were no ‘card-carrying’ party members or ‘registered voters’ in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century America, but a subscription to a party newspaper, or regular readership of one in a tavern or reading room, substituted for these more formal means of belonging” (p. 12). In essence, readers during this era were well aware of the partisan nature of their newspapers and they did not expect objectivity in their reporting (Humphrey, 1996; Schudson, 1978). Humphrey (1996) sums up the mood of the populace of the day when she explains that, “Publications were supposed to take sides in political conflicts and work to convince people to support their positions or their candidates” (p. 156). In fact, partisanship was such an obvious attribute of antebellum journalism that it was not unusual for newspapers to include the name of their party of allegiance in their paper’s title or masthead (Copeland, 2003, p. 6). But the partisan nature of American antebellum newspapers was only half of the equation. The other half of the unfamiliar (from a

twenty-first century perspective) intimacy between the press and politics was located in the widespread use of patronage as an acceptable political bargaining chip.

Again, like the partisan nature of the press mentioned above, the political patronage aspect of the press was rooted in the pre-Revolutionary period but it too did not reach maturity until the antebellum era (Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996). It was during Democratic President Andrew Jackson's administration, in the 1830s, that political patronage reigned supreme and it was at that time that, "the political system of the day ensured that the party in power could reward its loyal editors by granting them government printing contracts and political office" (Copeland, 2003, p. 6). Jackson and his predecessors did precisely that, although Jackson did so more vigorously than all the other presidents of the antebellum period (Humphrey, 1996, p. 127). For instance, "Jackson also [...] involved journalists in political office more than ever before. He gave federal government jobs to fifty-seven journalists" (p.128). That trend continued for three presidential administrations after that of Jackson until 1846 when Congress passed legislation forcing the government to open up federal printing contracts to public bidding (Copeland, 2003, p. 6).

Closely related to the thriving practice of patronage was the rise to power of the newspaper editor which also reached its pinnacle during the antebellum era. In the decades before that era, many of America's literate tradesmen and artisans who were already working in the new nation's printing industry as apprentices sought to move up and become members of a still-developing sub-segment of American society: the newspaper editor (Humphrey, 1996; Huntzicker, 1999; Pasley, 2001). Humphrey (1996) explains this situation by identifying that:

During the colonial and Revolutionary eras, most printing shops had been family operations, with possibly one or two employees. As the press grew during the years of the early Republic, diversification occurred. The first specialized job to appear was that of editor, primarily because of the need for someone to guide the newspaper's public stands on politics during the partisan conflicts of the 1790s. As the editor became the recognized controller of content in a newspaper, the person who printed the paper became an employee who simply produced the final product without really being involved in its substance. (p. 156)

In this light, becoming a newspaper editor in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was seen as an attractive path towards upward mobility in a society that still did not have a traditional professional middle class by any modern standard (Pasley, 2001, p. 20). Jeffrey L. Pasley sums up this trend by stating that, "After 1798, printers and other young men of similar status thronged into the editorial ranks for the chance (unprecedented for men of their class) to become important actors in the public sphere" (p. 23). By the antebellum era only a few short decades later, these editors had become extremely important individuals indeed.

The editors of the antebellum period were intensely politically engaged and they used the newspapers they were editing as pulpits to disseminate the opinions of their favored political party (Huntzicker, 1999; Pasley, 2001). Their effectiveness in this task cannot be overemphasized. For example, "Party newspaper editors occupied the nodal points of the political system [...since] it was the editors who controlled them, using their newspapers to direct the affairs of the party and coordinate its message" (p. 23). In other words, this new class of "professional" editors operated in a way that allowed them to move from the position of a mere skilled laborer or artisan to an influential political insider. Again, it was during the Jackson presidency, in the middle of the antebellum era, that this new force in the world of journalism reached its zenith (Huntzicker, 1999). By

that time, the dominance of newspaper editors had been firmly established: they had gone beyond the role of just running a newspaper and had “became lobbyists, currying favor among congressmen and trying to get a share of the government’s growing and increasing political printing contracts” (p. 35). Not surprisingly, the extremely partisan role assumed by editors in order to further their social mobility led to the “agitation journalism” mentioned earlier, intensifying the factionalism that was one of the principal reasons why the United States of America would erupt into a state of civil war (p. 36).

But the journalistic differences that existed in the antebellum era went beyond the attributes of the trade itself. The actual newspapers of this era bore little resemblance to those of more contemporary times. Throughout the opening decades of the nineteenth century, newspapers needed to be purchased through annual subscriptions from their publisher (Humphrey, 1996, p. 137). While it may have been true that this practice made newspapers a rather elitist form of media during the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, it was done for very practical reasons: “Such a policy limited access somewhat to newspapers, but sought to ensure a set amount of income for the publishers” (p. 137). This strategy was seen as necessary due to the extremely high costs associated with printing a newspaper in the early 1800s. Despite the fact that a newspaper subscription was very expensive at the time, upwards of fifty percent of American family households subscribed to a newspaper by the end of the 1830s (p. 135). However, the physical appearance of that newspaper would be very different to the eyes of the modern reader.

Newspapers in the antebellum era seemed to come in two sizes. The “penny papers” which were published by a new breed of entrepreneurs, beginning with Benjamin Day and his *New York Sun* in 1833, were extremely small in size and looked more like a

newsletter than a full-fledged newspaper, a clear contrast to the “blanket newspapers” (due to their huge size) which were published before 1833 (Copeland, 2003, p. 13). For example, Day’s newspaper, as well as many of the other penny papers that emerged in the 1830s, was “about the size of a piece of notebook paper and four pages in length” (p. 13). While the penny papers were very small in size, they quickly gained a very large audience because of their inexpensive price (one penny) and the fact that their content consisted of stories, news and events that appealed to ordinary Americans, not just the well educated who could easily afford a subscription to the nation’s more traditional newspapers (Copeland, 2003; Huntzicker, 1999; Schudson, 1978). They soon began to grow in size as their popularity increased and readers demanded that more information be packed into these publications (Copeland, 2003, p. 14). At the other end of the spectrum were the “blanket newspapers” which often contained more traditional news in their columns. As mentioned earlier, the blanket papers got their nickname through their massive size (p. 13). For instance, “Because of the large size of antebellum newspapers and their use of extremely small type, some newspaper articles could equal twenty pages of double-spaced, twelve-point type” (p. 17). Clearly, antebellum newspapers were characterized by one of two extremes when it came to size.

Still, it was not size alone that set antebellum newspapers apart from modern papers. There were other very important physical features that characterized the newspapers of the era. One of the most noticeable differences was the absence of clearly distinguishable headlines in the antebellum publications (Copeland, 2003; Huntzicker, 1999). Huntzicker (1999) gives an accurate description of what appeared where we would normally expect the headlines to be. He explains that there were “No crowd-

stopping headlines on the pages. Instead, a single line of body type in capital letters provided a dramatic heading” (p. 3). Also absent from the majority of the type in antebellum newspapers was the byline (Copeland, 2003; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). The articles that appeared in antebellum papers were usually unaccompanied by any identification of their author (Copeland, 2003; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). Should an article bear some form of identification, it would usually not be a name but would be either symbols or a clearly fictitious penname (Copeland, 2003, p. 15). For instance, “Authors still, at times, used pseudonyms, a practice dating back to colonial America and to seventeenth-century England. Editorials, too, were not generally accompanied by a name” (p. 15). A quick glance at the front page of the Wednesday, October 1st, 1851 edition of the *New York Times* (*Figure 1*) displays a typical antebellum newspaper layout and illustrates the different appearance of antebellum newspapers compared with those of today. The key features to be noted in *Figure 1* are the six columns of dense text and the absence of both headlines and bylines. As *Figure 1* clearly demonstrates, at that time, anonymity and a lack of attention-grabbing headlines were two of the defining features of journalism.

The material published in antebellum newspapers and also the manner in which that material was organized was very unlike that of modern newspapers. As Pasley (2001) puts it, “Through most of the nineteenth century, only the largest urban dailies maintained reporting staffs. The rest delivered the ‘news’ in a desultory, haphazard fashion, printing letters written or sent to the editor, material from other newspapers, and raw government documents” (p. 2). Consequently, there seemed to be little actual news (according to our contemporary interpretation of the word) in many antebellum papers.

As was suggested above, there was also very little organization in the layout and presentation of antebellum newspapers (Huntzicker, 1999). For instance, “Generally, [the] arrangement of articles on a page followed no particular logic” (p. 10). While there were exceptions to this rule, even the exceptions did not seem to follow the organizational structure of a modern newspaper with its stories divided into clean-cut, specialized sections devoted to a single category of story types or subjects. The few newspapers of the era that attempted to organize their stories at all did so in a practical yet extremely unorthodox manner. As Huntzicker explains,

When out-of-town news came via the exchanges, some printers set stories in chronological order as they arrived at the office; the first story to arrive might appear at the top of the first page with later developments and stories appearing next on the page or farther into the paper. As a result, the latest news could be at the bottom of any page, calling attention to the earlier story on page one. (p. 165)

In other words, it was not unusual for coverage of the most important events or happenings to be buried near the back of antebellum newspapers due to this formatting style. This is a sharp contrast to the general understanding today that the most important stories are always given prominence by appearing on the front page of a newspaper.

Despite the many differences characterizing antebellum journalism, there is one particularly important and lasting feature that continues to define journalism to the present day: the use of correspondents. For instance, “the early 1800s also saw the appearance of the first recognizable correspondents” (Humphrey, 1996, p. 140). Yet, while their occupation may have been recognizable, as was mentioned earlier, the correspondents themselves still remained anonymous to the readers of the newspapers for which they wrote in the antebellum era (Copeland, 2003; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962).

Further, despite the fact that correspondents were not identified, their attitudes clearly were and, consequently, the reports they wrote were anything but objective (Huntzicker, 1999; Schudson, 1978). For example, “Writers routinely passed judgment on the facts they reported, and the distinction between factual reporting and opinion did not become immediately clear” (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 5). The frequent inability to draw a clear line between opinion and hard news in antebellum newspapers was likely due to the fact that, as Michael Schudson (1978) explains, “in 1840 or 1850 or 1860, American journalism did not yet have clearly articulated common ideas and ideals” (p. 60). It was not yet seen as a professional occupation (p. 60).

The Emergence of a Relationship between Technology and Journalism

The remainder of this introductory chapter will examine the emergence of the surviving relationship between communications technology and journalism. The origin of this relationship in antebellum America will be examined first, followed by a brief discussion of the strengthening of this relationship during the coverage of the Civil War itself.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, newspapers and other printed materials were very expensive due to the fact that the resources needed to produce them were relatively scarce and the process of creating them was extremely labor intensive and costly (Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996; Starr, 2004). But in the middle of the antebellum era, America experienced a rapid reduction in the cost of printed materials including newspapers (Copeland, 2003; Humphrey, 1996; Starr, 2004). While the purpose of this thesis is not to explain how cheap print came to the United States of America, it is necessary to mention the role that technological developments played in

that phenomenon and how it was one of the first steps towards the future relationship between communications technology and journalism.

Although it may be tempting to go the technological determinist route and say that new developments in technology alone brought cheap print and therefore larger newspaper circulation to America, this is not the case (Starr, 2004, p. 125). As Paul Starr explains, “To conceive of technology as the causal force is to underestimate the prior importance of politics, culture, and markets in creating the conditions that allowed investments in new technology to pay off” (p. 125). And while it is important to keep this in mind, it is also important to note that, although technology alone may not have been the driving force behind bringing cheap print to America, it was certainly an important contributor (Copeland, 2003; Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 2004).

In the early antebellum period, paper was expensive since it had to be made from rags, often resulting in shortages in the supply of cloth and therefore very high paper prices (Copeland, 2003; Starr, 2004). However, new techniques in paper-making allowed for paper to be made from materials like soda wood pulp and straw which were in greater supply (Copeland, 2003; Starr, 2004). The combination of experimentation with new raw materials and the advent of the Fourdrinier automatic paper-making machines resulted in lower production costs and a roughly twenty five percent drop in the price of paper during the 1830s (Starr, 2004, p. 127). However, perhaps an even more important contributor to cheap print and the gradual development of the relationship between technology and journalism was the printing process itself.

In the early part of the antebellum period, newspapers and other publications were printed on wooden hand presses held by printers or printing apprentices (Huntzicker,

1999, p. 166). The result of this tedious printing process was twofold: fewer products produced and higher prices for those products. But in the 1830s, things changed (Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 2004). It was during this decade that, “the substitution of power-driven for hand presses and of presses working on the principle of the cylinder rather than the plane” caught on (Starr, 2004, p. 127). This mechanization and modernization of the printing industry produced staggering improvements in efficiency and productivity. For purposes of comparison, the average hand press of the early 1800s topped out at approximately 250 impressions per hour while the state-of-the-art steam-powered rotary printing presses of the 1840s and 1850s could print upwards of 12,000 impressions in the same amount of time (p. 128). Not surprisingly, “Like the advances in papermaking, the new presses cut costs and enabled both book and newspaper publishing to scale up to larger runs on faster timetables” (p. 128). Although improvements in printing technologies and techniques played a role in initiating the lasting relationship between technology and journalism, it was a radically new piece of communication technology rather than a refinement of past practices that would rapidly expand, and then solidify, that relationship. The device which would do so was the telegraph.

The telegraph represented, as John B. Thompson (1995) explains, “the first medium of communication which successfully exploited the communication potential of electricity” (p. 152). However, in the early nineteenth century, electricity remained a mysterious and largely unknown quantity to most Americans (Czitrom, 1982; Thompson, 1947). Daniel J. Czitrom (1982) explains how, despite the fact that electricity remained an obscure concept to most at the time, “in the 1820s and 1830s scientists from all over the world worked to create a viable electric telegraph” (p. 4). Ultimately, it was an

American by the name of Samuel Morse who won this race in 1838 (Czitrom, 1982; Lloyd, 2006; Thompson, 1947). Although Morse's electromagnetic telegraph was invented in 1838, a lack of funding for his project delayed the implementation of this radical new device (Czitrom, 1982; Huntzicker, 1999; Lloyd, 2006; Thompson, 1947). It should be noted that, "Five lonely and frustrating years passed before he obtained a thirty-thousand dollar grant [from the U.S. Congress] to construct a line between Baltimore and Washington, D.C" (Czitrom, 1982, p. 5-6). But on May 24th, 1844, the first telegraph line in America was officially opened (Czitrom, 1982; Huntzicker, 1999; Lloyd, 2006; Thompson, 1947).

While this inaugural telegraph line may have been a symbolic technological achievement, it was not a very practical or efficient communication artery. Mark Lloyd (2006) expands upon this when he notes that,

During the first six months the cost of operation was \$3,284.17, but telegraph revenue was only \$413.44. The first telegraph line was idle most of the time, operating at only 15 percent of capacity. In addition to its novelty, one of the main reasons for its underemployment was where it went to and from. In 1844, neither Washington nor Baltimore was a major urban center of the country. (p. 47)

To make matters worse, Morse was unable to persuade Congress to purchase the rights to his patents (Czitrom, 1982; Lloyd, 2006). The telegraph faced another damaging setback when, "After the government failed to buy them out, the inventor and his partners got into a complex legal tangle over patent ownership and construction rights" (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 94). Despite these major setbacks, as well as the prohibitively expensive costs associated with telegraph usage, the press was a key advocate in voicing support for further expansion of a technology which, even in the second half of the nineteenth century, still remained mysterious to most Americans (Thompson, 1947, p. 2). Robert

Thompson references the important fact that, in addition to its vocal advocacy for greater expansion of the technology, the press was the heaviest user of the technology itself during this era (p. 47).

Although the press became the principal user of the telegraph shortly after its arrival, its initial perception of the telegraph can be best described as lukewarm (Hunzicker, 1999, p. 96). Soon after the opening of the nation's first telegraph line, "Believing that newspapers controlled public opinion, some editors feared that instantaneous telegraphy could put newspapers out of business and give dangerous power directly to the people. If readers could get news instantly from a wire, would they wait for newspapers to be edited, printed, and distributed?" (p. 96). However, during the antebellum era, the extremely expensive transmission costs of telegraphy coupled with an ever-expanding readership of newspapers and the new urgency to be the first paper to print the news and get a "beat" on the competitor's paper quickly transformed journalists' perception of the telegraph (p. 95). At the risk of sounding like a technological determinist, "Although the press and commercial interests made the telegraph economically viable, the telegraph itself dramatically transformed the press. Telegraphy gave rise to both the modern conception of news and our present methods of newsgathering" (Czitrom, 1982, p. 14).

In sum, before the telegraph was harnessed by the press to disseminate news feeds and stories back to America's newspapers, there was less emphasis on immediacy in journalism (Blondheim, 1994; Czitrom, 1982; Knightley, 2000; Wheeler, 2006). For example, "Newspapers of the colonial and early national period, usually weeklies or semiweeklies, printed the news as it arrived through the mails or by word of mouth"

(Czitrom, 1982, p. 14). Once the telegraph introduced a revolutionary sense of immediacy into journalism, there was no going back. Getting a “beat” became a necessity and journalism was becoming more closely related to communications technology. Yet, this emerging relationship between communications technology and journalism would not reach maturity until the “peculiar institution” of slavery would split the nation in two, thus providing the opportunity for the telegraph to offer, for the first time, the comprehensive coverage that was unimaginable a few decades earlier (Knightley, 2000, p. 20).

The Civil War became the proving ground for the large-scale use of the telegraph to relay vast amounts of information from the front lines to the hundreds of newspapers scattered across the United States (Knightley, 2000, p. 20). Paul Starr (2004) explains how the telegraph allowed a level of interconnectivity that was unavailable in past conflicts (p. 177). He notes that, “During the Civil War, where Union armies advanced, telegraph lines followed, enabling President Lincoln [...] to stay in direct communication with his generals as no other president previously was able to do in wartime” (p. 177-8). But even more important for our purposes is the resulting solidification of the relationship between communication technology and journalism confirmed by the press’ use of the telegraph during the Civil War.

It is probably not surprising that, once the war began, there was a dramatic increase in news about the conflict as has been noted by many scholars (Blondheim, 1994; Gottlieb, 2003; Innis, 1951; Knightley, 2000; Schudson, 1978). It is also not surprising that this increased demand for war news ebbed and flowed with the events happening on the battle field. For example, a study by Menahem Blondheim (1994)

pointed out how, “When an important battle was taking place, newspapers could expect to sell five times as many papers as on other days” (p. 131). But what is surprising is how this particular conflict “pushed the newspaper closer to the center of the national consciousness” than ever before (Schudson, 1978, p. 67). Put differently, in a war fought on domestic soil where it was not unusual for family members to be on opposite sides of the conflict, newspapers—and journalism as a field—assumed a level of importance that had not been seen in the past (p. 67). As a result, recently developed technologies like the telegraph played the crucial role of transporting the information from the correspondents in the field to the newspapers on the home front.

The adoption of the electric telegraph for the distribution of news during the Civil War allowed a form of immediacy in journalism to develop which had been impossible only a decade earlier (Knightley, 2000; Wheeler, 2006). Tom Wheeler (2006) sheds light on this new immediacy in journalism by noting that a relationship was formed “between the telegraph and the rapid delivery of news that transformed both American journalism and politics” (p. 93). All accusations of technological determinism aside, it is safe to say that the journalistic use of the telegraph allowed for a greater volume of news to be spread more quickly than had ever before been the case, thus providing a sense of immediacy that was unfamiliar to American newspaper readers (p. 93). Phillip Knightley (2000) also references the new immediacy in stating that not only did the war increase the demand for news, and therefore increase newspaper sales, but it also led to a rapid expansion in the amount of content delivered “By Telegraph” (p. 20). Prior to the Civil War, the high cost of transmitting news feeds via telegraph meant that the majority of the columns in American newspapers were filled by stories collected more traditionally (p.

20). But, as the fate of the nation was hanging in the balance and the demand for up-to-date information about the battlefield grew steadily, the high cost of transmitting news by telegraph became less of a consideration and less of a deterrent (p. 20).

Consequently, Knightley (2000) states that, “For the first time in American history, it was possible for the public to read what happened yesterday, rather than someone’s opinion on what happened last week” (p. 20). In essence, since news could now be transmitted by the “lightning wires,” it could travel far faster than by the more traditional modes of mail, messenger, or steam train. As a result, more recent news could be printed in more newspapers more quickly than ever before, thereby creating a sense of immediacy that had been lacking in the past. Louis M. Starr (1962) points out that it was not just those on the home front who directly experienced the new sense of immediacy in the news. In fact, it was not unusual for soldiers in the field to purchase newspapers from the caravan of vendors that followed the Union Army from campaign to campaign (p. 176). The phenomenon of “in the field” news immediacy seems to have originated in 1863 at the epochal Battle of Gettysburg when, “For the first time, soldiers were able to read about a battle even as they fought it” (p. 176).

While it may have been a blessing for those at home anxiously awaiting news from the front, many scholars have noted how this new sense of immediacy and heightened sense of competition with other newspapers in fact encouraged inaccuracy and poor reporting. Starr (1962) claims that, “Competition ruled the [journalists] ruthlessly [...] If it inspired some of their finest work, it also drove them to bribery, subterfuge, plagiarism, and outright fakery” (p. 191). Knightley (2000) also highlights the increased inaccuracy and insists that “accuracy became a minor consideration” (p. 26).

Further, he claims that “the majority of correspondents were ignorant, dishonest and unethical and their dispatches were frequently inaccurate, often inverted, partisan and inflammatory” (p. 21). A similar argument is voiced by Michael Schudson (1978) as well. But was inaccuracy as commonplace as these authors suggest? There seems to be inconsistencies between authors on this subject. In fact, Starr (1962) contradicts his earlier statement by claiming that, “If the journalism of a period be judged by the best of it rather than by total output, the [journalists] appear in another light [...] many of them wrote well enough to bring a sense of participation in the war to their readers” (p. 219). As a result, the new sense of immediacy offered by the telegraph’s rapid carriage of newsfeeds from the battlefield to the printers in conjunction with the explosion in public demand for news and the birth of a new hyper-competitive journalistic environment ensured that communications technology and journalism would remain permanently conjoined.

In sum, this first chapter serves the purpose of establishing the historical context and laying the foundation for the events which will make up the focus of this thesis. In so doing, several important lessons have been learned. Firstly, the turbulent socio-political environment of nineteenth century America resulted in a nation that was deeply divided and ripe for civil war. Inability to find common ground on issues like the “peculiar institution” of slavery, regional economic specialization, the Southern rejection of the 1860 presidential election results as well as the secession and rapid armament of the South culminated in the bombardment of Fort Sumter and sparked the Civil War. At the same time, the expansion of newspaper readership in that era added fuel to the fire by heightening sectional tensions and further polarizing the nation. Secondly, the

newspapers which played a role in accentuating the differences between Northerners and Southerners in the antebellum era scarcely resembled what a twenty-first century reader would expect journalism to look like. Thirdly, it was during this troublesome era in American history that the enduring relationship between technology and journalism would develop although it would not reach maturity until the Civil War. Thus, it was during the antebellum era that refinements of existing technologies and the emergence of radical new ones like the telegraph transformed the news. Ultimately, it was through the press' use of the telegraph in the Civil War that the relationship between journalism and communication technology would be cemented and immediacy would become the defining feature of journalism itself.

Finally, two research questions emerge from the above review of antebellum and American Civil War journalism. They ask the following: How did the use of communications technologies still in their infancy at the time of the American Civil War contribute to the development of modern journalism? What role did the Civil War play in the transformation of journalism itself? Thus, this thesis will seek to demonstrate how much of the foundation for the modern practices and products of journalism taken for granted today was in fact established during the American Civil War.

II

This chapter will examine the new sense of immediacy offered by the journalistic use of the telegraph during the Civil War and will reflect upon how this immediacy provided the potential for quicker and more comprehensive news coverage than ever before. At the same time, careful attention will be given to how this new sense of immediacy, and the volume of news that could be characterized as its byproduct, played a role in reorganizing and annihilating preexisting notions of space and time.

The study by Paul Starr (2004) mentioned earlier can be seen as a suitable starting point for our examination of the role played by the telegraph during the Civil War and how its use contributed to the reshaping of journalism into the form we know today. Starr claims that the telegraph was the first in a long line of forms of mass communication, maintaining that news played a direct role in the establishment of this pioneering medium (p. 178). In fact, he states, “By virtue of its role in disseminating news, the telegraph became the first medium of mass communication” (p. 178). It was during the Civil War that the journalistic use of this medium was first employed on a large-scale (p. 178).

However, not every media historian or communications scholar is in agreement with the claim that the Civil War marked a crucial starting point and provided a test-bed for the pioneering of today’s journalism. Michael Schudson (1978) falls into this camp of skeptics. He takes issue with the claim that the Civil War represented a “turning point in the history of the American press” (p. 66). He argues that it represented an intensification of the changes that had been affecting journalism for more than two decades before the shelling of Fort Sumter (p. 66). In that respect, he claims that, “Journalism in the Civil War, then, was not so much different as bigger, more prominent and, as people anxiously

followed campaigns that involved their husbands and brothers and sons, more important to ordinary people” (p. 67). Robert C. Kennedy (2000) takes a similar position by claiming that it was not the coverage of the war itself but rather the coverage of the abolitionist John Brown’s botched attempt in 1859 to incite a slave revolt —followed by his trial and execution— which signaled a true “milestone in the development of American journalism” (p. 63). Kennedy insists that, although Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry occurred two years before the start of the Civil War, it “signaled the coming of age” of modern reporting through the extensive use of field reporters, illustrators and telegraphic news feeds—all of which techniques were to be used repeatedly during, and after, the Civil War (p. 63).

While there is much merit in both Schudson’s (1978) and Kennedy’s (2000) claims, it would appear that Kennedy’s research misses the fact that the coverage of Brown’s raid (and its aftermath) was a relatively isolated, concentrated event. New techniques may have been used to cover the story but it was nothing more than a story and did not represent an opportunity for using those new techniques in the extensive and ongoing manner that would present itself two years later when the war began. Similarly, Schudson’s (1978) claim that the Civil War did not represent a “turning point” in journalism misses one of the crucial benefits that accompanied the widespread use of the telegraph in the coverage of the war: immediacy.

More News More Quickly

The large-scale adoption of the telegraph by the press during the Civil War initiated a new sense of immediacy in journalism which had been impossible during the antebellum era (Knightley, 2000; Wheeler, 2006). J. Cutler Andrews (1983) highlights

the new sense of immediacy that evolved from reporting the Civil War by stating that, “By and large, the American people of that day were more accustomed to being regaled with somebody else’s opinion of the news that happened the week before than with the news of the previous-twenty four hours” (p. 6). As was noted in the previous chapter, one of the reasons for this norm was the prohibitively high cost of sending news via the wires which severely limited the volume of news reaching the papers by the telegraph (Andrews, 1983; Knightley, 2000; Starr, 2004). However, in the immediate aftermath of the bombing of Fort Sumter, the situation changed.

With the almost instantaneous explosion in the public’s demand for the latest news, the high cost of telegraph usage quickly became less of a serious deterrent (Knightley, 2000, p. 20). In fact, during the roughly thirty-four hour period when Fort Sumter was being shelled, it became clear that the only way for newspapers to keep up with their readers’ new-found hunger for breaking news was to vastly expand the amount of telegraphic news in their papers. This fact would have been obvious not only to newspaper editors but also to ordinary Southerners in Richmond, Virginia, “Where business was generally suspended that morning, [and] the citizenry were clustered around the newspaper and telegraph offices, awaiting the latest news from Charleston” (Andrews, 1970, p. 20). With similar scenes occurring all across the North and South, it was strikingly clear that the comprehensive news coverage demanded by both Northerners and Southerners could not be delivered by relying on the newspaper exchanges or the steam train alone.

Once the war began, newsreaders were no longer willing to patiently wait for the news to trickle in through the mail or the railway. Instead, they demanded up-to-the-

minute coverage of the happenings on and off the battlefields, forcing the newspapers to rapidly expand their use of the one technology that could deliver the type of coverage readers expected: the telegraph. James Carey (1997) explains how the telegraph was able to offer the immediacy expected by readers when he states that, “It allowed newspapers to operate in ‘real time’ for the first time” (p. 160). During this conflict, newspapers scrambled to learn how to operate in “real time” in order to maintain their readership in a highly competitive environment, a task which was accomplished by increasing the volume of telegraphic news in their papers (Andrews, 1983; Knightley, 2000). Shortly after the war began, there was a substantial increase in the amount of news that was delivered via the telegraph since, “Newspapers which had previously printed not more than two or three columns of telegraph news a day were now printing two or three pages of it and were frequently keeping open for telegraphic news until one o’clock in the morning or later” (Andrews, 1983, p. 6).

The fact that newspapers in the North and in the South were now printing a much greater volume of telegraphic news resulted in an obvious expansion in the number of pages in newspapers and a general trend whereby newspapers simply contained more news than they had during the antebellum era (Andrews, 1983; Blondheim, 1994). This growth in the amount of information contained in newspapers ensured that “the extra [an additional issue of a newspaper that was given the task of helping readers contextualize and interpret ongoing events by providing more information and stories than were included in the regular morning issue of a particular newspaper] became part of everyday life” (Starr, 1962, p. 25). But the influx of additional news to both Union and Confederate papers did not stop with the solidification of the practice of printing extras. In fact, “the

demand for an uninterrupted flow of news also brought separate morning and evening editions of the same paper” (Andrews, 1983, p. 34). Thanks in large part to the public’s never-ending demand for news from the battlefield as well as the telegraph’s ability to relay the desired news back to the nation’s newspapers, it was not unusual to be able to purchase a morning edition, an afternoon or evening edition and also an extra edition of the same newspaper within a single twenty-four hour period throughout much of the Civil War.

During the war, the larger volume of news that appeared in the press due to greater public demand for news from the front and a quantitative growth in the amount of telegraphic news also accounted for the publication of another now-familiar feature of American journalism: the Sunday edition paper (Andrews, 1983; Starr, 1962). As Andrews (1983) explains, “Improvements in typographical equipment and the abnormal appetite of the public for war news brought about changes in newspaper makeup and led to widespread use of Sunday and afternoon editions” (p. 33). While Sunday editions in general may have existed prior to the Civil War, they were not the kind of Sunday papers we would imagine today. For example, “Before the war, there was a fairly large number of Sunday papers not associated with a daily edition and, by 1860, there were Sunday editions of regular daily papers in at least four cities. Up to that time, however, Sunday papers had been largely incidental to regular newspaper production” (p. 33-4). In other words, the majority of the Sunday papers that were in circulation before the Civil War were generally isolated Sunday newspapers which were not linked to wider-circulation daily newspapers.

However, once the fighting began, daily newspapers began to offer their own Sunday editions (Andrews, 1983, p. 34). A concrete example best supports the fact that the use of Sunday editions increased exponentially during the Civil War. For instance, prior to 1861, the *New York Times* did not issue any Sunday editions but, by 1862, the second year of the war, there was a Sunday edition of the *Times* for each of the fifty-two Sundays that year. Yet, while most Americans welcomed the greater volume of news offered by the emergence of Sunday editions printed by the daily newspapers, not all Americans approved of the new practice (p. 34). There were some Americans who opposed the publication and circulation of Sunday editions but they were in the minority since, “During the war, the popular prejudice against Sunday newspapers diminished considerably as a result of the public desire for a continuous picture of war events, even though the more orthodox complained of the frequency with which battles were fought on Sunday” (p. 34). In fact, some of these more orthodox newspaper editors, refusing to print Sunday editions of their dailies, would give the first page of their regular Monday morning edition the previous day’s date—thus including the information that could have been published on Sunday but was held back—and then would print Monday’s date on the next page (p. 34).

In addition to creating a greater sense of immediacy for readers and an abundance of news to be printed, the wider use of the telegraph during the Civil War expanded the use of war correspondents, or “specials” as they were known at the time (Blondheim, 1994; Starr, 1962; Wheeler, 2006). These correspondents were given the difficult task of accompanying the army and navy throughout their campaigns and massaging information about everything from the monotonous reality of camp life to the victory or defeat of

monumental battles into news stories that could be sent back from the field to the printing offices without a minute to spare (Andrews, 1970; Andrews, 1983; Huntzicker, 1999; Knightley, 2000; Starr, 1962; Wheeler, 2006). The use of war correspondents in America did not originate with the Civil War but the practice grew to an unprecedented size and gained an unimagined level of importance during that war. As Huntzicker (1999) explains, “The idea of sending correspondents to battlefields began with the Mexican War in North America, the revolutionary conflicts in Europe in the 1840s, and the Crimean War of the 1850s” (p. 138). In the North, “there were [...] over 300 special war correspondents assigned by individual newspapers to travel with the troops” (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94-5).

Despite the fact that both sides in the conflict had war correspondents, the number of correspondents in the Confederacy was smaller than in the Union but was still impressive (Andrews, 1970). For example, “it appears that although the number of Confederate war correspondents was considerably less than the number of ‘Bohemians’ [the nickname given to the Northern war correspondents] within the Northern armies, over one hundred army correspondents represented the Confederate press in the field at various times during the war” (p. 48). The Confederacy’s journalistic “handicap” will be examined in greater detail later in this thesis. That said, the telegraph was one of the necessary tools of the trade for both Northern and Southern correspondents since it offered the fastest route that news could travel (Czitrom, 1982; Starr, 1962; Wheeler, 2006). In fact, it was not unusual for many of these correspondents to have “been chosen [for their job] primarily because of their ability to use a telegraph key” rather than for their writing ability or experience (Knightley, 2000, p. 22).

Why then would the ability to use a telegraph key take precedence over proficient writing skills when it came to hiring correspondents? It may well be that many newspaper owners and editors used this reasoning because “the telegraph gave a real rather than illusory meaning to timeliness. It turned competition among newspapers away from price, even away from quality, and onto timeliness. Time became the loss leader in journalism” (Carey, 1997, p. 160). Consequently, being able to send the latest breaking news from the battlefield to the printing office was the first priority of newspaper editors and owners. This issue as well as other problems related to the sudden influx of correspondents will be examined a little later in the chapter.

The use of the telegraph by the press to relay dispatches from various theaters of war to newspaper offices in either the North or the South was largely viewed in a positive light by the anxious, news-hungry readers on the home front (Andrews, 1970; Starr, 1962; Wheeler, 2006). From a twenty-first century perspective, it is not difficult to see the new sense of immediacy and new-found volume of news that the widespread use of the “lightning wires” offered as anything but a substantial improvement over the coverage of earlier conflicts. For instance, “In comparison, the Mexican War was remote and the War of 1812 had occurred at a time when American journalism was as yet incapable of achieving comprehensive coverage. Never before in our history had the press been called upon to depict from day to day so moving a spectacle” (Andrews, 1983, p. 638). But the new sense of immediacy generated by the unprecedented speed of telegraphic transmission had other consequences beyond more comprehensive coverage, not all of which could be classified as positive in nature.

Eroding the Balance between Space and Time

The new sense of immediacy accompanying the journalistic use of the telegraph altered time and space in a way that was unimaginable before the Civil War. David Harvey (1989) offers an appropriate comment that can serve the purpose of launching our discussion of some of the less-than-beneficial side effects that accompanied that sense of immediacy. Harvey comments that, “Space and time are basic categories of human existence. Yet we rarely debate their meanings; we tend to take them for granted, and give them common-sense or self-evident attributions” (p. 201).

More than a half century ago, in his study, *The Bias of Communication* (1951), Harold A. Innis analyzed the evolving history of concepts of space and time. He claimed that time and space both play a crucial role in determining societal behavior (p. 62). On this topic, Innis maintained that, “neither time nor space is abstractly conceived” (p. 62). Though it may be difficult to deny the fact that concepts and constraints of time and space play a role in determining societal behavior, Innis examines the role of time and space at a much deeper level. While doing so, he identifies how any society seeking stability or striving to ward off collapse must attain a balance between space and time (p. 64).

More recently, David Godfrey (1986) expanded on this notion of the need for balance between space and time. Godfrey states that, “Unless a society deals with both time and space successfully, it lacks stability. Unless two opposing media forms exert parallel influence, the society is open to sudden change. The greater the lack of balance, the greater the probability of change” (p. x). Paul Heyer (2006) clarifies how the balance between space and time can be eroded. Heyer insists that this balance can be whittled

away when “either one or the other [space or time] is overemphasized” (p. 150). And he identifies that it is actually the “dominant medium of communication that ‘favors’ certain forms of temporal or spatial orientation over others” (p. 151).

With that in mind, it is probably not surprising that the use of the telegraph for journalistic purposes could be seen as eroding the balance between space and time expressed by Innis (1951). Innis claims that societies generally move from the time-biased or time-binding to the space-biased or space-binding and that this pattern is exacerbated by the use of technologies which are either the former or the latter in nature (Heyer, 2006, p. 162). Before explaining how the journalistic use of the telegraph in the Civil War contributed to the erosion of the balance between space and time and also initiated the above described transition, it is important to differentiate between these two concepts. There are many explanations for the difference between space-binding and time-binding media. However, James Carey (1989) provides one of the most clearly defined and easy-to-decipher. Carey explains that, “Space-binding media were light and portable and permitted extension of space; time-binding media were heavy and durable or, like the oral tradition, persistent and difficult to destroy” (p. 161). The telegraph seemed to accentuate and increase a bias towards space that had characterized the practice of journalism ever since the invention of the printing press and the creation of the broadsheet newspaper (Heyer, 2006, p. 162). With the telegraph, news was more portable than ever before.

The sense of immediacy in reporting that accompanied the use of the telegraph, though seen as beneficial in general, had a darker side to it as well. While newspaper readers may have perceived the growing volume of telegraphic news coverage of the

battles between the Union and the Confederates as positive, there was an important downside. John B. Thompson (1995) notes how the increasing space-bias of communication has played a role in transforming society and the way that we think about it, leading to what has been classified as “Space-Time Compression (p. 4). He argues that technological developments significantly altered the “spatial and temporal organization of life” in America (p. 4). Thompson defines his concept of space-time compression in language that sounds very similar to Innis’ (1951) concept of space bias. He claims that, “With the development of new means of transportation and communication [...] the significance of spatial boundaries has declined and the pace of social life has speeded up” (Thompson, 1995, p. 36). Thus, the use of the telegraph to spread news during the Civil War reduced spatial distances and annihilated time, resulting in more timely news than ever before. Where, then, lies the problem? Well, Thompson alluded to the potential problem posed by this new sense of immediacy: the increased speed of life itself (p. 36).

Interestingly, Robert Luther Thompson (1947) explicitly identifies the potential problem associated with the immediacy afforded by the telegraph. He states that, “The whole tempo of life was quickened with the development of the telegraph industry” (p. 442). Carey (1997), though speaking abstractly, also touches upon this issue when he states that, “While the growth of modern communications, technology, and commerce has made space more uniform, the same process has radically destabilized time. The industrialization of time reduces the half-life of every phenomenon, collapses and telescopes persistence into an enduring present” (p. 325). He hints at why this likely occurred when he claims that, “Modern communications have drastically altered the ordinary terms of experience and consciousness” (Adam, 2008, p. xi). Leaving the

abstract behind and returning to the concrete, the telegraph itself and the press' use of this technology during the Civil War played a role in speeding up life and in initiating the creation of a more information-based society where newspaper readers experienced a level of immediacy in news coverage non-existent in the antebellum era. At the same time, the subsequent annihilation of space and time resulting from the wide-scale use of the telegraph was largely experienced by producers of the news content itself since they were engaged in a constant struggle to satisfy the public's ravenous appetite for more news all the time (Glen, 2000, p. 408). Nonetheless, it should be recalled that the telegraph, although a very important part of the equation which produced a greater sense of immediacy in American journalism, was only one of many technological developments and socio-economic forces that "helped reshape the nineteenth century press" (Czitrom, 1982, p. 18).

At the risk of sounding like a Luddite, it could be said that the increased speed of life brought about by the news-distributing function of the telegraph resulted in the speed itself becoming the defining feature of the telegraph and of communication as a whole. Hanno Hardt (2004) discusses this adoption of speed as the defining feature of communication and highlights its downside when he claims that:

Speed replaces reflection, as effect supersedes content and content displaces meaning, in the panopticon of modern media practices. There is no return to contemplation, reasoned judgment, or to a creative pause in the speed of mass communication. Instead, flashing realities are produced without historical consciousness to equip audiences on their travels through social, cultural, and political spaces, gaining fleeting impressions, which are soon reduced to a blurred memory of society. (p. 62)

Since speed becomes the defining feature of communication and life in general, the ability to slow down and reflect upon the quality of the information that is transmitted via

media forms like the telegraph becomes a luxury which it is increasingly difficult to justify. The rapid speed by which the information traveled became one of the most important attributes of telegraphic news for newspaper readers during the Civil War (Postman, 1992). With this increased transmission speed, “the certainty of absolute space and place gave way to the insecurities of a shifting relative space, in which events in one place could have immediate and ramifying effects in several other places” (Harvey, 1989, p. 261).

In essence, this acceleration of life resulted in the development of a spill-over effect in which the rapid speed with which news traveled over the wires diminished the ability for information to be contained by the natural boundaries of space (Thompson, 1947, p. 442). The immediacy offered by the journalistic use of the telegraph thus played a role in ushering in a new era of interconnectivity in which there were fewer truly isolated events in American society (Carey, 1989). Consequently, the ability for large volumes of news to travel further and faster than ever before because of the press’ use of the telegraph resulted in a very serious threat: valuable information could fall into the hands of the enemy and therefore compromise the likelihood of victory (Wheeler, 2006, p. 96).

Telegraphic Censorship and the Annihilation of Space & Time

With the telegraph providing a steady stream of newsfeeds from the battlefield back to newspaper editors across the country, the potential for sensitive information to accidentally give away strategic knowledge to the enemy was very real. The possibility of this happening was accentuated because, for the first time, information could travel extremely fast and extremely far via the telegraph (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94). During the

war, it was not unusual for both Union and Confederate newspapers to print extremely detailed information about military positions and actions in an attempt to provide readers with as detailed a description of the war effort as possible. This was a dangerous habit which, early on in the war, led to a number of embarrassing defeats by generals who were daily readers of the enemy's newspapers (Mindich, 2000; Randall, 1918). Wheeler (2006) describes how, in an attempt to prevent further valuable information from benefiting the other side, the North implemented "America's first exposure to widespread and systematic censorship" (p. 96).

It should be noted that, while the vulnerabilities caused by the use of the telegraph resulted in the first form of comprehensive censorship in America, it was by no means America's first experience with censorship in general (Stone, 2004; Wheeler, 2006). Long before the telegraph was invented, America had flirted with censorship in the closing years of the eighteenth century when the Sedition Act of 1798 was passed by both Houses of Congress and signed into law by Federalist President John Adams (Davidson et al, 2006; Linfield, 1990; Stone, 2004). The Sedition Act had a purely political motive: "[It] turned U.S. xenophobia inward and was used to imprison opposition leaders and suppress domestic criticism of the Adams administration" (Linfield, 1990, p. 17). The Act mandated a sentence of two years of incarceration for anyone who printed or uttered "Any false, scandalous and malicious...writings against the government of the United States, or either house of Congress...or the President...with the intent to defame the[m]...or to bring them...into contempt or disrepute...or to excite against them...the hatred of the good people of the United States..." (p. 17). The vast majority of those who were charged with violating the Act were newspaper editors who voiced criticism of

the Adams administration and its policies (p. 17). While this Act was clearly a breach of the First Amendment's freedom of press clause, the censorship ushered in by the Sedition Act did not last indefinitely nor was it comprehensive in nature since, "The Sedition Act has a sunset clause, expiring March 3, 1801, the last day of the Adams administration" (p. 17). It was more than sixty years after the Sedition Act had lapsed that the immediacy and annihilation of space and time resulting from the use of the telegraph in the Civil War would initiate comprehensive censorship in America.

The man who spearheaded the Union's large-scale telegraphic censorship operation was President Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton (Burton, 2008; Mindich, 2000). Stanton wasted no time in acting (Burton, 2008, p. 284). Crompton Burton describes how, on the day after Stanton was appointed to his position, he invoked the newly-written legislation which allowed the War Department under his command to take temporary ownership and control of the Northern railways and telegraph networks (p. 284). Furthermore, he determined that the military telegraph lines could not be used by newspapers (p. 282). David Mindich (2000) explains how drastic the telegraph censorship ushered in by Stanton really was by stating that, "Newspaper reporters could not send their stories directly to their newspapers; instead they had to pass through Stanton's office and his censors. Stanton restricted press passes to the front and arrested reporters and telegraphers" (p. 191).

Yet despite the relentless efforts of Stanton and those at the War Department, the North's comprehensive censorship program faced a number of setbacks. One of the most crucial was that:

Administrative confusion made a really effective censorship almost an impossibility. At different times during the war the censorship was

administered by the State, Treasury, and War departments, sometime by two of them simultaneously. Furthermore, the commanding generals might exercise their own discretion. They could censor dispatches originating in their own commands, or they could relax censorship to favor individual reporters and their newspapers. (Andrews, 1983, p. 650)

Making matters worse for the Northern government which was using censorship to try to manage the telegraph's annihilation of space and time was the reality that the censorship as a whole was neither as thorough nor comprehensive as the government had anticipated (Andrews, 1983; Blondheim, 2008; Randall, 1918). There were gaps in the censorship implemented in the North since, "Even after the control of the telegraph became general, messages could be freely sent by mail and this became the regular method by which news reporters conveyed their 'copy.' [Nonetheless], excessive caution had to be exercised to prevent official dispatches from being intercepted" (Randall, 1918, p. 306).

Furthermore, many of the telegraph censors in the North had little or no experience (Andrews, 1983, p. 649). As a result, "in the early days, the censors also frequently had rejected entire dispatches which contained a single censorable fact; they later learned to scissor and hack the correspondents' dispatches. These mutilated fragments the censors then sent on, frequently without bothering to show them to the reporters" (p. 649). South of the Mason Dixon line, the Confederacy's experience with censorship was not dissimilar to that of the Union.

Although a more ambiguous picture of the Southern experience with censorship has been painted by many historians, it is clear that the government of the CSA also pursued a path of censorship in an attempt to counteract the danger presented by the new sense of immediacy and subsequent annihilation of space and time resulting from the press' use of the telegraph. Although the South's regime of telegraphic censorship was

not perfect, it was seen as more effective than that of the North (Andrews, 1970; Huntzicker, 1999; Randall, 1918). James G. Randall (1918) illustrates the South's advantage when he claims that, "When we turn to a consideration of the Southern press we find something of the same laxness, but there were less serious disclosures of information, partly because of greater discretion, perhaps, on the part of Southern papers, and also because control was stricter and the sum total of newspaper activity far less" (p. 313).

Nevertheless, in both the Union and the Confederacy, sensitive information that could compromise the war effort still slipped past the censors and was printed in both Northern and Southern papers (Andrews, 1970; Andrews, 1983; Huntzicker, 1999; Randall, 1918; Starr, 1962). As Andrews (1983) puts it, "Chiefly it [censorship] managed to delay stories of disaster rather than to kill them outright" (p. 650). Randall (1918) sums up the government's censorship efforts when he states that, "Viewing the whole period of the war and taking account of all parts of the country, it appears that the actual governmental interference with the freedom of the press was comparatively slight, and that voluntary restraint or popular pressure had far greater effect in keeping improper material out of newspapers than official repression" (p. 322-3).

Union Secretary of War Edwin Stanton was likely aware of this fact and developed a new strategy to compensate for the shortcomings of the North's telegraphic censorship. Shortly after taking office, Stanton decided that the best way to keep valuable information from benefiting the enemy was for the War Department to develop daily official news bulletins about the happenings on the battlefield which could then be distributed via the telegraph to the Northern newspapers (Burton, 2008, p. 284). By doing

so, Stanton pioneered the now all-too-familiar practice of government press releases (Mindich, 2000, p. 199). Stanton understood that crafting the War Department's own daily news bulletins was the best way to circulate favorable stories about the Union war effort in the Northern press (Burton, 2008; Mindich, 2000). Carey (1997) explains why this strategy would have been appealing to someone like Stanton in stating that, "The net effect of the press conference [...] is to grant the source exceptional control over news dissemination" (p. 138). According to David Mindich (2000), the daily process went something like this: "Stanton's dispatches were [telegraphed to] General Dix, stationed in New York, who released the dispatches to the New York dailies" (p. 196). Although many Northern newspapers at first were reluctant to print the War Department's news bulletins, they were eventually widely adopted since they represented an easy source of daily news to satisfy the news-hungry readership—despite the fact that Stanton's reports frequently included fraudulent information and exaggerations to boost morale on the home front (p. 196).

The Associated Press (AP) played an active role in the circulation of news bulletins from the War Department (Blondheim, 1994, p. 130). As Blondheim notes, the AP's distribution of the government's bulletins to the newspapers, and so to their subscribers, resulted in a relationship in which the AP "assumed the position of a semi-official medium for the distribution of information coming from sources in the [Lincoln] administration" (p. 130). Just to be sure that no ambitious AP news editor tampered with the War Department's bulletins, Stanton often saw to it that the bulletins were sent late at night so that they would be published in the early morning hours, long after the most "opinionated editors" had left the newsroom (p. 137). Because the AP toed the

Washington line, it was given a number of benefits including the privilege that “AP reporters had free access to the president and the War Department and, more important, the association was given preferential access to the telegraph facilities” (p. 135).

The Misinformation Problem

The telegraph’s ability to allow large volumes of information to move from one distant point to another extremely quickly, thereby promoting a sense of immediacy in journalism, had another negative implication as well: misinformation travelled faster and further than was possible before the widespread journalistic use of the telegraph. Consequently, the potential damage that misinformation could inflict upon the war effort was more severe than in the past. For instance, throughout the course of the war, there were few distributions of misinformation that created as much controversy and caused as much damage as what has come to be known as the “Bogus Proclamation of 1864” (Blondheim, 2008; Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962).

In the May 18th, 1864 edition of two popular New York City newspapers, the *Journal of Commerce* and the *New York World*, a somber proclamation supposedly written by President Lincoln informed the North of the failed result of General Ulysses Grant’s pivotal campaign in the Confederate heartland of Virginia (Blondheim, 2008; Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962). The proclamation urged Americans to undertake “‘a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer,’ and called for a draft of 400,000 men” (Starr, 1962, p. 259). The dispatch from the NYAP (New York Associated Press) containing the supposed presidential proclamation was circulated to all of the New York dailies in the early morning hours of the 18th. Due to a number of unusual circumstances including the failure of the dispatch to be delivered in “the standard NYAP envelope” and also some

frantic fact-checking with the NYAP, all of the New York papers were able to quickly establish that the proclamation was a hoax and to remove the proclamation from their proofs before the printing and distribution of their morning edition (Blondheim, 2008, p. 205). Unfortunately, the *Journal of Commerce* and the *New York World* did not learn that the proclamation was false until long after their papers had left the printing house (p. 206).

The president and the war department were enraged at this apparent breach of national security since, “By coincidence, Lincoln the same evening signed an order calling up 300,000 men, but did not issue it” (Starr, 1962, p. 259). Not surprisingly, when the fraudulent proclamation appeared in these two New York papers the following morning, the president and his staff, suspecting that someone in the White House had leaked a copy of the president’s unissued proclamation to the press, claimed that this breach of national security was nothing short of an act of treason (Blondheim, 2008, p. 210). The Lincoln administration did not learn that the published fraudulent proclamation was not a leak of its own document until after the “incident culminated in the closing down [though temporary] of two of the most prominent opposition newspapers in the nation’s largest metropolis and the arrest of their proprietors and editors” (p. 204). The subsequent investigation revealed that both the *Journal of Commerce* and the *New York World* were in fact nothing more than victims to their circumstances as well as their haste since they did not make the effort to fact-check the story before including it in their morning editions (Blondheim, 2008; Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962). The source of the phony proclamation lay elsewhere.

Nevertheless, in the immediate aftermath of the publication of the fraudulent proclamation, Secretary of War Stanton used his authority to also attack the Independent Telegraph Company which had carried the false dispatch over its wires (Blondheim, 2008; Nofi, 1992). Major General John A. Dix who was serving as the commander of the Department of the East received a telegram from Stanton in which he was “Directed to take possession of the offices of the Independent Telegraph Company, close down the four offices of the company in New York City, confiscate all the office equipment and message files, and arrest the entire personnel of the company” (Blondheim, 2008, p. 207). Although the order was executed, Stanton’s suppression of the telegraph company was in vain since Dix’s suspicion that the proclamation was nothing more than a hoax rather than a leak from the White House was affirmed (Nofi, 1992, p. 302). According to Dix:

The whole affair [w]as a simple case of wartime financial speculation. Together with all astute Americans, the general knew full well that news of a military debacle was sure to produce rapid and dramatic increases in the price of gold. By anticipating such news, let alone manufacturing it, one could make a fortune in a series of brisk speculative transactions on the exchange. (Blondheim, 2008, p. 207)

Immediately following the publication of the proclamation in the two aforementioned papers, the price of gold had instantaneously increased more than ten percent on the New York Stock Exchange (Nofi, 1992, p. 302). By investigating the purchasers of large blocks of gold stocks on the day prior to publication of the proclamation, Dix was able to arrive at an unusual principal suspect: “Joseph Howard Jr. of Brooklyn, a prominent journalist and staunch Republican, who happened to be temporarily short on funds [while writing for the *Brooklyn Eagle*]” (Blondheim, 2008, p. 209).

While this rather comical and extremely coincidental example of misinformation may appear to be misplaced in a discussion about how the press’ use of the telegraph

created a new sense of immediacy in journalism, initiated the annihilation of space and time and thereby resulted in the erosion of the balance between space and time, this would be a hasty deduction. The fact that gold prices rose almost instantaneously upon investors' uncertainty concerning the proclamation, the success of Grant's Virginia campaign and also that "the dramatic proclamation dashed the high hopes in the North that the days of the rebellion were numbered" demonstrates that, due to the telegraph, misinformation traveled faster and had more grave effects on American society than in any earlier era (Blondheim, 2008, p. 205). Furthermore, the fact that workers at the *Journal of Commerce* and the *New York World* chose to print the fraudulent proclamation without taking the time to fact-check the piece beforehand was indicative of the extent of the annihilation of space and especially time which was felt by newspaper workers and proprietors in an extremely competitive environment with an audience that was quickly becoming more accustomed to immediacy in their news coverage. But printing without fact-checking was also symptomatic of a much broader problem occurring in many American newspapers throughout the Civil War: how the race to get a "beat" in a highly competitive environment was frequently resulting in poor reporting from both Northern and Southern "specials" or field correspondents.

Correspondents and the Problems with Beating the Clock

In an essay entitled "The Dark Continent of American Journalism" (1997), Carey stresses the important fact that, "the latest news is not always the best and most useful news" (p. 159). This statement could be seen as an accurate descriptor for a significant portion of the reporting that field correspondents conducted during the Civil War. As was briefly touched upon in the previous chapter, the field correspondents who spared no

expense to gather news from the battlefield and relayed their dispatches back to their newspapers via the telegraph were known to exaggerate, openly pass judgment on the “facts” they reported and occasionally lie in their stories (Knightley, 2000; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). The argument was made that these less-than-satisfactory occupational traits were the result of both the new sense of immediacy and extreme competition in the journalistic environment throughout the duration of the Civil War. Although this may well have been the case, there is more here than meets the eye.

While it would be difficult to refute that both the new sense of immediacy offered by the telegraph—and expected by the public—and the highly competitive news industry played a significant role in encouraging poor reporting during the Civil War, there remains another important issue to consider. This sense of immediacy that came to accompany the coverage of the conflict and the race to get a “beat” on competing newspapers was accentuated by the annihilation of space and time offered by the telegraph. In other words, although journalism was already a competitive industry before the Civil War, the press’ industrial-scale usage of the telegraph during the war and the subsequent increase in the transmission speed of information offered by this technology placed a previously unseen amount of pressure on the large number of correspondents who were following both the Northern and Southern forces into battle (Knightley, 2000; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). It was this expanded pressure to be the first correspondent to break the news which frequently led to poor reporting.

It would be impossible to overestimate the importance that was given to beating the competition. For instance, Starr (1962) reports that, “So great was the pressure to be first that correspondents repeatedly tripped on false reports, rumors and

misunderstandings” (p. 201). He expands on this claim of time-induced inaccuracy by insisting that, “Bohemians reported entire battles they had neither seen nor heard about from witnesses” (p. 204). Sometimes the witnesses that these correspondents consulted, and the manner in which it was done, were inadequate at best. As Randall (1918) explains, “the average reporter, under the pressure of a constant demand for news, would just as soon chat with a disgruntled subordinate officer and print his story as to search for reliable information from a safe source. Besides, the safe source would not talk” (p. 307). And when the “safe sources” (presumably generals and other high ranking strategic officers) would not talk, “it was not uncommon for disappointed correspondents to vent their spite by misrepresenting generals and falsely reporting conditions in the army” (p. 308).

Yet, correspondents embarking on this potentially libelous path needed to be cautious since there were very real consequences for deliberately printing false accusations and slanderous comments. It is important to remember that “Correspondents accompanying an army were within the range of military law, and were liable to discipline by court martial” (Randall, 1918, p. 317). While a formal court martial may have been an option for dishonest correspondents, the most common reprimand was the much less severe practice of banning the offending correspondents from further accompanying the military throughout their campaign (Andrews, 1983; Randall, 1918; Starr, 1962). But there were a number of other forms of less benign punishments that could be bestowed on inaccurate correspondents. For example, “After the Battle of the Wilderness, a Cincinnati paper published the untrue statement that [General George G.] Meade had counseled retreat. Under Meade’s order the offending correspondent was

appropriately placarded and paraded through the lines and afterward expelled from the army” (Randall, 1918, p. 318).

The telegraph’s annihilation of space and time as well as the requirement (to ensure immediacy) for the press to become increasingly competitive in striving to be the first to break the latest news are both important considerations, but there were other reasons why much of the journalism of the Civil War was less than stellar. Huntzicker (1999) sheds light on some of these factors when he states that:

During the Civil War, correspondents covering the armies faced both physical and political challenges in getting reports to their newspapers in a timely fashion. Their competitive efforts to out-maneuver both the competition and government have become the subject of myth—stories often created by the reporters themselves. Reporters often puffed themselves to increase their leverage against generals who wanted to control them. (p. 157)

More specifically, another reason for the inaccurate reporting by correspondents was monetary in nature. In a word, hiring and maintaining special correspondents was anything but cheap since keeping a single correspondent in the field alone usually cost between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per annum (p. 139). Moreover, the high cost of employing correspondents did not translate into excellent pay (Starr, 1962, p. 206). In fact, the pay offered to correspondents was likely another reason for a great deal of untruthful reporting since, “the work paid too little to prove attractive to many able men after the glamour of war correspondence began to wane. Reporters received from fifteen to thirty-five dollars a week at a time when a good compositor could make fifty” (p. 206). To make matters worse, Starr explains that, “Few correspondents had the staying power to follow the armies throughout the war. If bullets, illness or ennui did not get them, they

were expelled, captured, drafted or simply worn out. Editors had to reorganize their staffs after every campaign” (p. 134).

Inaccuracy in the reporting offered by many correspondents may have resulted from the annihilation of space and time that the telegraph initiated and the subsequent rapid growth in both a constant consumer demand for up-to-date news and the creation of a new, extremely competitive journalistic environment but it is important to remember that not all reporting undertaken by correspondents was inaccurate (Starr, 1962). It should be kept in mind that:

Much of the inaccuracy in Civil War reporting, however, was accidental or at least unintentional; comparatively few war reporters were chronic liars. In many cases the misstatements which cropped up in news stories were not so much a matter of willful misrepresentation as they were the result of the haste and confusion involved in newsgathering, especially after a battle. (Andrews, 1983, p. 643)

Despite the inaccuracies, the correspondents did create many richly descriptive and accurate stories as well (Andrews, 1983; Starr, 1962). In essence, the dispatches that correspondents contributed to newspapers in the North and the South gave the readers on the home front a lens through which they could bring meaning to the turbulent events through which they were living (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 158). It was the new-found immediacy resulting from the press’ use of the telegraph in this conflict that enabled journalism to evolve.

A number of important lessons have been learned in this chapter. Firstly, the chapter revealed how the press’ use of the telegraph in the context of the Civil War led to the development of a new sense of immediacy that quickly became one of the defining features of journalism. It examined how the telegraph’s rapid speed of transmission, as well as the public’s insatiable appetite for the latest news, generated an unimaginable

volume of up-to-date news in America's newspapers throughout the duration of the conflict. Secondly, the immediacy offered by the telegraph significantly altered pre-existing, long-held conceptions of space and time by both annihilating space and compressing time. Thirdly, the immediacy and subsequent annihilation of space and time produced by the telegraph played a significant role in eroding the balance between space and time, thereby creating a number of new and complicated problems that needed to be addressed by many different segments of American society. More specifically, both the Union and Confederate governments had to rely on widespread telegraphic censorship to counter the dangers engendered by the annihilation of space and time. As well, the annihilation of space and time afforded by the telegraph meant that misinformation could travel much faster than ever before and could cause greater damage much more quickly than in the past. Finally, the annihilation of space and time and the demand for immediate news created a constant pressure that was most strongly felt by the special correspondents in the field who followed both the Northern and Southern military campaigns and who frequently produced inaccurate news stories in their effort to get a "beat" on their competitors by being the first to wire their stories back to their printing offices.

III

The case has been made by many scholars that the telegraph signaled a break with more than 2,000 years of communication technology. In an essay entitled “Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph” (1989), Carey argues that the telegraph, “permitted, for the first time, the effective separation of communication from transportation [...] it allowed symbols to move independently of and faster than transportation” (p. 203-4). John B. Thompson (1995) unpacks and clarifies this concept when he states that, “Prior to the advent of telecommunication, the extension of availability of symbolic forms in space generally required their physical transportation: with a few notable exceptions, significant spatial distancing could be achieved only by transporting symbolic forms from one place to another” (p. 31-2). But, as Neil Postman (1992) puts it: “Telegraphy changed all this” (p. 67). With the advent of the telegraph, communication could travel long distances much more easily and much more quickly than in the past since, in the pre-telecommunication era, news had to be recorded on paper and these papers had to be physically transported from point A to point B via ship, stagecoach, horse or steam train (Packer, 2006, p. 80).

Thus, throughout much of the antebellum era, “Information traveled only as fast as the messenger who carried it” (Czitrom, 1982, p. 3). Before the telegraph was widely adopted for the transporting of news stories, the fastest messenger carrying the news was the steam train (Postman, 1992, p. 67). Consequently, “Prior to the telegraph, information could be moved only as fast as a train could travel: about thirty-five miles per hour” (p. 67). But by the middle of the nineteenth century, communication was no longer bound to transportation since “the telegraph removed space as an inevitable constraint on the

movement of information [... and, at the same time,] erased state lines, collapsed regions and, by wrapping the continent in an information grid, created the possibility of a unified nation-state” (p. 67). Although this was no small task in a nation as large and as sparsely populated as the United States of America, “the telegraph freed communication from the constraints of geography” (Carey, 1989, p. 204). Carey sums up the situation when he writes that, “When the telegraph reached the West Coast eight years in advance of a transcontinental railroad, the identity of communication and transportation was ended in both fact and symbol” (p. 203). The separation of communication from transportation could be seen as a necessity for the immediacy required in modern journalism, an immediacy which first became an attribute of journalism during the Civil War. Yet, before it is possible to examine the results of the separation of transportation from communication enabled by the telegraph, and also the consequences this separation had for the press during the Civil War, it is first necessary to discuss how the news was sent before the telegraph was widely adopted.

Transporter Required: News Distribution before the Telegraph

As was mentioned earlier, although the invention of the telegraph preceded the outbreak of the Civil War by more than a decade, the high costs associated with relaying news via the telegraph ensured that its role in distributing the news Americans read was minimal (Andrews, 1983; Knightley, 2000; Starr, 2004; Thompson, 1947). As a result, throughout the majority of the antebellum era, news stories still needed to be physically transported from the writers to the publication offices and, to do this, the press relied on the more traditional means of “transportation.” One of the most widely-used “transporters” of the news in the antebellum era was America’s postal system (Copeland,

2003; Humphrey, 1996; Lloyd, 2006). It is important to note that, while this thesis is not intended to provide an exhaustive history of America's postal system, it is still necessary to mention the dominant role that the mail played in distributing news in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to better understand how different things were after the telegraph was harnessed by the press.

By the antebellum era, America's postal network had already become an established transporter of news and, before the Civil War, there was no sure sign that this was going to change. David A. Copeland (2003) explains that, "the post remained vital to the dissemination of information throughout the antebellum period" (p. 11). Yet, the fact that the mail was a crucial distributor of news during the first part of the nineteenth century did not mean that news traveled quickly. Quite the opposite. For instance, "at the beginning of the antebellum period, news moved slowly and in the ways it had for a century [...slowly being the key word since] it took weeks for news to circulate from New England to states like Alabama or Mississippi" (p. 10). Despite the extremely slow pace at which the news traveled by mail, newspapers were the principal users of the postal system both previous to and during the antebellum era (Lloyd, 2006, p. 31). Mark Lloyd highlights the extremely important news distribution role played by the post when he claims that, at the close of the eighteenth century, "Newspapers accounted for 70 percent of the total weight handled by mail carriers, but contributed only 3 percent of total postal revenue" (p. 31).

While these numbers may not seem to make economic sense at first glance, it should be recalled that, less than a decade after the Bill of Rights was attached to the Constitution, there was federal legislation advantageously linking the still developing

postal system with the transportation of news to America's ever-expanding network of newspapers (Copeland, 2003; John, 1995; Lloyd, 2006). The postal system assumed the role of news transporter through the ratification of the Post Office Act of 1792. In a detailed historical analysis of the birth of the American postal network, Richard John (1995) explains that, the Post Office Act of 1792 "Transformed the role of the newspaper press in American public life" (p. 37). The reason that the Act can be considered transformative in nature—without delving into the convoluted world of U.S. legal history—can be established by identifying the three objectives for which the Act was written. Lloyd (2006) explains that, "There were three cornerstones of the Post Office Act. First, newspapers would be given preferential treatment. Second, Congress assumed control over the designation of postal routes. Third, federal officers were prohibited from surveillance" (p. 30). It is the first of these three cornerstones which explains why the post became the principal transporter of news from the revolutionary period well into the antebellum period.

The Post Office Act of 1792 gave "preferential treatment" to newspapers by way of reduced postage rates (Lloyd, 2006, p. 31). Individual newspaper subscribers in the early nineteenth century benefited from extremely low postage rates (Copeland, 2003; Lloyd, 2006). According to Copeland (2003), "Newspaper postage was cheap for those who had to pay. In 1825, it cost one and one-half cents to deliver a newspaper of any size to any place in America, and the nation had more post offices than any other country" (p. 11). These below-market postal rates for newspapers did not permanently increase until 1918 (Lloyd, 2006, p. 34).

Even more important than the low postage rate paid by publishers when mailing their newspapers to subscribers was the fact that “[the act] also provided that any newspaper printer could send without charge a copy of his paper to every news printer in the country” (p. 31). Furthermore, “the act allowed printers and editors to send each other newspapers gratis [free of charge] through the nation’s mail system. The legislation allowed editors to gather news from throughout the nation to share with local patrons. Nearly 20 percent of newspapers in 1810, for example, were delivered by mail to regions outside of the area of publication” (Copeland, 2003, p. 10-11). Thus, since newspapers could exchange news through the mail without paying any postal rates at all, it is no wonder that the mail was such a large transporter of news during this era.

The absence of postage rates for the swapping of news between newspaper editors created a popular news distribution system which was known as the “newspaper exchange” (Copeland, 2003; Coward, 1999; Humphrey, 1996). John M. Coward (1999) offers a concise explanation of the workings of the newspaper exchange. He explains that, “Editors used the post office to establish exchanges with editors in distant cities. By clipping items from the exchange papers, antebellum editors could obtain regular accounts of national and international news, material otherwise difficult to obtain” (p. 14). The system was merely what its name implies: an exchange of news between the editors of different newspapers across the country made possible by the nation’s extensive postal network which, in turn, was the direct result of the Post Office Act’s establishment of free mailing privileges between newspaper editors and publishers (Humphrey, 1996, p. 138). And, as Coward (1999) implies, the exchange system eased the process through which news was gathered and expanded the amount of information in

antebellum newspapers (p. 14).

While most newspapers in the country participated in the exchange system in one way or another, some papers relied on it more than others out of necessity. America's ever-expanding smaller newspapers greatly depended on the exchanges (Humphrey, 1996, p. 138). For instance, "For many small papers, particularly in the western part of the country, such access provided a major source of information and enabled them to produce a more comprehensive coverage of national and foreign news for their customers" (p. 138). Although it played an important role in offering broader coverage for the nation's newspapers and in providing free transportation of the news and a necessary life-line for America's smaller papers, the system was not flawless.

The extensive use of the exchanges led to a number of logistical flaws which highlighted the inability of the system to remain the sole transporter of the news. One of the most apparent problems with the exchange system concerned the volume of newspapers flowing through the mail in relation to the continuing expansion of the number of newspapers in antebellum America (Humphrey, 1996, p. 138). Humphrey expands upon this problem when she states that:

The growth of newspaper publishing even produced problems [...since] as the number of papers printed grew, many publishers felt overwhelmed by the number of exchanges that they received. This proved particularly true for the large-city daily papers, which received little of direct use from the rural papers who sought to participate in the exchange system. (p. 138)

It was not uncommon for editors of the larger metropolitan daily newspapers to feel dissatisfied with the volume of relevant news from smaller rural papers that they should include in their own papers (p. 138). The imbalance in the amount of relevant news

provided by the exchange system participants was further exacerbated by “trying to ascertain the differences in costs between dailies and weeklies” (p. 139).

While subscription fees were the same for both participants in the exchanges, some felt that the weeklies enjoyed an unfair advantage over the dailies since the weeklies were able to harvest the additional news contained in the nation’s daily newspapers at no additional cost due the free postage provided in the Post Office Act of 1792 (Humphrey, 1996, p. 139). According to Pasley (2001), there was another unwritten form of subsidy in the Post Office Act which many larger papers thought benefited the smaller papers at their expense:

... a newspaper publisher’s ability to reprint from other periodicals without limitation or payment of any kind. There were no copyright fees, required permissions, or even well-established canons of giving credit, for the use of previously published material in newspapers. Small-town newspapers typically filled most of their non-advertising space with freely reprinted matter from their complementary ‘exchange papers.’ (p. 8)

But this apparent imbalance between the smaller and larger newspapers participating in the newspaper exchange programs was just one of many setbacks.

Another logistical setback that exchange newspapers faced was the weather (Humphrey, 1996, p. 138). Humphrey’s work emphasizes how serious a foe the weather often was for the transportation of news through the exchanges. She explains that, “The weather, as always, played havoc with access to news. Most news still came through the exchange system developed during the colonial period, and bad weather often cut this outlet off, sometimes for weeks at a time” (p. 138). While the newspaper exchanges remained the most significant transporter of the news during the antebellum era, difficulties of that nature as well as other shortcomings with the newspaper exchanges themselves were often considered the primary motivators for the increasingly important

search for alternative forms of transporting the news prior to the press' adoption of the telegraph (p. 139).

While some of the alternative forms of transporting the news utilized by the press were more orthodox than others, they all still required communication to be linked with transportation. In the quest to establish an alternative to the exchanges, the link between transportation and communication became more clearly visible to the reader since those alternative methods went beyond simple exchanges of newspapers between editors and publishers, for the most part invisible to those not directly working in the publishing industry. As was mentioned earlier, the slow pace at which the news traveled through the mail was one of the principle issues of concern. Alternatives to the newspaper exchange system were developed in an attempt to mitigate the issue of timeliness as well as other areas of concern. Copeland (2003) mentions a number of the alternatives to which newspaper publishers turned in their search for a news transportation system that would offer greater immediacy than the exchange system. He claims that, "the press had continually sought ways to speed up the dissemination and gathering of news. The railroad helped, as did a pony express system. Some editors even used carrier pigeons and news boats in efforts to cut down on the time between events and the sharing of news about them" (p. 11). These alternative news transporters were used to distribute both national and international news throughout the antebellum era but they saw their most extensive use with the distribution of news from Europe—a practice which should be mentioned briefly (Blondheim, 1994; Huntzicker, 1999).

It was noted in Chapter One that, throughout the nineteenth century, New York City was the center of American journalism (Schudson, 1978; Starr, 162). At that time, it

was also the principal shipping center and port of entry in America (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 463). As a result, a great deal of news flowed in from Europe by way of the port of New York. Newspaper publishers were well aware of this fact and “they raced to get the news first, especially business and financial information from Europe. To meet incoming ships and relay the news first, editors hired fast boats, special trains, horseback messengers, and carrier pigeons” (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 95). These different methods increased the speed at which news was received and printed by the New York daily newspapers that could afford to employ expensive news-gathering and news-transportation alternatives. However, the fact remained that newspapers outside of New York City were unable to include most European news until the New York papers containing that news made their way through the slow, delay-prone newspaper exchange system via the mail. But this scenario was soon to change with the arrival of the telegraph.

Separation of Communication & Transportation: News Distribution after the Telegraph

The use of the telegraph to relay news to America’s newspapers initiated a lasting separation of communication from transportation. J. V. Boone (2005) sums things up when he states that:

The separation of human communication from transportation became a major trend in the mid-1800s. Humans have probably always wanted to communicate over longer and longer distances. We simply have things to say, information to exchange, and ideas to share [...] however, it was not until the advent of electrical telegraphy that routine, timely communication over long distances became a major factor in the conduct of personal, industrial, military, and political affairs. (p. 23)

The separation of communication offered by the use of the telegraph could clearly be seen as beneficial in that it allowed a surplus of more timely news to appear in America’s

newspapers—since news traveling over the wires moved far more quickly than even the fastest transporter in the pre-telegraph era (Knightley, 2000; Wheeler, 2006). Because a previous chapter examined in great detail how the press’ adoption of the telegraph for the distribution of news enabled a greater sense of immediacy to become one of the defining features of journalism, this issue will not be revisited here. Nor will attention be devoted to the fact that the telegraph was sporadically used (due to financial inhibitors) by the press to move the news during the last decade of the antebellum era, only achieving importance because of the turmoil, urgency and increase in newspaper circulation generated by the Civil War. This, too, was addressed in the preceding chapters. Instead, the remainder of this chapter will examine the other consequences that accompanied the separation of communication from transportation offered by the press’ use of the telegraph to transport the news in the context of the Civil War.

With news traveling from the “special reporters” in the battlefield back to the nation’s newspapers on the “lightning wires”, more up-to-date news could be printed in the dailies than ever before (Knightley, 2000, p. 20). But some scholars have questioned the role of the telegraph in separating communication from transportation. For instance, John Durham Peters (2006) claims that this argument “overloads the telegraph with a historical burden” (p. 147). He argues that, even before the telegraph came onto the scene, the use of carrier pigeons and line-of-sight signaling was able to offer a primitive form of information distribution which separated communication from the physical transportation of the message (p. 147).

Before proceeding, it is important to consider the criticism offered by Peters (2006). While it is undeniably true that carrier pigeons occasionally transported the news

in the attempt to find a quicker news-transporter than the exchange system, it is difficult to make the case that pigeons represented an earlier form of communication that was free from transportation. The pigeon was still a transporter in the same way that a horseman or a steam train carrying the mail was. Furthermore, while it may seem like a glib observation, the news or communication that the pigeon transported was attached in a canister to one of the bird's legs, therefore literally linking the transporter to the communication he carried (Martin, 2009).

Line-of-sight telegraphy is a more difficult matter. The process of line-of-sight telegraphy essentially revolved around "Signal messages [being] sent by means of flags, torches, or lights" (Greely, 1987, p. 311). Carey (1989) identifies that, "the first practical use of line-of-sight telegraphy was for the transmission of news of arriving ships, a practice begun long before 1837" (p. 214). The sending of messages over rugged terrain by way of signal flags, flares or lamps may well be seen as a precursor to the telegraph in terms of the separation of communication from transportation, but there are a number of issues that prevent it from being credited with truly initiating the lasting separation which has come to characterize much of the modern mediated communication taken for granted today. For instance, in the context of the topic of this thesis, although line-of-sight telegraphy was used for military purposes throughout the duration of the Civil War and although both the Union and the Confederacy developed their own "Signal Corps" who used this method for tactical communication, there is no evidence that line-of-sight telegraphy was used to transport the news to the press during the war. It was the electric telegraph and its journalistic use in the Civil War that really moved these earlier, more experimental breaks between communication and transportation to a commercially viable

level. Furthermore, the telegraph not only offered the separation of a message from its transporter (and the increased speed in transmission that was allowed) but it offered something that carrier pigeons and line-of-sight signaling could not on the same scale: encryption.

Keeping the enemy in the dark: Telegraphic encryption

J. V. Boone (2005) appropriately sums things up by insisting that, “all military leaders have based their tactics on their assumption as to the enemy’s location and intent. Thus maintaining secrecy has always been a vital part of any general’s war planning, as has concomitantly attempting to uncover the secrets of his opponents” (p. vii). The Civil War was no exception to this rule. Without getting into a detailed analysis of the history of cryptology and telegraphic espionage, it is important to briefly examine how the separation of communication from transportation offered by the telegraph created both advantages and disadvantages for sending strategically sensitive information to and from the battlefield. The immediate advantage of the telegraph from a military point of view was that large volumes of information could be sent extremely quickly from the battlefield to the nation’s command centers, or vice versa, thus enabling commanding officers and field strategists to keep in constant contact with their armies and thereby affording them the opportunity to command large armies over extensive geographical distances in near real-time (Boone, 2005; Wheeler, 2006). Boone (2005) expands upon the significance of this fact by claiming that, “The telegraph was used extensively in the conduct of the U.S. Civil War and helped to revolutionize the command-and-control aspects of warfare. Although signal flags and other methods of communications were also used, the telegraph provided a new capability, which was met with a quick

acceptance” (p. 26). But there was an important disadvantage as well: the separation of communication from transportation offered by the telegraph made it much easier for the enemy to covertly intercept its opponent’s communications (Greely, 1987; Wheeler, 2006).

It was not difficult for the enemy to wiretap the telegraph system and listen in on military and journalistic transmissions (Wheeler, 2006, p. 100). As Wheeler explains, Civil War wiretapping occurred very frequently and was a relatively easy process (p. 100). For example, “it simply required splicing into the official line and attaching that new feed to a telegraph key” (p. 100). Yet, while in theory the act of wiretapping was easy, it was very dangerous when actually executed (Fischel, 1996; Greely, 1987). Edwin C. Fishel (1996) illustrates the danger associated with wiretapping during the Civil War by explaining that, “Every phase of a tap was a risk—installing an undetectable and electrically successful connection, hiding and feeding the intercept operators, and getting their “take” back to headquarters” (p. 4-5). Furthermore, A. W. Greely (1987) stresses the important point that, “Skill and patience were necessary for efficient telegraphic work, especially when lines were frequently destroyed by Confederate incursions or through hostile inhabitants of the country” (p. 356). Although some remain skeptical as to the frequency with which wiretapping obtained relevant and useful information, there was at least one well documented instance when it did. Towards the end of 1864, “Confederate wires were often tapped during [Union Major General William Tecumseh] Sherman’s march to the sea, a warning of [Confederate] General [Joseph] Wheeler’s coming raid being thus obtained” (p. 362). Not only did this process allow for the strategic advantage of covertly gathering information from the enemy, it also provided the ability to transmit

misinformation intended to disorient the enemy — tactics that were used by both the South and the North (Wheeler, 2006, p. 100). With the large-scale separation of communication from transportation provided by the telegraph, it became much easier to obtain valuable information from the enemy than was the case in the past when one had to either intercept written correspondence or overhear conversations in person to gather intelligence. However, something had to be done to compensate for the inherent danger of the telegraph.

In order to prevent further information from falling into the wrong hands, encryption of telegraphic transmissions became a necessity (Boone, 2005; Fischel, 1996; Wheeler, 2006). It should be noted that, although the use of telegraphic encryption was widespread throughout the course of the Civil War, the use of codes and encryption in written correspondence in times of war predates the telegraph. Although the purpose of this thesis is not to scrutinize telegraphic encryption, the subject must be briefly touched upon here to properly examine how its extensive use was related to the separation of communication from transportation. It is important to note that, “Although the telegraph had already been used in military operations, the American Civil War saw its wide-scale use and raised awareness of the value of secure communications at the highest levels of government” (Boone, 2005, p. 30). Both the North and the South soon came to this realization and made extensive use of telegraphic encryption (Boone, 2005; Fischel, 1996).

At first this was not an easy task since, “There was a clear need for communications security, but little in the way of equipment to encourage its use” (Boone, 2005, p. 26). In the early stages of the war, much of the encryption undertaken by both

the North and the South was based on “substitutions and simple word transpositions” which were methods well known by both sides (p. 26-7). Eventually, the Union and the Confederacy developed more complex encryption methods in an attempt to keep the secrecy of their strategic information (Boone, 2005). Wheeler (2006) explains how both the Confederate and Union forces developed cipher codes to encrypt telegraphic messages (p. 100). While not every message transmitted via the telegraph was encrypted, since time (especially during war) was a finite resource and it required a great deal of time to encrypt and then decode a message, messages that were deemed sensitive were encrypted (p. 100). Another important consideration when determining when a telegraphic message would have been encrypted was that “a single error in transmission might require that the entire message be retransmitted” (Boone, 2005, p. 27). Failure to retransmit such messages would create useless garbled messages.

Despite the constant risk, “There was wide use, on both the Union and Confederate sides, of codebooks and cipher wheels” (Boone, 2005, p. 26). Although both the Union and the Confederacy actively encrypted important telegraph messages, “the Federals’ intelligence service is found to have been considerably more productive than the Confederates” (Fischel, 1996, p. 5). Wheeler (2006) highlights one of the reasons why this was likely the case. He explains that, in the North, “important messages were sent in a cipher that was never broken by the Confederates. This unbreakable code was known as the Route Code, so called because the message contained within it instructions for the ‘route’ to be used to piece it together” (p. 102). The route code cipher system proved so effective that disgruntled Southerners printed intercepted Northern-encoded messages in newspapers in the hope of finding someone in the Confederate States of

America (CSA) who could decode them (p. 102). That person never stepped forward (p. 102).

Robert L. Thompson (1947) also discusses the increasing importance of telegraph encryption through the use of ciphering messages. He describes how Secretary of War Stanton was an extremely influential figure in urging the development of the cipher system to prevent information leaks (p. 387-8). Thompson makes the important point that it was not just military information that was encrypted before being sent across the wires (p. 223). A number of civilian cipher and encryption systems were developed and utilized by the press during the Civil War although the motivation for their creation differed from their military counterparts (Fischel, 1996; Thompson, 1947). Because of their constant fear of being expelled from the field by commanding officers for the crime of revealing strategically sensitive information to their papers, many “special reporters” were prompted to produce “codes by which innocent-looking telegrams to their editors could carry brief reports on the military situation” (Fischel, 1996, p. 325). For example, “‘Will send you twelve pages tonight,’ [...] meant ‘Hooker will fight tomorrow’” (p. 325). Furthermore, a civilian cipher system for transmitting news on the telegraph was developed by Alexander Jones’ creating a method by which “a whole paragraph could be condensed into a single word” (p. 223). Although this civilian encryption system was less complicated than that developed by the military, it created a number of problems which, along with the ulterior motives for the press’ use of ciphering, will be discussed in the forth chapter of this thesis.

Less than Perfect: Technical Limitations Associated with the Telegraph

It has already been noted that the journalistic use of the telegraph in the Civil War offered more immediate and comprehensive coverage than ever before and that this contributed to the modern form of journalism with which we are familiar today. However, as Robert L. Thompson (1947) explains, at the time of the Civil War, the technical workings of the American telegraph system had only undergone minor improvements since its invention nearly two decades earlier (p. 248). For instance, copper telegraph wires had been replaced by iron and new forms of insulation increased the “efficiency” of wiring news, “but results were still far from satisfactory” (p. 248). In the 1860s, rain and fog often prevented telegraph lines from carrying messages from the field back to the nation’s newspapers (p. 248). Andrews (1983) also explains how the separation of communication from transportation offered by the electric telegraph was anything but perfect by stating that:

Even as late as 1861 the telegraph had many technical deficiencies. Although the copper wires used at first had generally been replaced by iron wire, which was less likely to break under adverse weather conditions, most of the telegraph lines were poorly insulated. The glass insulators then commonly used were mere bureau-drawer knobs that were hard to keep on the pins and were easily damaged. There was some experimentation with vulcanized rubber insulators during the late fifties, but their use was abandoned after it was discovered that the rubber was easily fouled by dust and moisture. During storms, the current frequently became so weak that messages would fail to come through. (p. 7)

Even after communication had been separated from transportation and the news was moved at an unprecedented speed, news-delivery still faced the same weather-related problems that had frequently plagued the newspaper exchange system. A concrete example will serve to illustrate this fact. For instance, “on October 7, 1861, the *Chicago Tribune* commented on the fact that for ‘three nights in succession’ the telegraph had

failed to supply the *Tribune* with its customary budget of news ‘on account of prevailing storms’” (p. 7).

Although the inevitable weather-related limitations as well as the technical limitations associated with the telegraph’s separation of communication from transportation were very real, they were not the only difficulties the medium experienced when it was harnessed by the press during the Civil War. As Carey (1989) explains, “the telegraph twisted and altered but did not displace [entirely] patterns of connection formed by natural geography: by the river and primitive foot and horse paths and later by the wooden turnpike and canal” (p. 203). This point can best be illustrated by the following example.

While the telegraph may have separated communication from transportation, that separation applied to domestic news only and not yet to international news. The international news printed in America’s papers throughout the duration of the Civil War was still reliant on traditional forms of transportation. There was however a brief moment before the Civil War when international news—or at least news from the British Empire—enjoyed the same separation of communication from transportation which the telegraph enabled. For a brief interval in 1858, there was a working transatlantic telegraph cable connecting the United States of America with Britain (Winseck & Pike, 2007, p. 22). Dwayne R. Winseck and Robert M. Pike describe the nature of this short-lived venture which was accomplished by the Atlantic Telegraph Company (p. 22). They state that:

The Atlantic Telegraph Company’s first attempt to lay a transatlantic cable in 1857 failed. A second attempt a year later saw the cable work for a little over a month, but after a few press dispatches and some celebratory exchanges between U.S. President James Buchanan and Queen Victoria

lauding the civilizing potential of cable communications, the line fell silent. (p. 22)

Once the line “fell silent”, communication between America and Europe was again reliant on transportation, a pattern which would continue until after the Civil War had ended (Blondheim, 2008).

After the failure of the Atlantic Telegraph Company’s 1858 transatlantic cable, the ocean was once more a buffer constricting communication between Europe and the United States of America. Since international communication and transportation were again intertwined, the transporter that brought the news to America was the transatlantic steamship (Blondheim, 1994; Blondheim, 2008). Although this technical limitation of the telegraph was a significant setback in terms of the speed at which news could travel from Europe to America or (particularly during the Civil War) from America to Europe, accommodations were made to streamline the transportation of the news across the Atlantic. Indeed, “Since the early stages of the war, the State Department and the NYAP had had in place a carefully devised procedure for timing the release of war news according to the scheduled departure of Europe-bound mail-bearing steamers” (Blondheim, 2008, p. 206). Arrangements were also made in England to fast-track the war news coming out of America to the British press due to the fact that “Reuter’s agency in England collaborated with them [the U.S. State Department and the NYAP] in disseminating the news in England and Europe upon the arrival of these steamers in the Old World” (p. 206). Without such accommodations and cooperation, news about the conflict in America would have reached the European press in a much slower and more disorganized fashion.

To recap, this chapter has examined how the telegraph initiated a lasting separation between communication and transportation. Attention was also given to the consequences that this separation had for the press in the American Civil War. There are also a number of key facts that the reader should take away from this chapter. First, throughout the entire revolutionary period and well into the antebellum era, communication and transportation were intimately linked. One depended upon the other. Consequently, news could only be moved as fast as the fastest transporter of the day since it needed to be physically carried from the writer to the publisher. Being well aware of this considerable limitation, newspapers developed numerous alternative news delivery methods in an attempt to ensure a stable and timely supply of news to print in the continually expanding number of American newspapers. However, each of the transporters used to achieve these ends —be it newspaper exchanges in the mail, carrier pigeons, fast boats, stagecoaches, or steam trains— still required the news to be written and transported in a paper-based format. Second, the press' adoption of the telegraph for news distribution purposes represented the first commercially viable and widely-used form of transporting the news in which communication and transportation were no longer conjoined. See *Table 1* on the following page for a more visual comparison of how the news was delivered in the United States of America before and after the press adopted the use of the telegraph.

Table 1

Delivering the News in Nineteenth Century America

| Before the Telegraph | After the Telegraph |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and transportation are necessarily linked. - The mail is the principal transporter of the news due to the subsidies included in the Post Office Act of 1792. - Newspaper exchanges are established through the mail and remain crucial for the dissemination of news to America's ever-expanding number of newspapers. - The inconveniences and problems associated with the exchanges lead newspaper publishers to pursue numerous alternative news distribution methods which are faster than the exchanges. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and transportation are no longer interlinked. News no longer needs to be physically carried in a paper-based format from writer to publisher. - The separation of communication and transportation results in a greater volume of more up-to-date news in America's newspapers. - Military commanders can now keep in near real-time contact with the distant armies they command. - Espionage and intelligence gathering can be accomplished more easily and the military bolsters its encryption efforts to compensate for the ease of wiretapping by the enemy. - The telegraph still has numerous technical deficiencies which limit its use under certain circumstances. |

Third, this separation of communication from transportation had both positive and negative repercussions. On the positive side, it resulted in a greater volume of up-to-date news in the press and allowed military commanders to remain in closer contact than ever before with the armies they commanded. On the negative side, there were still many technical limitations associated with the telegraph's use for that purpose. At the same time, the separation between communication and transportation increased the risks associated with breaches of sensitive military information, thereby prompting both the North and the South to devote greater attention to safeguarding strategic information through the development of more complicated encryption methods. The press, too, would experiment with encryption but for very different reasons than the military.

IV

The choice of an appropriate project-specific research method requires much deliberation. It is no small task, nor can it be done blindly, since the end result (meaningful findings) rests upon the use of a methodology that is well-suited to the given project. This project was no exception.

While it may be possible to eventually arrive at an effective research method through an extremely tiresome and often expensive process of elimination, there is a much more efficient way of proceeding. And, while trial and error may well play a role in the final selection of a research method, it is the research questions to be answered by a study which must always be the starting point for the selection of a method or research strategy (Herman, 2008, p. 167). As Margaret G. Herman puts it, “One’s research question should drive the choices that are made” (p. 167). Consequently, before going any further, it is necessary to revisit the two research questions which drive this thesis. They ask: 1) How did the use of communications technologies still in their infancy at the time of the American Civil War contribute to the development of modern journalism? 2) What role did the Civil War play in the transformation of journalism itself?

It is important to note that reviewing the literature on a topic of study is also a necessity when it comes to selecting an applicable research method (Buchanan, 2004; Leslie, 2010). After an extensive literature review, it was determined that the best way to provide comprehensive and concrete answers to the research questions cited was to conduct a newspaper content analysis. In addition, there are two related questions that should be answered at this time: a) Why is a newspaper content analysis the appropriate

research method to be used? b) How will a content analysis of Civil War newspapers answer these research questions? Let's turn our attention to the first of these questions.

Why Use a Content Analysis?

Arthur Asa Berger (2011) notes that, "Content analysis is one of the most commonly used research methodologies by scholars dealing with media and communication" (p. 205). To set out the thinking behind my choice of methodology, I felt that an analysis of periodicals published during the Civil War would be well served by one of the most widely used methodologies in communications research, shedding light on an aspect of a topic that has escaped the attention of many historians and media scholars alike. Also, conducting a content analysis would allow me to move beyond a reliance on secondary research alone to reach the inference needed to answer the stated research questions. In essence, a content analysis would allow me to examine first-hand the findings of scholars who claim that the news coverage of the Civil War laid the foundation for the format of modern journalism.

It is important to remember that the events which are the focus of this project occurred more than 145 years ago and therefore it is simply not possible to use a research method which would require reciprocal interaction between the researcher and the phenomenon being studied—as is the case when using methods such as interviews and focus groups for more current topics. Based on this reasoning, it was decided that an "unobtrusive" research method, like content analysis, would be the most appropriate option. Earl Babbie (2008) explains that an unobtrusive research method is a type of research strategy in which the "content analyst seldom has any effect on the subject being studied" (p. 361). Berger (2011) expands upon the notion of an unobtrusive research

method when he states that, “Unlike research methods such as interviewing and participant observation, the researcher does not ‘intrude’ on what is being studied and thus does not affect the outcome of the research” (p. 213). In other words, an unobtrusive research method like a newspaper content analysis offers what could be considered a limited form of one way interaction between the subject of study and the researcher: the researcher can only interact with the subject in so far as examining the artifacts which are preserved and accessible (the newspapers themselves) but he is unable to alter this material from the format in which it is preserved.

Newspaper content analyses have a number of attributes which were seen as beneficial for answering the research questions which are the focus of this study. The first is more of a necessity than an advantage and was mentioned above in the discussion of how content analysis is an unobtrusive research method (Babbie, 2008; Berg, 2009; Berger, 2011; Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The second attribute associated with content analysis can be considered a very important practical advantage in that a successful content analysis is often less expensive to conduct than many other popular research methods (Babbie, 2008; Berg, 2009; Berger, 2011). The third is that it can be seen as a forgiving or user-friendly research method since it “allows for the correction of errors” in an easier manner when mistakes are made and adjustments are required unlike other research methods such as ethnographic research or interviewing (Babbie, 2008, p. 361). While this may sound trite, it is an important advantage since, as Bernard Berelson (1952) points out, “there is something of a progression in the design of a content analysis study” (p. 164). The fourth advantage is that it offers the researcher the possibility of examining, or discovering, changes and trends that can only be observed by conducting

research over a long period in time (Babbie, 2008; Berg, 2009; Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The importance of this attribute will be discussed more thoroughly shortly.

While all four of the positive attributes associated with content analysis were viewed by the researcher as reasons for selecting a newspaper content analysis as the research method to be used in this study, it is important to note, as Berger (2011) does, that “there’s no such thing as a perfect methodology—one that does not have weaknesses and limitations” (p. 218). With this in mind, it should come as no surprise that there were several distinct disadvantages presented by content analysis which also had to be taken into consideration when it was selected as the methodology of choice. It is worth mentioning some of the most relevant disadvantages associated with this research method that could hinder the research project. The first is the fact that it is often very difficult to find a truly representative sample from which to make generalizable inferences to a broader population (Berger, 2011). The second key disadvantage with the chosen research method is relevant in any newspaper content analysis and especially an historical one such as my own: accessibility to primary documents (Leslie, 2010). As Larry Z. Leslie (2010) aptly explains, “A major disadvantage of the method lies with whether you have access to the materials you want to study” (p. 143). This issue will be dealt with more extensively a little later in this chapter. The third disadvantage involves the difficulty in achieving both reliability and validity in the creation of measurable units, operational definitions and the coding process (Berelson, 1952; Berger, 2011; Bryman & Teevan, 2005).

Bruce L. Berg (2009) sums up the processes involved in selecting an appropriate research method by reminding us that, “As with any analytic method, the advantages of

content analysis must be weighed against the disadvantages and against alternative research strategies. Although content analysis may be appropriate for some research problems and designs, it is not appropriate in every research situation” (p. 365). Nonetheless, after assessing the goals of this project, the research questions to be answered and the pros and cons associated with this research method, it was decided that a newspaper content analysis remained the best choice. Furthermore, I am confident that a well-organized research design will allow me to limit the potential disadvantages associated with this method.

How to Use a Content Analysis

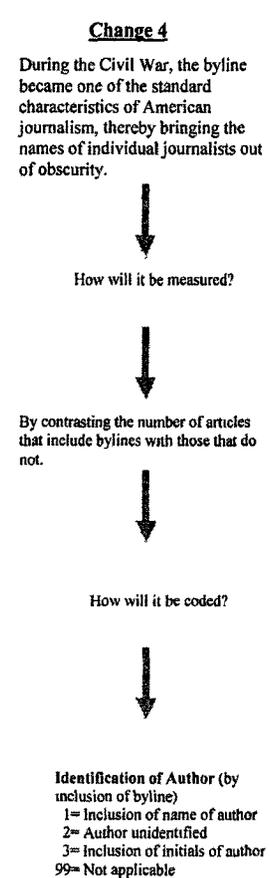
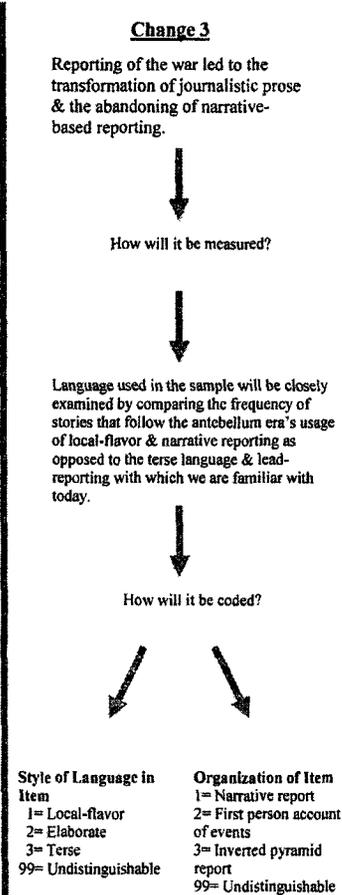
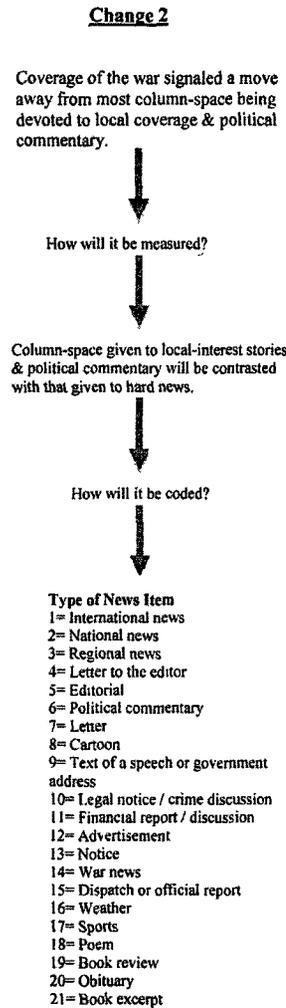
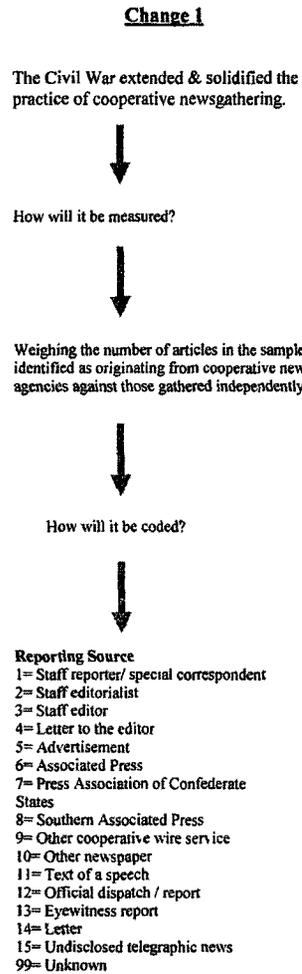
After establishing that a newspaper content analysis was the most appropriate research method to select, there remained the difficult task of determining how to develop and execute a content analysis of Civil War newspapers that could provide answers to my research questions. To answer the two research questions dealing with the likelihood that the press’ coverage of the Civil War represented a turning point in American journalism and served as the starting point for what could be considered “modern” journalism, a content analysis would have to address some specific changes in the field of journalism itself which occurred during the Civil War.

Although the material discussed in the first three chapters of this project outlined the many different changes that arose from the reporting of the Civil War, a focused and manageable approach was seen as a requisite for crafting a meaningful content analysis on such a broad topic. To do so, the content analysis will address four specific changes in the field of journalism which scholars have claimed were caused by the Civil War. The first is that the conflict extended, and then solidified, the practice of cooperative

newsgathering. To examine the extent of this claim, the content analysis will weigh the number of articles in the selected newspapers identified as originating from cooperative news agencies against those gathered independently. The second change is that the coverage of the war signaled a move away from the majority of column-space in papers being devoted to local coverage and political commentary. Here, the column space given to local-interest stories and political commentary will be contrasted with that given to hard news. The third change will address the claim that the reporting of the war led to the transformation of journalistic prose and the abandoning of narrative-based reporting. To document the extent of this change, the language used in the selected newspapers will be closely examined by comparing the frequency of stories that follow the antebellum era's usage of local-flavor language and narrative reporting as opposed to the terse language and lead-reporting we are familiar with today. The fourth change will investigate the much disputed claim that it was during the Civil War that the byline became one of the standard characteristics of American journalism, thereby bringing the names of individual journalists out of obscurity (Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). This will be accomplished by contrasting the number of articles that include bylines with those that do not. For an easy-to-use visual guide to how each of these four changes will be measured, and also how they will be coded, consult *Figure 2* on the following page.

It is important to note that the four changes were not chosen on a whim by the researcher but had their origins in the literature of this important era. Given that fact, it would now be appropriate to discuss the reasons why these four specific changes in journalism will be coded for in this project's content analysis. The following section will identify the thinking behind the changes and will also examine the findings of other

Figure 2
Coding Guide Flowchart



scholars in relation to the four identified changes in journalism, thereby serving to justify or ground the purpose of the coded-for changes in a body of literature.

Changing the Format of Journalism

More than fifty years ago, Innis (1952) wrote that, “the telegraph [was] significant to the expansion of journalism” (p. 78). This statement can be considered to be rather modest. It was the combination of the use of the telegraph and the reporting of the events of the Civil War that played a significant role in changing the format of journalism itself into what we are familiar with today (Van Tuyl, 2008, p. 146).

Change Number One: Cooperative news gathering

Even before the Civil War, it was abundantly clear that gathering news and then transmitting news feeds back to newspapers by way of the telegraph was an expensive process (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94). Transmission costs were often as high as 5 cents per word, which was anything but cheap in the 1860s (p. 94). By the start of the war, cooperative newsgathering had already been widely practiced by the Associated Press to combat these high costs (Blondheim, 1994, p. 47). Cooperative newsgathering was common in the North and the war accelerated the trend towards this modern pattern of journalism, but it also increased the difficulties associated with that practice (Lloyd, 2006; Starr, 2004; Wheeler, 2006). It was on the South that the war had its most drastic impact in terms of the move towards cooperative newsgathering and also the difficulties that this move embodied (Risley, 2008, p. 150).

Prior to the bombing of Fort Sumter, most of the Southern daily newspapers received their telegraphic news feeds from the AP (Risley, 2008, p. 149). However, as Ford Risley recalls, only six days after Sumter fell into the hands of the Confederates, “a

detachment of United States Army soldiers marched into the headquarters of the American Telegraph Company in Washington, D.C. and quietly took possession of the office” (p. 149). From then on, the South no longer had access to the AP’s telegraphic news feeds (p. 149). The South’s lack of access to the AP created a big problem since, as Risley (2001) points out in an earlier article, Southern papers could not afford as many full-time correspondents and special (field) reporters as could the Northern newspapers (p. 222). Van Tuyll (2008) sheds light on another setback faced by Confederate papers after access to the AP was no longer available. She notes that, when the war began, there was a spike in demand for newspapers in the South, but there were not enough resources—financial or material—to print the papers needed to keep up with demand (p. 139). In order to overcome these hurdles, it became clear that the Confederates needed their own cooperative news association.

Although there were a number of short-lived attempts to create a Southern cooperative news association in the early days of the war, the Confederate Press Association, or PA as it was called, became the most widely subscribed-to association during the war (Risley, 2001, p. 222). Even though the PA may have been the most successful of the Southern cooperative newsgathering associations, Risley (2008) points out that not all subscribers were satisfied with their service (p. 158). He states that, “The cost of membership in the association and the overall quality of telegraphic news supplied were cited as the chief reasons for dissatisfaction with the PA” (p. 158). Despite the lack of complete satisfaction with the PA’s services, Southern newspapers continually printed the PA’s telegraph news feeds in their columns throughout the war (p. 156). Although the increasing importance of cooperative newsgathering associations was

clearly exemplified during the Civil War, many newspaper readers of the day may not have been aware of that fact. What would have been more noticeable were two changes in the format of journalism pioneered during that war: less local coverage and political commentary as well as marked changes in journalistic language.

Change Number Two: Turning away from local coverage and political commentary

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the majority of the daily newspaper content in the United States described local events and provided political commentary (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94). Wheeler describes how it was the lack of separation between communication and transportation before the use of the telegraph which was the principle contributing factor to this focus on local events and political commentary in the first part of the nineteenth century (p. 94). As mentioned earlier, before the telegraph, information was bound to the form of transportation which physically carried it from messenger to receiver (p. 94). Because of this, Wheeler notes that, “the press focused on those activities where it could beat the mail, chiefly local news and political commentary” (p. 94). But with the use of the telegraph for news gathering purposes in the middle of the century, it finally became possible to gather national news more quickly than the railway or messenger could deliver it (p. 94). Consequently, the column space given to local news and political commentary in American newspapers began a steady decline while the space given to national news grew rapidly (p. 94).

Schudson (1978) focuses on the second aspect of pre-telegraph American newspaper coverage: political commentary. He maintains that, in the years before the telegraph was adopted for news gathering and distributing on a large scale, newspapers in the United States spent most of their time (when they were not covering local events)

providing political commentary (p. 14). On this topic, he states that, “They were financed by political parties, factions of parties, or candidates for office who dictated editorial policy and sometimes wrote the editorials personally” (p. 15). Thus, papers were forums for political commentary and their readers were fully aware of this (p. 15). But the Civil War and its subsequent coverage through the telegraph changed things.

When the war began, local news and political commentary were given less coverage in both Northern and Southern newspapers (Van Tuyll, 2008, p. 136). As Van Tuyll recalls, “editorial content was to play only a supporting role in Civil War-era newspapers [...readers] wanted to read about what was happening with the war” (p. 136). Although the importance of news over political commentary held true for both the North and the South, the shift away from openly partisan newspapers was a greater and later change in the South than in the North (Risley, 2008, p. 150). Unlike the North which abandoned the partisan style of press described by Schudson (1978) long before the Civil War began, the Confederate press, at the beginning of the war, was still largely characterized by a strictly partisan and political commentary format (Risley, 2008, p. 150). And, returning to a development discussed earlier in this section, Risley makes the important point that the high costs associated with transmitting news and the strategy of combating these costs through cooperative newsgathering firmly moved the South away from its older partisan practices (p. 150).

Carey (1989) notes a similar trend on a more national level when he claims that the high cost of telegraphic transmission of news and the growing number of politically diverse subscribers to the cooperative newsgathering associations “forced the wire services to generate ‘objective’ news, news that could be used by papers of any political

stripe” (p. 210). This is no doubt a persuasive argument, but we need to be careful when claiming that the use of the telegraph during the Civil War spawned objective journalism all of the time. It is true that many of the news feeds that traveled the wires were as accurate descriptions of events on the battlefields as was possible, but it was also a war. In this war, like all other wars before and after, inaccuracy and exaggeration was still a defining feature of the telegrams some correspondents wired back to newspapers on the home front (Knightley, 2000, p. 21).

Change Number Three: Transforming journalistic prose and abandoning narratives

The language used in journalism prior to the widespread adoption of the telegraph scarcely resembles the language used in contemporary news products (Blondheim, 1994; Carey, 1989; Mindich, 2000; Wheeler, 2006). In the pre-telegraph era, the language and grammar which filled the columns of the nation’s newspapers varied almost as much as the individuals reading those papers. In fact, before the telegraph caught on and before the same news could be transmitted across the country and printed in papers from nearly every state, the language used in journalism tended to be local-based, a reflection of the local papers it was printed in and the local events that the stories described (Blondheim, 1994; Carey, 1989). Thus, the writing in newspapers in the United States before the use of the telegraph differed from state to state and paper to paper based on local speech patterns and colloquialisms. However, with the use of the telegraph to transmit news, this “local flavor” in journalistic language had to be reduced or altogether eliminated (Carey, 1989, p. 210). Carey explains this local and colloquial problem and then identifies the solution that was adopted when he states that, “The wire services demanded a form of

language stripped of the local, the regional; and colloquial [...] language had to be flattened out and standardized” (p. 210).

Similarly, in *Changing Concepts of Time* (1952), Innis, writing in Canada, was also quick to classify the changes in journalistic prose that accompanied the abandonment of local language and writing styles (p. 94). He remarked that, “In the United States the dominance of the newspaper was accompanied by a ruthless shattering of language, the invention of new idioms, and the sharpening of words” (p. 94). One of the principal motivations for the standardization of language used in reporting in the wake of the telegraph was cost-effectiveness (Carey, 1989, p. 211). Quite simply, “Writing for the telegraph had to be condensed to save money” (p. 211). Throughout the Civil War, this standardization of language and especially the cost-effectiveness associated with it were key concerns for both Union and Confederate news correspondents and publishers (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94).

Correspondents in both the North and the South were instructed to write as crisply and concisely as possible in their dispatches (Risley, 2008, p. 154). They were to avoid extensive sentences and complicated words that could be confusing for readers, difficult for telegraphers to transmit or could simply be replaced with shorter words that expressed the same meaning (p. 154). The goal was to relay information that was “free of opinion”; but, as mentioned earlier, this did not always happen (p. 154). Nevertheless, the pressure to write as concisely as possible persisted. In fact, it was often carried to an extreme that ended up costing more money than it saved since the messages were written so concisely that the newspaper editor who reviewed and assembled incoming telegrams from the battlefield could not decipher what the correspondents were saying (p. 156). One specific

example from the Confederate Press Association highlights this contradictory problem. Blinded by the desire to save money at all costs, John S. Thrasher, the superintendent of the PA, gave each of his correspondents very specific instructions about how language should be used when sending telegrams from the field: “Read every message over after writing it out, and purge it of every word not required to convey your meaning; and see where you can use one word to express what you have put in two or three. Omit articles, pronouns, propositions, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs, when by so doing the plain sense of your meaning will not be lost” (p. 156). Not surprisingly, this extreme form of avoiding local, colloquial and even descriptive language resulted in just the opposite of what Thrasher proclaimed: “the plain sense of [...] meaning” was lost (p. 156). Extreme policies like that advocated by Thrasher were soon modified to allow for language to be stripped down just enough to be comprehensible to newspaper editors, but this standardization of language in journalistic prose survives even to this day (p. 156).

Closely related to the standardization of journalistic language was the reshaping of the structure of news stories themselves. Once again, the telegraph and the Civil War would play an important role in initiating this reshaping. Carey (1989) sums up the end result of this reorganization of the structure of writing in journalism when he says, “the story [was] divorced from the storyteller” (p. 211). Prior to and throughout most of the Civil War, the format of news writing scarcely resembled that of the present day. Antebellum news writing tended to follow a narrative or story-telling pattern (Mindich, 2000, p. 179). The pattern usually went along the lines of: “First, an announcement of the utility or importance of the story [... then,] the storyteller narrates in chronological order, leaving the surprise [...] for last” (p. 179-80). This pattern was continued in the reporting

that traveled across American telegraph lines throughout the Civil War (p. 180). Then, in the early morning hours of April 15th, 1865, only six days after the Civil War had officially ended with a Union victory, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at the Ford Theatre. The events that immediately followed his death signaled a break with the earlier narrative style of news-writing that had dominated the press for more than a century (p. 180).

While the President lay dying, the Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, quickly took control of the chaos in Washington. At the same time, he wrote the first example of the now familiar “inverted pyramid” style of news writing when he issued his official dispatch to the Associated Press, thereby informing the nation of the death of the President (Mindich, 2000, p. 180). The inverted pyramid, which is the standard form of journalistic writing today, is very different from the chronological narrative style of journalism that reigned during the first half of the nineteenth century. Before going any further, it is important to explicitly define the key attribute of the inverted pyramid style of news writing. David Mindich offers a concise but comprehensive definition of the style, “[It is] a system of ordering facts in descending order of importance” (p. 180). He expands on this by explaining that it, “is a system that appears to strip a story of everything but the ‘facts,’ and changes the way we process news. The new style [...] reflects a new age concerned with facts. It is an age with no time to hear a good story” (p. 180). This awareness of the finite resource of time was expressed in Stanton’s War Department dispatch which was written with the motive of “presenting important facts quickly” to the American people (p. 186). And this style of reporting which prides itself on providing concise news quickly has become the hallmark of modern journalism.

Change Number Four: Pioneering the use of the byline

As mentioned in Chapter One, many of the articles that appeared in American newspapers throughout the antebellum era had no identification of their author (Copeland, 2003; Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). During that era, in the rare instance when an article or story did include some form of identification, it was often not the author's name but rather a clearly fictitious pen-name (Copeland, 2003, p. 15). A number of scholars have made the case that this antebellum anonymity was vanquished by the Civil War (Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962). However, the initiative for the pioneering of the use of the byline that likely occurred during the Civil War was not spurred by journalists themselves but rather the Union military (Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962). As Louis M. Starr (1962) explains, in the spring of 1863, Union Major General Joseph Hooker, or "Fighting Joe" as he was known to many of the soldiers under his command, "Took the time to initiate an important reform in army correspondence: just before the launching of his Chancellorsville campaign, he directed that all news dispatches from the army must be signed" (p. 160).

Fighting Joe's demand that news correspondents use bylines was formalized in the "controversial" General Order No. 48 (Huntzicker, 1999, p. 149). Huntzicker outlines Hooker's motivation for mandating the use of bylines by explaining that, "in General Order No. 48, he [Hooker] said requiring signatures should overcome the problems of 'the frequent transmission of false intelligence, and the betrayal of the movements of the army to the enemy, by the publication of injudicious correspondence of an anonymous character'" (p. 149). The consequences for violating General Order No. 48 were very real. For instance, "Violators would be excluded from the lines of the army, and their

newspapers would be suppressed from circulation within the army—two powerful controls generals could exert” (p. 149). Journalists’ reception of Hooker’s demand that they use bylines soon proved to be positive since, “Although reporters opposed bylines as inhibiting their writing, they soon discovered that bylines helped them build national reputations” (p. 149). In essence, the Union army’s requirement of author identification could be seen as a starting point in the move away from anonymity for American journalists. Or, as Louis M. Starr (1962) puts it, “For the first time, some reporters became familiar by name to readers throughout the Union” (p. 161).

However, there were limitations to the extent of the government-mandated initiation of the byline in American journalism. Huntzicker (1999) highlights the major limitation by identifying that, “the practice of using bylines, however, appears to have been adopted only when required or when an editor thought the correspondent’s reputation would attract attention to the story” (p. 149). Furthermore, Louis M. Starr (1962) claims that, “After Hooker passed from command, names tended to shrink to initials or disappear, but enough of them remained to establish for Fighting Joe a fair claim to having given the byline to American journalism” (p. 161).

The Quest for the Appropriate Type of Content Analysis

With the intent of coding for these four journalistic changes and the goal of answering this study’s research questions, it was decided that a structural content analysis would be the most appropriate type of content analysis to utilize. A structural content analysis is a content analysis in which “we are less concerned with subtleties of meaning than with styles of presentation. We watch for the presence or absence, the prominence, the extent of treatment of general themes rather than for substantive nuances” (Manheim,

Rich, Willnat & Brians, 2006, p. 177). Put differently, a structural content analysis examines the manifest content rather than the latent content in the texts being studied. Attention is directed towards issues such as the inclusion or exclusion of certain structural characteristics of the sample rather than deciphering the implicit meaning that is contained within the sample (p. 178). Consequently, a structural content analysis can be accomplished by “identifying the frequency of occurrence of a name or other item[s]” (p. 178). With this in mind, this project’s plan to identify and count the frequency (or percentage) of different reporting sources, types of news items, styles of language, organizational formatting of stories and inclusion or exclusion of bylines seems to fall within the realm of what could be considered a structural content analysis.

If the universe of this study is Civil War newspapers and the content analysis is restricted to examining the four categories of manifest content mentioned, the next step is to identify the unit of analysis which will be used in this structural content analysis. After much thought, I decided to use the front page of the newspaper as my unit of analysis. This decision was made because it has been viewed as an efficient and well-used practice and has been known to yield a manageable and adequate sample without sacrificing the inferences needed to answer a study’s research questions (Buchanan, 2009; Herman, 2008).

Selecting and Operationalizing a Sampling Strategy

Jarol B. Manheim et al., (2006) offers an important service by reminding us that “not all samples are equally representative” (p. 113). This should be kept in mind in the effort to answer the two research questions which are the driving force behind this study. Consequently, the researcher needed to develop a sampling strategy which would allow

the results of the proposed content analysis to be generalized beyond the immediate boundaries of the selected newspapers. To arrive at generalizable findings, a representative sample had to be gathered (p. 110-1). As Manheim et al., explains, “a representative sample is one in which every major attribute of the larger population from which the sample is drawn is present in roughly the proportion or frequency with which those attributes occur in the larger population” (p. 110). Based on this reasoning, an effort must be made to gather as representative a sample as possible in order to generalize a study’s findings to a broader population—in this instance, the general development and practice of American journalism.

As any researcher knows, acquiring a representative sample is not an easy task and making sweeping deductions without a representative sample can have dangerous consequences (Babbie, 2008; Berelson, 1952; Manheim et al., 2006). Having as representative a sample as possible is important because “if it is not [representative], the researcher may, if not exercising care, at the very least be misled and at the worst be manipulated” (Manheim et al., 2006, p. 179). After much consideration, it was decided that a stratified sampling strategy offered the researcher the greatest likelihood of being able to gather a truly representative sample.

Before explaining how and why a stratified sampling strategy was used, it should first be made clear what a stratified sampling strategy or method entails. While there are many different definitions of stratified sampling, the one which will guide this study is the definition offered by Berg (2009). Berg provides a concise but clear definition of stratified sampling by explaining that it is a type of probability sampling that “is used whenever researchers need to ensure that a certain sample of the identified population

under examination is represented in the sample” (p. 49). He sheds light on how stratified sampling works by claiming that, “the population is divided into subgroups (strata), and independent samples of each stratum are selected. Within each stratum, a particular sampling fraction is applied in order to ensure representativeness of proportions in the full population” (p. 49).

Why then is it appropriate to use a stratified sampling strategy or method to conduct of content analysis of American Civil War newspapers? The principal reason that this particular sampling strategy was chosen was based upon the calculated assumption that this method would allow me to gather the most representative sample possible and, by so doing, would offer the greatest opportunity to accurately answer this study’s research questions. This assumption was not made carelessly. Rather, it was made after recognizing a crucial advantage that stratified sampling strategies offer as was noted by Alan Bryman and James J. Teevan (2005) who state that, “It ensures that the resulting sample is distributed in the same way as the population in terms of the stratifying criterion” (p. 220). In other words, using a stratified sampling strategy offers a greater potential for selecting a sample which more clearly represents the larger population from which the sample was selected, thereby increasing the possibility of being able to make accurate deductions without skewing the data and reducing the probability of making unfounded conclusions resulting from an unrepresentative sample (p. 220). The advantage noted by Bryman and Teevan requires identification of the stratifying criteria used in this study, which will be done by outlining how a stratified sampling strategy will be implemented.

The first step in outlining how a stratified sampling strategy was implemented hinges upon the reality that, to be able to make inferences from my project to the broader development of American journalism as an industry and cultural practice, the sample would be required to include newspapers which, when viewed together, could be seen as best representing American journalism in the 1860s. While this may seem self-evident when gathering any sample, it is more complicated than one would expect when gathering a sample of Civil War newspapers. This is because there were in fact two Americas during the Civil War era since one nation split into two halves—each of which could still be considered American but different from the other due to conflicting cultures and definitions of property—and then these two halves merged into one country again after the war had ended.

Based on this reasoning, it was deemed necessary to pursue a stratified sampling strategy which developed a sample consisting of two strata which were determined primarily by geography and political allegiance. The first stratum was newspapers from the United States of America (North) and the second was papers from the Confederate States of America (South). I will return to a more detailed discussion of how these two strata were organized but, for the moment, it is important to examine the way that a stratified sampling strategy will be utilized in a manner intended to gather as representative a sample as possible.

Although the sample will be stratified by being divided into two different strata based on geography and political allegiance, the very definition of a stratified sampling strategy offered by Berg (2009), reminds us that developing a representative and generalizable sample cannot be achieved just by stratifying the sample alone (p. 49).

Instead, the researcher needs to develop a sampling fraction which can be used to ensure that the newspaper issues selected to serve as the samples for each of the two broad strata can truly be representative of the larger population from which they were drawn (p. 49). Constructed week sampling was determined to be the best style of sampling fraction to achieve this end.

Constructed week sampling, or composite week sampling as it is often called, was seen as the most effective type of sampling fraction for conducting an historical content analysis such as this project's. Essentially, it is a style of sampling "in which sample dates are stratified by day of the week to account for systematic variation due to day of the week" (Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993, p. 133). This type of sampling fraction is extremely important since, according to Daniel Riffe, Charles F. Aust and Stephen R. Lacy, "the distribution of newspaper stories is simply not normal" (p. 139). Put differently, the distribution of stories in any given newspaper is not the same every day of the week (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001; Lacy, Robinson & Riffe, 1995; Leslie, 2010; Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993).

Stephen Lacy, Daniel Riffe, Staci Stoddard, Hugh Martin and Kuang-Kuo Chang (2001) describe why news story distribution cannot be classified as normal and highlight the reason why the commonly used simple random sampling fraction is not the best option for conducting a content analysis like the one in this project. Together they state that, "Daily papers vary from day to day during a week because of the advertising cycle, and simple random sampling can over-sample large-news hole Wednesday and Sunday editions and under-sample scanty Saturday editions" (p. 837). Constructed week sampling fractions are designed to compensate for this pattern because "constructed week

sampling assumes cyclic variation of content for different days of the week and requires that all different days of the week be represented” in the sample (Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993, p. 134).

In sum, a constructed week sampling fraction is an important type of sampling fraction to utilize in the larger stratified sampling method since it “presumably controls for sources of ‘systematic variation’” (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001, p. 837). But how does constructed week sampling control for systematic variation? The answer to this question can be found in identifying how constructed week sampling works. Essentially, “constructed week samples involve identifying all Mondays, and randomly selecting one Monday, then identifying all Tuesdays, and randomly selecting one Tuesday, etc., to ‘construct’ a week that ensures that each source of cyclic variation—each day of the week—is represented equally” (p. 837). The end result is a constructed or composite week in which you have one randomly selected newspaper issue for each of the seven days of the week (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001; Lacy, Robinson & Riffe, 1995; Leslie, 2010; Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993).

The sample for this project’s content analysis was gathered using the constructed week sampling fraction outlined above by Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang (2001). In the spirit of openness and transparency, it is important to outline the exact process through which I operationalized the use of a constructed week sampling fraction. As mentioned earlier, the content analysis had two broad strata: the first stratum consisted of Union newspapers and the second was made up of Confederate papers. In the hopes of creating as representative a sample as possible and, by doing so, a sample which best-represented American journalism in the 1860s, I decided to add an additional sub stratum

in each of the two broad strata. This additional sub stratum would be the inclusion of multiple newspapers in each of the two broad strata—North and South. Again, the first step in the use of the constructed week sampling fraction for gathering this project's sample was to ensure that both Union and Confederate papers would be sampled to provide a comprehensive test ground before drawing any inference. A total of four papers were utilized: two Union and two Confederate. The details and considerations involved in the selection of each of the four newspapers will be revealed shortly but, for now, it is necessary to outline how constructed week sampling fraction was utilized.

When using a constructed week sampling fraction, once all the different days of the week are identified and segregated, one issue is selected within the study's time frame for each day of the week (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001, p. 837). Consequently, successfully using a constructed week sampling fraction is dependent upon the ability to objectively create random numbers. Microsoft Excel's random number generator known as RAND was used for this purpose. Random numbers ranging from 101 to 752 will be used to create each constructed week sample. The decision was made to use three digit numbers to determine which editions of which of the four newspapers would make up this study's sample. The first digit was the numeric value given to each day of the week from Sunday to Saturday (1-7). The second and third digits were the numeric values given to each week of the year (1-52). Only the last two digits were generated randomly since the first digit identified a specific day of the week in the sampling period and did not need to be generated at random given that the whole purpose was to construct a week, therefore ensuring that each day of the week was present in the sample.

The number that RAND generated was used to identify which week out of a specific year would be selected to correspond with the given day of the week for the particular year being analyzed. The result was the generation of a totally random number greater than zero (0) and less than fifty-three (53). For example, if we were creating a constructed week for 1860 and we were looking for an edition to use from a Friday which was given the numeric value of six (since it is the sixth day of the week) and RAND generated the number forty-nine, we would select the forty-ninth Friday edition of the chosen newspaper of the year for which we were creating a constructed week. This process was repeated for each of the seven days of the week, each of the four papers and each of the chosen years within the time frame to create this project's sample. The end result was a three digit number which would identify the appropriate edition to include in the sample. Thus, to clarify, when creating a constructed week for newspaper X during year Y, the number 136 would indicate that we would use the thirty-sixth Sunday edition of that paper as the Sunday in our constructed week sample for year Y of the selected paper.

There are two important questions which both require answering at this time—though one more extensively than the other. They are the following: How many constructed weeks do we need to represent a given year of news coverage in a sample? and, how long a time-frame does this project's sample span? With respect to the first of the two questions, many scholars have stressed the fact that, as a general rule of thumb, “it would take a minimum of two constructed weeks to reliably represent an entire year's content” (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001, p. 838). This study adhered to this general principle and used two constructed weeks for each of the selected years

within the sample. When an issue for a certain weekday in the constructed week was not available, an additional following weekday was selected (i.e. when no Sunday edition was printed, an additional Monday edition was added to take its place). That being said, attention must now be directed towards answering the second question: how long a timeframe does this project's sample span?

To do this, our starting point requires revisiting the broader type or classification of content analysis which I plan to conduct. As stated earlier in this chapter, a structural content analysis was viewed as offering the best opportunity to conduct a content analysis which would code for the four identified changes in journalism hypothesized to have been initiated (at least in part) by the reporting of the Civil War. A stratified sampling strategy was deemed the most appropriate and efficient sampling strategy to execute such a structural content analysis. While it may sound trite, when conducting a structural content analysis coding for changes in the practice of journalism, it is important to remember that changes often do not occur overnight. Therefore, a content analysis intended to examine a topic such as this must be designed in a manner which reflects the fact that the coded-for changes neither come out of nowhere nor did they occur overnight. Based on this reasoning, it was determined that the content analysis employed here needed not only to be a structural content analysis but a longitudinal structural content analysis as well.

As Babbie (2008) explains, “a longitudinal study is designed to permit observations of the same phenomenon over an extended period” (p. 112). He expands upon this by stating that, “they are often the best way to study changes over time” (p. 112). Due to this study's goal of answering two research questions by conducting a

content analysis examining the magnitude of four specific changes in journalism, the researcher concluded that a longitudinal structural content analysis was a necessity. It should be noted that there is more than one type of longitudinal content analysis (p. 112). However, only one was seen as being appropriate for this study: the Trend Study. Essentially, a trend study “is a type of longitudinal content analysis that examines changes within a population over time” (p. 112). This is exactly what is required to answer this study’s research questions. Yet, before identifying the specific newspapers papers that will be used as the sample and then embarking upon the task at hand, the time-frame of the sample must be identified.

To ensure the accurate assessment of the lasting effects of the four changes that are the focus of the content analysis, the sample could not be limited to the five years during which the war was fought. Instead, it would also have to include issues of the chosen newspapers preceding the first shot of the war fired on Fort Sumter and subsequent to the last battle fought. Therefore, a constructed week sampling fraction of two constructed weeks per year would be used to select the individual newspaper editions. The time-frame of the constructed weeks would cover the nine years between 1859 (when John Brown led his infamous raid on Harper’s Ferry) and 1867 (a time when the conflict between the presidential and congressional Reconstruction plans reached the point of no return, followed a few months later by the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson). A complete listing of all eighteen of the constructed weeks—two per year—spanning this nine year sampling period, and also a detailed legend further describing how the constructed week sampling fraction was used, can be found in *Appendices B through E*.

Selecting the Newspapers to Analyze

Bearing in mind that, in order to answer this study's research questions, the task of gathering as representative a sample as possible was a necessity and that this would require the crafting of a sample using newspapers which could be seen as best-representing American journalism in the 1860s, the decision was made to use two Northern and two Southern newspapers for the nine year sample of analysis. The next step in the sampling method was to determine which four papers would be analyzed. Two criteria were considered in selecting the sample: the region (location) and the market size. Both of these criteria were used as important indicators of how large an audience these papers had and, thereby, how greatly they influenced their readers. The two Northern papers selected were the *Boston Evening Transcript* and the *New York Times*. The two Southern papers selected were the *Charleston Mercury* and the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. But why these newspapers?

Taking region and market size into consideration, the decision was made to select two daily newspapers from two of the North's largest cities: Boston, Massachusetts and New York, New York. The *Boston Evening Transcript* was a popular paper that was chosen to represent the coverage of the war from a Bostonian perspective, thereby offering a look at the news products of one of the most pro-Republican and pro-abolitionist states in the Union (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 470). The *New York Times* was chosen for two reasons. First, even before the war began, New York City was already firmly established as the center of American journalism (Schudson, 1978; Starr, 1962). In the nineteenth century, most of the newspapers which were considered to be national papers held their printing offices in New York City (Starr, 1962). Second, even in the

mid-nineteenth century, New York City was already America's most densely populated city. As the main point of entry for the waves of immigrants coming from Europe and elsewhere, the influx showed no signs of lessening (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 463).

The selection of Confederate newspapers was also based primarily on regional and market size considerations. For instance, the *Charleston Mercury* was selected since it was the leading publication in Charleston, South Carolina, the capital of the first state to secede from the Union on December 20th, 1860 (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 480). Although Charleston was not the seat of the Confederate government, many Northerners viewed it as the heart and soul of the Confederate States of America (CSA) and it remained both a strategically and symbolically important city throughout the war (Schivelbusch, 2001/2003). The *Daily Richmond Examiner* was chosen since it was the predominant newspaper in Richmond, Virginia, which served as the capital of the CSA throughout the majority of the war (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 500). The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to providing a brief history of each of the four selected newspapers utilized in my sample. The intent is to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of how these four newspapers combined could be seen as representative of American journalism in terms of both a cultural practice and profession in the 1860s.

Four Uniquely American Civil War Newspapers

Almost sixty years ago, Berelson (1952) pointed out that, "Many samples have been determined primarily by the availability of material, even though such materials were not the most suitable for the purposes at hand" (p. 175). This study tried not to fall into such a trap. As mentioned above, careful attention was given to the selection of each of the four newspapers that would make up this project's sample. Luckily, I did not need

to use accessibility alone as one of the primary motivations for selecting the four papers. Since the Civil War occurred nearly 150 years ago and since the newspapers making up this study's sample are difficult to come by, it is important to briefly outline how each of the four papers were accessed. The required issues of the *New York Times* were conveniently accessible through the Carleton University library ProQuest database which included full PDF scans of every page of every edition of the *Times* from 1851 to 2005—a range within which the selected nine year sample clearly fit. However, the *Boston Evening Transcript*, *Charleston Mercury*, and *Daily Richmond Examiner* required a little more effort to access. The constructed week samples for these three newspapers were gathered from the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. between Monday, June 13th and Friday, June 17th, 2011. A closer examination of each of the four Civil War papers selected for the sample is now warranted. The task begins in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Boston Evening Transcript

Throughout the nineteenth century, “Massachusetts had led the way in the antislavery struggle and the Civil War” (Schneider, 1997, p. 49). Although it was often characterized as a paper for the social elite, the *Boston Evening Transcript* was still one of the most widely-read daily newspapers in this state's largest city (Ural, 2010). Yet, for one of the most-widely read newspapers in New England, there is a dearth of information on the history of this influential paper. Mark Schneider (1997) sheds some light onto the birth of this Boston newspaper by identifying that “the newspaper was founded in 1830 by Henry Worthington Dutton, a poor boy from western Massachusetts, and Lynde Minshull Walter, a Harvard-educated Episcopalian” (p. 47).

The *Transcript's* views on the slavery issue and emancipation changed dramatically during the 1800s (Richardson, 1997; Schneider, 1997). The paper's transformational views on these issues are captured by Schneider (1997) who claims that, "In the antebellum period, the paper followed the line of Boston's Cotton Whigs—generally antislavery but also anti-abolitionist. The paper supported conservative Whiggery until [Senator] Daniel Webster's Seventh of March 1850 speech, and then gradually toughened its antislavery stance, supporting Abraham Lincoln in 1860" (Schneider, 1997, p. 47).

Webster was one of the ranking Whigs on Capitol Hill and his Seventh of March 1850 speech, which was given during the heated debates in Congress surrounding the Compromise of 1850, "rested on the standard northern conservative defense [in the 1850s] of the peculiar institution" (Reid, 1996, p. 123). Above all, Webster advocated preservation of the Union at all costs and, as Brian Holden Reid explains, Webster realized that, "Any attempt at secession would result in war; 'the common property' of the Federal government could not be shared equally among the states" (p. 123). The *Boston Evening Transcript* would eventually move from supporting the "cotton Whiggery," which was sympathetic to slavery for economic reasons, to embracing the Republican Party which was established, among other reasons, to stop the spread of slavery throughout the Union (Richardson, 1997; Reid, 1996; Schneider, 1997).

Throughout this turbulent era, "The original owners [of the *Transcript*] gave the editorial staff considerable leeway and the Dutton family continued this policy throughout the century" (Schneider, 1997, p. 47). On October 1st, 1866, the year after the Civil War ended, the name of this popular Bostonian paper changed slightly from the

Boston Evening Transcript to the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, which it would remain for nearly a decade.

The New York Times

The *New York Times* commenced publishing at the opening of the turbulent 1850s, a decade during which the combined forces of the slavery issue, westward expansion, southern sectionalism and the birth of the Republican Party would shatter any possibility of achieving national unity. Elmer Davis (1921) draws attention to this event by identifying that, “On August 5, 1851, the association which was to publish the new paper was formed under the name of Raymond, Jones & Company” (p. 17). However, the circumstances that would culminate in the birth of this still widely-read paper can be traced back to an earlier event that same year when two friends, Henry J. Raymond (who at the time was an editor of *The Courier and Enquirer*) and George Jones (who was a banker) went for a walk across the ice-covered Hudson River (p. 5).

During the walk across the frozen river, the two men discussed the hefty profits being made by the other New York daily newspapers and also a piece of legislation then making its way through the New York State legislature which “proposed to regulate the rate of bank-note redemption so severely that it would make the business too hazardous for men of integrity” (Davis, 1921, p. 5). In a company-issued publication celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the *Times*, Davis writes that:

Before they reached the other shore he [Raymond] had obtained Jones’s promise to join him, if the redemption bill passed, in the establishment of a new daily in New York. The bill did pass. Jones closed up his business, and he and his business associate, E.B. Wesley, prepared to put their money, with Raymond’s experience into the new venture. (p. 5)

In the early fall of 1851, the *Times* began printing in the busiest and most-competitive

newspaper market in America: New York City (Brown, 1951; Davis, 1921; Maverick, 1870).

This was no small task since, as Francis Brown (1951) explains, “The *Times* had had to compete with both the [*New York Herald*] and the [*New York Tribune*], each of which had long since found its audience” (p. 103). But who was the audience of the *Times*? The answer to this question can be found in revisiting the paper’s prospectus which claimed that the *Times*,

‘is not established for the advancement of any party, sect or person [...] It will be under the editorial management of Henry J. Raymond, and while it will maintain firmly and zealously those principles which he may deem essential to the public good, and which are held by the great Whig Party of the United States more nearly than any other political organization, its columns will be free from bigoted devotion to narrow interests.’ (Davis, 1921, p. 18-19)

Once the Whig Party dissolved and the Republican Party took its place, the *New York Times* along with the *New York Tribune* could be considered New York’s two leading Republican papers and Raymond himself played an active role in the then recently formed Republican Party (Brown, 1951; Davis, 1921). According to Davis (1921), “In the campaign of 1856 *The Times* and Raymond took a prominent part, and from that time on for twenty-eight years *The Times* stood in the front rank of Republican journalism in the country” (p. 33).

Raymond’s view on the “slavery issue” mirrored that of many in the Republican Party throughout the 1850s and even during the first few years of the Civil War in the 1860s (Davis, 1921). Davis expands upon this by insisting that, “He [Raymond] was not an abolitionist, but he believed that the domination of the federal government by the slave

states in the interest of slavery—the domination of the majority by a minority—must be ended” (p. 14-15).

Raymond would continue to play a substantial role in the Republican Party by helping run the 1864 election campaign to re-elect President Lincoln and would eventually be rewarded with the position of the head of the Republican Party by being appointed the chairman of the Republican National Committee (RNC) that same year (Brown, 1951; Davis, 1921). During the Civil War, “so far as his [Raymond’s] independent spirit allowed, he would make the *Times* a New York mouthpiece for Lincoln. More consistently than any other New York editor he would support the Administration’s conduct of the war as it unwound from battlefield to battlefield [...] and to final victory at Appomattox” (Brown, 1951, p. 201).

Nonetheless, the *Times* was still widely viewed as offering fairly even-handed coverage of the Civil War by way of thirty-four special correspondents in the field (Davis, 1921, p. 60). J. Cutler Andrews (1983) sheds some light onto the even-handedness of the *Times* by identifying that, “One of Henry J. Raymond’s outstanding qualities—rare among journalists of that day—was his ability to see both sides of a question and discuss current issues without misrepresentation or abusive epithets” (p. 10). This was likely due to the fact that, despite being actively involved in the Republican Party and whole-heartedly supporting the president’s policies, “Raymond did not regard his paper as a partisan organ” (Brown, 1951, p. 104). While it was likely very difficult to tread the thin line between being the chairman of the RNC and editing a newspaper that vigorously supported the Lincoln Administration without being either a personal or party

organ, Raymond succeeded since, “*The Times* gained steadily in prosperity throughout the war” (Davis, 1921, p. 64).

The Charleston Mercury

Few Southern daily newspapers garnered more attention—though much of it was negative attention from Northerners—than the *Charleston Mercury* (Osthaus, 1994). As Charles R. Osthaus explains, “The *Mercury* lived for politics. Founded in 1822 as a politically neutral journal of miscellany and news, the *Mercury* soon turned to factional and sectional politics, the one form of journalism guaranteed success in South Carolina” (p. 77). As was mentioned earlier in discussing the selection criteria for each of the four newspapers in this study’s sample, Charleston, South Carolina was a very important city in the South since it was the capital of the first state to secede from the Union (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 480).

There were many other reasons why Charleston was so influential in the South, but its population size was not one of them. For example, “Though [it was] a leading city in the South, Charleston existed on the periphery of national and international trade. With forty-two thousand inhabitants in 1850, Charleston was less than half the size of New Orleans” (Osthaus, 1994, p. 70). Charleston’s small population did not matter though since “Charleston was a kind of spiritual capital” (p. 71). Osthaus expands upon this by stating that, “the political ideology of Charleston and South Carolina differed only in intensity and timing from the Southern mainstream; where Charlestonians led, the South followed” (p. 71). Furthermore, “No other state was so dominated by an elite or so dedicated to the protection of slavery, republicanism, and the Southern way of life as South Carolina” (p. 70).

The *Mercury's* move from political neutrality to unwavering support of southern sectionalism was largely the result of its purchase by the prominent Rhett family which was devoted to protecting the Southern way of life and encouraging the development of a separate South, free from what it perceived as the hostile "Yankee North" (Andrews, 1970; Osthaus, 1994; White, 1965). The fact that the Rhett family was intimately involved in the day-to-day workings of the paper was known to most Americans since, "the wartime editor of the *Charleston Mercury*, Col. Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., was the scion of a famous Charleston family and eldest son of Senator Robert Barnwell Rhett," who was one of the most well-know "fire eaters," or advocates of secession in America (Andrews, 1970, p. 36). In fact, since it was "Widely quoted throughout the North as the voice of Southern extremism, the *Mercury* secured for the Rhetts a lasting national reputation for political influence and power" (p. 69).

What then was the centerpiece of the "extremism" advocated by the *Mercury*? This can be revealed by identifying what was seen as the newspaper's goal. Amongst other things,

The *Mercury's* goal was Southern independence. It was among the first journals to emphasize the faithlessness of national parties, and in 1860 boasted publicly of its role in dividing the Democrats. In the final analysis, radical strategy looked to a Republican victory, for it was built on the premise that no slave state could abide a Republican president. (Osthaus, 1994, p. 84)

There was seldom a Southern paper characterized as more radical than the *Mercury* (Osthaus, 1994; White, 1965). The creation of a sovereign Southern nation built upon the foundation of chattel slavery was the goal of the paper under the ownership and management of the Rhetts. In other words, "to the *Mercury* everything [...] was a means to an end: the protection of slavery and the security of South Carolina and the South"

(Osthaus, 1994, p. 77). This type of mission statement was considered common knowledge since most Americans knew that “The *Mercury* was the pioneer preacher of Southern separatism and the paladin of the plantation economy” (p. 77).

With such a polarizing issue as this acting as the sole driving force of a newspaper, it comes as no surprise that the *Mercury* could be seen as the polar opposite of the *New York Times* when it came to providing balanced news coverage. The *Charleston Mercury* was anything but even-handed. In fact, “the *Mercury*’s policy was never to give a fair or objective statement to an opposing viewpoint” (Osthaus, 1994, p. 81). As a result of this policy, “the *Mercury* inflamed passions, glossed over whatever did not fit its mission, suppressed press freedom and national loyalties, and propagandized in defense of slavery and in support of secession” (p. 92). While the *Mercury*’s extreme editorializing played a direct role in bringing about the secession of South Carolina and, by doing so, the creation of the Confederacy to which it remained committed throughout the war, it was not committed to the Confederate President Jefferson Davis or his administration’s conduct of the war (Osthaus, 1994; White, 1965).

As Osthaus (1994) puts it, “After the Rhett’s apotheosis of 1860, the war was, for them, an anticlimax” (p. 93). It did not take long for the Rhett and their *Mercury* to speak out against the Davis Administration. As Laura A. White explains (1965), “Within three months after the election of the President, said the *Mercury* later, it was known that the choice of Davis was a mistake” (p. 207). Osthaus (1994) expands upon the governmental criticism offered by the *Mercury* by stating that its columns began “reviling the Davis administration for its incompetence, arrogance, and autocracy” (p. 93). In fact, White (1965) points out that the *Mercury* even went so far as to “declare [...] its belief

that all the generals and other officers in the army, Congress [Confederate Congress that is,] and the whole South were against the administration's war policy" (p. 217). But even with such daily doses of criticism aimed at the Davis administration's conduct of the war effort, the *Mercury* remained completely committed to the Southern cause and continued to advocate the likelihood of a Southern victory—even after it became clear that this was realistically not in the cards (Andrews, 1970; Osthaus, 1994; White, 1965). The *Charleston Mercury* would remain one of the most consistent and combative defenders of the Southern cause yet would also act as an anti-administration newspaper until the paper was forced to suspend its publication from February 12th, 1865 to November 18th, 1866 due to the Union army's invasion and subsequent occupation of Charleston. However, the *Mercury's* post-suspension operations were extremely short-lived since, in 1868, the paper succumbed to the unsustainable debt it had acquired during its rapid expansion in the late 1850s under the Rhett's ownership (Osthaus, 1994, p. 93).

A few words should now be said about Southern newspapers as a whole. The publication suspension experienced by the *Charleston Mercury* in 1865 and 1866 was not unusual for Southern newspapers during the Civil War. As Osthaus (1994) explains, unlike the Northern newspapers which generally saw the event of the Civil War as beneficial from a business point of view because of the explosion in demand for up-to-date news (and therefore, a rapid expansion in their revenue due to more issues being sold daily), "Southern newspapers, on the other hand, experienced no expanded opportunities or widened horizons as a result of the war" (p. 103). In fact, "on the contrary, Confederate journalism reflected in microcosm the crisis of the South's agricultural society in something akin to total war. Newspapers were crippled by war conditions" (p.

103). During the later stages of the Civil War, Southern journalism was hit hard by publication suspensions like the kind experienced by the *Mercury*. Andrews (1970) describes the process through which these crippling sanctions were initiated by identifying that:

As its major cities one by one fell into enemy hands, its daily newspapers either closed up shop, acquired managements which aligned their editorial policy with that of the Northern press, or fled to other parts of the Confederacy. During the last year of the war, what little news there was in the Southern press was largely of Northern origin or was reprinted from newspapers published in the parts of the South under enemy occupation. (p. 536)

With this important trend identified and explained, we can now turn our attention to painting a picture of the second Southern newspaper, the fourth and last paper to be used in this project's sample.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

While the *Charleston Mercury* may have been the voice of Southern extremism throughout the Confederacy, the *Daily Richmond Examiner* was widely regarded as the voice of the South as a whole (Moncure, 1907). John Moncure explains why the *Examiner* could be seen as representing the voice of the South by stating that, “the whole country [CSA] read the *Examiner*, from the chief officers of the administration to the humblest soldier in the trenches. It shaped the opinions of thousands” (p. 259). As a result of its popularity and opinion-shaping abilities, “the *Examiner* was well known from Texas to Virginia, and actually had more subscribers in some of the distant states of the Confederacy than in the immediate vicinity of its place of publication” (Andrews, 1970, p. 32). Consequently, as Moncure (1907) points out, “No one man in all the Southern Confederacy exerted a wider and more powerful influence on popular thought than the

editor of the *Examiner*” (p. 258). The editor who would assume the greatest role of importance during this era was John M. Daniel (Andrews, 1970; Moncure, 1907; Osthaus, 1994; Trexler, 1950). Throughout the South and much of the North, it was widely known, as Andrews (1970) notes, that “to a marked degree the journalistic character of the *Examiner* was the personality of Daniel writ large” (p. 29).

Before briefly discussing the character of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* and its highly influential editor, it should be noted that if Charleston, South Carolina was the spiritual capital of the South, Richmond, Virginia was both the political and journalistic capital of the South (Andrews, 1970, p. 26). Here too, Richmond’s relatively small population would not diminish its importance. As Andrews puts it, “With a population of over 168,000 New Orleans was at the time the largest city in the South. Yet Richmond, with a population of less than one-fourth that of New Orleans in 1860, was the hub of Confederate news enterprise for almost the entire war” (p. 26).

The *Examiner*, founded in 1799 as a tri-weekly newspaper by B. M. De Witt, was where Daniel would begin working as one of the paper’s editors at the age of twenty-two (Moncure, 1907, p. 263). Andrews (1970) sheds some light onto the early days of the *Examiner* by insisting that, “Almost from its beginning the dynamic John M. Daniel had been the editor of the Democratic semi-weekly *Richmond Examiner*, which became a daily shortly before the war” (p. 29). Daniel quickly made a lasting impression at the *Examiner*. As Moncure (1907) reports, “It [the *Examiner*] had been powerful before, it was now [with Daniel at the helm as its editor-in-chief] a mighty engine, dragging everything in its wake” (p. 259). Under the editorial leadership of John M. Daniel, “The *Examiner*, in one word, had become the controlling power, almost of the epoch. Its views

had become those even of men who bitterly stigmatized its course” (p. 259). Why then would many readers of arguably one of the most financially successful Confederate papers, a paper characterized as the voice of the South, stigmatize that very paper’s course?

The answer to this perplexing question can be found not in a discussion of the *Examiner*’s goal but rather in its attitude toward the Davis Administration. The goal of the *Examiner* throughout the war years was to ensure that the Confederate military won the war and that the CSA remained a separate entity from the Union (Osthaus, 1994). As Osthaus explains, “A firm believer in the rights of states and individuals, Daniel nevertheless would advocate almost anything short of dictatorship to win the war” (p. 108). Daniel’s *Daily Richmond Examiner*, like the Rhetts and their *Charleston Mercury*, “Extolled a Southern ideal of social order based on chattel slavery and dedicated to freedom for whites” (p. 114). However, unlike the *Charleston Mercury*, the *Daily Richmond Examiner* was more averse to printing inaccurate news to boost public morale and support for the Confederate war effort (p. 115). For example:

Daniel occasionally practiced some ‘economies’ of truth but usually did not intentionally deceive; he would not suppress the facts of military setbacks though he had an amazing ability to explain such facts away. Daniel asserted that it was not *Examiner* policy to cheat the public of the news; nor would he endanger the paper’s reputation for truthfulness by printing false stories planted to confuse the enemy. (p. 115)

Harrison A. Trexler (1950) expands upon this positive characteristic of the paper by stating that, “Although often the victim of wishful thinking, the *Examiner* was more realistic than most Southern papers of the period” (p. 182).

While the goal of the *Examiner* may have been consistent with virtually all of the other newspapers in the South (since its loyalty to the Southern cause and way of life was

unwavering), the *Daily Richmond Examiner*, like the *Charleston Mercury*, soon developed into an anti-administration paper once the war had begun (Andrews, 1970; Moncure, 1907; Osthaus, 1994; Trexler, 1950). As Trexler (1950) recounts, “From the beginning, the *Examiner* was superciliously aloof toward the President [Jefferson Davis] who had been chosen unanimously by the southern delegates at Montgomery” (p. 183). However, the paper’s lukewarm opinion of the Davis Administration quickly deteriorated into hostility. From the end of 1861 onward, “the *Examiner* attacked with brutal frankness the entire administration and the Congress” (p. 184). In the first few months after the attack on Fort Sumter, the paper maintained a neutral view of the Davis Administration but that soon changed. By the beginning of the second year of war, “the *Examiner* steadily lost faith in the president’s ability to prosecute the war [...and then] accused the Davis administration of despotism at home, sloth in the field, and favoritism in appointments” (Osthaus, 1994, p. 106).

It was widely assumed that the *Examiner*’s criticisms stemmed from both angst and disappointment (Osthaus, 1994, p. 108). In fact, according to Osthaus, “Daniel’s criticism apparently sprang more from genuine concern for the South’s fate than from hatred of Davis, the desire to sell papers, or his own yearning to be the capital’s center of attention” (p. 108). Even more importantly, it should be noted that, “in all of the *Examiner*’s controversial editorials and diatribes, there was only one real purpose: to advance the conduct of the war” (p. 107). Thus, the reason why many readers continued to purchase the *Daily Richmond Examiner* on a daily basis, even though they objected to the paper’s perception of the Davis Administration, was that the *Examiner* “vehemently advocated its society’s war aims” (p. 110).

Unfortunately, even a large readership coupled with a renowned reputation in the South and steady profits could not prevent the *Daily Richmond Examiner* from facing the same hardships experienced by virtually all other Southern newspapers, large or small. The day after Richmond, Virginia was captured by the Northern army on April 3rd, 1865, the publication of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* was suspended until December 9th of that same year. Like the *Charleston Mercury*, the *Examiner* did not enjoy a long and prosperous life after it resumed printing in the final weeks of 1865. On July 13th, 1867, just nineteen months after it was able to resume publishing, the *Daily Richmond Examiner* ran out of steam, shuttered its printing office and faded into history.

The most appropriate way to draw this crucial chapter to a close is to offer a short summary of the key methodological decisions made by the researcher in view of answering this study's two research questions: 1) How did the use of communications technologies still in their infancy at the time of the American Civil War contribute to the development of modern journalism? 2) What role did the Civil War play in the transformation of journalism itself? It was determined that the use of a structural newspaper content analysis using a stratified sampling strategy and a constructed week sampling fraction offered the best possibility of gaining the inference required to answer the research questions. However, the sample gathered for this project using the constructed week sampling fraction necessarily includes the previously described unavoidable publication gaps in both the *Charleston Mercury* and the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. Furthermore, it must be noted that the decision was made not to replace the missing issues that were unavailable due to publication suspensions, collapses and gaps in the Library of Congress collections.

After careful consideration, it was decided that the most effective way to use such a content analysis was to code for four specific changes in American journalism which the literature has suggested emerged from the press' use of relatively new communications technology in their coverage of the Civil War. This would represent a turning point in American journalism and would play a role in initiating the "modern" journalism we take for granted today. Lastly, in order to have as representative a sample as possible, two influential Northern and two Southern newspapers were chosen for such a content analysis.

V

While the preceding chapter provided a thorough methodological discussion about using a content analysis to answer this project's research questions, it should be noted that simply outlining the "how" is only one half of the equation when conducting research. Thus, this fifth chapter will be devoted to the other half of the equation: the "what." It will perform the essential task of documenting and contextualizing the results from the content analysis outlined in the previous chapter. However, before examining whether or not the four anticipated changes in journalism were in fact reflected in the sample, it is important to briefly refresh the reader's memory about the two questions for which answers are being sought.

The research questions which launched this project ask: 1) How did the use of communications technologies still in their infancy at the time of the American Civil War contribute to the development of modern journalism? and 2) What role did the Civil War play in the transformation of journalism itself? After much preliminary research and an extensive literature review, it was decided that the most appropriate way to attempt to answer the questions would be to utilize a longitudinal structural content analysis which made use of a stratified sampling strategy consisting of four newspapers from two very different regions as well as to use a constructed week sampling fraction spanning a nine year time-frame. Also, the content analysis would code for four specific changes in American journalism thought to have occurred through the press' coverage of the Civil War, changes that today remain common attributes of American print-based journalism.

This chapter will be organized according to the four changes in journalism discussed earlier. Rather than segregating the chapter into four separate sections

identifying how the four changes manifested themselves in one specific newspaper at a time, each of the four newspapers will have its results from the content analysis discussed in the chronological order in which they were analyzed by the researcher. The decision was made not to focus on a single newspaper at a time but rather to focus on one trend at a time in all four newspapers simultaneously in the hope of providing a clearer and easier-to-read discussion of the newspapers' similarities and differences within the larger context of each of the four changes coded for. Consequently, this chapter is organized chronologically by each change coded for rather than by the four newspapers which together made up this study's sample.

As mentioned earlier, the sample used for the content analysis to be discussed here consisted of two Northern and two Southern newspapers. The two Northern newspapers were the *Boston Evening Transcript* and the *New York Times*. The two Southern newspapers were the *Charleston Mercury* and the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. Taking all four newspapers in the sample period from 1859 to 1867 using a constructed week sampling fraction of two constructed weeks per year for each of the four newspapers resulted in a total of 464 front pages which together made up this project's sample. Furthermore, the 464 pages consisted of a total of 31,914 news items (cases). After all cases were coded, they were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistics program for analysis. Let us now turn our attention to the first of the changes which was coded for, cooperative newsgathering.

Change Number One: Cooperative News Gathering

The first change in journalism suggested by the literature was that the conflict extended, and then solidified, the practice of cooperative newsgathering. Even before the

Civil War, it was very clear that gathering news and then transmitting news feeds back to newspapers by way of the telegraph was an expensive process (Wheeler, 2006, p. 94). Transmission costs were often as high as 5 cents per word, a rate which was generally seen as prohibitively expensive in the 1860s and which translates into \$1.18 per word today (p. 94). Cooperative wire-based news gathering agencies were developed decades before the war to combat these high costs (Blondheim, 1994, p. 47). To examine the extent of the claim that the Civil War expanded and solidified this practice, the content analysis weighed the number of articles in the selected newspapers identified as originating from cooperative news agencies against those gathered independently. Did the results of the content analysis support the above claim? In answering this question, we must turn our attention to the first of the four newspapers in the sample, the Northern paper, the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

The Boston Evening Transcript

The “Reporting Source” variable is where one needs to look to see if cooperative newsgathering did in fact expand over the course of the Civil War. When interpreting the results of this first supposed change, it makes sense to begin that discussion with 1859, the first year in this study’s sample, and then to proceed chronologically from there. The results of the reporting source variable for the *Boston Evening Transcript* can be found in *Table 2A* which is seen below.

Table 2A
Reporting Source (Boston Evening Transcript)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Staff Reporter / Special Correspondent | 1.2% | 1.6% | 0.8% | 1.5% | 0.7% | 1.7% | 2.8% | 2.5% | 1.0% |
| Staff Editorialist | 2.7% | 0.0% | 2.1% | 0.9% | 0.3% | 4.0% | 3.1% | 2.8% | 2.8% |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Staff Editor | 5.4% | 1.8% | 2.3% | 0.3% | 2.6% | 1.8% | 1.1% | 2.8% | 0.4% |
| Letter to the Editor | 0.6% | 0.6% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 0.2% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 0.4% |
| Advertisement | 62.5% | 73.3% | 55.8% | 60.0% | 68.5% | 60.3% | 58.8% | 63.5% | 72.0% |
| Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Press Association of the Confederate States | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Southern Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Cooperative Wire Service | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Newspaper / Magazine | 5.6% | 5.5% | 5.4% | 6.9% | 4.9% | 6.6% | 8.3% | 8.6% | 4.5% |
| Text of a Speech | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.0% |
| Official Dispatch / Report | 0.4% | 0.3% | 1.2% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 1.8% | 1.7% | 0.9% | 0.2% |
| Eyewitness Report | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.9% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.1% |
| Letter | 0.0% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| Undisclosed Telegraphic news | 2.0% | 0.1% | 3.3% | 3.8% | 2.5% | 4.8% | 6.1% | 4.8% | 3.1% |
| Unknown | 19.2% | 16.0% | 27.6% | 24.5% | 18.7% | 17.8% | 17.0% | 12.3% | 15.4% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

At first glance, it would appear that the results are anything but favorable. In 1859, two years before the Civil War, the Associated Press (AP) provided absolutely none (0.0%) of the news on the front page of the *Transcript*, which continued to be the case throughout the entire nine year time-frame of the study's sample. This complete lack of presence of cooperative newsgathering was not limited to just the AP. In fact, as can be seen in *Table 2A*, other cooperative wire services made no contribution to the news in the *Transcript* between 1859 and 1867. If the *Boston Evening Transcript* was not using cooperative newsgathering services as its primary source for front page material, than what was it using? The answer is that advertising occupied the majority of space on the front page of the newspaper.

Throughout the entire nine years of analysis, advertisements were the most dominant reporting source in the *Transcript*. In 1859, advertising was the source of 62.5% of the items on the front page of the *Transcript*. As the largest source of front page material in this popular Bostonian paper, advertisements peaked at 73.3% in 1860, the decisive year before the Civil War began. During the war, advertisements would be the source of between 55.8% (1861) and 58.8% (1865) material in the *Transcript*. In 1867, after the war had ended and the Reconstruction period had begun, advertisements had become the reporting source of 72.0% of the items on the front page of the *Transcript*. All told, when all nine years of the *Transcript's* sample are combined, advertisements were the source of 63.9% of the material on page one of the *Transcript*.

The second most prevalent source of material in the *Transcript* was material with an unknown origin. In 1859, unknown (or at least unstated) reporting sources provided 19.2% of the news. In 1861, once the war had begun, unknown news would reach its peak of being the source of 27.6% of the news. From 1862 onward, news from unknown sources would begin a steady decline from 24.5% of the sample in 1862 to only 12.3% in 1867. Over the entire time-frame, unknown news was the origin of 18.7% of the sample.

News from other newspapers and magazines (likely received through the newspaper exchange system described in Chapter 3 of this thesis) was the third largest source of news in the *Transcript* over the entire nine year sample. In 1859, as the antebellum era began to draw to a close and America moved ever closer to civil war, other newspapers and magazines were the source of 5.6% of the news on the front page of the *Transcript*. Other newspapers and magazines would hover between 5% and 6% of the sample for the first few years of the Civil War before they gained a larger share of the

sample in 1862 (6.9%) and eventually reached their peak of providing 8.6% of the news in 1866, the year after the war had ended. In 1867, two years into the Reconstruction Period, other newspapers and magazines represented 4.5% of the news in the *Transcript's* portion of the sample. Furthermore, when all nine years of the *Transcript* sample are combined, it is revealed that other newspapers or magazines were the source of 6.2% of sample.

While the above results do not seem to bode well (at least in the *Boston Evening Transcript*) for the claim that cooperative newsgathering was expanded and then solidified by the press' coverage of the Civil War, there is one other noteworthy trend that can be seen in *Table 2A* and which hinges on the category of "Undisclosed Telegraphic News." What was coded as undisclosed telegraphic news was news that appeared under the increasingly common heading of "Latest Telegraphic News" or "Telegraphic News" but which had no identification of where *specifically* that telegraphic news had come from. An example of this can be found in *Figure 3* on the following page. In 1859, such undisclosed telegraphic news was the reporting source of 2.0% of the material in the *Transcript* sample. It would dip down to 0.1% in 1860 and then begin a pattern of slow growth followed by slow decline repeatedly until it reached its high point of being the source of 6.1% of the news in 1865, the final year of the war. After the war, however, undisclosed telegraphic news again began to slowly decline, ending at 3.1% of the news in 1867, the final year of the sample. That said, even with the fluctuations described above, there was a modest increase in the amount of undisclosed telegraphic news in the *Transcript* from 1859 to 1867. In total, undisclosed telegraphic news was the origin of 3.5% of the front page material in the *Transcript* throughout the nine year

Figure 3

Example of Undisclosed Telegraphic News

NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS YESTERDAY

RICHMOND, August 25.—In the Senate, Mr. YARCKE'S resolutions relative to retaliation, and the right of the citizen to attack the invader, were laid upon the table for the present, Mr. Yarrow having been detained from his seat by indisposition.

Mr. OUN submitted a resolution relative to the Medical Examining Board in Richmond, which elicited an animated discussion of the abuses in the Medical Department of the Army. The resolution was adopted. It requests the President to inform the Senate who constitute said Board, and what necessity there is for it.

Mr. SPENCER, of Louisiana, submitted a resolution directing the Committee on the Judiciary to enquire into the necessity for further legislation to restrain within constitutional limits the exercise of power by military officers, assumed under color of the Act suspending the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*. Mr. SPENCER criticized the order recently issued by Gen. VAN DORN, but gave him credit for patriotic motives.

In the House, a bill was introduced providing for the granting of bounty money to emigrants, also, a bill to amend the law prescribing rates of postage.

Mr. FORTS submitted resolutions, declaring that the movements of our armies should be active and aggressive, so far as consistent with an enlightened discretion, that when the enemy is driven back to his own country, if the delinquent Government at Washington still refuse us peace, our policy will be to invade the territory of the foe, and that at the same moment, anterior to this invasion, the President should proclaim to the inhabitants of the Northwestern States the unconditional willingness of the people of the Confederate States to guarantee to them the free use of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, provided they will desist from all further participation in this cruel and unnatural war. The resolutions were referred, without debate, to the Committee on Military Affairs.

The House then went into secret session.

sample. However, *Table 2A* clearly shows that cooperative newsgathering did not expand at the *Boston Evening Transcript* during the Civil War.

The New York Times

Turning now to *Table 2B* (found below), the *New York Times*, the second Northern paper in the sample shows both important similarities and differences in relation to the claim that the Civil War expanded and solidified cooperative newsgathering.

Table 2B

Reporting Source (New York Times)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Staff Reporter / Special Correspondent | 6.5% | 6.5% | 17.4% | 8.2% | 11.2% | 16.2% | 19.8% | 23.3% | 13.1% |
| Staff Editorialist | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Staff Editor | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Letter to the Editor | 0.8% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 0.8% | 0.3% |
| Advertisement | 13.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| Associated Press | 1.8% | 3.4% | 4.1% | 3.4% | 3.0% | 5.4% | 12.0% | 1.1% | 4.0% |
| Press Association of the Confederate States | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Southern Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Cooperative Wire Service | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| Other Newspaper / Magazine | 9.3% | 4.8% | 4.4% | 14.9% | 28.4% | 11.1% | 11.3% | 4.7% | 8.2% |
| Text of a Speech | 0.8% | 6.5% | 0.7% | 0.5% | 3.6% | 0.5% | 0.6% | 1.5% | 2.4% |
| Official Dispatch / Report | 1.3% | 0.7% | 1.6% | 4.3% | 3.6% | 2.2% | 4.8% | 2.5% | 3.0% |
| Eyewitness Report | 0.3% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 0.7% | 1.0% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| Letter | 1.4% | 2.7% | 1.6% | 0.9% | 0.7% | 1.4% | 1.3% | 0.4% | 0.9% |
| Undisclosed Telegraphic News | 16.0% | 33.0% | 0.9% | 0.2% | 17.8% | 1.9% | 4.3% | 31.3% | 39.2% |
| Unknown | 48.3% | 41.8% | 67.7% | 55.9% | 30.4% | 59.2% | 44.9% | 32.6% | 29.0% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

In the *New York Times* portion of the sample, the Associated Press (AP) only accounted for a total of 4.5% of the news over the life of the study. Although the AP was not the most dominant reporting source throughout the sample, we cannot ignore the growth that the AP experienced in terms of its provision of news during the Civil War. As can be seen in *Table 2B*, in 1859, the AP contributed just 1.8% of the news. Two years later during the first year of Civil War (1861), the AP's share of front page news at the *Times* had grown to 4.1%. As a reporting source, the AP lost some ground the following two years but surged to 12.0% of the sample in the final year of the war (1865). In 1866, the AP's role as a reporting source dropped far below its peak of 12.0% to a mere 1.1% of the sample. However, in 1867, the final year of the sample, it had once again increased its presence, providing 4.0% of the material on the front page of the *Times* and thereby more than doubling its 1.8% contribution nine years earlier.

The other cooperative wire services did not fare as well in the *New York Times*, especially in 1859 when they were the source of none (0.0%) of the news in that paper. As a reporting source in the *Times*, other cooperative wire services struggled throughout the Civil War to eventually reach a peak of just 0.6% of front page news in 1866, but in 1867, ended the sample exactly where they had begun at 0.0%. Over the nine years, other cooperative wire services provided just 0.1% of the *Times* portion of the sample.

At the other end of the scale was "Unknown News" which was the most frequent reporting source throughout the sample. Unknown news accounted for a total of 46.9% of the sample over the nine years of study. In 1859, unknown news provided 48.3% of the sample. It would peak early three years later in 1862 as the source of 67.7% of the news. After that substantial jump, it would start a steady decline for the next two years until it

shot back up to 59.2% in 1864. However, in the final year of the sample (1867), unknown news was the source of 29.0% of the sample.

In stark contrast to the *Boston Evening Transcript*, “Undisclosed Telegraphic News” was the second largest source of news throughout the nine year sample at the *New York Times*. Adding up the percentages represented by undisclosed telegraphic news over the nine year period reveals that undisclosed telegraphic news was the reporting source of 15.1% of the material in the *Times*. By referring to *Table 2B*, we can see that, even as early as 1859, undisclosed telegraphic news already provided 16.0% of the news in the *Times* portion of the sample. It would grow to 33.0% the following year which was the year of the decisive and extremely divisive 1860 presidential election mentioned in Chapter One. In 1861, once the Civil War had begun, undisclosed telegraphic news would plummet, providing just 0.9% of the news. It would gain ground and then lose it again throughout the rest of the war. However, as the war drew to a close, undisclosed telegraphic news again provided more than 30% of the news in the *Times*. In fact, two years after the war had ended, it accounted for 39.2% of the news in the *Times*.

The sudden drop in undisclosed telegraphic news on the front page of the *New York Times* throughout much of the Civil War was likely due to the growth experienced by the third largest reporting source at the *New York Times*: staff reporters or special correspondents (a.k.a. “specials”). In 1859 and 1860, the specials contributed 6.5% of the news in the sample. But with the war underway the following year, the contribution of the specials more than doubled to 17.4% of the material in the *Times*. That dominance later declined to being the reporting source of just 11.2% of the news in 1863. After 1863, they became an even more important reporting source for the *Times*, eventually

peaking at 23.3% of the sample in 1866. In 1867, specials were responsible for 13.1% of the news—more than twice the volume of news contributed at the beginning of the sample—and over the whole time-frame they contributed 14.9% of the sample.

This sustained growth in the use of specials or staff reporters could be seen as contributing to the sudden drop in the volume of undisclosed telegraphic news in the *Times* during the war as well as to, if one reads between the lines, the small percentage of news contributed by the Associated Press and other cooperative wire services. The fact was that the newspapers in the North (especially the widely-read New York dailies) could afford to employ their own large staff of reporters to follow the army into battle and report exclusive news back to their paper of employment. Prosperous Northern papers like the *Times*, already financially able to pay for the high cost of using cooperative news services, were willing to utilize the much more expensive newsgathering practice of sending their own correspondents into the field to report back custom-tailored news to their printing offices via the telegraph (Andrews, 1983; Huntzicker, 1999; Starr, 1962).

The Charleston Mercury

Turning to the reporting source of the first of the two Southern newspapers in the sample reveals some interesting findings set out below in *Table 2C*. Let us begin by focusing on the contribution made by cooperative newsgathering agencies.

Table 2C
Reporting Source (Charleston Mercury)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Staff Reporter / Special Correspondent | 3.9% | 8.7% | 7.3% | 3.5% | 1.3% | 4.4% | 1.1% | 0.4% | 16.2% |
| Staff Editorialist | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 4.2% | 3.2% | 1.5% | 0.4% |
| Staff Editor | 3.3% | 4.1% | 6.7% | 1.7% | 2.7% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.4% |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Letter to the Editor | 1.4% | 3.4% | 1.3% | 0.3% | 1.5% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 0.2% | 0.4% |
| Advertisement | 38.4% | 38.6% | 10.5% | 4.5% | 14.2% | 10.1% | 10.1% | 24.6% | 9.4% |
| Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.9% | 0.0% |
| Press Association of the Confederate States | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.9% | 0.5% | 4.0% | 1.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Southern Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | 7.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Cooperative Wire Service | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Newspaper / Magazine | 18.2% | 8.1% | 13.8% | 28.4% | 17.4% | 20.1% | 12.9% | 5.9% | 6.4% |
| Text of a Speech | 1.2% | 2.0% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 2.0% | 1.3% | 0.6% | 0.0% | 0.4% |
| Official Dispatch / Report | 0.8% | 1.2% | 4.5% | 11.4% | 6.4% | 9.6% | 16.4% | 1.5% | 2.6% |
| Eyewitness Report | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.9% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Letter | 0.2% | 1.7% | 1.2% | 1.9% | 0.5% | 0.6% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| Undisclosed Telegraphic News | 0.0% | 5.8% | 8.1% | 20.1% | 17.4% | 4.5% | 13.4% | 28.2% | 40.0% |
| Unknown | 32.5% | 26.2% | 44.4% | 25.1% | 30.5% | 24.3% | 40.1% | 35.2% | 23.4% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

The Associated Press (AP) accounted for none (0.0%) of the news on the first page of the *Charleston Mercury* during the two years of the sample that preceded the war. In 1861, the first year of the Civil War, the AP provided 0.3% of the news in the *Mercury*. However, this must have been early in 1861 because less than a week after Fort Sumter fell to the Confederates in April 1861, the Union Army cut off all Southern access to the AP, a policy which remained in effect until after the war had ended (Morris Jr., 2008; Risley, 2008). In 1866, when access to the AP's services was restored, the AP's role as a reporting source in the *Mercury* peaked at just 1.9% of the sample before declining to 0.0% the following year. Other Northern cooperative wire services were also non-existent (0.0%) in the *Mercury* throughout the entire sample time-frame.

However, this did not mean that the Southern cooperative press associations which were quickly developed to replace the sudden lack of access to news from the Northern Associated Press (AP) were non-existent in the *Mercury*. The Press Association of the Confederate States (PA) was the source of 0.9% of the news in 1861. By the middle of the war (1863), the PA peaked by contributing 4.0% of the news in the *Mercury* before it dropped to 1.5% the following year and then faded out of existence in 1865. The story of the Southern Associated Press was similar to that of the PA. Although the Southern Associated Press did not contribute any news to the *Mercury*'s portion of the sample during the first two years of the war, by 1863 it was the source of 1.8% of the news. In 1864, it reached a healthy 7.7% of the sample before disappearing the following year. Over the nine year time-frame, the PA provided 0.6% of the news while the Southern Associated Press supplied 0.8%.

Like the *New York Times*, the most dominant reporting source at the *Charleston Mercury* was news from an unknown reporting source which, over the life of the sample, contributed 31.6% of the front page material. Unknown news accounted for 32.5% of the sample in 1859 and peaked at 44.4% in 1861, the first year of the war. It reached 40.1% in 1865 before it dropped to 23.4% of the sample in 1867, two years after the Civil War had ended. Interestingly, news reported by staff reporters or special correspondents grew from 3.9% in 1859 to 16.2% in 1867, an indication that the *Mercury* found itself in a better financial position after the Civil War had ended.

Advertisements were the next most important source at the *Mercury* throughout the sample. They contributed 17.9% of the material over the period of study. In 1859, advertisements were the source for 38.4% of the sample, peaking the very next year at

38.6%. They declined throughout most of the war and, in 1867, were the source of just 9.4% of front page items, a substantial drop from nine years earlier.

At the *Charleston Mercury*, just like at the *New York Times*, undisclosed telegraphic news was a substantial reporting source throughout the sample period. Over the entire nine year period, undisclosed telegraphic news represented a combined percentage of 17.7% of the sample. Although undisclosed telegraphic news was non-existent (0.0%) in 1859, two years before the war, in the second year of the war (1862), undisclosed telegraphic news accounted for 20.1% of the front page material in the *Mercury*. While the share of undisclosed telegraphic news would slowly decline during the final three years of the war, it would experience fast-paced growth in the post-war portion of the sample. In 1866, undisclosed telegraphic news stood at 28.2% and when the sample drew to a close in 1867, it accounted for a staggering 40.0% of the sample, a significant improvement over the 0.0% nine years earlier.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

The *Daily Richmond Examiner* was quite a different story. Before discussing why this was so, it is important to underline the differences between the *Daily Richmond Examiner* sample and the other three newspapers in this study. Gaining access to preserved Southern newspapers was a more difficult task than accessing Northern newspapers of the same era. The greater hardships experienced by Confederate journalists and printers during the war (as discussed earlier in this project) resulted in a much smaller total output of Confederate newspaper editions in comparison with the North. Furthermore, there are far fewer preserved Confederate Civil War newspapers which remain accessible to researchers today.

While this did not directly affect the gathering of the two constructed weeks for each of the nine years of the *Charleston Mercury*, it did affect the *Daily Richmond Examiner*'s sample. No issues of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* from 1859, the first year of this study's sample, are preserved and accessible at the Library of Congress in Washington .D.C. Furthermore, the 1860 portion of the sample for the *Examiner* consisted of just two papers rather than the fourteen still in existence for all of the other sample years in all four papers. This is because only two *Examiner* editions from the entire year of 1860 are still preserved and accessible at the Library of Congress. It must also be pointed out that, while the *Examiner* did not permanently cease publishing until the second half of 1867, there are no preserved and accessible issues of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* that are publicly available for 1867, the final year of the sample. Consequently, taking these limitations into account, the sample for the *Daily Richmond Examiner* was only seven years instead of the nine years represented by the other three newspapers.

These logistical setbacks aside, there was substantially less telegraphic news overall in the *Examiner*. Nowhere was this more evident than in the cooperative news agencies and their tiny representation seen in *Table 2D* below.

Table 2D
Reporting Source (Daily Richmond Examiner)

| | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Staff Reporter / Special Correspondent | 0.0% | 2.3% | 2.5% | 20.4% | 0.7% | 1.5% | 0.7% |
| Staff Editorialist | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 1.7% | 4.0% | 0.1% |
| Staff Editor | 0.7% | 1.9% | 4.7% | 3.9% | 2.7% | 1.2% | 1.2% |
| Letter to the Editor | 0.0% | 0.5% | 0.2% | 0.6% | 1.4% | 0.3% | 0.1% |
| Advertisement | 74.5% | 28.8% | 44.7% | 11.1% | 38.2% | 12.9% | 73.4% |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Press Association of the Confederate States | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.3% | 1.3% | 0.0% |
| Southern Associated Press | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other Cooperative Wire Service | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Other Newspaper / Magazine | 0.0% | 2.5% | 7.4% | 7.2% | 2.7% | 18.6% | 2.3% |
| Text of a Speech | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.1% |
| Official Dispatch / Report | 2.1% | 1.9% | 7.8% | 4.9% | 9.7% | 21.8% | 0.6% |
| Eyewitness Report | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.8% | 1.1% | 0.8% | 0.0% |
| Letter | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 1.0% | 0.9% | 0.0% |
| Undisclosed Telegraphic News | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.4% | 7.9% | 2.3% | 2.8% | 0.0% |
| Unknown | 22.1% | 61.8% | 31.5% | 42.3% | 35.1% | 33.6% | 21.4% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Over the seven year time-frame, the Associated Press (AP) and the Southern Associated Press were both non-existent (0.0%) in the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. The Press Association of the Confederate States (PA) did not fare that much better. For the first four years of the sample, it contributed 0.0% of the material in the *Examiner*. But by 1864, the PA jumped from being the reporting source of no news in the *Examiner* to representing 3.3% of the sample. In 1865, it fell to 1.3% before the paper collapsed and indefinitely suspended operations later that same year. Undisclosed telegraphic news as a reporting source accounted for 7.9% of the sample in 1863, but, over the entire seven year period combined, it was the origin of just 1.7% of front page material in the *Examiner*.

As was the case for the *Boston Evening Transcript*, Table 2D reveals that advertisements were the most common reporting source in the *Daily Richmond*

Examiner. In 1860, they accounted for 74.5% of the material on the *Examiner*'s front page, which was actually the largest percentage of material it would supply for the entire time-frame of study. As a source of material, advertisements would lose and regain more column space before finishing up with a robust 73.4% of the sample in 1867, two years after the war had ended. This was followed by news from an unknown origin which peaked at 42.3% in 1863 and had a total combined percentage of 35.4% of the sample.

Unlike any of the other three papers in the sample, "Official Dispatches or Reports" were a dominant source of front page material in the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. In 1860, they were the source of 2.1% of the news in the *Examiner*. Two years into the war, official dispatches represented 7.8% of the material in the *Examiner*'s portion of the sample. In the final year of the war (1865), official dispatches were the source of nearly one quarter (21.8%) of the news in the *Examiner*. In 1866, the final year of the sample, they provided less than 1% (0.6%) of the sample. All told, over the seven years of *Daily Richmond Examiner* issues in this study's sample, official dispatches contributed 6.0% of the front page news.

After examining the different reporting sources of the four newspapers, it becomes clear that it may be premature to claim that the Civil War expanded and solidified the practice of cooperative newsgathering. Surprisingly, I found that, unlike what was suggested by Mark Lloyd (2006), Paul Starr (2004), and Tom Wheeler (2006), the high costs associated with telegraphic news gathering, and even the public's ravenous appetite for news during the war, did not expand and solidify the use of cooperative newsgathering. Of the four newspapers in this study's sample, only the *New York Times* experienced an expansion in the amount of news provided by the Associated Press,

America’s premier cooperative news gathering service. Even so, this was only a rather modest increase from 1.8% of the sample in 1859 to 4.0% in 1867.

Change Number Two: Turning Away from Local Coverage and Political Commentary

That the coverage of the war signaled a move away from the majority of column space being occupied by local coverage and political commentary was the second change coded for. The literature suggested that, at the outset of the war, local news and political commentary were given less coverage than war news, national news and international news and that this trend continued even after the fighting had stopped (Van Tuyl, 2008). Again, to measure the truth of this claim, the column space given to local interest stories and political commentary will be contrasted with that given to hard news.

The Boston Evening Transcript

To examine the validity of this claim, we need to investigate the “Type of Item” variable which isolates and breaks down the percentage of each type of news item in the sample over the nine year period of study. *Table 3A* displays these important findings for the first Northern newspaper in the sample, the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

Table 3A

Type of Item (Boston Evening Transcript)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| International News | 4.7% | 4.2% | 4.3% | 6.3% | 4.0% | 5.0% | 5.6% | 7.3% | 3.1% |
| National News | 4.0% | 4.3% | 4.2% | 3.0% | 2.0% | 3.1% | 6.9% | 5.7% | 3.0% |
| Regional News | 2.0% | 2.2% | 3.1% | 2.8% | 0.6% | 2.1% | 1.3% | 1.7% | 0.8% |
| Local news | 2.2% | 1.2% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 0.7% | 1.2% | 0.8% | 0.9% | 0.4% |
| Editorial | 1.8% | 2.7% | 1.4% | 1.1% | 1.6% | 1.1% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 0.2% |
| Political Commentary | 0.6% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.1% |
| Letter | 0.6% | 0.9% | 0.5% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 0.5% |
| Cartoon | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Text of a Speech / Government Address | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.0% |
| Legal Discussion / Crime Report | 1.4% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.9% | 1.5% | 0.7% | 0.2% |
| Financial Report / Discussion | 0.0% | 0.7% | 1.8% | 1.9% | 2.2% | 3.2% | 4.3% | 2.3% | 1.6% |
| Advertisement | 61.8% | 73.5% | 55.8% | 60.0% | 68.5% | 60.3% | 58.8% | 63.9% | 72.0% |
| Notice | 15.0% | 4.5% | 10.5% | 8.6% | 9.1% | 9.6% | 8.7% | 9.1% | 12.4% |
| War news | 0.0% | 0.0% | 9.1% | 8.3% | 6.4% | 5.8% | 2.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Dispatch / Official Report | 0.4% | 0.3% | 1.2% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 1.8% | 1.7% | 0.9% | 0.2% |
| Weather | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Sports | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.9% | 0.3% |
| Poem | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 0.9% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.5% | 1.1% | 0.7% |
| Book Review | 3.9% | 2.6% | 3.5% | 2.1% | 0.9% | 3.8% | 3.5% | 2.5% | 2.6% |
| Obituary | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| Book Excerpt | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 1.6% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

A quick glance at the *Table 3A* reveals that the overwhelming majority of the items in the *Transcript* were not news but rather advertisements yet we can still see that the volume of regional and local news depreciated over the course of the Civil War and the larger sampling period. In 1859, two full years before the war began, international news contributed 4.7% of the news in the *Transcript* while national news supplied 4.0%. That was already more than double the contribution of both regional (2.0%) and local news (2.2%). In the pivotal third year of the Civil War (1863), the share of regional news in the *Transcript* had dropped to just 0.6% and local news had also fallen to 0.7%. However, that same year, international news represented 4.0% of the sample and national news 2.0%. While international news peaked at 7.3% of the news in 1866 and national news peaked at 6.9% in 1865, both had decreased their contribution slightly in 1867, two full years after the war had ended. That year, international news items accounted for

3.1% of the sample and national news accounted for 3.0%. Even with this marginal decrease in the volume of international and national news in the immediate post-war years, international and national news had still stunted the growth of both regional and local news in the *Transcript*.

As *Table 3A* indicates, in the middle of the Civil War, regional news accounted for only 0.6% of the sample while local news represented 0.7% of the sample. The most regional news could offer over the entire sample period was 3.1% in 1861, the first year of the war, and local news never surpassed the 2.2% it contributed in the first year of the sample. Yet by the end of the sample, regional news and local news had run out of steam. In the final year of the sample (1867), both regional news (0.8%) and local news (0.4%) contributed less than 1% of the news. A similar trend can be seen in the second half of this change, that is, the move away from political commentary and editorializing.

Over the entire nine year sample, political commentary items made up 0.2% of the news in the *Transcript* and editorials made up 1.3%. However, to gain a clearer picture of the decreasing importance of both political commentary and editorializing in the *Transcript*, we should focus on specific sample years. Beginning two years before the war, in 1859, political commentary accounted for 0.6% of the news in the *Transcript* and editorials represented 1.8%. In the middle of the war (1863), political commentary in the *Transcript* was non-existent (0.0%) and editorials were holding their ground at 1.6% of front page material. In 1867, political commentary contributed just 0.1% of the sample and editorials had plummeted from their all-time high of 2.7% of the news in 1860 to 0.2% in the final year of the sample. Hard news was outpacing political commentary and editorializing in the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

The New York Times

Table 3B below sets out the type of items found in the *New York Times*, highlighting both similarities and differences with its New England equivalent. A brief mention of the role of notices should be the starting point of our discussion.

Table 3B

Type of Item (New York Times)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| International News | 9.8% | 16.7% | 2.0% | 3.4% | 11.2% | 7.8% | 10.2% | 19.2% | 15.0% |
| National News | 10.5% | 34.4% | 7.5% | 7.0% | 8.6% | 10.7% | 19.6% | 26.2% | 14.6% |
| Regional News | 9.8% | 3.4% | 11.1% | 5.9% | 2.3% | 4.6% | 3.4% | 5.3% | 4.9% |
| Local News | 0.6% | 6.1% | 3.1% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 4.4% | 3.2% | 0.2% | 2.8% |
| Editorial | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.9% | 1.6% | 0.8% | 3.6% |
| Political Commentary | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.5% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Letter | 2.5% | 4.1% | 1.9% | 1.4% | 3.3% | 2.0% | 1.8% | 1.3% | 2.2% |
| Cartoon | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Text of a Speech / Government Address | 0.8% | 6.8% | 0.7% | 0.5% | 4.0% | 1.2% | 1.0% | 1.7% | 2.4% |
| Legal Discussion / Crime Report | 1.1% | 1.7% | 0.3% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 1.4% | 3.2% | 3.0% | 2.4% |
| Financial Report / Discussion | 4.1% | 9.9% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 3.0% | 1.4% | 8.5% | 6.1% | 16.2% |
| Advertisement | 13.5% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| Notice | 45.5% | 16.0% | 40.9% | 36.4% | 15.2% | 37.4% | 34.3% | 31.5% | 31.5% |
| War News | 0.0% | 0.0% | 26.9% | 36.0% | 46.2% | 23.0% | 4.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Dispatch / Official Report | 1.1% | 0.7% | 1.8% | 4.3% | 4.0% | 3.6% | 6.1% | 2.5% | 3.1% |
| Weather | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.6% | 1.5% | 0.9% |
| Sports | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 0.4% |
| Poem | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Book Review | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Obituary | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Book Excerpt | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Notices, which could best be described as 19th century, one sentence, tweet-like, factual statements were the most common type of item in the *New York Times*. Over the nine year sampling period, they accounted for 34.5% of the material located on the front page of the *Times*. But things get more interesting when we turn our attention to the next biggest contributor: the expanding role of international, national and hard news in general at the *Times*.

In 1859, international news already had claimed 9.8% of the *Times*' front page and national news had captured 10.5%. In 1863, international news was responsible for 11.2% of the sample while national news had decreased slightly to 8.6%. International news reached its pinnacle the year after the war had ended (1866) when it provided 19.2% of the news. National news peaked much earlier in 1860 with 34.4% of the sample. In 1867, at the end of the sampling period, international news accounted for 15.0% of the news and national accounted for 14.6%. Both represent substantial increases over the nine year period of analysis.

In the tension-filled final days of the antebellum era, regional news claimed 9.8% (1859) of the *Times*' front page while local news contributed a much smaller 0.6% that same year. During some of the heaviest fighting in 1863, regional news had slowed its growth to 2.3% of the sample and local news had increased marginally to 1.0% of the news. In post war 1867, regional news accounted for 4.9% of the sample and local news had grown to 2.8%. Despite the fact that local news, unlike regional news, had a larger presence in the *New York Times* after the Civil War than it did before, both regional and local news were clearly outpaced by international and national news. For example, over the entire nine year period, international news represented 10.1% of the sample and

national news 14.4%. At the other end of the spectrum was regional news with 6.2% and local news with 2.4%. A similar trend could be seen in the other type of important hard news from the era: war news.

Not surprisingly, during the five years of the Civil War, war news occupied a significant portion of the front page of the *Times*. In the first year of the war (1861) it claimed 26.9% of the space. War news would reach an all-time high of 46.2% of the stories in the *Times* two years later in 1863 before falling to 4.3% in 1865, the final year of the war. In total, over the entire nine year sample, war news occupied 13.4% of the front page news in the *New York Times*. This is in stark contrast to its New England counterpart, the *Boston Evening Transcript*, which only devoted 3.6% of its front page space over the nine years to the events of the Civil War.

Turning now to political commentary and editorials in the *Times* confirms one expectation while disproving another. In 1859, political commentary was nowhere to be seen in the *Times* (0.0%) while editorials accounted for a benign 0.1% of the sample. In the middle of the Civil War (1863), political commentary represented 0.3% of front page news while editorials accounted for 1.0% of the front page items in the *Times*. However, in 1867, when the Union had been restored, political commentary was once again non-existent in the *New York Times* (0.0%) yet editorials had grown to occupy 3.6% of all front page news. And, at 3.6% of the sample in 1867, editorials were more than three times as common as they were before the Civil War. The expansion of hard news in the *New York Times* may have stunted the growth of political commentary articles but it did not do the same for editorials.

The Charleston Mercury

Moving south of the Mason-Dixon Line reveals a somewhat different picture.

Table 3C sheds light on the different patterns in the *Charleston Mercury*.

Table 3C

Type of Item (Charleston Mercury)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| International News | 3.4% | 6.3% | 4.6% | 9.5% | 8.5% | 6.3% | 2.9% | 10.2% | 8.0% |
| National News | 5.6% | 6.6% | 9.0% | 6.6% | 4.2% | 4.8% | 3.2% | 8.6% | 14.7% |
| Regional News | 4.7% | 2.5% | 2.5% | 5.5% | 0.9% | 2.2% | 2.5% | 3.9% | 11.8% |
| Local News | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 1.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.9% | 5.0% | 12.1% |
| Editorial | 6.8% | 6.7% | 6.1% | 4.3% | 8.2% | 3.1% | 0.9% | 5.6% | 2.7% |
| Political Commentary | 0.9% | 1.7% | 2.7% | 1.4% | 0.7% | 2.9% | 4.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Letter | 1.7% | 5.7% | 3.0% | 1.6% | 2.0% | 1.1% | 1.6% | 0.2% | 0.9% |
| Cartoon | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Text of a Speech / Government Address | 1.2% | 2.0% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 2.0% | 1.8% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 0.7% |
| Legal Discussion / Crime Report | 2.3% | 0.0% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 7.9% | 3.2% |
| Financial Report / Discussion | 4.0% | 0.8% | 1.2% | 2.8% | 1.6% | 2.0% | 1.0% | 10.8% | 8.5% |
| Advertisement | 40.3% | 41.2% | 11.2% | 4.5% | 14.2% | 10.5% | 10.1% | 24.5% | 9.9% |
| Notice | 23.6% | 21.1% | 35.1% | 5.8% | 22.0% | 30.8% | 46.4% | 19.8% | 23.1% |
| War News | 0.0% | 0.3% | 16.5% | 33.6% | 27.9% | 28.0% | 11.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Dispatch / Official Report | 1.2% | 1.5% | 4.3% | 11.6% | 6.4% | 5.5% | 12.4% | 1.5% | 2.9% |
| Weather | 1.9% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.4% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.6% |
| Sports | 1.2% | 0.9% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.3% |
| Poem | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Book Review | 0.6% | 2.5% | 1.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 0.1% |
| Obituary | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.7% | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.8% | 0.4% | 0.9% |
| Book Excerpt | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Before examining the differences between the *Mercury* and its Northern counterparts, we

should begin with the similarities. In terms of the type of news item, the most obvious similarities reflect the prevalence of notices and advertisements on the front page of the *Mercury*. In the *Charleston Mercury*, like the *New York Times*, over the nine year sampling period, notices were the most common type of item. They represented 26.6% of the sample. Similarly, like in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, advertisements played a strong role in the *Mercury*. Over the entire sample period, 18.6% of front page material could be classified as being an advertisement in one form or another. Yet this is where many of the similarities end.

Between 1859 and 1867, international news represented 6.7% of the front page material in the *Mercury* while national news represented 7.4% of the sample. Conversely, over the same time-frame, regional news represented 4.4% of the sample while local news occupied only 2.8% of all front page material. On the surface, this appears to be a clear-cut case of international and national news outweighing regional and local news. However, beneath the surface, when we look at the four types of news in specific years of the sample, things become less supportive of the anticipated change in news type.

In 1859, before the war, international news contributed 3.4% of the items on the front page of the *Mercury* and national news contributed 5.6%. International news would surge to 8.5% in 1863 before reaching its peak of 10.2% of front page material in 1866, the year after the war ended. In the final year of the study, the share of space occupied by international news had fallen to 8.0%. National news in the *Mercury* peaked at 9.0% in 1861 and dropped to just 4.2% of the news in 1863. However, in 1867, two years after the war had ended, national news accounted for a robust 14.7% of the news.

Regional news began the sample period with 4.7% of all front page material in the *Mercury*. Once the South had seceded and war had been waging for three years, regional news had free-fallen to 0.9% (1863) of the sample. However, in 1867, regional news occupied a staggering 11.8% of the sample, which was more than double what it had been at the beginning of the sample nine years earlier. In fact, in 1867, regional news occupied more column space than international news. Local news experienced a similar type of powerful late growth like that enjoyed by regional news. In 1859, local news occupied 0.3% of the front page items in the *Mercury*. It would vary between 0.0% (where it would remain in 1863) and 1.2% throughout the duration of the Civil War. But as *Table 3C* shows, two years after the war had ended, local news would suddenly rise to a peak of 12.1% of all front page items in the *Mercury*. In 1867 as the South began to rebuild its shattered economy, national news was the most dominant form of hard news on the front page of the *Charleston Mercury* (14.7%), immediately followed by local news (12.1%) and then regional news (11.8%) while international news trailed in a distant fourth place (8.0%).

As was the case for the *New York Times*, war news was another substantial form of hard news in the *Charleston Mercury*. War news would occupy 16.5% of all front page items in the first year of the war and would reach its peak of 33.6% the following year (1862). In the middle of the war (1863), war news would account for 27.9% of the sample before falling to 11.9% in 1865, the final year of the war. In fact, when all five years of war coverage are combined, it appears that war news was the third largest occupant of all front page material in the *Mercury* with 11.3% of the sample.

Contrary to what was expected, even though regional and local news expanded in the *Mercury* at the expense of international news, the same could not be said about both political commentary and editorials. Both political commentary and editorializing contracted in the *Mercury* over the course of the study. In 1859, political commentary would represent less than 1% (0.9%) of all front page news in the *Mercury*. It would continue to gain some column space (and then lose it again) during much of the Civil War until it had risen from 0.7% in 1863 to its peak of 4.7% two years later in 1865. After that, political commentary in the *Charleston Mercury* collapsed to 0.0% where it would remain for the final two years of the sample. A similar story can be told about the percentage of editorials in the *Mercury*.

In 1859, editorials occupied a solid 6.8% of all front page items in the *Mercury*. However, the percentage of editorials then declined for the next three years until the middle of the Civil War when, in 1863, there would be a sharp increase to 8.2% of the sample. Yet, in the final two years of the war, editorials would decline substantially. That said, editorials would spike back up to 5.6% of the *Mercury* sample in 1866 before dropping back down to 2.7% in 1867, the final year of the sample. Despite rapid fluctuations in the percentage of editorials over the nine year time-frame, there were substantially fewer editorials in the *Charleston Mercury* two years after the Civil War (2.7%) than there were before the Civil War (6.8%). Hard news in the *Charleston Mercury* was increasing at the expense of political commentary and editorials.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

As can be seen in *Table 3D*, like the *Boston Evening Transcript*, advertisements were the most frequently occurring item in the *Daily Richmond Examiner*. Over the seven

year period of analysis, advertisements cumulatively accounted for 42.8% of all front page material. Advertisements were followed by notices as the second most dominant type of item in the *Examiner*. They encompassed 28.6% of the total *Examiner* sample from 1860 to 1866.

Table 3D

Type of Item (Daily Richmond Examiner)

| | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| International News | 0.0% | 0.8% | 1.5% | 1.9% | 1.3% | 5.2% | 1.0% |
| National News | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.1% | 1.1% | 0.4% | 2.6% |
| Regional News | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.7% | 0.9% | 1.6% | 3.1% | 1.5% |
| Local News | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 3.7% | 3.2% | 1.9% | 0.0% |
| Editorial | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 1.8% | 0.2% | 0.6% |
| Political Commentary | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 5.2% | 0.5% |
| Letter | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.8% | 2.0% | 1.2% | 0.1% |
| Cartoon | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Text of a Speech / Government Address | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.1% |
| Legal Discussion / Crime Report | 0.0% | 0.1% | 2.8% | 6.9% | 14.3% | 4.4% | 1.6% |
| Financial Report / Discussion | 0.0% | 0.2% | 1.0% | 6.8% | 0.4% | 1.5% | 0.4% |
| Advertisement | 74.5% | 29.0% | 45.2% | 11.1% | 40.4% | 2.9% | 74.3% |
| Notice | 22.8% | 62.2% | 27.7% | 39.8% | 5.2% | 23.8% | 16.5% |
| War News | 0.0% | 1.8% | 8.7% | 21.1% | 17.8% | 16.3% | 0.0% |
| Dispatch / Official Report | 1.4% | 2.5% | 8.2% | 4.9% | 10.0% | 21.9% | 0.6% |
| Weather | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.1% |
| Sports | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Poem | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| Book Review | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Obituary | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.6% | 0.3% | 1.3% | 0.1% |
| Book Excerpt | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

As was the case for the *Charleston Mercury*, war news was the most prevalent form of hard news in the *Examiner* throughout the sample period. During the five years of the Civil War, war news as a cumulative percentage accounted for 8.4% of the items on the front page of the *Examiner*. According to *Table 3D*, it jumped from 1.8% of the sample in the first year of the war (1861) to 21.1% two years later in 1863. After this high-point in the middle of the war, war news would begin a slow decline until it reached 16.3% of front page news in the *Examiner* in 1865.

A discussion on whether or not international and national news displaced regional and local news in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* is a little more complicated. Let us begin by considering international and national news. In 1860, one year before the war began, both international and national news were nowhere (0.0%) to be found in the *Examiner*. By the middle of the Civil War (1863), international news represented 1.9% of the front page and national news was almost nowhere to be found since it only occupied 0.1% of the sample. However, towards the end of the sampling period, both international and national news would experience growth in the *Examiner*. In 1865, the final year of the Civil War, international news jumped from 1.9% to 5.2% of all front page material in the *Examiner*. Similarly, in post war 1866, national news had risen to a total of 2.6% of the sample compared to the miniscule 0.1% of three years earlier. Over the entire seven year sampling period for the *Examiner*, international news accounted for 1.7% of all front page material while national news accounted for 1.1%.

In 1860, regional and local news also failed to occupy space on the front page of the *Examiner*. Yet, once the Civil War was well under way in 1863, regional news had grown to just under 1% (0.9%) of the sample and local news had reached its sample high

of 3.7% of all front page news. Local news would reach its peak the following year when it would claim 3.2% of all the material on the front page of the *Examiner*. After the hostilities had ended, local news would plummet from providing 1.9% of all front page material to no (0.0%) front page material in 1866 — where it began seven years earlier. Regional news, however, in the post war portion of the *Examiner* sample, was a different story. In 1866, regional news was the source of 1.5% of all front page material compared to the 0.0% it represented in 1860. In fact, the 1.5% share of regional news on the front page of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* outweighed the percentage of international news that was present in the paper that same year (1.0%).

The anticipated vanquishing of both political commentary and editorials in the *Examiner* did not wholly materialize in the sample. Over the entire seven year sample, political commentary represented 1.0% of all front page items while editorials represented 0.6%. But it is when we focus in on the “before, during, and after” Civil War years within the sample that we can clearly see that both political commentary and editorials did not lose their prominence in the popular Richmond publication. In fact, just the opposite occurred. For instance, two years before the war began, political commentary and editorials were nowhere to be seen in the *Examiner* since they both accounted for 0.0% of all front page items. However, in 1863, political commentary would account for 0.5% of all front page items while editorials would contribute 0.3%. The following year, editorials would increase their presence to 1.8%. In 1865, the year which would see the fall of Richmond itself, the collapse of the Confederate States of America, and consequently the end of the Civil War, political commentary occupied a substantial 5.2% of all front page items in the *Examiner*. In 1866, the first year of peace

and the last year of accessible *Daily Richmond Examiner* editions in the sample, political commentary accounted for 0.5% of all front page news and editorials accounted for 0.6%. While both these values point to a very limited presence of political commentary and editorials in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* during the Reconstruction Era, even this limited presence was greater than that in the two years before the Civil War.

Change Number Three: Transforming Journalistic Prose & Abandoning Narratives

The third change coded for addressed the claim that the reporting of the war led to the transformation of journalistic prose and the abandoning of narrative-based reporting. To that end, the frequency of stories using the antebellum era's local-flavor language and narrative reporting as opposed to the terse language and lead-reporting with which we are familiar today were examined. To address the extent of this anticipated change in journalism, the analysis was split into two separate variables where one measured the suggested transformation in journalistic prose and the other measured the suggested replacement of narrative-based reporting by the more familiar inverted-pyramid reporting that remains the obligatory style of news reporting today. Let us focus on the first half of this anticipated change, the suggested change in journalistic prose.

3A: Transforming Journalistic Prose

As was identified in the preceding chapter, the literature review conducted earlier suggested that the high transmission costs associated with relaying an increasing amount of news from the battlefield back to a newspaper's printing office via the telegraph played a crucial role in initiating a transformation in the style of language where elaborate and local-flavor language was replaced with the more uniform and terse language which is a common attribute of most newspaper writing to this very day

(Blondheim, 1994; Bulla & Borchard, 2010; Carey, 1989; Innis, 1952; Mindich, 2000; Wheeler, 2006).

The Boston Evening Transcript

What then did the journalistic language inside Boston’s popular evening paper look like? To answer this question, we must turn to *Table 4A* to see if the anticipated transition in journalistic prose occurred in the *Boston Evening Transcript* during the nine year period of study.

Table 4A
Style of Language in Item (Boston Evening Transcript)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Local-flavor | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Elaborate | 10.7% | 2.3% | 19.1% | 12.8% | 1.5% | 7.1% | 5.4% | 2.7% | 2.7% |
| Terse | 10.4% | 16.5% | 10.3% | 14.1% | 16.8% | 17.6% | 19.6% | 18.7% | 10.4% |
| Undistinguishable | 78.9% | 81.2% | 70.6% | 73.0% | 81.8% | 75.4% | 75.0% | 78.6% | 86.9% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

A quick glance at the *Table 4A* reveals that, in the columns of the *Boston Evening Transcript* during the Civil War, there was a move away from local flavor and elaborate language toward the terse language characteristic of newspapers today. Before investigating this shift further, it should be stated that what was coded as having “undistinguishable” language included the language in letters, speeches, notices and advertisements, poems and book excerpts and also that this category made up the sample’s largest language grouping (78.1%) of all items in the *Transcript* during this period. As well, the decision was made to keep the items classified as containing undistinguishable language as valid responses in the analysis so that the reader could get

as accurate a picture as possible of how news appeared in the Civil War era. This decision applies to all four of the newspapers in the sample and was duplicated for the variable examining the suggested move away from narrative-based reporting.

Over the course of the nine year sample, local-flavor language was virtually non-existent in the *Transcript*. In fact, the second year of the war (1862) was the only sample year which registered cases of what could be deemed local-flavor language, a mere 0.1% of the language from all front page items that year. This surprising lack of local-flavor in the sample as a whole could be attributed to the fact that the author's operational definition of what should be classified as local-flavor language was based on, as Blondheim (1994) and Carey (1989) in particular point out, the unique regional language patterns and colloquialisms of the various geographic regions of America in the antebellum era. It proved to be very difficult to identify these region-specific language patterns in each of the four newspapers of study in this project.

Turning our attention to the presence of elaborate language in the *Transcript* reveals a clear trend that signaled the diminishing importance and usage of elaborate language in that paper. In 1859, two full years before the war began, elaborate language was present in 10.7% of the news stories in the *Transcript*. Elaborate language would peak in this popular Bostonian paper in 1861, the first year of the Civil War, when it would occupy 19.1% of the language in the paper's news stories. During 1863, the year in which the tide of the war would finally shift to favor a victory for the North, elaborate language would represent only 1.5% of the news in the *Transcript*. The presence of elaborate language in the *Transcript* would then increase in 1864 before it dropped to just 2.7%, where it stayed in the two years after the war had ended.

In 1859, terse language in the *Transcript* was present in 10.4% of the new stories. By the middle of the Civil War (1863), it grew to 16.8% of the sample. Terse language reached its high-point in the final year of the war (1865) when it represented 19.6% of the sample. Although the share of language in the *Transcript* identified as having terse language declined from its 1865 peak to 10.4% in 1867, the same percentage as nine years earlier, the 10.4% of the news deemed terse, more than tripled the 2.7% of the news which utilized the antebellum era’s more elaborate language. This sustained trend becomes even more apparent when examining the *New York Times*.

The New York Times

As *Table 4B* indicates, undistinguishable language was the most frequently occurring style of language in each year of the *New York Times* sample. In fact, over the entire nine years combined, it would be found in 47.0% of all front page, non-news items. Like the *Boston Evening Transcript*, local-flavor was not a significant force at all in the *New York Times* although it had a little more presence than it did in the Boston paper. But “little” is the key word since it was apparent in 0.1% of the news in 1859, 0.3% in 1860 and only 0.2% in 1865. In the other six years of the sample, it was nowhere to be found in the *New York Times*.

Table 4B
Style of Language in Item (New York Times)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Local-flavor | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Elaborate | 15.6% | 52.0% | 20.4% | 25.1% | 22.8% | 15.5% | 10.2% | 5.1% | 4.5% |
| Terse | 14.2% | 17.3% | 32.3% | 29.6% | 53.1% | 39.8% | 44.7% | 52.6% | 47.0% |
| Undistinguishable | 70.1% | 30.3% | 47.3% | 45.2% | 24.1% | 44.7% | 44.9% | 42.3% | 48.6% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Elaborate language was much more apparent in the *Times*. Combined over the entire nine year sample, it would account for the language in 16.5% of the *Times* stories. It would begin the antebellum portion of the sample in 1859 with 15.6% of the language in all front page news articles before claiming an impressive 52.0% in 1860, the year before war was declared. During the mid-point of the Civil War in 1863, the presence of elaborate language had dropped sharply to 22.8%. It would continue to fall throughout the remainder of the war as well as in the post-war period where, in 1867, it would occupy only 4.5% of the news.

Terse language exhibited the opposite trend: growth. When the nine years of the sample are combined, terse language in the *Times* was visible in 36.4% of all stories. Before the Civil War, in 1859, terse language was found in 14.2% of the news in the *Times*. It would grow in the next year and throughout the majority of the Civil War years, culminating in a presence of 53.1% in 1863. Although the percentage of stories using terse language would decrease after 1863, it would increase again in 1866, the year after the war ended, to appear in a strong 52.6% of all front page news in the paper. It would end the sample in 1867 with a presence in 47.0% of the news, a noteworthy figure considering the tiny 4.5% of the news that elaborate language appeared in that same year.

The Charleston Mercury

Turning to the *Charleston Mercury*, this first of the Southern papers reveals that this shifting style of language in the press during the Civil War was not confined to just the Northern press. Once again, as *Table 4C* below demonstrates, local-flavor language in the *Charleston Mercury* was non-existent in every year of the sample except the first year after the war had ended (1866) when it was noticeable in just 0.1% of the sample. As was

the case for its Northern competitors, elaborate language was losing ground to terse language.

Table 4C

Style of Language in Item (Charleston Mercury)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Local-flavor | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| Elaborate | 15.6% | 13.0% | 14.5% | 25.1% | 15.1% | 13.1% | 7.4% | 5.0% | 8.3% |
| Terse | 12.8% | 9.8% | 31.0% | 39.5% | 36.5% | 37.8% | 22.2% | 9.4% | 49.6% |
| Undistinguishable | 71.7% | 77.2% | 54.4% | 35.4% | 48.5% | 49.2% | 70.4% | 55.4% | 42.1% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

In 1859, the first of the final two years of the antebellum era, elaborate language was visible in 15.6% of the front page news in the *Mercury*. It would then rise to its apex of 25.1% in the second year of the Civil War (1862) before falling back to 15.1% the following year. In 1867, two years after the Civil War had ended, elaborate language appeared in 8.3% of the news in the *Mercury*, which was a little less than half the number of appearances it made eight years earlier in the dog days of the antebellum era. All told, over the entire nine years of analysis, elaborate language could be found in 12.2% of all front page news.

During the same nine year period, terse language would be present (although cumulatively) in 31.6% of the news in the *Charleston Mercury*. Looking at a number of the specific years within this time-frame, it emerges that the presence of terse language in the columns of the *Mercury* would increase substantially during the Civil War to quickly surpass the volume of elaborate language, a trend which appeared to be firmly entrenched even after the war had ended. For example, in 1859, terse language appeared in 12.8% of

the front page news in this popular but controversial newspaper. In the first year of the war alone (1861), terse language in the *Mercury* more than doubled to 31.0% of the sample. Two years later, it had increased even further to 36.5% of all the news on the front page. Although the percentage of terse language would decline to 22.2% in the final year of the war (1865), it would then begin a sustained period of growth in the post-war portion of the sample and in 1867 was found in 49.6% of all stories. Even so, undistinguishable language (due to the many notices and advertisements) was still the most common form of language overall, representing 56.2% of the sample over the nine year period. Nevertheless, after reflecting upon *Table 4C*, it cannot be denied that terse language had become the dominant style of language in the *Charleston Mercury*—where any classification of language warranted it. A similar finding occurred in the second Southern paper as well.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

Like its South Carolinian competitor, the dominant style of language in the front page columns of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* would experience a wartime shift from elaborate to terse language. The summary table below, *Table 4D*, illuminates this shift.

Table 4D
Style of Language in Item (Daily Richmond Examiner)

| | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Local-flavor | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Elaborate | 0.0% | 3.2% | 4.5% | 4.8% | 5.9% | 4.1% | 0.6% |
| Terse | 0.7% | 2.6% | 13.0% | 38.0% | 35.5% | 36.5% | 7.7% |
| Undistinguishable | 99.3% | 94.2% | 82.4% | 57.2% | 58.6% | 59.4% | 91.8% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Undistinguishable language was the premier style of language from a quantitative point of view due to the fact that, cumulatively over the seven year sample, it appeared in 78.7% of all front page items (given the large number of advertisements and notices). Yet it was not the dominant style of language in this Old Dominion newspaper and it should also be noted that local-flavor style language was completely absent in all seven years of the *Examiner* sample.

In 1860, the year before war broke out, terse language appeared in 0.7% of the *Examiner* sample while elaborate language was non-existent at 0.0%. This changed the following year when elaborate language could be found in 3.2% of the news stories but terse language in only 2.6%. However, the sudden growth in elaborate language in the *Examiner's* news was short-lived. Two years later, in 1863, language which could be classified as elaborate was found in 4.8% of the *Examiner's* news but terse language now represented a staggering 38.0% of the language in all the front page news that same year.

Although the percentage of terse news would decline from this high point during the remaining years of the sample, its decline would not surpass the stagnant amount of elaborate news in the *Examiner's* columns. For instance, in 1866, the final year of the *Examiner* sample and the first year of the Reconstruction Era, terse language appeared in 7.7% of the all front page news stories while elaborate language appeared in less than 1% (0.6%) of the same. Despite the drop in terse language news stories from 38.0% in the middle of the war to 7.7% after the war had ended, the volume of stories consisting of terse language had still grown tenfold from 0.7% in the first year of the sample period. Furthermore, over the entire seven year sample of the *Examiner*, the cumulative

percentage of stories with terse language was 18.1% while that with elaborate language was just 3.2%.

To sum up, the first part of the third anticipated change in journalism, that the press' coverage of the Civil War initiated a lasting shift in the dominant style of language in the news from elaborate to terse, was supported in all four newspapers both Union and Confederate. Let us now examine the second half of this change: the supposed abandoning of narrative-based reporting for modern lead-based reporting.

3B: Abandoning Narratives

Many scholars claimed that, throughout the majority of the antebellum era and a large portion of the Civil War, the organization of news stories in American newspapers followed a narrative or story-telling pattern in which the presentation of the facts more closely resembled a short story or a chapter from a novel than the lead-based reporting with which we are familiar today (Mindich, 2000, p. 179-80). The literature review in this project suggested that the press' extensive use of the telegraph during the Civil War to gather and relay news—and the conditions associated with this increased use—played a role in initiating the replacement of narrative-based reporting by more modern inverted-pyramid reporting. Let us see if this anticipated trend did in fact materialize in the project's sample.

The Boston Evening Transcript

On consulting *Table 5A*, it can be seen that, in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, there was a noticeable move away from narrative-based reporting towards the adoption of inverted-pyramid reporting during the war.

Table 5A
Organization of Item (Boston Evening Transcript)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Narrative Report | 11.1% | 8.2% | 22.1% | 17.7% | 10.3% | 13.7% | 8.5% | 3.5% | 1.6% |
| First-person Account of Events | 0.8% | 0.2% | 0.7% | 1.5% | 0.3% | 2.1% | 2.2% | 1.1% | 0.7% |
| Inverted Pyramid Report | 0.1% | 0.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 6.1% | 10.9% | 4.8% |
| Undistinguishable | 88.0% | 91.2% | 77.2% | 80.8% | 89.3% | 84.1% | 83.2% | 84.5% | 92.9% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

It is not surprising that, due to the high frequency of advertisements in the *Transcript*, undistinguishable organization was the most common pattern over the nine year sample. It would be present in 85.8% of all front page items during that time. Interestingly, in items where there was any organization at all, a shift from narrative to inverted-pyramid could be seen. In 1859, two years before the war, narrative reports controlled a steady 11.1% of the sample while the other popular form of antebellum story organization, first-person accounts of events, was present in 0.8% of the news. The analysis surprisingly revealed that, in 1859, seven years before most scholars claim the inverted-pyramid made its first appearance, an extremely small but nonetheless present 0.1% of the stories in the *Transcript* could be classified as being written in the modern inverted-pyramid style.

By 1863, with the Civil War well underway, narrative reports had become the default organizational style for 10.3% of all stories in the *Transcript* after reaching a peak of 22.1% two years earlier. Both first-person accounts of events and inverted-pyramid-style reports were sitting at 0.3% of the sample. During the final years of the Civil War and its immediate aftermath, narrative reporting would steadily decline while inverted-

pyramid reports would begin a period of growth. Although inverted-pyramid reports in the *Transcript* would peak at 10.9% of the sample in 1866, they would represent 4.8% of all front page stories in 1867, surpassing the 1.6% presence of narrative reports in that same year. A similar trend occurred in the *New York Times*, albeit much more vigorously than it had in the *Transcript*.

The New York Times

Even with the more apparent abandoning of narrative reporting in the *New York Times*, the most common form of article organization was either no organization at all or undistinguishable organization which cumulatively was present in 67.3% of all front page material. Yet in front page material where there was organization, there was a clear transition from narrative reports to inverted-pyramid reports. This trend is apparent in *Table 5B* which follows.

Table 5B
Organization of Item (New York Times)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Narrative Report | 20.1% | 41.8% | 37.2% | 36.9% | 30.7% | 34.2% | 14.2% | 8.0% | 8.5% |
| First-person Account of Events | 1.4% | 1.0% | 3.1% | 6.8% | 1.7% | 3.6% | 2.2% | 1.3% | 1.0% |
| Inverted Pyramid Report | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 15.7% | 11.8% | 20.1% |
| Undistinguishable | 78.5% | 57.1% | 59.7% | 56.3% | 67.0% | 62.2% | 67.9% | 78.9% | 70.4% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Over the entire nine year sampling period, narrative reports were the organizational style for 24.2% of all the news in the *Times*. First-person accounts of events represented 2.4% and inverted-pyramid reports were found in 6.1% of the news. However, when we examine certain specific years in the sample, we can see that, despite

its cumulative percentage, inverted-pyramid reports would outpace the antebellum narrative reporting style in the final days of the Civil War and would remain the dominant form of organization (when there was any) well into the Reconstruction Era. Let us begin this discussion in 1859.

In 1859, 20.1% of the stories in the *Times* were identified as having a narrative-style organization. During the same year, first-person accounts of events would be present in 1.4% of the news but inverted pyramid reporting had not yet come to the *Times*. The next year, 1860, was the last year before the Civil War and it was also the year which would see the highest percentage (41.8%) of narrative-style reports in the *Times*. First-person reports would reach their peak in 1862, the second year of the Civil War, when they would be found in 6.8% of the news. In the middle of the war (1863), narrative reports occupied 30.7% of all organized news in the *Times* and first person narratives had dropped to 1.7% of the sample. In 1863, inverted-pyramid reporting would appear for the first time in the columns of the *New York Times*, albeit only marginally since it would only be present in 0.7% of all news stories. By the final year of the war, two years later, things had changed. In 1865, the inverted-pyramid had established itself as the most dominant form of story organization in the *New York Times* by capturing 15.7% of the sample compared to the narrative report's 14.2%. This pattern would strengthen in the post-war period when, in 1867, the final year of the sample, inverted-pyramid stories were found in 20.1% of all front page stories. That same year, narrative reports were found in just 8.5% of the stories and first-person narratives represented an anemic 1.0% of the front page news.

The Charleston Mercury

As can be seen in *Table 5C*, the *Charleston Mercury* demonstrated that inverted-pyramid reporting had penetrated the South as well.

Table 5C

Organization of Item (Charleston Mercury)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Narrative Report | 15.6% | 11.5% | 27.0% | 46.6% | 26.0% | 40.3% | 28.2% | 5.4% | 18.6% |
| First-person Account of Events | 1.1% | 0.5% | 1.3% | 1.0% | 1.5% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.2% |
| Inverted Pyramid Report | 0.5% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 13.4% | 28.3% |
| Undistinguishable | 82.9% | 88.1% | 71.5% | 52.3% | 72.4% | 58.9% | 71.8% | 81.1% | 52.9% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Once again, undistinguishable organization (or a lack of organization) was the most prevalent type of article organization. Over the entire timeframe of study, it had a presence of 70.4%. But when we look at the organizational style of the items that had any organization at all, we can see that the same shift noted in the two Northern newspapers occurred in the *Charleston Mercury*.

For example, in the first year of the antebellum portion of the sample, the era's familiar narrative-style of article organization could be found in 15.6% of the *Mercury's* front page stories, while first-person accounts were present in 1.1% of the news and the modern inverted-pyramid report was present in less than 1% (0.5%) of all front page news. The early war years generally saw an increase in the amount of narrative reports in the *Mercury*, rising to 26.0% in 1863 and peaking at 40.3% the following year. The first-person account of events reporting style would reach its peak in 1863 when it organized

1.5% of the *Mercury*'s front page news. That same year, inverted-pyramid reports would only account for 0.2% of all news in the *Mercury* before disappearing completely in the final two years of the war.

However, that disappearance was short-lived since inverted-pyramid reporting would experience explosive growth in the post-war portion of the sample. It would jump from 0.0% in 1865 to 13.4% in 1866 and, in 1867, the final year of the sampling period, would organize 28.3% of all front page news in the popular publication. This was almost a full 10% higher than the antebellum-style narrative report reflected in 18.6% of the news in the *Charleston Mercury*.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

Over the seven year period, undistinguishable organization (and therefore no organization at all) would reign supreme in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* with a cumulative percentage of 84.2% of the sample. There can be no doubt as to the reason because, as discussed earlier in this chapter, advertisements and notices made up more than half of all the items on the front page of the *Examiner* throughout the entire sampling period. Over the seven years as a whole, narrative reports would occupy 14.6% of the sample, first-person account of events would appear in 0.1% of the news and the inverted-pyramid style of reporting would be characteristic of 1.0% of all front page news. While the *Daily Richmond Examiner* would demonstrate some different trends throughout its shorter seven year sampling period, the end result would be the same: a transition from the antebellum era's narrative reporting style to the modern era's inverted-pyramid style of reporting or story organization. *Table 5D* showcases this transition in the *Daily Richmond Examiner*.

Table 5D

Organization of Item (Daily Richmond Examiner)

| | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Narrative Report | 0.0% | 4.5% | 13.8% | 35.1% | 21.6% | 37.7% | 0.7% |
| First-person Account of Events | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Inverted Pyramid Report | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 1.9% | 0.7% | 1.3% | 1.7% |
| Undistinguishable | 100.0% | 95.3% | 86.0% | 63.1% | 77.0% | 61.0% | 97.6% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

The first year of the *Examiner* sample was the year before the Civil War began (1860) and can best be described as an anomaly because 100% of items in this year of the *Examiner*'s sample were advertisements and notices. They were therefore coded as having undistinguishable language. As a result, all three types of story organization (narrative, first-person, or inverted-pyramid) were non-existent in this particular year. But in the first year of the Civil War, narrative-style reports were present in 4.5% of the news in the *Examiner* while the first-person account of events style could be seen in 0.1% of the sample. The inverted-pyramid style was just one tenth of a percentage more prevalent at 0.2% of the annual front page news. By the middle of the Civil War in 1863, narrative reports had gained a stranglehold of 35.1% of the news in the *Examiner*, while the first-person account of events had completely vanished and the inverted-pyramid style of story organization occupied just 1.9% of the sample. The modern inverted-pyramid report would appear less frequently in the final two years of the war before it would finish the sampling period in 1866 as the organizational style of 1.7% of all news stories in the *Examiner*. The 1.7% represented by inverted-pyramid style story organization in the first

year following the Civil War may not seem significant but it still signaled a transition with the *Examiner's* shifting from narrative-based to inverted-pyramid style reporting. In fact, by 1866, the share of narrative style stories in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* had fallen from a peak of 37.7% of all front page news stories in the final year of the war to just 0.7% of the stories a year later. In other words, after the Civil War ended, inverted-pyramid style reporting had a marginal, but still visible, lead over the antebellum era's requisite reporting style, the narrative-based story.

Change Number Four: Pioneering the Use of the Byline

The fourth and final change in journalism that was suggested by the literature, particularly Schudson (1978) and Starr (1962), and anticipated by the author will now be examined: that it was during the Civil War that the byline became one of the standard characteristics of American journalism, thereby bringing the names of individual journalists out of obscurity. Unfortunately, the data made it extremely clear that this was not the case. We shall begin the postmortem on the fourth anticipated change in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Boston Evening Transcript

Before discussing the presence of bylines in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, it should be mentioned that, for this newspaper as well as for the other three papers in the sample, the decision was made to remove all the responses coded as "not applicable" from the valid responses in the "Identification of Author" variable. This decision was based on the reasoning that advertisements, notices, stock quotes, or weather reports, even to this day, are not expected to include the identification of their author. With this

disclaimer noted, we can turn our attention to the presence of bylines in the *Boston Evening Transcript*. An important visual aid to this discussion can be found in *Table 6A*.

Table 6A
Identification of Author (Boston Evening Transcript)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Inclusion of Name of Author | 6.0% | 9.1% | 2.7% | 2.2% | 6.3% | 7.1% | 5.1% | 10.3% | 13.7% |
| Author Unidentified | 81.8% | 84.1% | 87.5% | 88.6% | 90.9% | 83.0% | 80.6% | 79.8% | 81.2% |
| Inclusion of Initials of Author | 12.2% | 6.9% | 9.8% | 9.2% | 2.8% | 9.9% | 14.4% | 9.9% | 5.1% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

The annual percentages in *Table 6A* clearly indicate that, over the course of the entire sampling period, the overwhelming majority of front page news items in the *Transcript* did not include any identification of the author. In fact, the cumulative percentage of news items without any identification of the author was 84.3% of the *Transcript* sample. The cumulative percentage of items in the *Transcript* including the name of the author over the nine year sample was 6.4% while the cumulative percentage of articles with the inclusion of the author's initials was slightly higher at 9.3% of the sample. The number of items identified by the author's initials would experience a fluctuating decrease during the Civil War, going from 12.2% of all news items in pre-war 1859 to 2.8% in the middle of the war (1863) before accounting for 5.1% of the stories two years after the war had ended. Stories that included the author's name would experience a period of growth through much of the sample.

For example, in 1859, 6.0% of all front page stories in the *Transcript* included the name of the author. In 1860, 9.1% of the news in this popular Bostonian paper would

include the name of the author. By 1863, just 6.3% of the news would be linked to the author by a name but the growth trend would continue into the Reconstruction Era portion of the sample. For instance, in 1865, the final year of the war, 5.1% of the news in the *Transcript* would be attached to its author by the inclusion of a name. This percentage would more than double to 10.3% in the first year of the Reconstruction Era and would grow a further 3% to a total of 13.7% of the *Transcript* sample in the final year of study (1867). The ownership of news through the identification of a story's author by name was growing at the *Boston Evening Transcript*, but not quickly enough to signal a general shift in journalistic practice.

The New York Times

The *New York Times* was a similar story. Its columns were also dominated by stories that had no indication of their authorship. A cumulative percentage of 85.9% of the front page stories in the *Times* over the nine year period of study did not include any type of byline. Over the same period, a total of just 11.0% of all stories would include a byline identifying the author by name and 3.1% would bear the initials of the author. *Table 6B* breaks down the stories in the *Times* which included the identification of their author by name, initials, or no identification at all.

Table 6B
Identification of Author (New York Times)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Inclusion of Name of Author | 5.4% | 8.3% | 6.7% | 6.2% | 10.6% | 15.7% | 18.4% | 10.7% | 13.1% |
| Author Unidentified | 86.0% | 84.4% | 91.3% | 88.8% | 85.6% | 82.1% | 80.7% | 88.4% | 85.9% |
| Inclusion of Initials of Author | 8.6% | 7.3% | 2.0% | 5.0% | 3.7% | 2.2% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

In 1859, the first year of the antebellum era portion of the sample, 5.4% of the stories in the *Times* included the author's name compared to 8.6% percent which included the author's initials. Four years later, in 1863, Union Army General Joseph Hooker, or "Fighting Joe," mandated General Order No. 48 (as was discussed in the preceding chapter), which required all special correspondents in the field to sign their names on the stories they sent back to their newspapers for publishing. Bylines including the name of an author grew that year to 10.6% of front page news in the *Times* while the percentage of bylines identifying the author by his initials dropped to 3.7% of the sample. The percentage of bylines using the author's name reached its highest point in the last year of the war (1865), while the percentage of bylines using the author's initials peaked much earlier in 1860, the year before the Civil War began. In the post-war Reconstruction portion of the *Times* sample, bylines would experience a period of growth from 10.7% in 1866 to 13.1% in 1867, the final year of the sample. By 1867, the percentage of bylines identifying the author by his initials had stabilized at 0.9% of the sample, exactly where it had been since 1865. The *New York Times*, like the *Boston Evening Transcript*, experienced a wartime growth in the percentage of bylines identifying the author by name; however, just like the *Transcript*, this growth could not offset the majority of stories in the *Times* which had no identification of the author whatsoever.

The Charleston Mercury

The prominent Confederate newspaper, the *Charleston Mercury* was no exception to the generally anonymous nature of journalism that existed in the North. Cumulatively over the entire nine years of the sample, 95.2% of all stories did not include any identification of the author. Over the same period, 4.3% of the front page stories in the

Mercury identified the author by name and only 0.5% identified the author by his initials.

Table 6C breaks these trends down by year.

Table 6C

Identification of Author (Charleston Mercury)

| | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Inclusion of Name of Author | 8.1% | 11.6% | 3.5% | 5.4% | 3.3% | 5.1% | 9.4% | 0.8% | 1.2% |
| Author Unidentified | 90.8% | 88.4% | 94.4% | 94.6% | 96.0% | 94.6% | 89.8% | 99.0% | 98.8% |
| Inclusion of Initials of Author | 1.2% | 0.0% | 2.1% | 0.0% | 0.7% | 0.4% | 0.9% | 0.3% | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

The percentage of articles including the identification of the author by name began the pre-war portion of the sample in 1859 at 8.1%. That same year, only 1.2% of all front page stories would include the initials of the author. By the middle of the Civil War, some four years later, the percentage of stories that included the author's name had dropped from 11.6% in 1860 to just 3.3% in 1863. The percentage of stories which identified the author by his initials in the same year was just 0.7% of the entire *Mercury* sample. The use of bylines including an author's name would peak at 11.6% in 1860 and the use of bylines including an author's initials would peak at 2.1% in 1861, the first year of the Civil War. In the final year of the sample, two years post-war, the percentage of bylines including the author's name in the *Mercury's* columns had dropped from 8.1% in 1859 to just 1.2% in 1867. Likewise, the percentage of bylines identifying the author's initials had declined from 1.2% to 0.0% in the same time-frame. Unlike the *Boston Evening Transcript* and the *New York Times*, the use of bylines in general was declining

in South Carolina’s flagship newspaper. The same could also be said of the other Southern newspaper in this project’s sample.

The Daily Richmond Examiner

The premier newspaper of the capital city of the Confederate States of America (CSA) was also characterized by generally supplying anonymous reporting. Over the entire seven year sample of the *Examiner*, a total of 95.4% of all front page news lacked any identification of the author. Over that period, only 3.6% of all news would include a byline stating the name of an article’s author and a minuscule 1.0% would include a byline identifying an author by his initials. We can better analyze the anonymity of authorship in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* by examining *Table 6D* which can be found below.

Table 6D

Identification of Author (Daily Richmond Examiner)

| | 1860* | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Inclusion of Name of Author | 0.0% | 13.3% | 4.5% | 1.9% | 4.2% | 1.4% | 5.9% |
| Author Unidentified | 0.0% | 84.0% | 91.0% | 98.1% | 95.0% | 98.6% | 93.0% |
| Inclusion of Initials of Author | 0.0% | 2.7% | 4.5% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 1.1% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

*Due to fact that virtually 100% of the cases from the *Examiner* in 1860 were either advertisements or notices and advertisements and notices were given the value of “Not Applicable,” (and the “Not Applicable” responses were made missing for this variable) when conducting the analysis, 1860’s portion of the sample for the *Examiner* amounted to 0.0% for all three valid responses.

Because almost 100% of the cases from the *Examiner* in 1860 were either advertisements or notices, they were given the value of “Not Applicable.” Since the “Not Applicable” responses were made missing for this variable when conducting the analysis,

the 1860 portion of the sample for the *Examiner* amounted to 0.0% for all three valid responses. In other words, to more closely examine the relative lack of bylines in the *Daily Richmond Examiner*, we must instead begin with 1861, the first year of the Civil War. In that pivotal year of American history, 13.3% of all front page stories in the *Examiner* identified the author by name while only 2.7% used initials for such a purpose. Two years later in 1863, the percentage of articles including the author's name had plummeted to 1.9% of the sample with absolutely no (0.0%) bylines identifying an author by his initials. Bylines including the author's initials peaked at 4.5% of all front page news in the *Examiner* a year before this disappearing act.

In 1866, the year which represented the post-war portion of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* sample, 5.9% of all front page news included a byline which identified a journalist by his name. This was a substantial depreciation from the 13.3% of such bylines which graced the *Examiner's* columns in the first year of Civil War. A similar decline in author identification in the first year after the war had ended (1866) can be seen when examining the percentage of bylines that included the author's initials, a percentage which dropped from 2.7% in 1861 to 1.1% in 1866.

Was the case then made for the claim that it was during the Civil War that many of America's previously anonymous journalists became known to their readers through the inclusion of a byline containing the journalist's name or initials? Unfortunately, not so. The widespread use of the byline and the move out of anonymity for American journalists had not yet come to pass— at least at the four newspapers that together constructed this project's sample.

This rather technical chapter is indicative of the often all-too-true fact that research does not always go as planned. Indeed, results can be anticipated but never promised— as evinced by the findings of this longitudinal structural content analysis. The sixth and concluding chapter of this project will begin by examining the legacy left by the four changes in journalism—or at least those reflected in this study’s sample—through the post Civil War period.

VI

Open any major American newspaper today and you will find a uniform structure that we take for granted as being characteristic of modern journalism. That format would include: large font headlines; neat columns of stories organized by a specific theme or topic of interest; clear identification of the reporting source; the use of certain types of easy-to-read and tersely written words, sentences and phrases; the omission of elaborate, regional and colloquial language; the standard operating procedure of beginning a news story by first identifying the who, what, where, when, and why, with everything else that follows in the story assuming an ever decreasing position of importance; and, of course, the identification of a story's author by the inclusion of a byline. Few readers would realize that behind the format of journalism in their daily paper lies an evolution that was due, in large part, to the press coverage of the cataclysmic American Civil War in the years between 1861 and 1865. Accordingly, this brief chapter will attempt to assess the legacy of the four changes in journalism which were coded for in the study's content analysis.

The Legacy of the Changes in Journalism

To begin to assess the legacy, we must return to a discussion of the first change in journalism which was suggested by the literature and anticipated by the researcher: that the high costs associated with the press' increasing use of the telegraph to gather and send news during the Civil War expanded and solidified the practice of cooperative newsgathering. As was extensively discussed in the preceding chapter, the Civil War did bring about a substantial expansion in the volume of undisclosed telegraphic news in the *New York Times* and the *Charleston Mercury* (a trend which would continue into the

Reconstruction Era), but it did not lead to a sustained and substantial growth in the use of cooperative wire services in the analysis of the 464 front pages from two popular Northern and two popular Southern newspapers between 1859 and 1867. This lack of growth in cooperative newsgathering throughout the nine year period of study including the Civil War contradicted the findings of Mark Lloyd (2006), Paul Starr (2004), and Tom Wheeler (2006), all of whom adamantly claimed that the Civil War did indeed expand and solidify the practice of cooperative newsgathering.

On the other hand, the finding that, in at least half the sample, undisclosed telegraphic news expanded sharply during the Civil War and would continue to grow post war did not contradict any of the previously consulted literature. In fact, it added further support for the findings of Menahem Blondheim (1994), David W. Bulla and Gregory A. Borchard (2010), J. Cutler Andrews (1970 & 1983) and Phillip Knightley (2000). The principal reason why this was likely the case was that more people bought newspapers during the Civil War and these new readers (or new sources of revenue in the eyes of newspaper owners) demanded more up-to-date news than had appeared in the columns of newspapers during the antebellum era. The electric telegraph was the only device that could deliver such amounts of news over long distances on such short notice. The telegraph was quickly ensuring that, as David W. Bulla and Gregory A. Borchard (2010) put it, “‘Speed with Heed’ became the new mantra of American journalism” (p. 92- 93).

The second change in journalism that was suggested by the literature and coded for by the researcher was that the coverage of the war signaled a move away from the majority of column-space in American newspapers’ being devoted to local coverage and political commentary. The analysis of the 31,914 news items (cases) in the four

newspapers revealed that, for the most part, this was indeed true. However, the finding was not unanimous since there were some exceptions. Most notably, political commentary in the *Daily Richmond Examiner* was slightly more frequent in the year after the war had ended than it was in the year before the war had begun. Similarly, editorials were more frequent on the front page of the *New York Times* in 1867, two years after the war, than they were in 1859, two years before the Civil War. That said, there is a strong possibility that both of these seemingly contradictory results were merely anomalies which would not be repeated if the sample were to have been extended just a few more years into the Reconstruction Era.

In 1867, Republican President Abraham Lincoln's successor, Democratic President Andrew Johnson, a Southerner, was facing the threat of impeachment for his actions of "undercutting congressional Reconstruction," which was the congressional plan to rebuild and reintegrate the former Rebel states into the United States of America, while at the same time constitutionally abolishing the practice of slavery and enshrining the right to vote for former male slaves (Davidson et al, 2006, p. 539). Many Northerners and Republicans were claiming that "Johnson had conspired to systematically obstruct Reconstruction legislation," and the newspapers all across the nation would not neglect the opportunity to comment on what was shaping up to be the first presidential impeachment trial in American history (p. 540). There would not be a second such trial until 131 years later, in 1998, when another Democratic president and Southern native, President Bill Clinton, would also face impeachment — but for a very different set of circumstances (p. 540).

The other anomaly occurring in the first two years after the Civil War had ended was also related to the congressional Reconstruction process. It was the political fallout and outrage amongst many Democrats and Southerners at the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution (or Reconstruction Amendments as they were then commonly called), which outlawed slavery, made former slaves citizens of both the United States and also the state in which they reside and, perhaps most controversially, gave former male slaves enfranchisement (Bulla & Borchard, 2010; Davidson, Gienapp, Heyrman, Lytle & Stoff, 2006). It did not take long before Southern newspaper editors had stepped into the debate on these issues and jumpstarted the use of front page editorials to rhetorically attack the congressional Reconstruction Plan (Bulla & Borchard, 2010, p. 217-18). As Bulla and Borchard explain, in the Southern newspapers in 1866 and 1867, “Editors suggested [that governments throughout the South] ought not to recognize the Reconstruction Amendments, especially the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted the right to vote to former male slaves” (p. 218). Their reasoning was somewhat reminiscent of the antebellum era’s “fire breathing” which was found in the columns of most Southern papers from the 1850’s and early 1860s, though probably most notably in the Rhett’s *Charleston Mercury*. These Reconstruction Era Southern editors “declared that new suffrage rights both infringed on the rights of Southern citizens, and furthermore the measure was unnecessary, as state constitutions throughout the South already provided male suffrage [although they did not and would not specify male suffrage for former slaves]” (p. 218). Old habits die hard.

Regarding the claim that the Civil War initiated a shift from column space being used for local coverage and political commentary towards national and international news, the preceding chapter outlined how, in 1867, the presence of both regional and local news in the *Charleston Mercury* outweighed that of international news. A year earlier, in 1866, the *Daily Richmond Examiner*'s columns of regional news outpaced the amount of international news in that paper. There is a very likely reason why, in the final year of the *Mercury* sample, regional and local news had a greater presence than international news and why, one year earlier in the final year of the *Examiner* sample, regional news was more dominant than international news. That reason was alluded to in numerous chapters and could be identified as the Southern press' journalistic disadvantage throughout the duration of the Civil War.

As was mentioned in Chapter Four, the Southern press had to struggle throughout the entire Civil War to fulfill the Southern public's demand for a greater volume of up-to-date news due to the combination of a lack of financial, material and human resources (Andrews, 1970; Risley, 2001; Van Tuijl, 2008). Unlike the Northern major newspapers which had enough resources to establish their own army of special correspondents, during the war it was not unusual for Southern newspapers to be printed on old wallpaper because of extreme shortages of paper and for "editors, reporters and printers [to...] take chickens and collards in trade for their subscriptions" (Van Tuijl, 2010, p. xii). Furthermore, in the South, manpower was lacking in the field of journalism as well. As Bulla and Borchard (2010) explain, "Many journalists, especially in the South, had to decide whether to fight or stay home; due to a shortage of laborers in the Confederate military, many of those editors chose to fight" (p. 142). In fact, the Southern papers faced

such a severe shortage of manpower during the war that, “an editor in the South was often lucky if he had a single man or boy to help him with the printing” (p. 147). This was largely due to the fact that, “Military service swept some 80 percent of printers into the army, at least in the South” (Van Tuijl, 2010, p. xi). Although many journalists in the North decided to fight, because there was no shortage of replacement journalists and printers the Northern press could easily keep up with the public’s ever growing demand for up-to-date news (p. 147).

But how do the dire circumstances of the Southern press during the Civil War explain the expansion of regional and local news in the *Charleston Mercury* and the *Daily Richmond Examiner*’s expansion of regional news at the expense of international news? Quite simply, it was less expensive to gather and print regional and local news than it was to print a steady stream of international news. This could also be seen as a likely reason why the percentage of official military dispatches noted in the preceding chapter experienced a sudden growth in the final years of the Civil War, when the Southern press’ financial, material and manpower disadvantage was most apparent. Official military dispatches represented a form of nearly free news because they did not require newspapers to accrue the heavy costs of employing a special reporter to gather the news from the field and then send it back via the South’s expensive—and more fragile—telegraph system.

For the most part, the content analysis’ portion of results dealing with the type of items on the front page of all four newspapers demonstrated that, quite often, in the antebellum era,

Politics was the agenda of the day, and that was what newspaper audiences wanted to read about. With the advent of war, the agenda

changed. The time for political commentary had passed. The time for news had arrived. The whos, whats, wheres, whens, and hows of the war became the new reader passions, and newspapers followed, developing new practices and principles, adopting new technologies, and adapting to changed social, political, and economic circumstances as necessary. (Van Tuyl, 2010, p. xiii)

Yet, as mentioned earlier, there were still exceptions to this trend. Nevertheless, more hard news was appearing on the front page of America's newspapers during and after the Civil War than in the antebellum era. And this was transforming the front page of America's newspapers. As Helen MacGill Hughes (1940) puts it, editors and newspaper owners were beginning to realize that, "to attract a variety of publics, the front-page news must transcend each one's particular sphere" and increasing the presence of hard news on the front-page could achieve this task (p. 56-7). Similarly, during the Civil War, "reader demand led editors to rethink how they would display the news. Traditionally, page one had been reserved for advertising, but reader demand led editors to place [more] news right on the front page—and to add multiple deck headlines to summarize correspondents' lengthy stories" (Van Tuyl, 2010, p. xii). Or, as Hughes (1940) puts it, "in time all publishers and the advertisers as well realized that, valuable as it was for advertising space, the front page was even more valuable for advertising the newspaper itself by displaying the news" (p. 40). The general growth in the amount of hard news revealed in this study's content analysis can attest to this fact.

As you may recall, the third change in journalism which this study's content analysis examined was the double-headed claim that the Civil War led to the transforming of journalistic prose and the abandoning of the popular antebellum narrative-based reporting style. The literature suggested that the press' coverage of the Civil War signaled a shift away from the antebellum era's usage of elaborate and local-

flavor language and narrative-style reporting towards the more tersely written and inverted-pyramid style reporting with which we are more familiar today (Blondheim, 1994; Carey, 1989; Innis, 1952; Mindich, 2000; Risley, 2008; Wheeler, 2006). As was documented in the preceding chapter, the content analysis bolstered support for that claim in all four of the newspapers in the study's sample.

It was likely that the press' increasing use of the telegraph to gather and relay news from the battlefield back to their newspaper's offices had played a role in this transition. For example, "Because newspapers paid for the telegraph by word, reporters learned to write concise narratives. For some, this meant the omission of certain rhetorical devices, as well as less opinion and more emphasis on fact. Some correspondents began using a summary lead, fearing that their dispatches might be cut during transmission" (Bulla & Borchard, 2010, p. 94). Or, as Hughes (1940) explains, with the war, we were beginning to see the emergence of modern-day journalism's obligatory story organization, the inverted-pyramid, in which, "the report must begin with the climax and progress from facts of greatest news value to those of least" (p. 69). By the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the subsequent first two years of the Reconstruction Period, concisely written inverted-pyramid reporting was quickly becoming the norm in American journalism.

The final step in assessing the legacy of change in journalism requires revisiting what was suggested by the literature and coded for by the researcher. This was the claim that it was during the Civil War that the byline would become one of the defining features of American journalism, responsible for bringing the names of individual journalists out of obscurity and turning American journalism into a less anonymous profession.

However, as the discussion on the results of the content analysis has shown, that was not the case. Most items and stories on the front page of America's newspapers were still anonymously written pieces that indicated no identification of the author. Despite some modest growth in the inclusion of bylines during this period, bylines that included either an author's name or initials were mostly absent throughout the Civil War and the first two years of the Reconstruction Era.

Returning to the Research Questions One Last Time

After conducting and discussing the results of a longitudinal structural content analysis of four popular American newspapers over a nine year period covering the two years preceding the American Civil War, the five years of the Civil War itself and also the first two years of the Reconstruction Era in order to assess the suggested role that the Civil War played in initiating the four specific changes that together represent some of the most recognizable characteristics of modern American print-based journalism, it is now time to turn our attention back to the two research questions which launched this study. They asked: 1) How did the use of communications technologies still in their infancy at the time of the American Civil War contribute to the development of modern journalism? 2) What role did the Civil War play in the transformation of journalism itself? The results contained in the analysis of the 464 front pages of two prominent Northern and two equally prominent Southern newspapers and their resulting 31,914 news items (or cases) allow the two questions to be answered. Although the high cost associated with telegraphic news reporting during the war did result in more concisely-written stories using terse language and inverted pyramid leads rather than narrative reports using elaborate language, it did not lead to an extension and solidification of

cooperative newsgathering. Similarly, while the Civil War did contribute to a sustained growth of national, international and, of course, war news in many of America's newspapers, most of these stories lacked any identification of their author.

In drawing this project to a close, it is important to note, as Richard R. John (2010) does, that, "the United States has long boasted an impressive array of facilities for circulating information regularly and reliably over vast distances and at high speeds [...but it was] the telegraph [that] established new conventions in simultaneity" (p. 6). Much time was spent, particularly in the first three chapters, discussing how the electric telegraph played a crucial role in initiating "the modern communication revolution" since it was the first technology to successfully harness the power of electricity for communication purposes, thereby establishing the foundation upon which all future forms of mediated communications were built (Boone, 2005; Thompson, 1995). But even more attention was given to how the press' increasing use of this then relatively new technology to gather and transmit news during the American Civil War contributed to the development of the modern American print-based journalism that we know today. Some of the changes in journalism which were coded for in this study's content analysis were supported while some were not. This study's findings echo a recent statement by Debra Reddin van Tuyll (2010) who claims that, "At the same time they were dealing with trying to meet increased demand for their product with fewer resources, Civil War-era newsmen were also creating a new paradigm for journalism, one that included a very new form of journalistic communication, visuals, and a move to a whole new definition of news" (p. xii). Yet, as Van Tuyll would indicate and the results from this project would

suggest, “This new form of news would not flower fully until the twentieth century, but its seeds were firmly planted and fertilized during the Civil War” (p. xii).

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Coding Manual

Case Number (numeric)

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Name of Newspaper

- 1 = The Boston Evening Transcript
- 2 = The New York Times
- 3 = The Charleston Mercury
- 4 = The Daily Richmond Examiner

Reporting Source

- 1 = Staff reporter/ special correspondent
- 2 = Staff editorialist
- 3 = Staff editor
- 4 = Letter to the editor
- 5 = Advertisement
- 6 = Associated Press
- 7 = Press Association of the Confederate States
- 8 = Southern Associated Press
- 9 = Other cooperative wire service
- 10 = Other newspaper
- 11 = Text of a speech
- 12 = Official dispatch / report
- 13 = Eyewitness report
- 14 = Letter
- 15 = Undisclosed telegraphic news
- 99 = Unknown

Type of Item

- 1 = International news
- 2 = National news
- 3 = Regional news
- 4 = Local news
- 5 = Editorial
- 6 = Political commentary
- 7 = Letter
- 8 = Cartoon
- 9 = Text of a speech or government address
- 10 = Legal discussion / crime report
- 11 = Financial report / discussion

- 12 = Advertisement
- 13 = Notice
- 14 = War news
- 15 = Dispatch or official report
- 16 = Weather
- 17 = Sports
- 18 = Poem
- 19 = Book review
- 20 = Obituary
- 21 = Book excerpt

Style of Language in Item

- 1 = Local-flavor
- 2 = Elaborate
- 3 = Terse
- 99 = Undistinguishable

Organization of Item

- 1 = Narrative report
- 2 = First person account of events
- 3 = Inverted pyramid report
- 99 = Undistinguishable

Identification of Author (by inclusion of byline)

- 1 = Inclusion of name of author
- 2 = Author unidentified
- 3 = Inclusion of initials of author
- 99 = Not applicable

APPENDIX B

Boston Evening Transcript Constructed Week Sample

Legend

- Random numbers ranging from 101 to 752 will be used to create each constructed week sample. A total of two constructed weeks will be used to represent each year in the sample.
- 3 Digits: i.e. 101, 204, 351, etc
 - o The first digit is the numeric value given to each day of the week (1-7)
 - o The second and third digits are the numeric values given to each week of the year (1-52)
- Random numbers for each constructed week were generated through the use of the RAND function in Microsoft Excel.
 - o Formula → =RAND()*53
 - o Result → A random number greater than or equal to 0 but less than 53
- *NB: The random numbers that were generated through Microsoft Excel's RAND function were not rounded.
- *NB: When an issue for a certain weekday in the constructed week was not available, an additional following weekday was selected (i.e. when no Sunday edition was printed, an additional Monday edition was added to take its place).

1859

237 = Monday, September 12th
322 = Tuesday, May 31st
423 = Wednesday, June 8th
539 = Thursday, September 29th
606 = Friday, February 11th
741 = Saturday, October 22nd
243 = Monday, October 24th
333 = Tuesday, August 16th
446 = Wednesday, November 16th
513 = Thursday, March 31st
620 = Friday, May 20th
701 = Saturday, January 1st
214 = Monday, April 4th
312 = Tuesday, March 22nd

1860

203 = Monday, January 16th
350 = Tuesday, December 11th
410 = Wednesday, March 7th
518 = Thursday, May 3rd
622 = Friday, June 1st

752 = Saturday, December 29th
236 = Monday, September 10th
342 = Monday, October 22nd
403 = Wednesday, January 18th
527 = Thursday, July 5th
628 = Friday, July 13th
725 = Saturday, June 23rd
244 = Monday, November 5th
302 = Tuesday, January 10th

1861

230 = Monday, July 29th
351 = Tuesday, December 24th
419 = Wednesday, May 8th
543 = Thursday, October 24th
651 = Friday, December 20th
717 = Saturday, April 27th
234 = Monday, August 26th
325 = Tuesday, June 18th
428 = Wednesday, July 10th
506 = Thursday, February 7th
627 = Friday, July 5th
734 = Saturday, August 24th
213 = Monday, April 1st
303 = Tuesday, January 15th

1862

203 = Monday, January 20th
334 = Tuesday, August 26th
423 = Wednesday, August 20th
552 = Thursday, December 25th
636 = Friday, September 5th
721 = Saturday, May 24th
231 = Monday, August 4th
340 = Tuesday, October 7th
428 = Wednesday, July 9th
524 = Thursday, June 12th
605 = Friday, January 31st
729 = Saturday, July 19th
246 = Monday, November 17th
302 = Tuesday, January 14th

1863

231 = Monday, August 3rd
308 = Tuesday, February 24th
416 = Wednesday, April 22nd

519 = Thursday, May 7th
651 = Friday, December 18th
715 = Saturday, April 11th
222 = Monday, June 1st
329 = Tuesday, July 21st
430 = Wednesday, July 29th
541 = Thursday, October 15th
618 = Friday, May 1st
729 = Saturday, July 18th
205 = Monday, February 2nd
312 = Tuesday, March 24th

1864

207 = Monday, February 15th
324 = Tuesday, June 14th
431 = Wednesday, August 3rd
549 = Thursday, December 8th
610 = Friday, March 4th
733 = Saturday, August 13th
245 = Monday, November 7th
319 = Tuesday, May 10th
402 = Wednesday, January 13th
537 = Thursday, September 15th
648 = Friday, December 2nd
748 = Saturday, December 3rd
218 = Monday, May 2nd
335 = Tuesday, August 30th

1865

240 = Monday, October 2nd
321 = Tuesday, May 23rd
405 = Wednesday, February 1st
503 = Thursday, January 19th
618 = Friday, May 5th
712 = Saturday, March 25th
209 = Monday, February 27th
314 = Tuesday, April 4th
419 = Wednesday, May 10th
529 = Thursday, July 20th
601 = Friday, January 6th
708 = Saturday, February 25th
238 = Monday, September 18th
313 = Tuesday, March 28th

1866

230 = Monday, July 23rd

313 = Tuesday, March 27th
406 = Wednesday, February 7th
526 = Thursday, June 28th
650 = Friday, December 14th
716 = Saturday, April 21st
246 = Monday, November 19th
302 = Tuesday, January 9th
452 = Wednesday, December 26th
520 = Thursday, May 17th
644 = Friday, November 2nd
736 = Saturday, September 8th
224 = Monday, June 11th
322 = Tuesday, May 29th

1867

214 = Monday, April 8th
308 = Tuesday, February 19th
424 = Wednesday, June 12th
542 = Thursday, October 17th
610 = Friday, March 8th
709 = Saturday, March 2nd
233 = Monday, August 19th
344 = Tuesday, October 22nd
438 = Wednesday, September 18th
532 = Thursday, August 8th
641 = Friday, October 11th
714 = Saturday, April 6th
240 = Monday, October 7th
305 = Tuesday, January 29th

APPENDIX C

New York Times Constructed Week Sample

Legend

- Random numbers ranging from 101 to 752 will be used to create each constructed week sample. A total of two constructed weeks will be used to represent each year in the sample.
- 3 Digits: i.e. 101, 204, 351, etc
 - o The first digit is the numeric value given to each day of the week (1-7)
 - o The second and third digits are the numeric values given to each week of the year (1-52)
- Random numbers for each constructed week were generated through the use of the RAND function in Microsoft Excel.
 - o Formula→ =RAND()*53
 - o Result→ A random number greater than or equal to 0 but less than 53
- *NB: The random numbers that were generated through Microsoft Excel's RAND function were not rounded.
- *NB: When an issue for a certain weekday in the constructed week was not available, an additional following weekday was selected (i.e. when no Sunday edition was printed, an additional Monday edition was added to take its place).

1859

248 = Monday, November 28th
346 = Tuesday, November 15th
452 = Wednesday, December 28th
552 = Thursday, December 29th
651 = Friday, December 31st
750 = Saturday, December 17th
247 = Monday, November 21st
346 = Tuesday, November 15th
446 = Wednesday, November 16th
545 = Thursday, November 10th
642 = Friday, October 21st
745 = Saturday, November 12th
243 = Monday, October 24th
341 = Tuesday, October 11th

1860

213 = Monday, March 26th
352 = Tuesday, December 25th
418 = Wednesday, May 2nd
528 = Thursday, July 12th
637 = Friday, September 14th

710 = Saturday, March 10th
211 = Monday, March 5th
340 = Tuesday, October 2nd
433 = Wednesday, August 15th
506 = Thursday, February 9th
602 = Friday, January 13th
744 = Saturday, November 3rd
251 = Monday, December 24th
328 = Tuesday, July 10th

1861

223 = Monday, June 10th
309 = Tuesday, February 26th
441 = Wednesday, October 9th
516 = Thursday, April 18th
634 = Friday, August 23rd
730 = Saturday, July 27th
241 = Monday, October 14th
317 = Tuesday, April 23rd
420 = Wednesday, May 15th
535 = Thursday, August 29th
616 = Friday, April 19th
741 = Saturday, October 19th
228 = Monday, July 15th
336 = Tuesday, September 3rd

1862

103 = Sunday, January 19th
235 = Monday, September 1st
349 = Tuesday, December 9th
406 = Wednesday, February 5th
552 = Thursday, December 25th
646 = Friday, November 14th
712 = Saturday, March 22nd
120 = Sunday, May 18th
240 = Monday, October 6th
310 = Tuesday, March 11th
450 = Wednesday, December 17th
548 = Thursday, November 27th
643 = Friday, October 24th
730 = Saturday, July 26th

1863

116 = Sunday, April 19th
222 = Monday, June 1st
315 = Tuesday, April 14th

423 = Wednesday, June 10th
514 = Thursday, April 2nd
610 = Friday, March 6th
710 = Saturday, March 7th
134 = Sunday, August 23rd
237 = Monday, September 14th
350 = Tuesday, December 15th
431 = Wednesday, August 5th
539 = Thursday, October 1st
635 = Friday, August 28th
746 = Saturday, November 14th

1864

133 = Sunday, August 14th
244 = Monday, October 31st
345 = Tuesday, November 8th
445 = Wednesday, November 9th
546 = Thursday, November 17th
638 = Friday, September 16th
728 = Saturday, July 9th
152 = Sunday, December 25th
242 = Monday, October 17th
349 = Tuesday, December 6th
414 = Wednesday, April 6th
538 = Thursday, September 22nd
650 = Friday, December 16th
739 = Saturday, September 24th

1865

111 = Sunday, March 12th
223 = Monday, June 5th
331 = Tuesday, August 1st
408 = Wednesday, February 22nd
536 = Thursday, September 7th
638 = Friday, September 22nd
734 = Saturday, August 26th
132 = Sunday, August 6th
205 = Monday, January 30th
318 = Tuesday, May 2nd
447 = Wednesday, November 22nd
514 = Thursday, April 6th
636 = Friday, September 8th
733 = Saturday, August 12th

1866

105 = Sunday, February 4th

252 = Monday, December 31st
308 = Tuesday, February 20th
449 = Wednesday, December 5th
514 = Thursday, April 5th
644 = Friday, November 2nd
738 = Saturday, September 22nd
122 = Sunday, June 3rd
233 = Monday, August 13th
352 = Tuesday, December 25th
435 = Wednesday, August 29th
505 = Thursday, February 1st
646 = Friday, November 16th
750 = Saturday, December 15th

1867

118 = Sunday, May 5th
228 = Monday, July 15th
312 = Tuesday, March 19th
419 = Wednesday, May 8th
510 = Thursday, March 7th
615 = Friday, April 12th
737 = Saturday, September 14th
110 = Sunday, March 10th
214 = Monday, April 8th
313 = Tuesday, March 26th
440 = Wednesday, October 2nd
518 = Thursday, May 2nd
627 = Friday, July 5th
702 = Saturday, January 12th

APPENDIX D

Charleston Mercury Constructed Week Sample

Legend

- Random numbers ranging from 101 to 752 will be used to create each constructed week sample. A total of two constructed weeks will be used to represent each year in the sample.
- 3 Digits: i.e. 101, 204, 351, etc
 - o The first digit is the numeric value given to each day of the week (1-7)
 - o The second and third digits are the numeric values given to each week of the year (1-52)
- Random numbers for each constructed week were generated through the use of the RAND function in Microsoft Excel.
 - o Formula → =RAND()*53
 - o Result → A random number greater than or equal to 0 but less than 53
- *NB: The random numbers that were generated through Microsoft Excel's RAND function were not rounded.
- *NB: When an issue for a certain weekday in the constructed week was not available, an additional following weekday was selected (i.e. when no Sunday edition was printed, an additional Monday edition was added to take its place).

1859

231 = Monday, August 1st
336 = Tuesday, September 6th
434 = Wednesday, September 7th
548 = Thursday, December 1st
630 = Friday, July 29th
725 = Saturday, June 18th
237 = Monday, September 12th
302 = Tuesday, January 11th
416 = Wednesday, April 20th
521 = Thursday, May 26th
604 = Friday, January 28th
729 = Saturday, July 16th
226 = Monday, June 27th
337 = Tuesday, September 13th

1860

241 = Monday, October 8th
331 = Tuesday, July 31st
446 = Wednesday, November 14th
523 = Thursday, June 7th
633 = Friday, August 17th

741 = Saturday, October 13th
207 = Monday, February 13th
341 = Tuesday, October 9th
432 = Wednesday, August 8th
506 = Thursday, February 9th
607 = Friday, February 17th
722 = Saturday, December 22nd
239 = Monday, October 1st
345 = Tuesday, November 6th

1861

221 = Monday, May 27th
331 = Tuesday, July 30th
414 = Wednesday, April 3rd
521 = Thursday, May 23rd
651 = Friday, December 20th
747 = Saturday, November 23rd
232 = Monday, August 12th
306 = Tuesday, February 5th
439 = Wednesday, September 25th
510 = Thursday, March 7th
628 = Friday, July 12th
721 = Saturday, May 25th
207 = Monday, February 18th
334 = Tuesday, August 27th

1862

207 = Monday, February 17th
346 = Tuesday, November 18th
429 = Wednesday, July 16th
545 = Thursday, November 6th
604 = Friday, January 24th
710 = Saturday, March 8th
217 = Monday, April 28th
334 = Tuesday, August 26th
448 = Wednesday, December 3rd
502 = Thursday, January 9th
612 = Friday, March 21st
711 = Saturday, March 15th
245 = Monday, November 10th
335 = Tuesday, September 2nd

1863

246 = Monday, November 16th
320 = Tuesday, May 19th
439 = Wednesday, September 30th

524 = Thursday, June 11th
616 = Friday, April 17th
715 = Saturday, April 11th
228 = Monday, July 13th
343 = Tuesday, October 27th
430 = Wednesday, July 29th
501 = Thursday, January 1st
630 = Friday, July 24th
738 = Saturday, September 19th
240 = Monday, October 5th
301 = Tuesday, January 6th

1864

247 = Monday, November 21st
312 = Tuesday, March 22nd
411 = Wednesday, March 16th
531 = Thursday, August 4th
629 = Friday, July 22nd
707 = Saturday, February 13th
221 = Monday, May 23rd
341 = Tuesday, October 18th
428 = Wednesday, July 13th
510 = Thursday, March 10th
611 = Friday, March 11th
719 = Saturday, May 7th
222 = Monday, May 30th
340 = Tuesday, October 4th

1865

206 = Monday, February 6th
302 = Tuesday, January 10th
402 = Wednesday, January 11th
506 = Thursday, February 9th
601 = Friday, January 6th
705 = Saturday, February 4th
203 = Monday, January 19th
305 = Tuesday, January 31st
401 = Wednesday, January 4th
501 = Thursday, January 5th
602 = Friday, January 13th
703 = Saturday, January 21st
202 = Monday, January 9th
303 = Tuesday, January 17th

1866

249 = Monday, December 10th

347 = Tuesday, November 20th
449 = Wednesday, December 5th
549 = Thursday, December 7th
651 = Friday, December 21st
751 = Saturday, December 22nd
250 = Monday, December 17th
351 = Tuesday, December 18th
451 = Wednesday, December 19th
547 = Thursday, November 22nd
647 = Friday, November 23rd
750 = Saturday, December 15th
247 = Monday, November 19th
349 = Tuesday, December 4th

1867

218 = Monday, May 6th
347 = Tuesday, November 26th
444 = Wednesday, October 30th
518 = Thursday, May 2nd
636 = Friday, September 6th
745 = Saturday, November 9th
250 = Monday, December 16th
352 = Tuesday, December 31st
419 = Wednesday, May 8th
514 = Thursday, April 4th
610 = Friday, March 8th
726 = Saturday, June 29th
205 = Monday, February 4th
332 = Tuesday, August 20th

*Publication of this paper was suspended from February 12th, 1865 to November 18th, 1866. The constructed weeks for both of these years were created from the available issues.

APPENDIX E

Daily Richmond Examiner Constructed Week Sample

Legend

- Random numbers ranging from 101 to 752 will be used to create each constructed week sample. A total of two constructed weeks will be used to represent each year in the sample.
- 3 Digits: i.e. 101, 204, 351, etc
 - o The first digit is the numeric value given to each day of the week (1-7)
 - o The second and third digits are the numeric values given to each week of the year (1-52)
- Random numbers for each constructed week were generated through the use of the RAND function in Microsoft Excel.
 - o Formula → =RAND()*53
 - o Result → A random number greater than or equal to 0 but less than 53
- *NB: The random numbers that were generated through Microsoft Excel's RAND function were not rounded.
- *NB: When an issue for a certain weekday in the constructed week was not available, an additional following weekday was selected (i.e. when no Sunday edition was printed, an additional Monday edition was added to take its place).

*NB: No issues of the *Daily Richmond Examiner* from 1859 are preserved and accessible at the Library of Congress.

1860*

Monday, December 3rd

Wednesday, December 5th

*Only these two issues from 1860 are still preserved and accessible.

1861*

223 = Monday, June 10th

343 = Tuesday, October 29th

423 = Wednesday, June 5th

527 = Thursday, July 4th

650 = Friday, December 13th

739 = Saturday, September 28th

238 = Monday, September 30th

349 = Tuesday, December 10th

436 = Wednesday, September 4th

525 = Thursday, June 20th

652 = Friday, December 27th

736 = Saturday, September 7th

242 = Monday, October 21st
326 = Tuesday, June 25th

*Tuesday, March 12th is the first available preserved issue from this year. There are also various issues missing from all post April 12th editions.

1862

210 = Monday, March 10th
341 = Tuesday, October 14th
423 = Wednesday, June 4th
510 = Thursday, March 6th
603 = Friday, January 17th
716 = Saturday, April 19th
208 = Monday, February 24th
320 = Tuesday, May 20th
432 = Wednesday, August 13th
511 = Thursday, March 13th
614 = Friday, April 4th
726 = Saturday, June 28th
207 = Monday, February 17th
339 = Tuesday, September 30th

1863

218 = Monday, May 4th
335 = Tuesday, September 1st
449 = Wednesday, December 9th
543 = Thursday, October 29th
610 = Friday, March 6th
719 = Saturday, May 9th
219 = Monday, May 11th
341 = Tuesday, October 13th
420 = Wednesday, May 20th
527 = Thursday, July 9th
606 = Friday, February 6th
729 = Saturday, July 18th
205 = Monday, February 2nd
321 = Tuesday, May 26th

1864

251 = Monday, December 19th
351 = Tuesday, December 20th
422 = Wednesday, June 1st
524 = Thursday, June 16th
614 = Friday, April 1st
719 = Saturday, May 7th
234 = Monday, August 22nd

313 = Tuesday, March 29th
451 = Wednesday, December 21st
508 = Thursday, February 25th
626 = Friday, June 24th
704 = Saturday, January 23rd
240 = Monday, October 3rd
321 = Tuesday, May 24th

1865*

201 = Monday, January 2nd
311 = Tuesday, March 14th
409 = Wednesday, March 1st
507 = Thursday, February 16th
607 = Friday, February 17th
703 = Saturday, January 21st
203 = Monday, January 16th
312 = Tuesday, March 21st
402 = Wednesday, January 11th
509 = Thursday, March 2nd
610 = Friday, March 10th
710 = Saturday, March 25th
214 = Monday, April 3rd
306 = Tuesday, February 7th

*The *Daily Richmond Examiner* suspended publication on April 3rd, 1865, resuming publication on December 9th, 1865. However, only the issues up until the April 3rd suspension are preserved and accessible at the Library of Congress.

1866*

230 = Monday, July 30th
328 = Tuesday, July 10th
415 = Wednesday, August 8th
519 = Thursday, May 10th
636 = Friday, September 7th
744 = Saturday, November 3rd
228 = Monday, July 9th
334 = Tuesday, August 21st
437 = Wednesday, September 12th
530 = Thursday, July 26th
640 = Friday, October 5th
726 = Saturday, June 30th
225 = Monday, June 18th
341 = Tuesday, October 9th

* The Library of Congress' collection for 1866 begins with the May 10th edition of the *Examiner*. There are no 1866 issues prior to this date.