Canadian Influence on the United States' Mass Media

Despite the proximity of Canada and the United States and their shared heritage, differences do exist in culture, politics, education and media systems. Such characteristics are reflected to some extent in the professional lives of the Canadian expatriates who historically have provided leadership and helped influence the U.S. media both positively and negatively to a degree out of proportion to their limited numbers. Canadian influence appears to be the result of the role many Canadian journalists see of themselves as neutral bridges between American institutions and the outside world and in the area of strong activist or interpretive or investigative social responsibility reporting.

The major purpose of this article is to evaluate the influence of selected Canadian journalists on the United States. As a secondary objective, it will attempt to assess what aspects of the Canadian culture, education, training and media environment contributed to the success or failure of prominent Canadian expatriates in the American media environment.

by Alf Pratte

According to journalist-author David Halberstam, on August 6, 1965 President Lyndon Johnson made an early-morning phone call to CBS president Frank Stanton to express concern about a TV account of the torching of a Vietnamese village by U.S. military personnel. The object of Johnson's anger that day and for much of the rest of his career was a young Vietnam correspondent, Morely Safer, who according to Halberstam "ended an era of innocence" in American journalism and "changed the direction of TV reporting".

In contrast to previous television reporting which followed a somewhat print-oriented format of fact finding and interviewing, he was the first significant media challenge to Johnson's escalating military policy. Safer's account of "The Burning of the Village of Cam Ne" was said to be too one-sided and negative — too realistic. Safer, who wanted to show the inhumanity of war, nearly lost his job. Halberstam says Safer's film not only helped legitimize pessimistic reporting by all other television correspondents (who resolved that if they witnessed a comparable episode they would film it), it prepared the way for a different perception of the war among most Americans.

Even more offensive to President Johnson and some Americans at that critical period in American foreign affairs and journalism was the fact that the correspondent of the legendary news report was a foreigner. According to Halberstam, Johnson was certain Safer was a Communist, so the President ordered a security check by both American internal security staff as well as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Although police on both sides of the border checked out everything on Safer, they could find nothing outside of the fact that Safer had a Vietnamese girl friend. Still, Johnson insisted that Safer was a Communist, and when aides said no, he was simply a Canadian, Johnson reportedly said, "Well, I knew he wasn't an American".[1]

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Concern about alien influence in the United States and on its media is nothing new. Such prejudice aimed at foreigners extends from the *Alien and Sedition Acts* of 1798, and has come from such groups as the No-Nothings, Ku Klux Klan and other elected officials as well as Johnson. An example of recent efforts aimed at foreign control can be seen in efforts by Senator Edward Kennedy or others in the U.S. Congress to frustrate Australian-born Rupert Murdoch from owning both broadcast and print holdings in the same market area. Ironically, much of the discussion about media domination has come from other countries, such as Canada, which often claim control or cultural imperialism by the United States media.

Numerically Canadians have not been particularly prominent. A study of 274 major American journalists and magazinists in the period 1690-1950 shows 39 (16.3 per cent) were foreign born. Of these 39, only three (journalists Joseph Medill and James Creelman and magazinist John Foster Kirk) were Canadian born. In Joseph McKern's *Biographical Dictionary*, 75 of 475 entries were foreign born. Of the 75 foreigners, seven (Elie Abel, George Booth, Father James Coughlin, Creelman, Mark Kellogg, Medill and James P. Newcomb) were born in Canada.

In the list of nearly 1,000 twentieth century journalists, approximately 30 of the most prominent journalists were listed as foreign-born, with at least seven of them identified as being born in Canada. In addition to Safer and Abel they include broadcasters Peter Jennings and Robert MacNeil; cartoonist Paul Szep; investigative reporter and publisher Mark Dowie and A.M. (Abe) Rosenthall.

For purposes of this study the list could be expanded to include certain other Canadians such as the inventor Reginald Aubrey Fessenden, editor Archibald McLelland, theorists and educators John Kenneth Galbraith and Marshall McLuhan, publishers Robert Sears, Lord Roy Thompson and Conrad Black and Lorne Michaels, creator of the TV program "Saturday Night Live." Although not strictly journalists, they are generally acknowledged to have made major contributions to the media in the United States and internationally.[2]

More than any other Canadian in this study, McLuhan is said to be responsible for making people think theoretically about the impact of mass media on their lives. The Canadian English professor became "the Moses of communications" in the late sixties and early seventies. And while his pronouncements and probings (including the "medium is the message," "the message is the massage," "the global village," and "hot" and "cold" mediums) were far less understandable than the Old Testament injunctions, they had, for a short time, almost as much impact.

Contributions of Canadian-born Journalists

James Creelman was among the journalists who helped create the late 19th century image of the "Golden Age" of reporters in American journalism. Some of this may be attributed partly to Creelman's sense of adventure that reached back to Montreal, where he was born and raised. A few years after his parents separated, Creelman saved a pocketful of coins and set out at the age of twelve, to be with his mother. After rebelling against her insistence that he go to school, he got a job in the printing plant of the Episcopal church newspaper and later began his career as a highly-rated correspondent for the big three in U.S. journalism: Joseph Pulitzer, James Gordon Bennett Jr. and W.R. Hearst.

During his career, Creelman travelled the world interviewing global notables from Indian rebel Sitting Bull to Russian novelist and reformer Leo Tolstoy. He covered three wars and several other conflicts with accuracy and compassion. Like Morley Safer, who 80 years later would follow him as a war correspondent, Creelman was more than an onlooker and chronicler. In an editorial eulogy headlined "Journalism the Poorer for His Loss," the *New York Times* noted that before his death, Creelman had opinions of what he saw and heard, and he considered those opinions an essential part of the news he sent to the paper. That he, a reporter was allowed thus to encroach on the editorial domain ranked him with a small group of political and military representatives of the press that is fast disappearing because of change in conditions under which journalistic service is rendered.

In keeping with his activist role, Creelman at times found himself defending and defining yellow journalism as "a form of American journalistic energy which is not content merely to print a record of history, but seeks to take part as an active and sometimes decisive agent". Critics of Creelman described his enthusiasm as a form of egotism; this is evident in that he quit his first job on Bennett's *Herald* over a policy that stories be published without by-lines. In an 1891 interview with Pope Leo XIII, the Pope asked: You are not of the Faithful?" Creelman replied: "I am what journalism has made of me." In another interview, Count Leo Tolstoy said: "You newspaper writers are an irreverent tribe." Creelman wrote later: "The statement being true, I made no reply". Because of what some historians such as Philip Knightley describe as Creelman's "truth and compassion" rather than adventure and glory, it is unfortunate that Creelman is remembered less for his leadership and more for recording one of the more unfortunate apocryphal

quotes in American journalism. In his 1901 reminiscences, Creelman reports on the exchange of telegrams between Hearst and artist Frederick Remington, with whom Creelman was covering the 1897 Cuban insurrection. Remington reportedly cabled Hearst to tell him there was no war and he was coming home. According to Creelman's account (which has never been documented), Hearst cabled Remington back: "Please remain. You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war".

The spirit of interpretive, action-oriented reporting exemplified by Creelman and Safer can be seen to an even greater extent in the life of modern print leader and muckraking reporter Mark Dowie. Canadian-born Dowie worked in banking and investments in San Francisco before becoming publisher of *Mother Jones* magazine in 1976. In 1980, he became its editor before leaving after a change of management and philosophy.

Named after the pioneering socialist organizer, Mary "Mother" Jones, the publication won National Magazine Awards in 1977 and again in 1979 for its hard-hitting investigative exposés of problems such as Ford Pinto gas tanks and the Dalkon shield. A staff reporter, before assuming the editor's post, Dowie said that "Investigations should be long term. They should be deep. They should be politically motivated. They should be advocacy journalism". In an interview, Dowie attributed his Canadian education and what he described as a different sense of justice and culture for his investigatory approach to journalism. He also said he felt that a number of other Canadians in the American media today share a similar approach. "They are quicker to see the injustices and hypocrisies of power".

Still another former Canadian who has helped keep the spirit of investigative and advocacy reporting alive is Paul Michael Szep, the Pulitzer Prize winning editorial cartoonist for the *Boston Globe*. Szep was a sports cartoonist for the *Hamilton Spectator* (1958-61) and graphics designer for the *Financial Post* in Toronto before heading south of the border. The winner of a number of other awards from Sigma Delta Chi and the Boston Chamber of Commerce, Szep and the *Boston Globe* have been leaders in court cases challenging the encroachment of public officials against the cartoonist's pen. Szep has also been one of the leading cartoonists advocating the power of cartoons to offset editorial timidity. In a 1977 article discussing the status of editorial page humor Szep argued that most editorial pages contain only a few of the qualities of courage and perception important to the public. Szep claims that most editorials tend to be bland, boring, predictable, gutless, and somewhat kneejerk. There is a tendency to try and offset this general lack of inspiration by running funny cartoons.

According to a 1987 court ruling supporting three of Szep's cartoons that portrayed Gov. Edward J. King's administration as corrupt, cartoons are "seldom vehicles by which facts are reported; quite the contrary, they are deliberate departures from reality, designed forcefully, and sometimes viciously, to express opinion." The court also said "The First Amendment protects the questioning and impugning of the motives of public officials." It upheld a lower court's dismissal of King's libel suit[3].

In contrast to the more aggressive advocacy journalism that these journalists have contributed to American society, another former Canadian helped found one of America's prestige newspapers to fight against the excesses of sensational journalism. Archibald McLellan was born in New Brunswick, later moving with his parents to Boston. Following his conversion to the Christian Science religion, McLellan became one of the members of the business and editorial team that helped set the *Christian Science Monitor* on the paths which it has since followed. According to McLellan, three important elements in the newspaper's success were policy, readers, and advertising. Former editor Erwin Canham says it was important that the first editor be a responsible church leader as well as an experienced man of affairs. At the outset, when so many precedents had to be created and so much new ground plowed, newspaper talent had to be infused with spiritual insight. In the emphatic statement of Mary Baker Eddy in a 1902 letter discussing the possibility of the *Christian Science Monitor* there was a need for a "born editor." There could hardly have been a happier choice than McLellan.

Another legendary Canadian with far less prestigious newspapers is Lord Roy Thomson. He not only serves as a symbol of the increasing profitability of the Canadian media, but also helped spread integrated corporate power throughout the United States and the world. Today this is seen not only in the spreading influence of the Thompson group in North America but also in the growing influence of other foreign institutions, including those of Australian-born Rupert Murdoch. While modern newspaper chains started in Canada long after they had started in the U.S., the Thomson group serves as one of three different models of newspaper groups that have evolved.

Before his death in 1976, Thomson had multiplied his $200 down-payment on a Timmins, Ontario newspaper into the world's largest mass communications empire, including Canadian American and British media holdings in print and broadcast. As evidence of the Thomson group influence, author Russell Braddon needed 11 pages just to list its holdings in a 1965 biography. In 1982, Thomson newspapers Ltd. owned 40

dailies and 12 weeklies in Canada, and 71 dailies and five weeklies in the U.S.

Thomson's newspapers were outstanding profit makers. In 1979, for example, the return on net assets, was just under 78 percent. The key to such success can be seen in the motto of Canadian chain owners like Thomson: "Give the public what they want, since that sells the best. In this way, the media have become all things to all men."

Because of its emphasis on profits, the Thomson chain has been frequently criticized by former employees and official government commissions investigating the political and cultural implications of monopoly. Except for newly-absorbed dailies, Thomson papers generally are considerably thinner, than other newspapers of similar circulation, and have a comparatively high ratio of advertising to non-advertising space.

Former editor Bruce B. VanDusen charges that in the first year after Thomson took over *The Kokomo Tribune* in 1981, the news staff dropped from 29 to 23 persons and none of the vacancies were ever filled. "The paper continued to come out every day, but no one close to it believed it was as good as it had been. The editorial page used to have three or four locally-written pieces daily; now it has one, if that. Many school board meetings we used to staff in person now were covered by phone. We used to have a full-time librarian; now a secretary did the job half as well[4]".

In addition to the Thomson group, another Canadian entrepreneur is targeting small town U.S.A. He is Conrad Black who in 1987 acquired 41 small-town newspapers in the U.S. and Canada for $105.9 million. According to reports in both the *Wall Street Journal* and a number of Canadian publications, Black is looking for other acquisitions in small towns such as Canton, Illinois and Booneville, Missouri where he is focusing his finances. "If the deals are good enough, we could spend hundreds of millions of dollars over the next two to three years," he says. "My inspiration in these matters is Rupert Murdoch. The only part of the U.S. newspaper market that isn't prohibitively costly to enter is the under 25,000 in daily circulation. We don't mind going below daily circulations of 10,000."

Bruce Thorp, a Washington based analyst notes the similarities of approach of Black with that of Thomson in regard to the U.S. newspapers. "We think Thomson's operating profit margins exceed 40 percent, making them among the highest among U.S. publishers. The trick is not to put any more money than you have to into a small daily and then bleed them for all you can get out of them". Phil Ballard, publisher of the *Richmond* (British Columbia) *Review*, argues that the Black papers are more service oriented than they are generally credited with being. One of the reasons Ballard says is because a number of the Black newspapers are unionized. "They (the unions) help to keep us honest," he said.

More influential than Thomson or Black, however, was the former executive editor of the *New York Times*, A.M. (Abe) Rosenthall. Born in Sault Ste. Marie, the child of Russian Jewish parents, Rosenthall grew up poor, ambitious, bright, argumentative and loving books, factors that helped chart his rise from a campus stringer for the *Times* through the corporate ladder to one of the most powerful editors in the nation. How Rosenthall's editorial talent propelled him to the pinnacle of American journalism, despite what many agree are serious personality flaws, is the theme of Joseph Goulden's *Fit to Print: A.M. Rosenthall and His Times.* Prior to his retirement as executive editor of the *New York Times* Rosenthall was described by Jonathan Alter as "the most powerful newspaper editor in the nation, perhaps in the world. For 17 years he ruled with such complete authority that grown men and women, reporters whose job it was to cover wars and stand up to foreign tyrants, quaked in his presence."

Leadership of Canadian Broadcasters

Canadians, however, have not provided their greatest contributions at the head of major papers such as the *New York Times* or in cost-cutting techniques on small newspapers in small-town U.S. Instead, the broadcast media have exerted greater influence through a home-grown inventor who helped develop radio, and through others trained under Canada's unique public private broadcasting system. Sadly, despite the great potential of the broadcast media, particularly in their earliest years, Canada has not taken advantage of its opportunities nor its home-grown talent. This is best seen in the life of Reginald Aubrey Fessenden

Born in 1866 in eastern Quebec and educated at Bishop's University, Fessenden was the first North American to make a major contribution to radio. His approach emphasized voice radio, a far more complex undertaking then Marconi's Morse code transmissions. The Liberal government of Sir Wilfred Laurier, however, put most of its financial support behind Marconi's system, and Fessenden spent most of the rest of his life working for the Edison and Westinghouse corporations in the U.S. After being turned down for a teaching position at McGill University, Fessenden taught at Purdue University and the University of Pittsburgh. Despite his world-wide influence on radio and more than 500 patents, Fessenden never received the recognition he deserved either in the U.S. or in Canada.

One Canadian who exploited the radio technology developed in large part by Fessenden was Charles James

Coughlin the famous radio priest of the 1920s and 1930s. Born, educated and ordained in Canada, Coughlin moved to Michigan where he began one of the first major broadcast ministries, paving the way for today's broadcast evangelists. His influence over the airwaves may have been far greater. At the peak of his career prior to the 1936 election, Coughlin was receiving more mail than the president of the United States and serving as a significant factor in molding public opinion.

Another Canadian who, since 1983, has influenced American viewers is Robert MacNeil as co-anchor of The MacNeil/Lehrer Report, a nightly one-hour program on the Public Broadcasting Service. But even before that, MacNeil received recognition from his peers as one of the first journalists complaining about efforts by the Nixon administration to censor public broadcasting. Frank Stanton, former president of CBS from 1947-1973 believes "the MacNeil/Lehrer Hour is the best example of news in America"[5].

Born in eastern Canada, MacNeil was an aspiring actor and playwright before becoming a journalist. A graduate of Carleton University in Ottawa, he is the author of: *The People Machine*, which *Current Biography* cites as "a blistering indictment of commercial television's preoccupation with entertainment," and *The Right Place at the Right Time*, which describes some of his background in Canada and London and suggests what it contributed to his ability to become a leader in America.

> I grew up in a country Canada, and worked another sixteen years in another, Britain, where I never felt my civil liberties infringed by the absence of a First Amendment. Indeed by becoming politically aware as I did in the early 1950s, I thought I had a decided advantage not to be living in a country which permitted a demagogue like Senator Joseph McCarthy to trample on its freedoms. One can argue in which system the private individual's basic liberties are better protected. There are sound arguments for relief from the draconian libel laws in Britain and from the *Official Secrets Act*. There are grounds to argue that American journalism is too sheltered to admit to its own trespasses. I make the point only to indicate that I did not absorb the true faith from birth[6].

MacNeil also notes that like all of the other journalists in this study, he did not go to a journalism school. All he ever wanted in Canada was as many English courses as possible. In Britain, journalism schools were almost unknown, and in the 1950s university graduates were still only grudgingly admitted to Fleet Street. "So I did not come factory equipped, as they say with cars, with a body of theory about journalism. That has been a weakness from time to time, when I had to admit that I really didn't know what I was doing — or why. But it meant that I also missed another opportunity for indoctrination in the myths and rituals of the craft. I was not programmed with as many stereotypes"[7].

In 1989, MacNeil's Memoir *Wordstruck* received favorable reviews as a sort of personal sequel to *The Story of English* which he wrote with Robert McCrum and William Cran. In an interview in *Maclean's* magazine, MacNeil said he believes being from Canada has provided him with a somewhat "more detached and unhysterical view of the Cold War than many American journalists have. We are also a bridge into the psyches and minds of Third World peoples through our ties with the Commonwealth. Canadians can talk to them through shared experiences in a way the Americans and Europeans find difficult."[8]

In addition to MacNeil, articles in Canadian magazines regularly point to the large number of Canadians who gather and present the news for U.S. television. A 1981 article focused on the world-wide network of Canadian correspondents who have received "superb training" before being attracted to the U.S. by higher salaries and the advantages of their Canadian passports. More recently, *Maclean's* magazine lists the names of 15 broadcasters from Canada who work for the networks or for major market stations across the country. Along with MacNeil they include Peter Jennings, Barrie Dunsmore, John McKenzie, Jerry King, Hilary Bowker of ABC; Morley Safer, Mark Phillips, Don McNeil of CBS and Peter Kent, Henry Champ and Brian Stewart of NBC.

By far the best known is Peter Jennings, who was named anchor and senior editor of "ABC News World News Tonight" in September 1983. The readers of the *Washington Journalism Review* named Jennings the country's best anchor in 1988, and a Gallup poll commissioned by the Times Mirror Co. showed that Jennings ranked second only to Walter Cronkite in believability among reporters. That same year, Jennings' peers in the Radio and Television News Directors Association selected him as the most professional network news director.

A former reporter for stations in Montreal and Hamilton, the handsome and urbane Jennings is the son of Charles Jennings, the first national newscaster in Canada. Charles Jennings was one of the first four announcers hired by the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, predecessor of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1935. His son started his professional broadcast career as nine-year old national network star. A student with Mark Dowie at an elite Ontario high school, before dropping out Jennings was the co-anchor of Canada's first national news on a commercial network, and worked as a foreign correspondent before being recruited to ABC with a number of other Canadians who serve as major prospects for network talent scouts.

Among the reasons cited for their attractiveness is their level of literacy, intelligence, understanding and particularly their level of reporting, a refreshing sense of objectivity and a clear view.

The Canadian journalists are also said to have a deep respect for the English language. Speaking about Jennings, ABC vice president for news David Burke says that viewers were polled to determine if Jennings was too Continental or too sophisticated, or was he one of the boys? "We found that while people do view him as different, he's not a distraction. More people stay than leave". According to Southam news correspondent Allan Fotheringham "the 47-year old Ottawa dropout is doing rather well. By far the most accomplished reporter of the Jennings-Rather-Brokaw rivalry, his cool mid-Atlantic accent and his sophisticated wardrobe and his calm delivery make the CBS millionaire and the NBC milk-fed boy appear rather too All-American"[9].

Along with Jennings, Safer continues to exert an agenda-setting influence on American viewers. Based partly on his pioneering reporting from Vietnam (which was described by CBS executive Fred Friendly as "Morley Safer's War"), Safer became a "legendary figure" among correspondents, admired as much by print journalists as by television journalists. Friendly attributes Safer's influence in part to the decline of the print media and uses Safer's activist journalism as evidence against the hypothesis developed by Dr. Ernest LeFever of the Brookings Institute that content can not be measured by word-count alone. "Even on radio, Morley Safer's account, complete with the sound of crackling huts and terrorized peasants, caused slight reaction, but the filmed report by the same reporter on television set off a groundswell of public reaction which continued through the night as the broadcast moved through the time zones across the nation."[10]

But even more than Safer's luck being in the right place at the right time with the right medium, the Canadian made the decision to stand up to the combined powers of the military, the American government and even his own network, which Halberstam claims wanted to fire him. Like the little boy who calmly announced that the emperor was naked, Safer reported what he had seen and heard. Instead of following the traditional, linear rules of hot, objective journalism, Safer used the cool medium of television to magnify his perspective and passion. Speaking in 1983 at the University of California at a conference on Vietnam, Safer used the image of the emperor's new clothes to challenge remarks by Keyes Beech that reporters should go out and seek truth, but only within the context of serving their country's foreign policy. "The assumption in Vietnam back in the 60s was that reporters who would not get on the team were anti-American or pro-Vietnamese – at worst leftist, at best pacifist. Maybe that was true of some. I think most reporters in Vietnam smelled something terribly rotten about this war from day-one of their tours – that it lacked a moral or intellectual or strategic core."

But despite the bad smell there was little reporting of the reality until the Canadian journalist combined with the cool technology. "The numbers in Vietnam were like the emperor's clothes," Safer said. "Unlike the fable, most people — most reporters, anyway — saw through them. General Westmoreland expressed concern the people might be led to believe there had been no progress in the war if the truth were published".

In the nearly two decades since the end of the Vietnam war, Safer has continued to practice his slightly irreverent form of activist journalism as one of what TV Guide described "four White Knights," as they sally forth in search of villains, astride a dark-horse newsmagazine turned prime-time Secretariat. This massive bunch of metaphors refers to "60 Minutes", the news-type program that since its debut has the distinction of regularly being among the ten most popular television programs.

Former "60 Minutes" correspondent Dan Rather reports he was eager to come to the program because he knew from his Washington experience as a correspondent that it was "a broadcast that made a difference." One of "60 Minutes" producers says that "just the knowledge that 60 Minutes is doing a story can begin to have effects". In an interview regarding the "60 Minutes" style of reporting which he has helped popularize, Safer said: "You lead viewers by the hand to a certain conclusion. What licence you have to do this is I think your record, in a way it gives you the right. The mere fact that I am not elected forces me into something that I can only describe as fairness. That's all we want to be is fair, and I think that someone who consistently violates that won't be around for very long".[11]

Possible Reasons for Canadian Leadership in U.S. Media

Jonathan Miller is one of a number of popular writers who have suggested factors from the Canadian culture became influential on its natives and that in turn may have influenced others. To illustrate, Miller refers to the background of Marshall McLuhan, going back to McLuhan's personal history and literary criticism to demonstrate that "a coherent system of values had been shaped in his early years and that those values were alive and operative in his later works." Having been born and bred in the agricultural provinces of western Canada, Miller believes McLuhan must have acquired "a near instinctive taste for agrarian populism, which, of course,

can be interpreted as a form of tribalism". Miller says that McLuhan was also strongly influenced by his Cambridge education experience. MacNeil says it was London that made him a journalist, "and that city became the biggest single influence on my life, politically, culturally, emotionally."

Miller's ideas about Canadian environmental influences receive some support from John Kenneth Galbraith in an essay about the harsh life of the frontier on Scandinavian immigrants such as Thorstein Veblen and of their feelings of superiority to those in the larger towns. A former journalist as well as economist and ambassador to India, Galbraith argues that the same geographic, cultural and social influences molding the American Veblen were true in his own rural upbringing as a Scots emigrant opposed to the English and Anglicans in Ontario.

> We felt ourselves superior to the store-keepers, implement salesmen, grain dealers and other entrepreneurs of the adjacent towns. We worked harder, spent less, but usually had more. The leaders among the Scotch took education seriously and, as a matter of course, monopolized the political life of the community ... We were taught to think that claims to social prestige based on such vacuous criteria were silly. We regarded the people of the town not with envy but with amiable contempt. On the whole, we enjoyed letting them know.

In much the same way that Veblen and Galbraith and other rural immigrants viewed themselves as a superior culture to those in the towns, a number of the journalists discussed in this paper have brought elements which have nudged the communications media of their adopted country toward a greater realization of its potential. Ironically, this has happened in some cases when Canada has not been willing to provide its own journalists or inventors such as Fessenden with the critical mass or financial support needed.

> ***In leaving Canada, the journalists have taken with them an outstanding and in some cases superior sense of the English language, a feel for the underdog, a populist outlook and a sense of outrage not always felt in the over-commercialized U.S.***

Galbraith, a journalist himself for *Fortune* magazine, was to write later that it was Henry Luce's reluctant discovery that, "with rare exceptions, good writers on business were either liberals or socialists". In his *Affluent Society* and other books, Galbraith was also to indict the self-centered consumer culture of America for its obsession with frivolous commodities instead of investing in social services, a feeling demonstrated by many of the Canadians already mentioned.

An underlying sense of superiority and populist passion is certainly seen in the lives of Creelman, Father Coughlin, Dowie, Szep and Rosenthall, as well as broadcasters Safer, MacNeil and Jennings. Some of this journalistic passion and movement from American objectivity toward interpretation and outright opinion may come from what Dowie believes is a greater sense of injustice favoring minority groups against the established power structure, and is reflected somewhat in the long-time Canadian practice of using government resources to a greater extent to assist the disadvantaged as well as to preserve the Canadian culture. Former Canadian journalist Keith Morrison (now of Los Angeles) referred to this in an 1986 interview when he noted the absence in the U.S. of the social security net that's taken for granted in Canada. "There are a lot of people who are very well off — people who in extreme cases avoid paying any income tax. Yet there are a great many people who are terribly poor. Government isn't involved in caring for people to the degree that we're accustomed to in Canada"[12].

Such comments should not lead one to the conclusion that all Canadians involved with the media in the United States always have an interpretive, challenging, reformist, socially responsible stance that does not allow economics and technology to dominate. Publishers Thomson and Black detract from the point not only in their pragmatic approach to the small-town newspapers but in their general shoddy economic treatment of their own employees. Goulden observes this in A.M. Rosenthall's ideological steps toward the right and his callous treatment of his subordinates at times. Canadian-born Mark Fowler has carried such libertarian thinking to an extreme in implementing Ronald Reagan's deregulation of the broadcast industry from 1981-1988. Father Charles Coughlin failed to reach acceptable standards of media responsibility in his demagogic attacks over the air and through his widely circulated magazines. *Lippincott's Magazine* editor, John Foster Kirk, represented an upper class literary stratum of society generally far removed from the investigative reporters or socially responsible editors such as McLelland who helped found a newspaper that historically has been committed to quality rather than profits, and Rosenthall, who helped transform the respected but financially floundering *New York Times* into one of the world's most valuable media enterprises.

Despite exceptions to the rule, most Canadian journalists seem to have brought a strong, socially

responsibile mind-set to their adopted country. Such a philosophy diverges slightly from the stronger libertarian emphasis in the U.S. that treats media developments mainly as economic or technological events, rather than as combinations of resources, primarily in the framework of public development wherein private benefit properly follows. Milda Hedblom elaborates on this in an essay comparing the Canadian, British and American media and notes that American media are expected to further the cause of a free media by succeeding as independent private enterprises not beholden to government favor, protection or subsidy. "The United States ... has tended to see media system developments and changes as primarily commercial or technical matters, avoiding consideration of the 'whole system perspective which is inherent in the British concern for program quality and diversity or the Canadian concern for content"[13].

Notes

1. In an interview in Provo, Utah February 1, 1989, Frank Stanton denied Halberstam's colorful anecdote. "The conversation never took place," he said. Stanton said that when he talked with Halberstam about the alleged conversation, Halberstam said he had concluded that Johnson "might have had such a conversation" with Stanton and that the quotes were "the intent of the conversation". Stanton said a check of both his and President Johnson's telephone log shows there were no calls between the two on the date cited in Halberstam's book.

2. One history describes Fessenden as the "American Marconi"; McLelland was the first editor of the Christian Science Monitor; Thomson and Black both serve as economic models for chain or group ownership; Sears was the publisher of *The Colored American*, one of the first black newspapers in America. The Ontario-born Michaels was the original producer of the original NBC "Saturday Night Live" which is included among the major influences of the 1970s. The program pioneered the field of cheeky, irreverent public affairs-oriented television. The controversial McLuhan is a throwback to the turn-of-the-century "grand theorist," whose single causality perspective explained away countless variables and leapfrogged over bothersome evidence to reach simple conclusions.

3. *King v. Globe Newspapers Co.*, 512 N.E. 2d 241 (Mass., 1987) note 53, 53, 245.

4. Bruce B. VanDusen, "Thomson Comes to Kokomo," *The Quill*, September, 1983. 31.

5. Interview, Frank Stanton, Provo, Utah, Feb. 1, 1989.

6. Robert MacNeil, *The Right Place at the Right Time*, Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1982, 9.

7. *Ibid.*, 7.

8. Roy MacGregor, "Message from a worldwide network: When Canadian correspondents join the big leagues, few miss the comforts of home," *Macleans*, April 27, 1981. 45-46; Dick Brown, "The charge of the Canadian light brigade," *Macleans*, Dec. 1, 1986; Jeff Bradly, "Canada-grown 'heavies' stay away," *Salt Lake City Deseret News*, Nov. 20, 1987.

9. Allan Fotheringham, "The importance of Peter Jennings," *Macleans*, July 21, 1986.

10. Fred Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Guys and the First Amendment*, New York: Random House, 1975, 189. Among those disagreeing with the historical significance of Safer's legendary account from Vietnam is Friendly's former superior, Frank Stanton. In an interview in Provo February 1, 1989, Stanton said that although Safer was an outstanding journalist, Safer's report was preceded and followed by others equally as significant.

11. George Shea, "Morely Safer: An Old-Fashioned Reporter," *Vis-a-Vis*, December, 1988, 76.

12. Jamie Portman, "Morrison Settling in to L.A.", *TV Times*, May 9-16. 1986, p. 25.

13. Milda Hedblom, "Do Differences Matter? Canadian, American and British Media Compared," unpublished paper, Association for Canadian Studies in the U.S., Montreal, Canada, October, 1987, p. 167.