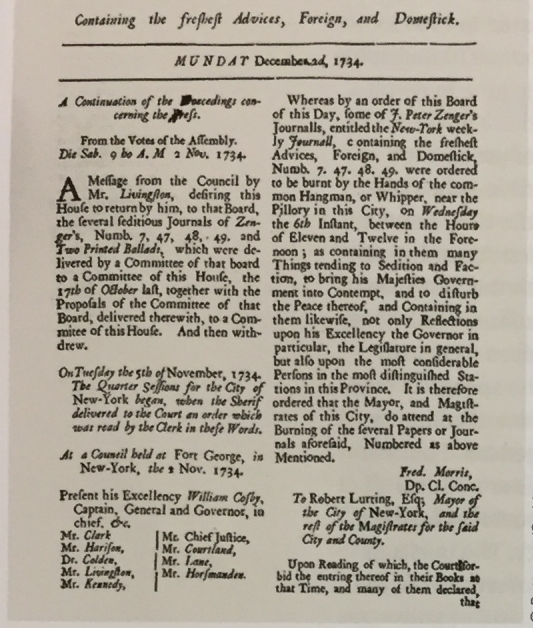

Containing the freſheſt Advices, Foreign, and Domeſtick.

MUNDAY December 2d, 1734.

A Continuation of the Proceedings concerning the Preſs.

From the Votes of the Aſſembly.
Die Sab. 9 ho A. M 2 Nov. 1734.

A Meſſage from the Council by Mr. *Livingſton*, deſiring this Houſe to return by him, to that Board, the ſeveral ſeditious Journals of *Zenger's*, Numb. 7, 47, 48, 49. and *Two Printed Ballads*, which were delivered by a Committee of that board to a Committee of this Houſe, the 17th of *October* laſt, together with the Propoſals of the Committee of that Board, delivered therewith, to a Committee of this Houſe. And then withdrew.

On Tueſday the 5th of November, 1734. *The Quarter Seſſions for the City of* New-York *began, when the Sheriff delivered to the Court an order which was read by the Clerk in theſe Words.*

At a Counſel held at Fort George, *in* New-York, *the* 2 Nov. 1734.

Preſent his Excellency *William Coſby*, Captain, General and Governor, in chief, *&c.*

Mr. *Clark* | Mr. Chief Juſtice,
Mr. *Harriſon*, | Mr. *Courtland*,
Dr. *Colden*, | Mr. *Lane*,
Mr. *Livingſton*, | Mr. *Horſmanden*.
Mr. *Kennedy*,

Whereas by an order of this Board of this Day, ſome of *J. Peter Zenger's* Journalls, entitled the *New-York* weekly *Journall*, containing the freſheſt Advices, Foreign, and Domeſtick, Numb. 7. 47. 48. 49. were ordered to be burnt by the Hands of the common Hangman, or Whipper, near the Pillory in this City, on *Wedneſday* the 6th Inſtant, between the Hours of Eleven and Twelve in the Forenoon; as containing in them many Things tending to Sedition and Faction, to bring his Majeſties Government into Contempt, and to diſturb the Peace thereof, and Containing in them likewiſe, not only Reflections upon his Excellency the Governor in particular, the Legiſlature in general, but alſo upon the moſt conſiderable Perſons in the moſt diſtinguiſhed Stations in this Province. It is therefore ordered that the Mayor, and Magiſtrates of this City, do attend at the Burning of the ſeveral Papers or Journals aforeſaid, Numbered as above Mentioned.

Fred. Morris,
Dp. Cl. Conc.

To Robert Lurting, Eſq; *Mayor of the City of* New-York, *and the reſt of the Magiſtrates for the ſaid City and County.*

Upon Reading of which, the Court forbid the entring thereof in their Books at that Time, and many of them declared, that

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COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS During the colonial period, New York printer John Peter Zenger was arrested for seditious libel. He eventually won his case, which established the precedent that today allows U.S. journalists and citizens to criticize public officials. In this 1734 issue, Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* reported his own arrest and the burning of the paper by the city's "Common Hangman."

Timothy took over the *South Carolina Gazette*, established in 1734 by Benjamin Franklin and the Timothy family. Also during this period, Anna Maul Zenger ran the *New-York Weekly Journal* throughout her husband's trial and after his death in 1746.[7]

The Penny Press Era: Newspapers Become Mass Media

By the late 1820s, the average newspaper cost six cents a copy and was sold through yearly subscriptions priced at ten to twelve dollars. Because that price was more than a week's salary for most skilled workers, newspaper readers were mostly affluent. By the 1830s, however, the Industrial Revolution made possible the replacement of expensive handmade paper with cheaper machine-made paper. During this time, the rise of the middle class spurred the growth of literacy, setting the stage for a more popular and inclusive press. In addition, breakthroughs in technology, particularly the replacement of mechanical presses by steam-powered presses, permitted publishers to produce as many as four thousand newspapers an hour, which lowered the cost of newspapers. **Penny papers** soon began competing with six-cent papers. Though subscriptions remained the preferred sales tool of many penny papers, they began relying increasingly on daily street sales of individual copies.

Day and the *New York Sun*

In 1833, printer Benjamin Day founded the *New York Sun* with no subscriptions and the price set at one penny. The *Sun*—whose slogan was "It shines for all"—highlighted local events, scandals, police reports, and serialized stories. Like today's supermarket tabloids, the *Sun* fabricated stories, including the infamous moon hoax, which reported "scientific" evidence of life on the moon. Within six months, the *Sun*'s lower price had generated a circulation of eight thousand, twice that of its nearest New York competitor.

The *Sun*'s success initiated a wave of penny papers that favored **human-interest stories**: news accounts that focus on the daily trials and triumphs of the human condition, often featuring ordinary individuals facing extraordinary challenges. These kinds of stories reveal journalism's ties to literary traditions, such as the archetypal conflicts between good and evil, normal and deviant, or individuals and institutions. Today, these themes can be found in everyday feature stories that chronicle the lives of remarkable people or in crime news that details the daily work of police and the misadventures of criminals. As in the nineteenth century, crime stories remain popular and widely read.

Bennett and the *New York Morning Herald*

The penny press era also featured James Gordon Bennett's *New York Morning Herald*, founded in 1835. Bennett, considered the first U.S. press baron, freed his newspaper from political influence. He established an independent paper serving middle- and working-class readers as well as his own business ambitions. The *Herald* carried political essays, news about scandals, business stories, a letters section, fashion notes, moral reflections, religious news, society gossip, colloquial tales and jokes, sports stories, and eventually reports from the Civil War.