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Lumsden, Linda J. *Social Justice Journalism: A Cultural History of Social Movement Media from Abolition to #Womensmarch*. New York: Peter Lang, 2019, 308 pp., \$47.95 (paperback).

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Social Justice Journalism seeks to increase knowledge about contemporary digital activism by offering depth and context to the topic through an examination of its roots in what author Linda Lumsden describes as a “venerable print culture of dissent” (Lumsden, 2). Through an examination of the ways in which historical periodicals such as William Lloyd Garrison’s *Liberator* and Alice Paul’s *Suffragist* employed journalism to effect social change, Lumsden makes an important connection between historical activist media and contemporary social justice media. These connections offer an opportunity to examine how the definition of journalism changed in response to the introduction of “objectivity” as the defining standard to determine what qualified as authentic journalism.

The book begins with an examination of the ways the nineteenth-century American abolitionist press set a precedent for future social movements, with other early chapters covering connections between early abolitionist, suffrage, and labor periodicals and their digital descendants. Other chapters examine how the *Sierra Club Bulletin* served as the catalyst for the environmental movement at the turn of the twentieth century, the role of *El Malcriado* in strengthening the United Farm Workers movement, as well as the roles of *Ms.* magazine, the *Disability Rag*, *Gateway*, and *FTM* in building a collective identity that would mobilize the collective action needed to effect change for their respective causes.

Lumsden effectively makes the case that while the Internet offered an increased ability for twentieth-century social justice newspapers and magazines to reach a larger audience more quickly in order to communicate and coordinate collective action, it did not alter the five basic functions of social movement media established by their nineteenth-century predecessors: recruit membership, inform and

educate, build and maintain collective identity, engage and counter mainstream media, and mobilize collective action. Notably, the author employs framing theory to examine the ways in which social justice journalism fulfills those functions, and she extends that theory’s utility through an examination of the role emotion plays in message framing in order to effect collective action and, ultimately, social change.

The chapter examining the *Arkansas State Press*’s combined use of activism and journalism in response to the March 1942 death of Sergeant Thomas D. Foster, an African American soldier who was beaten, shot, and killed by police, offers one of the best intersections of the book’s efforts to connect historical press activism with contemporary social justice media platforms. The work done by the *State Press* in connection with Foster’s death, which drew from predecessors such as Ida Wells-Barnett’s *Memphis Free Speech*, would set the tone for future coverage of high-profile stories related to issues of segregation and civil rights throughout the ensuing decades: “The newspaper’s act of witnessing and condemning Foster’s death in 1942 was a precursor of the citizen cell phone videos and social media that mobilized Black Lives Matter” (Lumsden, 125).

The concluding chapter offers a sobering assessment of the challenges facing social justice journalistic outlets in the current moment: issues of sustainability and economic viability, and a political climate that may not be supportive of the causes being put forward by these media outlets.

Social Justice Journalism makes an important contribution by offering a cross-disciplinary cultural history that links the past with the present, deepening and enriching our understanding of both by asking us to consider what we believe the work of journalism to be and what we believe about journalism’s

responsibility to not only report on injustices, but also to advocate for real change.

Future editions could consider examining the Native press, certainly a valid context for examining issues of social justice as it relates to our nation's journalism past and present. Also worthy of future consideration would be an examination of the ways in which social justice journalism was or was not employed by the Asian American community in key moments of our nation's history when that group was the target of prejudice and discrimination.

Scholars interested in exploring the role

communication plays in building group identity and a sense of common purpose will find *Social Justice Journalism* a worthwhile read. Additionally, instructors teaching undergraduate media history, or courses examining issues of diversity and inclusion, would find this book a useful resource. It would also serve well as an instructive prompt in classroom ethics discussions around the role of objectivity in defining journalism in the present moment, and the role of citizen journalism, particularly in light of events and issues related to social justice that have made headlines in the last several months.