



# **The American Revolution and the Press: The Promise of Independence (Medill School of Journalism Visions of the American Press)**

*Carol Sue Humphrey*

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Finalist, 2014 AEJMC Tankard Book Award

Carol Sue Humphrey's *The American Revolution and the Press* argues that newspapers played an important role during America's struggle for independence by keeping Americans engaged in the war even when the fighting occurred in distant locales. From the moment that the colonials received word of Britain's new taxes in 1764 until reports of the peace treaty arrived in 1783, the press constituted the major source of information about events and developments in the conflict with the mother country. Both Benjamin Franklin, one of the Revolution's greatest leaders, and Ambrose Serle, a Loyalist, described the press as an "engine" that should be used to advance the cause. The efforts of Patriot printers to keep readers informed about the war helped ensure ultimate success by boosting morale and rallying Americans to the cause until victory was achieved. As Humphrey illustrates, Revolutionary-era newspapers provided the political and ideological unity that helped Americans secure their independence and create a new nation.

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