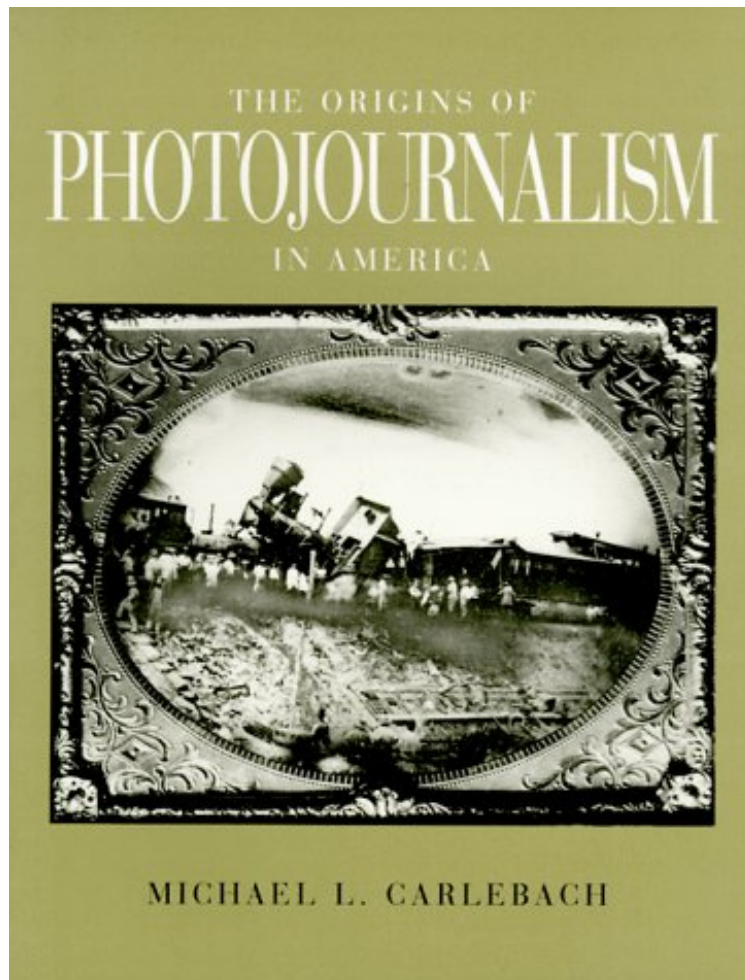


THE ORIGINS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM IN AMERICA

MICHAEL L. CARLEBACH

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MICHAEL L. CARLEBACH : THE ORIGINS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM IN AMERICA before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised THE ORIGINS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM IN AMERICA:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading in the history of photojournalismBy Peter B. HalesCarlebach has written a duet of books on the rise of American photojournalism. This is the first; the second, which I also review, is American Photojournalism Comes of Age. The two books are essential reading: they are impeccably researched and they are also quite well-illustrated, a necessity if one is to understand both the possibilities and limitations of early photojournalism. Carlebach might be accused of too liberal an interpretation of the term when he approaches images that required exposure times of more than a minute and camera set-up times ten times that, but that's actually one of the great strengths of this book. One feels from this the tension between a genuine urge for a visual medium with a reputation for unimpeachable truthfulness and a democratic capacity to reach a vast audience,

much of it functionally illiterate. The struggle against the limits of early photography is a palpable, even starring character in this largely well-written and certainly comprehensive study. It would receive a full five stars from me, but Carlebach's successor volume sets the bar much higher, for the prose is smooth, the argument engrossing and the style both more authoritative and more adventurous.

Book by MICHAEL L. CARLEBACH

From Publishers Weekly Carlebach, an associate professor of communications at the University of Miami and a photojournalist himself, here offers a scrupulously researched history of American photojournalism from 1839 to 1880. He effectively narrates the technical developments that made news photography possible, while also describing how the craft's early successes affected the American people. The first photojournalists were folk paparazzi who badgered presidents and other notables to sit for portraits; later, they risked their lives traveling in wagons with portable darkrooms to photograph Civil War battles and Indian chiefs. Carlebach concentrates on how the craft's foremost practitioners--Mathewok Brady, William Henry Jackson, George Barnard--were able to create, and satisfy, the public taste for a new, more exciting visual journalism. Shocked and fascinated by Brady's wartime photos and Jackson's pictures of the newly laid Union Pacific railroad, the public developed a ravenous appetite for photographic images, spurring the breakthroughs of dry-plate and fast-shutter photography, and ultimately of the halftone printing process, which enabled newspapers and magazines to reproduce photos directly. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.