

## Squawkies and Talkies

Will Straw



Figure 1. *New York Tattler*. No. 1, March 1934.

The cover of the first issue of the *New York Tattler* (Figure 1) struggles to convey the flurry of gossip which swirled, in the early 1930s, around the American singer and actor Rudy Vallee. *The New York Tattler* was a short-lived, scandal-oriented, monthly tabloid newspaper of 1934, one in a wave of such publications which worked to find a place within the crowded journalistic culture of this historical moment. Lacking the photographers or reporters of a ‘real’ newspaper, the *Tattler* could offer little more than hand-drawn references to the details of Rudy Vallee’s troubled life, details known to most readers of *New York Tattler* from their coverage in other media. The graphic materials deployed here – handwritten dialogue, braying mules, exclamation marks, a circular insert which suggests a telephone connection – interact to produce an off-balance mixture of expressive forms and shapes. Most striking, perhaps, are the ways in which these elements so obviously strain to produce the impression of sound, to be noisy and exclamatory. As our attention scatters, protocols of newspaper reading, which would guide the eye down or across the page, are deflected by the challenge of linking sounds to their sources.

The dilemma of print culture, in the years around 1930, was that of finding a place within a new, sensational media complex founded on the conjoining of sound and electricity. During this period, the quick proliferation of gossipy tabloids like *New York Tattler* signalled an important reversal in the journalistic rendering of scandal. Forms of gossipy writing which once sought to whisper now gave way to others which laboured to shout. In this shift, the society gossip magazine of an earlier period was turned inside out. Secrets which had been hidden behind coyly quiet covers were now condensed in the sharp, exclamatory forms of the tabloid headline. Textual rhetorics which had postponed revelation within elaborately suggestive constructions were replaced by brief gossipy bits strung together, like staccato telegraph messages, in newspaper gossip columns. These changes, which rippled across the popular print culture of the United States in the 1920s and early 1930s, set in place conventions of journalistic sensation which persist through the present.

### The Audiophonic Media Complex

In 1932, Virginia Pope, the future fashion editor of the *New York Times*, diagnosed the death of silent cinema and what she called its dreamy ‘shadow lands’<sup>1</sup>. Talking pictures, Pope argued, had banished the shadows, nourishing a new entertainment culture dominated by the flesh and blood physicality of show business performers. Talkies had not accomplished this on their own. Rather, talking pictures hastened the interaction of cinema with radio, gramophone records and noisy, live entertainment forms like vaudeville. A myriad of new hybrid genres (like short films of vaudeville performances) had helped to kill the shadowy abstractions of a pre-talkie world. The new physicality of entertainment culture was moulded in the circulation of performers between different media, a circulation in which different parts of their being were successively clarified or exaggerated. As celebrities migrated across audio-visual media, the substance of performer corporeality was filled in; voice, image and gesture interacted to convey a sense of fleshy presence. Pope traced this new physicality of entertainment forms to emerging structures of corporate integration between and within the entertainment industries: ‘The consolidation of radio, talkie and vaudeville interests,’ she wrote, ‘has doubtless done much toward increasing the exchange of artists.’<sup>2</sup>

Douglas Kahn has usefully described the condition of media during this period as ‘audiophonic’, generated by mixes of older and emergent media in which sound was central:

[...] the convergence involved in the digital mix of today had its forerunner in a mix of audiophonic equivalences: sound began to complete the picture as phonography combined with film and promised to fuse the radio and cinema into television; recorded sound stretched over film sound, film music, music composition and performance, and the new realm of radio and threatened to establish its own autonomous artistic domain.<sup>3</sup>

Print media, David Henkin suggests, had been searching since the late nineteenth century to find a place within the noisy textures of urban life. The postbellum

newsboys of New York, in his words, merged the ‘traditional orality of the street crier (the hot corn girls, the ragmen, the chimney sweeps) with new print technologies and revolutionary demands for up-to-the-minute news and information.’<sup>4</sup> More striking, by 1930, were the ways in which print culture joined with audio-visual media in circuits carrying what Peter Fritzsche has termed the ‘small bits and rich streams of text that saturated the twentieth-century city.’<sup>5</sup> Show business scandals quickly became one of the most ubiquitous of raw materials for these bits and streams. ‘As the public sphere becomes less oriented to print and more oriented to electronic media,’ Michael Warner has written, ‘the bodies and expressive lives of politicians and citizens come more routinely into view in more and more unpredicted and troubling ways.’<sup>6</sup> The same was true, of course, for the bodies and lives of entertainment figures in the early 1930s. However, the new prominence of expressive bodies could be seen in print media, as well, as they developed new forms of graphic extravagance nourished by the cultural proximity of print to electronic media like cinema and radio.

In the early 1930s, arguably, the sensations of the new entertainment culture became the most fluid currency in the passage between media. Show business fan magazines corrected or extended the gossip published in the columns of daily newspapers, while a flurry of new weekly tabloids tried to find a place between the two. Risqué magazines of the mid-1920s had used artistic ‘figure studies’ as the pretext for nudity; by 1930, titles like *Film Fun* offered semi-naked photographs of movie stars alongside page-long compendiums of entertainment gossip. The writers of newspaper gossip columns hosted radio programs designed to replicate the rhythms of the ‘jazz journalism’ which they had helped to inaugurate. Those rhythms had been inspired, a decade earlier, by another electricity-based medium, the telegraph.

### Squawking and Screeching

The cover of *New York Tattler* shown in Figure 1 refers to widely-circulated rumours about the extra-marital affairs of Rudy Vallee’s wife, and to Vallee’s own attempts to uncover her infidelity. Newspapers which covered the scandal relished the discovery that Vallee had used a primitive wire-tapping device to make phonographic recordings of his wife’s conversations with her lover. That revelation extended the already elaborate technological circuits in which Rudy Vallee was implicated. Vallee’s career had become intensely *intermedial* in the early 1930s, as he passed between radio, phonograph records and movies, caught up in that construction of the crooner persona to which Patti Smith guitarist Lenny Kaye has devoted his recent book *You Call It Madness*.<sup>7</sup> Vallee would run from one fan magazine or radio show all through the 1930s, writing columns of self-explanation and endlessly denouncing the apparently humiliating rumours and gossip which had come to surround him. Inevitably, of course, Vallee’s relentless passage through media forms only intensified a wider circulation of his image which he was unable to control. Rudy Vallee was, arguably, the most prominent product and victim of the rampant intermediality of early 1930s American show business.



Figure 2. *Squawk*. Prototype of first issue, c. 1936.

Within this intermediality, as we have seen, sound and voice came to be prominent. Newspapers and magazines would seek graphic, textual equivalents for noise, even as they sought to satirize and comment upon the new noisy culture of electronic media. One curious example of the print response to media gossip was Rudy Vallee's attempted launch of a magazine called *Squawk*, conceived to provide entertainment stars like himself with a vehicle for countering gossip about them. (Figure 2) In his newspaper column of March 24, 1936, columnist Walter Winchell announced the imminent birth of the magazine:

The other midnight Rudy Vallee was telling us about his forthcoming magazine, to be christened 'Squawk.' The mag, he said, would be for the public which suffers from inaccuracies in newspapers and especially 'the columns.' His mag, he added, will 'tell the real story.'<sup>8</sup>

*Squawk's* only public existence, it seems, was as one more bit in Walter Winchell's newspaper gossip column. There is no evidence that any issues of the magazine were ever published. A mock-up of the first issue turned up in Rudy Vallee's estate after his death in 1986; it was bought by an antiques dealer who sold it to me, over Ebay, several years ago. Winchell's anecdote allows us to date the magazine, whose prototype contains no masthead, no information on its editors, no address of publication. Rudy Vallee planned to launch *Squawk* with the collaboration of entertainment celebrities, as a vehicle through which they might respond to claims about their private lives published in the gossip columns of the time. The unsigned editorial offers a condemnation of celebrity journalism, faulting it, in particular, for the speed with which it rushed unsubstantiated innuendo into print. ('Thanks in part to the pressure

brought to bear on the press by its rival, the radio news flash, the dead line of the news office becomes a dread boss.<sup>9)</sup>

*Squawk's* intended practice was to reprint or summarize a piece of published celebrity gossip, then offer, to the star who had been targeted, a chance to respond. The mock-up of *Squawk's* first issue repeats a *Hollywood Reporter* story claiming that Katherine Hepburn had splashed Ginger Rogers with a drink at a Hollywood nightclub. Below the summary, and in her own words, Katherine Hepburn responds, explaining that she and Ginger Rogers remain friends, and that she had merely, and accidentally, spilled a glass of water in Ginger Rogers' presence. Following several such 'corrections,' and pages devoted to sports and humour, the magazine concludes with two pages in which Rudy Vallee himself, at exhausting length, reproduces (and holds up for mockery) a series of headlines ostensibly containing falsehoods about himself and the state of his career.

*Squawk* was a word which circulated widely within U.S. print culture of the early 1930s, fading away as the decade wore on. 'Squawk' figured most prominently as part of the word 'squawkies', employed since 1930 or so as a term of derision for talkies, for motion pictures offering dialogue, music and sound effects. Eric Knight, author of the hugely famous novel *Lassie Came Home*, took credit for coining the term 'squawkies', but it was widely used by others, like comedian Will Rogers, who cultivated a curmudgeonly hostility to the novelty of talking pictures.<sup>10</sup> Less widely acknowledged, however, is the way in which *squawking* came to stand as emblematic of a broader cultural sensibility based on the loud intrusion of vulgarity into public space. This intrusion was intermedial. The term 'squawking' was used most often to condemn talking pictures, but a squawky culture was seen to be strengthened through the aforementioned conjoining of radio, phonograph records, talking films and new, telegraphic forms of celebrity journalism. These media were all seen to emphasize the sharply sensational, and to express that sensation in new, noisy ways.

The historical coincidence of sound film and commercialized radio in the United States is regularly noted in histories of either medium. Less commonly acknowledged is the way in which forms of print culture mobilized this atmosphere of noisy sensation to revise their own relationship to the culture of gossip and celebrity. The radius of intermediality at work here extended to some of the lower forms of American print culture in the late 1920s and 1930s: the scandal magazines, risqué magazines of sensation, and weekly tabloid newspapers which flourished, particularly in New York, until most of them were shut down by judicial campaigns launched with regularity from 1932 onwards. These magazines and newspapers worked to find a place within a new environment characterized by the competition between noisy media. Even as they laboured to add to this noise, many of these periodicals found their purpose in commenting cynically and critically upon the perceived debasement of new electronic media. Just as they regularly denounced the squawking inconsequentiality of talking films, they were inventing forms which conveyed something of the noisy restlessness of these films, or which captured the crackling contemporaneity of the urban voices now filling audiovisual media.

Figure 3 shows the cover of the first issue of a magazine called *Squawkies*. That magazine (retitled *Hollywood Squawkies* with its third issue) was launched in New York in



Figure 3. *Squawkies*. Vol. 1, no. 1, August 1933.

1933, and does not seem to have survived beyond the end of the year. The magazine's publisher, Joseph Burten, had followed a trajectory common among publishers working at this level within the U.S. magazine industry. From ribald, colourful magazines of cultural commentary in the 1920s, Burten had descended, by the early 1930s, into the world of the quasi-pornographic, 'spicy' periodical. The history of Burten's flagship title, *Burten's Follies*, reflected these shifts with particular clarity. In its first issues, from the early 1920s, Burten and his writers clearly lived and moved within the cultural worlds (those of Greenwich Village and Broadway) about which they wrote. By the early 1930s, they had become spectators confronting a media-dominated show business in which they had no place, and whose sensational excesses they could only exploit from outside. *Burten's Follies*, by the mid-1930s, was one more spicy magazine filled with recycled nude images and authorless jokes. The withdrawal of Burten's own voice from his magazines was complete by World War II, when he became a low-level publisher of men's pin-up magazines featuring little or no editorial comment.

The megaphone on the cover of *Squawkies's* first issue is both the stereotypical tool of the Hollywood film director and a way for the magazine to shout itself into public perception. An inside feature, the 'Private Guide to Screechwood,' describes the ways in which howling and moaning had become the typical behaviours of the Hollywood star. Elsewhere in the first issue, 'Snitchell's Squawkies Snatchers' is both a parody of columnist Walter Winchell and a commentary on the perceived idiocy of talking films. *Squawkies* was, quite explicitly, a satirical magazine about the talkies and their degraded chatter. It was almost as concerned, however, with the gossip columnists and radio announcers whose rise to prominence seemed to coincide with the cinema's transition

to sound. All were treated as fully complicit in the ascendancy of a newly cacophonous culture. The first issue of *Squawkies* announced the imminent publication of a companion magazine, to be titled *Radio Razzberries*.

*Squawkies* may be understood as both a degraded form of the Hollywood fan magazine and a specialized version of the early 1930s spicy periodical. (Its inside pages feature a great deal of nudity, much of it in elaborately staged drawings of unclothed Hollywood stars by Leo Manso, later an important American collage artist and art teacher.) The most useful genealogy, for my purposes here, sets *Squawkies* within a cycle of humour and cartoon magazines which erupted in New York City between 1932 and 1934. In this cycle, magazines appeared with titles which captured and helped to enact a degradation of language. These titles were often expletives, phrases used to denounce falsehood or exaggeration, and they were more typical of spoken than of written language. *Aw Nerts!*, *Ballyhoo*, *Bunk*, *Hooley*, and *Baloney* were some of these magazines, and while none of these titles referred explicitly to radio or cinema, they were nourished by an amplification and circulation of slang forms for which sound films and radio were responsible. These magazines typically mocked the new, slangy orality of 1930s media culture even as their titles sought to approximate it. In contrast, the best-known satirical magazines of the 1920s, like *Judge* and *College*, bore quiet titles with respectable lexical pedigrees.

### Bits and Brevities

One of those who wrote for the magazine *Squawkies* was Stephen G. Clow, a Canadian who had moved to New York City in the early years of the twentieth century. From 1917 to 1925, Stephen G. Clow edited a magazine called *Broadway Brevities and Society Gossip*, a key artefact in the transition from the 19<sup>th</sup> century society magazine to the 20<sup>th</sup> century gossip tabloid. In his biography of Broadway journalist and producer Mark Hellinger, Jim Bishop claimed that ‘no paper has ever aroused as much fear and hatred as Mr. Clow’s editorial production.’<sup>11</sup> Stephen G. Clow was indicted in 1924, and convicted the following year, for having used *Broadway Brevities* as the basis of a successful blackmail racket. Over a period lasting at least five years, Clow had approached individuals prominent in show business or high society, threatening to expose their secrets if they did not buy advertisements in his magazine. Gerrit Lloyd (the advertising manager for film director D. W. Griffith), Ziegfield Follies performer Helen Lee Worthing, actress (and Countess) Peggy Hopkins Joyce Morner, industrialist Otto H. Kahn, film executive Jesse Lasky and ‘yeast king’ Jules Fleischmann were among those who confirmed having paid Clow for his silence.<sup>12</sup>

At several levels, *Broadway Brevities* signalled a shift in the textual rendering of gossip and sensation. Across its eight-year history, we see its gaze shift from a residual, nineteenth century New York high society (the world of the *Social Register* and of prominent mercantile families) to a twentieth century celebrity culture of entertainment stars and newly-risen entrepreneurs. While the cover of each issue contained the publicity portrait of a Broadway performer, and no indications as to the content

within, the revelations inside grew more daring and explicit in the magazine's final years. The rhetoric of *Broadway Brevities* draped the punchy, declarative sensationalism of an ascendant tabloid journalism on top of the ornate, suggestive style more typical of an earlier period. In its whispery coyness, the following paragraph, from a feature entitled 'Mirrors of Mayfair', typifies that earlier sensibility:

Burton Plumb might be mentioned as another of the crowd beguiled by the Circe of the Seine. Burton was at one time a great pal of Edmund L. Goodman, now the head of 'Finchley's,' and also of Archibald Hutchinson, who inherited fortunes from both his father and mother and who stops at the Netherlands on his brief visits here. Years ago 'Hutchy' was inseparable from the late Loring Andrews, rich interior decorator of Cincinnati, old enough to be his father.<sup>13</sup>

Like virtually everything in *Broadway Brevities*' recurrent 'Mirrors of Mayfair' feature, this item hints at same-sex relationships among the rich and socially prominent. It works through the deferral of revelation, through what we might think of as a textual curvature, a slow delineation of relationships which circles back on a list of names to implicate all of them within a lightly suggested scandal. With its subtle hints of more explicit scandals awaiting exposure, this was a mode of gossip writing whose pressures, steadily applied, perfectly served the blackmailer's enterprise. Five years after his conviction for mail fraud (the technical base for his conviction), *Time* magazine repeated, without comment, Clow's claim that he was the 'the most famous and wicked blackmailer in world history.'<sup>14</sup>

Elsewhere in *Broadway Brevities*, we see a move away from this textual curvature, towards the stripped-down forms of the modern gossip column, with its brief bits and three dot ellipses. By the turn of the twentieth century, Nick Mount suggests, newspapers and magazines had come to cherish short, self-contained paragraphs of text, both for their usefulness in plugging holes in a page's layout, and for their affinities with a fast-paced age of diminished attention<sup>15</sup>. While the gossipy paragraph remained a staple of the society magazine well into the 1920s, it would be displaced, by decade's end, by the gossipy 'bit', brief words or phrases strung together in a column and separated by three dots. The best known practitioner of the elliptical gossip column (and, possibly, its inventor) was Walter Winchell, who popularized the form in his columns of the late 1920s for the *New York Daily Graphic*. Across a broad corpus of newspaper columns and magazine features, we may trace the ascendancy of the elliptical gossipy bit through the mid 1930s.

One part of the history of ellipsis reaches back into book history, into the genealogy of excerpting and summarizing. Another strand will reach forward, into the writing of Celine and other modernist novelists, for whom the ellipsis is taken as emblematic of a breakdown of authorial coherence. The three-dot ellipses of Winchell and other gossip columnists have been grasped, more intermedially, as attempts to approximate the sounds of inter-war technologies, as manifestations of modernist sonic sensibilities. Neil Gabler notes that the dots gave Winchell's column 'a jazzy, almost musical look; items now seemed to cascade down the page, each with its own urgency.' Gabler quotes, as well, Ben Hecht's suggestion that Winchell wrote 'like a man honking in a traffic

jam.’<sup>16</sup> I would add, as well, that the ellipses of Winchell’s cascading columns look on the page like the pauses for breath required by hasty readers. In the holes they set within blocks of typography, they are part of that transition which John Guillory has described, in his study of the business memorandum, as ‘the shift from continuous prose to a graphically organized page.’<sup>17</sup>

In 1930, following his release from Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, Stephen G. Clow launched a new version of *Broadway Brevities*. For a few issues, the revived title resembled its predecessor of the 1917–1925 period, with covers devoid of all but a few words and interior pieces organized around gossipy paragraphs. In 1930, this version of *Brevities* could not help but seem outmoded, a coy form in an era of extroverted sensationalizing. In 1931, the title was launched once again, this time in newspaper format, as *Brevities: America’s First Tabloid Weekly*.<sup>18</sup> Like *New York Tattler*, the new *Brevities* was a striking inversion of those society magazines (like the original *Brevities* itself) which had hid their sensations behind staid, incommunicative covers. The new *Brevities*, like other entertainment tabloid papers of the early 1930s, exhausted its sensations on noisy front covers, with little but bland inconsequentiality left to fill its interiors.

Clearly wounded by his loss of influence in the years since his imprisonment, Stephen G. Clow set out in his revived *Brevities* to accuse the highly successful Walter Winchell of having stolen his formal innovations from Clow himself. In a long diatribe, in the May, 1930 issue of *The New Broadway Brevities*, Clow referred to Winchell as a parasite who had ‘fattened off *Brevities*’<sup>19</sup>. Then, over two packed pages, Clow reprinted items from the original *Broadway Brevities* of the 1910s and 1920s – items in which, he claimed, one could find virtually all of Winchell’s stylistic eccentricities, but introduced by others, like Clow himself. The lengthiest piece reprinted as evidence of Winchell’s theft was a column from the August, 1921 issue of *Broadway Brevities*, presumably written by Clow himself:

Among other enchanting ‘Hollywood’ news is that Mary Pickford denies an air is expected at the Fairbanks home ... Of course it being quite immaterial if there were ... Betty Clark and Artie Collins, the dears, first goo-gooed at a dinner dance ... Said that Kate McDonald, she of the dying duck roles, is engaged to a young sassiety millionaire B whatever that may import ... Shirley Mason and Bernard Durning, darn him, stood up for Edith Hallor when she inflicted herself on Jack Dillon ... May Collins ‘blushingly’ continues to deny her engagement to the Knight of the Custard Pies ... Oh, you Purviance!<sup>20</sup>

Here, Clow suggested, was the complete stylistic repertory of the late 1920s gossip columnist, a half-decade before Winchell had made it his own. We may never know who invited the three-dot ellipsis form for gossip, so prominent in this extract. In his biography of Walter Winchell, Neal Gabler claims that Winchell had introduced it in 1927, in his column for the *New York Graphic*.<sup>21</sup> However, neither that nor the 1921 column offered up by Clow constitutes its first appearance. Winchell, in fact, had employed the three-dot ellipsis as an organizing principle in one of his early columns for a trade paper called *Vaudeville News*, in 1920,<sup>22</sup> but there is no certainty that this was its first appearance either.

## Fixity and Flow

The ambiguous status of the elliptical gossip column as a communicational form is striking. On the one hand, the string of items, with clear divisions between them and a paring of each to their essentials, fuels an idea of information as flow, as a substance easily commodified and transplanted from one place of presentation to another. The common observation that the three dots of the gossip column were like the ticking of a telegrapher's keys has reinforced this reading. In this, the modern column exemplifies that process, described by James Carey and others, whereby news becomes a movable, divisible and quantifiable commodity, easily syndicated and poured into the constrained spaces of the newspaper which hosts it.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the syndication of gossip columns like that of Walter Winchell was crucial in the standardization of the form in the late 1920s.

On the other hand, though, the elliptical gossip column is a graphic form, fixed on pages such that its dots and gaps order a page in pre-ordained ways. In this, the elliptical gossip column embodies the fixity of tabloid culture. In Joanne Drucker's words, it offers a marked form of typography, self-conscious about its occupation of public surfaces and explicit in the ways it organizes such surfaces as fields of human attention.<sup>24</sup> Through its size, its arrangement on the page, and the calculated graphic tension between elements, the elliptical column recasts the private stuff of scandal in the public forms of graphic display. It does so less spectacularly, of course, than the tabloid headline, whose marked typography more obviously strains to approximate the noisiness of audiophonic media. The headline, however, has no obvious equivalents or antecedents in electronic media; its closest ties are to public signage. The pulses and gaps of the elliptical gossip column were seen, from the very beginning, to resemble those of electronic or machine-based communication. With its quickly changing, multiple registers of irony, sarcasm, anger and insinuation, the gossip column worked best when readers were familiar with its author's voice, and that was only possible in an age of audiovisual media. By the 1930s, the reception of newspaper gossip columns by Walter Winchell and others was inflected by familiarity with their equivalents on radio, where columnists read out items against the sonic background of noisy typewriters or a clicking telegraph key.

### Notes

The images accompanying this essay are provided by the author (collection of Will Straw).

<sup>1</sup> Virginia Pope, 'The Changing Cycle of Entertainment/After a Long Era of Shadows and Voices Comes a New Call for the Actor', *New York Times* (16 October 1932).

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Pope, pg. SM7.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Kahn, *Noise Water Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), p.123.

<sup>4</sup> David Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p.111.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p.1.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Warner, 'Zones of Privacy', in *What's Left of Theory: New Work on the Politics of Literary Theory*, ed. Judith Butler, John Guillory and Kendall Thomas (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), p.102.

<sup>7</sup> Lenny Kaye, *You Call It Madness: The Sensuous Song of the Croon* (New York: Villard Books, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Walter Winchell, 'Broadway', syndicated column, *Port Arthur News* (24 March 1936), p.4.

<sup>9</sup> Unsigned, 'Foreword', *Squawk*, no date, no pagination, pp.1–2.

<sup>10</sup> For claims about Knight's 'invention' of the term, see the discussion on the American Dialect Society listserve, archived at <<http://listserv.linguistlist.org/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0001D&L=ads-l&P=R1218>> [15/01/2008].

<sup>11</sup> Jim Bishop, *The Mark Hellinger Story* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), p.55.

<sup>12</sup> For a lengthier account of Clow's trial, and his life in general, see Will Straw, 'Traffic in Scandal: The Case of Broadway Brevities', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 73:4 (2004), pp.947–971.

<sup>13</sup> Unsigned, 'Mirrors of Mayfair', *Broadway Brevities*, 3:20 (June 1924), p.17.

<sup>14</sup> 'The Press', *Time* (11 August 1930), p.23.

<sup>15</sup> Nick Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), p.53.

<sup>16</sup> Neal Gabler, *Winchell: Gossip, Power and the Culture of Celebrity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> John Guillory, 'The memo and modernity', *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2004), p.126.

<sup>18</sup> For images of the covers of *Broadway Brevities* from all periods in its history, see my website, 'Print Culture and Urban Visuality', <<http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/ahcs/cultureofcities/Print%20Culture.html>>

<sup>19</sup> Stephen G. Clow, 'Parasites Who Have Fattened Off Brevities. Our Original and Unique Style of Banter Copied Everywhere B Columnist Winchell on the Most Brazen and Contemptuous imitator B Boasted "Winchellisms" But an Echo of Brevities (1916–1924)', *The New Broadway Brevities* 1:4 (1930), pp.32–33.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen G. Clow, 'Parasites Who Have Fattened Off Brevities', pp.32–33. I have shortened the text Clow reproduces for reasons of space.

<sup>21</sup> Neal Gabler, *Winchell: Gossip, Power and the Culture of Celebrity*, p.80.

<sup>22</sup> The three-dot ellipsis is used in Walter Winchell's 'Merciless Truth', *Vaudeville News* (20 August 1920), p.2.

<sup>23</sup> James Carey, 'Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph', in *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp.201–30.

<sup>24</sup> Johanne Drucker, *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909–1923* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p.94.

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