



# All the News Unfit to Print: How Things Were... and How They Were Reported

*Eric Burns*

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**All the News Unfit to Print: How Things Were... and How They Were Reported** Eric Burns  
You really can't believe everything you read . . .

A premature newswire report announces the end of World War I, spurring wild celebrations in American streets days before the actual treaty was signed. A St. Louis newspaper prints reviews of theatrical performances that never took place—they had been canceled due to bad weather. New York newspaper reporters plant evidence in the apartment of the man accused of kidnapping the Lindbergh baby and then call him a liar in the courtroom once the trial begins.

These are just a few of the many wrongs that have been reported as right over two centuries of American history. *All the News Unfit to Print* puts the media under the microscope to expose the many types of mistakes, hoaxes, omissions, and lies that have skewed our understanding of the past, and reveals the range of reasons and motivations—from boredom and haste to politics and greed—behind them. Reviewing a host of journalistic slip-ups involving Ben Franklin, Mark Twain, William Randolph Hearst, Theodore H. White, and many others, this book covers the stories behind the stories to refine incorrect "first drafts" of history from the Revolutionary War era to more recent times.

"*All the News Unfit to Print* is a rollicking joyride that careens through the ridiculous, the odd, and the serious malfeasances in American journalistic history and reminds us of the difference between news and facts."

—**Neal Gabler**, author of *Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination*

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