

As a result of improvements in education, the rate of literacy in America rose from 70 to nearly 90 %. As more and more people became literate, the number of newspapers, books, and magazines increased. Technology also played a part in the rise of the print media. Improvements in paper, printing presses, typesetting, and photography assured higher quality.

Photography had been around for some time but the invention of the Kodak camera (1888) made photo-journalism a reality. Reporters were now able to take pictures of events as they happened.

Photography made advertisements more appealing and profitable. Newspapers and magazines carried an ever-increasing number of ads aimed at the growing population of consumers in America.

- Newspapers contained much more than attractive advertisements and pictures
  - Newspapers of the late 1800's contained **sensational stories** written to excite the imaginations of their readers.
    - These papers were geared toward the common person
      - They used black, bold headlines that were written to grab the attention of readers
  - A primary goal of the editors was **to increase circulation** of the paper
    - **Reporters were not beyond creating news** if it helped to sell papers
      - Example: Henry Stanley's (New York Herald) journey to Africa to find explorer David Livingstone.
      - **Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst owned the leading newspapers of the day**
        - Pulitzer's paper emphasized "**sin, sex, and sensation**"
        - Hearst competed by filling his papers with exaggerated stories about things such as scandals
          - Eventually, the competition between Pulitzer and Hearst was so great that they actually helped push the U.S. into war with Spain
- The interrelation between industrialism, immigration, and progressive reform created a climate in which businesses needed literate people (largely immigrants) to work for them. Progressive reforms provided the education that created a core of literate consumers. Technological improvements brought about mass media, including the yellow press, for them to consume.