

The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks 1641-1649

Joad Raymond

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The first weekly English newsbooks appeared in November 1641, on the eve of the civil war. Though they provoked animosity and fanned the flames of civil war, they have survived almost without interruption to the present day, transformed into the modern newspaper. The Invention of the Newspaper is the first detailed account of the origins and early development of the English newspaper, using a wealth of new evidence to show the causes of the first newsbooks, and their many and complex roles in the turbulent society in which they participated. Newsbooks were widely read and exerted considerable influence not only over immediate perceptions of news, but also over subsequent histories of the seventeenth-century, extending even to the present day. Using and synthesizing approaches from literary criticism, history, and the "sociology of texts," The Invention of the Newspaper shows how newsbooks transformed print culture, fed the public hunger for news, and in turn created a market for news periodical. Charting the newsbook's development as a form and a commercial enterprise, its literary qualities, and its relationship to other means of communication, The Invention of the Newspaper shows the newsbook's gradual and irresistible dominance of the market for information.



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Alberto Meyer:

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