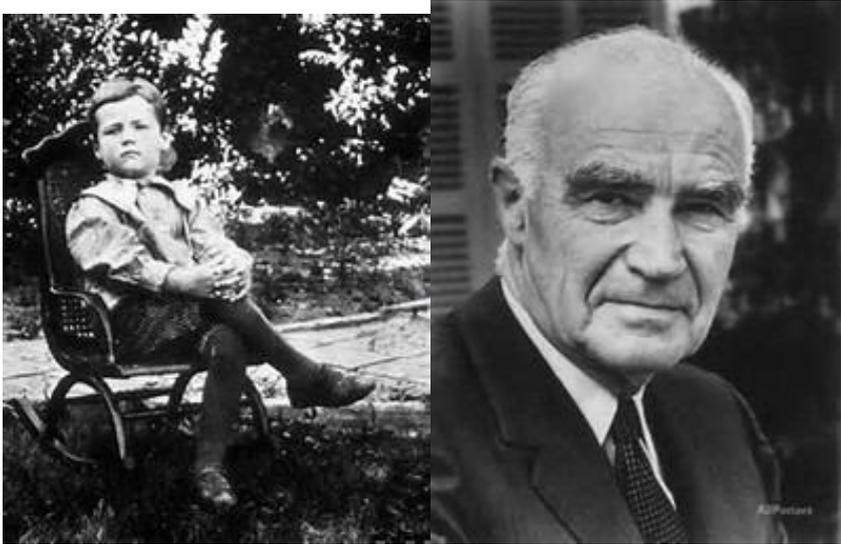


US National Standard in Culture

Harry Luce - Time Magazine



MOSES: In the few pages, it is that you see the mission that Harry Luce was on. Son of a missionary he is one who aspires to “interpret the news from radio and local sources” must have a sterling standard, the National Standard.

NATHAN the Judge: You see from the choices he made that his duty lies in journalism. He had a distinct dislike for business. And at one time, the United States was not as it is now, single-mindedly absent directly to be only serving representation of business.

MOSES: In the National Standard, the need to define his allegiance must be forthright, as this is the position of the People’s representation.

"I'm sure they like you," the friend answered. "Then why don't they ever ask me over for dinner or an evening of cards?"). But he was a curiously artless man, graceless and brusque and lonely, rude inevitably even to those whose favors and good will he coveted; he could only be what he was, he could never be facile or slick, though on frequent occasions his magazines were.

He was a big man, little ideas and little concepts and little men did not interest him; he was always in search of giants. He was ever restless, ever dissatisfied, he was not a man of inner peace. He was fascinated by men; men, not the great rhythms of history or economics, were the key to the past and he was a big man himself. He was a major figure of American journalism, the leading innovator of more than two decades, and perhaps only Walter Lippmann in a different way was as important a figure of the same era. He was also a major figure in American politics, and he frequently crossed back and forth between the two, as did his magazines, so that Luce's printed version of what he felt events should have been often obscured what they in fact had been. He and his magazines would be the true voice of American life at the midcentury, what he had hoped would be the American Century, the real voice of Christian Capitalism, closer to what the country's real drive and impulse were than the countless critics who decried him and what they deemed to be his conservatism.

→ He was the son of a missionary and he took his Presbyterianism seriously. Very seriously. It hovered above his life, forcing him to work ever harder to exert his will in greater areas and to take as little joy from his material successes as was humanly possible. Religion was a living force, it required genuine obligations, hard work, and sacrifice, permissiveness was never to be rewarded. He was the Calvinist as journalist, as a poorly briefed Richard Nixon once found out. Nixon had come to dinner at the Luce headquarters before the election in 1960, hoping to get the Luceian nod. Someone had clearly briefed Nixon about Luce and his religion, telling Nixon that a discussion of predestination was the key to Luce's heart. And so in the middle of the dinner when they were all talking about religion, Nixon said that if he were not a Quaker he would rather be a Presbyterian than anything else, because it was so easy. There was a long moment of stunned silence at the table, all the editors looking at Luce, waiting for him to explode. For about thirty seconds the air hung silent and then Luce decided to let it go, but it did not lead Richard Nixon down the corridor to Harry Luce's heart. Son of a missionary, Luce was part missionary himself, and like any true missionary, he had both mission and vision; he knew what his calling was. He started *Fortune* magazine because as an emancipated young capitalist in the late twenties he thought most American businessmen were narrow sleepy Babbitts unworthy of their roles and their duties and he wanted to seek out the handful of worthy businessmen and hold them up as examples. Similarly he was fascinated by religion and philosophy and was a serious lay theological scholar who did more than anyone else to interest his fellow Americans in these subjects and to popularize men like Niebuhr and Tillich. But he did as little as he could to popularize Sartre. He

did not like Sartre, thought him too vague, too fuzzy, and even more than he disliked Sartre, he disliked Sartre's existentialism, which he suspected would inspire a kind of permissiveness that could threaten true Western culture. So he worked long and hard to keep Jean-Paul Sartre off the cover of *Time*. His magazines would play no part in the propagation of ideas and values unworthy of true Western culture. He would strengthen not weaken the West.

He was large on the landscape. Always the editor, always in charge. Roy Alexander, a managing editor who had come from the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, where Pulitzer was always known as "the proprietor," for a time referred to Luce that way, but Luce did not like it, "proprietor" implied just business ownership, and he was the *editor*, let there be no doubt about it, and just to make his point he had a tendency to patronize his top business associates. It was a means of letting them know that *Time* was first and foremost an editorial product and then and only then a business success; thus he, Luce, was first and foremost a journalist, and only afterward an eminently successful businessman. His professional accomplishments were dazzling. He was the man who invented the concept of a weekly news magazine. Once when talking with students at Brandeis, he was informed that he had no right to call *Time* a news magazine since it was full of opinions largely his own. His response was very simple and typical: "Well, I invented the idea, so I guess I can call it anything I like." With *Life* magazine, a publication global and dazzling, he brought photojournalism to a height never reached before. With both these magazines he quickly outdistanced and thus powerfully influenced the tepid, bland, and often ignorant journalism of the day; *Time* in the thirties, run by a bunch of green young Yale graduates, was in effect teaching older newspapermen how to report, showing that there were greater dimensions to stories than had previously been permitted. Politically he was a belligerent democrat, a muscular Christian, as hopeless an Americanophile as only someone born twelve thousand miles away could be; very early in this century he sensed the coming of America's new power and range, America would be the superpower in the super-century.

Even on the eve of World War II, when the nation's future seemed darkest, he foresaw the American Century, and he almost seemed to welcome the challenge of the war, it would test America's worthiness. Though he was much mocked, in time it did become the American Century. Yet this caused new problems, for the American Century brought an arrogance of power and values that bothered his critics, who worried about both America's imperial course after the war and *Time*'s enthusiasm for that course. For him and for many of the elite of his generation, born as they were near the turn of the century, too young for World War I, the idea of America's attaining the full zenith of its power was an idealistic one, a true goal. For it was, he thought, an age when America and Americans had to be educated to their power and their responsibilities. To him the idea that the American Century might bring

too much power was totally alien, to him the danger was of *too little* American power. His American Century was a noble concept, convinced as he was of the rectitude of our culture and our values and our energy; the world would want these same things, on our terms and by our definitions, and it was our clear duty to spread them. He would stand watch to ensure that our politicians matched and fulfilled their responsibilities. No wonder, then, that men like Walter Lippmann and Bill Fulbright, men increasingly full of doubts, were never favorites of *Time* magazine; they were clearly unworthy of the challenge ahead. In truth, he despised them. But all this made Luce and *Time* the most important and influential conservative-centrist force in the country for more than two decades. He was one of the first true *national* propagandists; he spoke to the whole nation on *national* issues, one man with one magazine speaking with one voice, and reaching the entire country. He was not interested in regional or parochial concerns and he tended either to belittle them or to ignore them. Rather, his vision was of the whole nation.

It was, however, the irony of his life that the more passionately he believed in something, the more ruthlessly he wanted to sell it, the more his own prejudices showed and offended readers. ("Mister Henry Luce is like a shoe salesman," said Earl Long, a governor of Louisiana who was not an admirer, "but all the other shoe-store owners stock all different sizes of shoes, but Mr. Luce, he only sells shoes that fit himself.") In areas where he was less passionate, less committed, he was often far more influential. He cared more deeply about politics than anything else, but curiously it was the back of the book—art, education, books—that probably touched his fellow citizens more immediately than the front, where Luce's opinions on political issues and the future of the West were more clearly outlined. His greatest influence may have been in broadening American culture, in involving millions of middlebrow Americans in the arts, in theater, in religion and education.

Similarly, for editors of countless newspapers, he broadened the definition of news. Until he arrived, news was politics and crime, but Luce's curiosity recognized every tiny part of the social fabric—medicine, the law, even the press itself—as something newsworthy. He was as much educator as he was journalist and propagandist. Yet he had a strong sense of the nature of his reader and he would on occasion, when he thought the magazine was becoming too eastern, tell his sophisticated staff, "I want more corn in the magazine. Yes, I know you don't like it, you're too Ivy League and sophisticated, but we need more corn in it." If he was going to lead them to a promised land, he was not, on the way, going to lose touch with his following. He had a powerful sense of what people should read, what was good for them to read, and an essential belief worthy of the best journalist, that any subject of importance could be made interesting. Thus the cover story, the personalizing of issues so that a lay reader could become more interested and more involved in serious reading matter. The cover story alone had a major impact on the journalism of our age.

He had, long before polls and demographic studies became fashionable,

He refused to see the Communists coming, and refused to accept their take-over, and when they did win, he adopted a policy of non-recognition toward events. China was not to his liking, therefore it did not exist. China remained Nationalist Chiang, even in exile on a small island. And here the role of the Luce publications in the dark era that followed the fall of China was crucial.

Time helped foster a belief that China had gone Communist not because of deep historical forces culminating in revolution (forces which would prove as difficult for the Soviets to deal with as they would for Americans), but because of conspiracy.

MOSES: In the representation of the China famine, he refused to accept that this was not but a conspiracy that the Communist had taken over, and in this day, from the teachings of Nostredame, you see this is what happened with the Long March to consolidate power to take over the country militarily.

Nancy of Oregon: You see that representation of the People in his standing for justice in the face of one such as Roosevelt who sold out after World War II, the nations of Eastern Europe to be behind the Iron Curtain.

Mathzedes: You see the representation of the People of Walter Cronkite and Betsy in his reporting of Vietnam that finally ended the war.

MOSES: The word used of this role as “opinion” is not exact but what Luce uses of “nonpartisan reporting.” What political party can they represent it is only one, yet they themselves must have principle as in the Ten Commandments Religion.

Harry Luce: They have a significant responsibility to represent what the people do not have in hand as the news.

Betsy Cronkite: They have a considerable responsibility to uphold the National Standard in seeing through the arguments of the Communists and barbarians.

MOSES: Thus you see that prior to Luce of Time Magazine, the reporting was on 1. politics and crime. And he took on the accountability and responsibility to make it one of 2. propaganda, educator and journalist.

GOD HELIOS: You can see that the media has reverted back to #1, reporting politics and crime in the news and the majority is on sports and family breakup methodology.

The radio was originally used to broadcast for the news twice a day from the President. Roosevelt's speeches to the American public every day was to show what was occurring to the nation. Thus do try to understand that the Military Law Council broadcasting station has a history to it.

Harry Luce: Yes, I am gone since 1967. And you see how corrupt the media has become. The National Standard of both TV and print media is healthy and wise propaganda.

J. Edgar Hoover: The National Standard is education to the highest cause and principles.

Harry Luce: Thus I am Calvinist and I did not know about John Calvin, however the work from the days of Calvinism must be continually taught, yes? You have 50% unemployed, then you must see to continually showing people *working*, not as you have now, playing football! Sitting by the pool and insinuating having sex.

MOSES: And you have been told already that for 10 years that the TV media must be restored to not enter the living room, to not be a violence. The law being that for a child to come close to the TV in the living room is too close.