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#### ABSTRACT

#### IDENTIFICATION

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#### PAPER

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**Title:** The telegraph as an omen of the future in James W. Carey's vision

##### **Abstract**

In the history of modern communication, after the development of the printing press, the telegraph unleashed a revolution in communications. Today, Internet is in many ways its heir. Reflections on the telegraph may open up perspectives concerning tendencies, possibilities and pitfalls of the Internet.

The telegraph has been well explored in important literature on communication and media which tends to emphasize the history of this technology, its social context and institutional meaning [e.g. Robert L. Thompson, 1947, Tom Standage, 2007 [1998]. James W. Carey, the North-American critical cultural studies' mentor, in his essay "Technology and Ideology. The Case of the Telegraph" (2009 [1983]), suggests a distinctive approach. In the telegraph, Carey sees the prototype of many subsequent commercial empires based on science and technology, a pioneer model for complex business management; an example of interest struggle for the patents control; an inductor of changes both in language and in structures of knowledge; and a promoter of a futurist and utopian thought of information technologies.

Having in mind a revolution in communications promoted by the Internet, this paper revisits this seminal essay to explore its great attainment, as well as the problems of this kind of approach which conceives the innovation of the telegraph as a metaphor for all the innovations announcing the modern stage of history and determining still today the major lines of development in modern communication systems.