



## ALBUM [DISABLED NEWSIES \(PRIMARY SOURCE LEARNING ACTIVITY\)](#)

### Album Description

This learning activity uses photographs and newspaper articles to learn about disabled newsies (newsboys) in the early 1900s.

\*Note: Before starting this exercise, discuss respectful language and historical terms (like crippled) which are considered offensive today.

Consider starting with the Observe, Reflect, Question approach to [analyze the newspaper articles and photographs.](#)

For background information about newsies, I suggest starting with this [LOC Research Guide.](#)

### Potential Discussion Questions

1. Did anything surprise you in these articles or photos?
2. Using specific examples from the sources, what was it like for newsies to live with a disability at the turn of the twentieth century?
3. How would you describe the newsie community? (were they competitive? did they support each other? etc.)
4. What were some of the ways people could become disabled at the turn of the twentieth century?
5. What types of mobility aids did some disabled newsies use?
6. Why do you think disabled children and adults might have worked as newsies (compared to other jobs)? What makes you think that?
7. What can we learn about community from these sources? How did newsies help/support each other? How did the broader community support the newsies?

Discussion questions for the news articles "Newsy's Handicap Removed"; "Takes Pity on Crippled Newsie"; and "When Tulsa and Muskogee's..."

1. What attitudes about people with disabilities do these articles express? What evidence is in the primary sources?
2. How have attitudes about people with disabilities changed since the early 1900s? How are they the same?

Additional questions can be found in the teaching notes for the individual sources.

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This source set can be put in conversation with:

- general newsy sources/exercises, which are already on the TPS Network
- the 1992 Disney musical movie "Newsies" (available on Disney+)
- lessons on child labor during the Progressive Era

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Alt text for the photographs is available on the LOC website. Alt text for the newspaper articles is available in the reference note section for each source.

**3 P.M. SOME OF THE BOYS AT A BUSY TROLLEY JUNCTION. 3 BROTHERS, SALVATORE, 9 YRS. (IN FRONT), JOSEPH, 11 YRS. (CRIPPLE), LEWIS, 13 YRS. (BETWEEN THESE 2). "WE WOULD BE MURDERED IF WE SHOP CRAPS." BOY AT LEFT SOLD ME PAIR OF DICE FOR 2 C[EN]TS. - WHAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR MORE. LOCATION: JERSEY CITY, NEW**



**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018677396/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1912 November.

Subject Headings: - Boys

- Newspaper vendors
- Amputees
- United States--New Jersey--Jersey City

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.
- In album: Street trades.
- Hine no. 3224.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

- General information about the National Child Labor Committee collection is available at:

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>

- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA



<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03816 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03816>

cph 3b39340 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b39340>

**ALBERT SCHAFFER, EIGHT YEAR OLD NEWSBOY WHO USUALLY BEGINS AT 8:00 A.M. SUNDAYS. SELLS SOME ON WEEK-DAYS. IS A CRIPPLE. MAKES ONE TO TWO DOLLARS A**



**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018677167/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1913 October.

Subject Headings: - Boys

- Newspaper vendors

- Amputees

- United States--Texas--Austin

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.

- In album: Street trades.

- Hine no. 3574.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

- General information about the National Child Labor Committee collection is available at:

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>

- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03882 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03882>

cph 3c15371 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c15371>

**SELLING ON MAIN STREET, 9:30 P.M. LEFT TO RIGHT: JOSEPH MAGUS, 10 YEARS OLD, 80 MELODY ST. GUY CASACALI, 12 YEARS OLD, 31 MAPLE ST. MORRIS STEIN, CRIPPLE, 14 YEARS OLD, 53 SULLIVAN ST. ASKED POLICEMAN ON CORNER WHERE THEY WERE SELLING, HOW LATE THEY STAYED OUT AT NIGHT. HE ANSWERED EVASIVELY; "AIN'T SUPPOSED TO BE OUT AFTER NINE O' CLOCK." LOCATION: ROCHESTER, NEW YORK**



**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018675507/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1910 February.

Subject Headings: - Boys

- Newspaper vendors
- People with disabilities
- Night work
- United States--New York (State)--Rochester

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.

- In album: Street trades.

- Hine no. 1249.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

- General information about the National Child Labor Committee collection is available at:

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>



- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

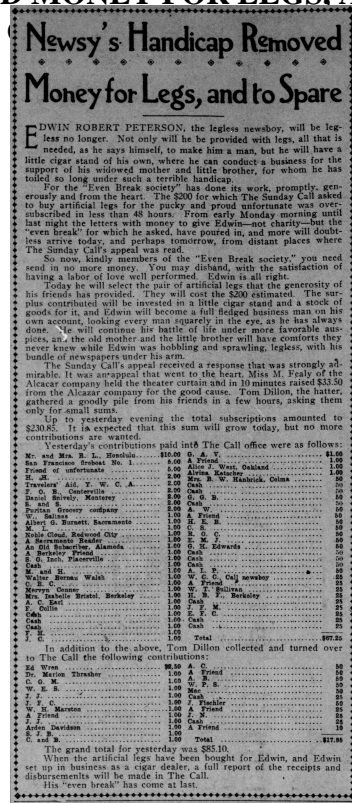
Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03420 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03420>



## NEWSY'S HANDICAP REMOVED MONEY FOR LEGS, AND TO SPARE (SAN FRANCISCO



### Teaching Notes:

Additional discussion questions:

- Why do you think Edwin Peterson insisted that donations for his artificial legs were "an even break," not "charity"? What connotations do each of those words carry?
- Based on the article's title "Newsy's Handicap Removed," how is handicap understood in this context? (Is it the loss of legs or the loss of mobility?)
- What accommodations do schools and work places make to support people with disabilities today?

As a class, students could put together pictures of accommodations.

Students who are comfortable could also share their own experiences with accommodations. But no one should be put on the spot or asked to speak for a whole group. The teacher might choose to broach this subject with students individually first.

Teachers might also use this article to talk about the differences between equality versus equity.

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1912-11-13/ed-1/seq-18/>



## Alt Text

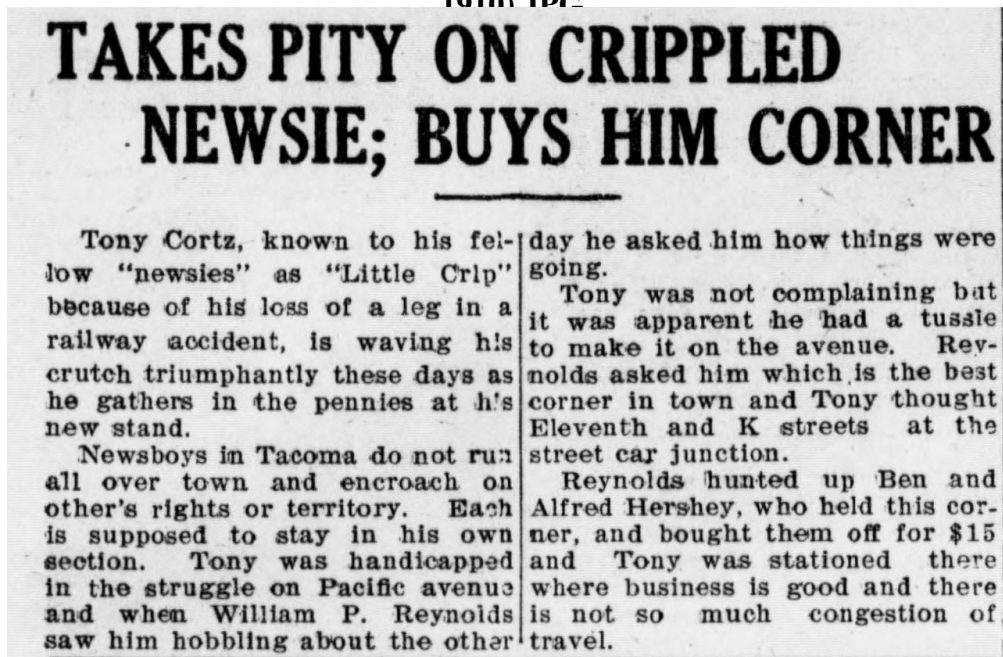
Edwin Robert Peterson, the legless newsboy, will be legless no longer. Not only will he be provided with legs, all that is needed, as he says himself, to make him a man, but he will have a little cigar stand of his own, where he can conduct a business for the support of his widowed mother and little brother, for whom he has toiled so long under such a terrible handicap. For the "Even Break society" has done its work, promptly, generously and from the heart. The \$200 for which The Sunday Call asked to buy artificial legs for the pucky and proud unfortunate was over-subscribed in less than 48 hours. From early Monday morning until last night the letters with money to give Edwin—not charity—but the "even break" for which he asked, have poured in, and more will doubtless arrive today, and perhaps tomorrow, from distant places where The Sunday Call's appeal was read. So now, kindly members of the "Even Break society," you need send in no more money. You may disband, with the satisfaction of having a labor of love well performed. Edwin is all right. Today he will select the pair of artificial legs that the generosity of his friends has provided. They will cost the \$200 estimated. The surplus contributed will be invested in a little cigar stand and a stock of goods for it, and Edwin will become a full-fledged business man on his own account, looking every man squarely in the eye. as he has always done. He will continue his battle of life under more favorable auspices, and the old mother and the little brother will have comforts they never knew while Edwin was hobbling and sprawling, legless, with his bundle of newspapers under his arm. The Sunday Call's appeal received a response that was strongly admirable. It was an appeal that went to the heart. Miss M. Fealy of the Alcazar company held the theater curtain and in 10 minutes raised \$33.50 from the Alcazar company for the good cause. Tom Dillon, the hatter, gathered a goodly pile from his friends in a few hours, asking them only for small sums. Up to yesterday evening the total subscriptions amounted to \$230.85. It is expected that this sum will grow today, but no more contributions are wanted. Yesterday's contributions paid into The Call office were as follows:

\*List of names and dollar or cent amounts. Highest one is \$10; most are a dollar or less.\*

The grand total for yesterday was \$85.10. When the artificial legs have been bought for Edwin and Edwin set up in business as a cigar dealer, a full report of the receipts and disbursements will be made in The Call. His "even break" has come at last.



**TAKES PITY ON CRIPPLED NEWSIE; BUYS HIM CORNER (TACOMA TIMES, FEB 2, 1910) IPC**



### Teaching Notes:

Additional discussion questions:

- What does the headline mean by "pity"?
- What does this article teach us about what daily work was like for newsies?
- What challenges might Tony Cortz have faced in the built environment?

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88085187/1910-02-02/ed-1/seq-5/>

*Tacoma Times*, Feb 2, 1910, p.5 (article in upper left corner)

### Alt Text

Tony Cortz, known to his fellow "newsies" as "Little Crip" because of his loss of a leg in a railway accident, is waving his crutch triumphantly these days as he gathers in the pennies at his new stand. Newsboys in Tacoma do not run all over town and encroach on other's rights or territory. Each is supposed to stay in his own section. Tony was handicapped in the struggle on Pacific avenue and when William P. Reynolds saw him hobbling about the other day he asked him how things were going. Tony was not complaining but it was apparent he had a tussle to make it on the avenue. Reynolds asked him which is the best corner in town and Tony thought Eleventh and K streets at the street car junction. Reynolds hunted up Ben and Alfred Hershey, who held this corner, and bought them off for \$15 and Tony was stationed there where business is good and there is not so much congestion of travel.



Read starting at the section titled Newsies Given Outing (third column) until the end of the article.

Additional discussion questions:

-What can we learn about newsie life from this source that we can not learn from photos or accounts about them working?

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85042344/1916-08-06/ed-1/seq-5/>

*Tulsa Daily World*, Aug 6, 1916, morning edition, p.5

Alt Text

Fuzzy black and white photograph of a boy, Olaf Shook, standing outside with his crutches. Caption reads: The center picture shows Olaf Shook, the youngest newsy in the camp. He lives at Muskogee and is a cripple. He enjoyed all the past times of the camp, including swimming, at which he was quite proficient using his crutches as propellers.

Relevant paragraphs of the article read:

Newies Given Outing.



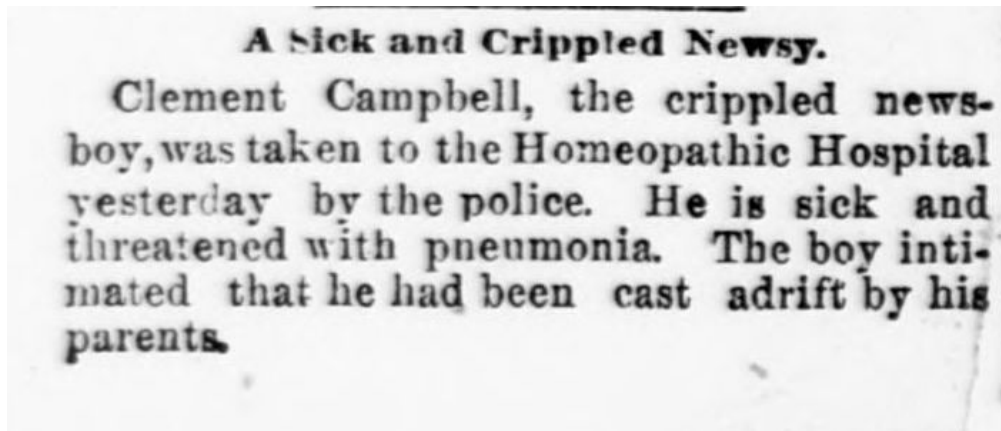
During the later end of July the papers of Tulsa decided to give the working boys at the city a free outing at the same camp. A campaign was launched to provide for forty boys. When the list were closed there were fifty boys from Tulsa provided for by generous Tulsans, who had not forgotten the days of their youth, and about twenty from Muskogee. It was an interesting group of newsies and other working boys who gathered at the station for the trip. A special chartered car over both the Midland Valley and Frisco railroads carried the boys to Tahlequah. At the camp after a six-mile hike, these boys found a fried chicken dinner waiting for them. Then the first real swim that had ever entered some of these little fellows lives was awaiting them. Through the former camps, the above diving platform had been built by the boys. They climbed over it, fell off it, dived from it, yelling and shouting with the wildest of glee and joy at being outdoors once, where "hollering" was free, as one of them expressed it...

Tulsa's oldest newsie, A. R. Gregg was taken in his chair to the camp. It was one of the good sights of the day to see a dozen of the little "merchants of the streets" gathered around his chair, wheeling him to the table to partake of their tri-daily feasts, and other little things that went to make a pleasant time for their friend and partner. And many were the words of kindly advice to them that came from his experienced lips that went deep into their young lives.

#### A Happy Cripple.

The youngest newsie at the camp was a little Olaf Shook. At five years of age a fall injured the little fellow's leg from which he has been a cripple walking upon crutches ever since. His average weekly earnings average over \$5 all of which goes to help clothe him and keep him in school. Whatever fun was to be found there was Olaf and the little wooden crutches. Whenever the swim period came around one of the first down the long hard hill was the little lad with the crutches. Stranger than all was the wonderful use to which these crutches were put in learning to swim. Then there came a night when a much older boy in camp swiped his camp bed. Without a whimper or whine but with the comment that "Guess he needs it worse than I do," he was about making a bed of leaves upon the floor and for being as comfortable there as upon the cot. The cot came back. The other newsies saw to that. "Don't you think it is a fine thing for a little crippled boy to earn his way four years before he is 10 years old," he asked Mrs. Fenstermacher, the matron to every needy little fellow in camp, one day as he finished telling his story. "And I'm always going to do that," he said. But there are not many years left for him to have to earn his own way.

**A SICK & CRIPPLED NEWSY (PITTSBURG DISPATCH, MAY 5 1892).JPG**



**Teaching Notes:**

Additional discussion questions:

- What were some of the dangers of working as a newsie?
- Based on this article, why might Clement Campbell have started working as a newsboy?

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024546/1892-05-05/ed-1/seq-2/>

*Pittsburg Dispatch*, May 5, 1892, p.2 (article in bottom left corner)

Alt Text

Clement Campbell, the crippled newsboy, was taken to the Homeopathic Hospital yesterday by the police. He is sick and threatened with pneumonia. The boy intimated that he had been cast adrift by his parents.

## CRIPPLED NEWSIE STUDIES CRIPPLED NEWSIE STUDIES LAW, EXAMINER, JUNE 12 1910).JPG

From Newsboy to lawyer is the dream of crippled "Newsie" Job W. Adams, 35 years old, who may be seen every day on the streets in a canopied wheel chair selling local newspapers. Adams is unable to use his legs, an attack of spinal fever having destroyed the power of the motor muscles when he was 7 years old.

He first began to dream of becoming a lawyer last summer. When September, 1909, arrived he registered as a first year student in the Indianapolis College of Law. Since then he can be observed studying a huge calfskin covered book in his canopied wheel chair whenever the demand for papers is not pressing.

Adams is hopeful of graduating from the local college in three years. He now is carrying three subjects. One of the subjects is taken every night from 7 to 8 o'clock, and the remaining two subjects are taken outside the recitation room, privately, under the direction of the instructors of the college.

Adam's schedule of duties calls for a minimum of sleep. He rises at 5 o'clock in the morning and is at work by 6 o'clock. He continues to sell papers till 7 o'clock in the evening, when he goes to his evening law class. After the recitation closes at 8 o'clock he goes to his room, figures up his day's business, often studies his law books for a time and goes to bed by 10:30 or 11 o'clock.

The crippled newsboy was a resident of Jefferson county, Indiana, till seven years ago. He came to Indianapolis then, first making his living by shining shoes. However, he abandoned this in about three months and has since sold papers at his present location. Adams' father and mother are both dead. He has a common school education and attended the Moores Hill college for two terms.—Indianapolis Star.

### Teaching Notes:

Additional discussion questions:

-How does this profile of Job W. Adams challenge our typical view of newsies? (Another way to start this discussion is to ask students what surprised them in this article.)

-Why might Adams have chosen to work as a newsie? Why was that a good work option for him?

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85058394/1910-06-12/ed-1/seq-10/>

*Morning Examiner*, June 12, 1910, Theaters-Society, p.10 (article towards bottom of middle column)

Alt Text

From Newsboy to lawyer is the dream of crippled "Newsie" Job W. Adams, 35 years old, who may be seen every day on the streets in a canopied wheel chair selling local newspapers. Adams is unable to use his legs, an attack of spinal fever having destroyed the power of the motor muscles when he was 7 years old. He first began to dream of becoming a lawyer last summer. When September 1909 arrived he registered as a first year student in the Indianapolis College of Law. Since then he can be observed studying a huge calfskin covered book in his canopied wheel chair whenever the demand for papers is not pressing. Adams is hopeful of graduating from the local college in three years. He now is carrying three subjects One of the subjects is taken every night from 7 to 8 o'clock and the remaining two subjects are taken outside the recitation room, privately under the direction of the instructors of the college. Adam's schedule of duties calls for a minimum



of sleep. He rises at 5 o'clock in the morning and is at work by 6 o'clock. He continues to sell papers till 7 o'clock in the evening when he goes to his evening law class. After the recitation closes at 8 o'clock he goes to his room, figures up his day's business, often studies his law books for a time and goes to bed by 10:30 or 11 o'clock The crippled newsboy was a resident of Jefferson county, Indiana till seven years ago. He came to Indianapolis then, first making his living by shining shoes. However he abandoned this in about three months and has since sold papers at his present location. Adam's father and mother are both dead. He has a common school education and attended the Moores Hill college for two terms.



**A LEGITIMATE OCCUPATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED. LOCATION: NEW YORK, NEW YORK (STATE)**



**Teaching Notes:**

Additional discussion question:

-Why do you think the photographer titled this photo "A legitimate occupation for the handicapped"? What might have been considered illegitimate occupations?

(my album on the "Ugly Laws" might help answer this question)

**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018675977/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1910 July.

Subject Headings: - Men

- Newspaper vendors

- Amputees

- Peg legs

- United States--New York (State)--New York

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.

- In album: Street trades.

- Hine no. 1647.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.



<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>

- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03662 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03662>

**HANDICAPPED. A LEGITIMATE OCCUPATION. LOCATION: NEW YORK, NEW YORK  
(STATE)**



**Teaching Notes:**

Additional discussion question:

-Why do you think the photographer titled this photo "A legitimate occupation for the handicapped"? What might have been considered illegitimate occupations?

(my album on the "Ugly Laws" might help answer this question)

**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018675975/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1910 July.

Subject Headings: - Boys

- Men
- Newspaper vendors
- Amputees
- United States--New York (State)--New York

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.

- In album: Street trades.

- Hine no. 1645.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

- General information about the National Child Labor Committee collection is available at:



<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>

- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03660 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03660>

**BLIND NEWSMAN. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HANDICAPPED. LOCATION: NEW YORK,**



**Reference Link:** <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018676002/>

Contributor Names: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Created / Published: 1910 July.

Subject Headings: - Men

- Newspaper vendors
- Blind persons
- United States--New York (State)--New York

Genre: Photographic prints

Notes: - Title from NCLC caption card.

- Attribution to Hine based on provenance.
- In album: Street trades.
- Hine no. 1672.

- Credit line: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

- General information about the National Child Labor Committee collection is available at:

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.nclc>

- Forms part of: National Child Labor Committee collection.

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id: nclc 03686 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/nclc.03686>