MENCKEN MENTION: NEWSWEEK's Books editor, Karl Schriftgiesser, went to work on The Boston Transcript in 1924—the same year that H. L. Mencken (see cover), George Jean Nathan, and A. A. Knopf founded the American Mercury magazine. Those were the salad days of the Banned-in-Boston era of literature. One highlight of the times was H.L.M.'s arrest on Boston Common for selling an issue of the Mercury containing the story "Hatrack." Reporter Schriftgiesser helped stage the arrest and gave a policeman, one Lt. Garrett, the half dollar used to buy the banned magazine from H. L. M. Schriftgiesser went on to write the first full story of Boston book censorship as The New Yorker's "A Reporter at Large."

Schriftgiesser later interviewed most of the top literary figures of The Twenties and became something of a literateur himself as the author of five important historical treatises. His latest is a study of the politics of the 1920s, called "This Was Normalcy," to be published this month by Little, Brown & Co. Incidentally, one of Schriftgiesser's last interviews for The Transcript's famous book pages was with Henry Hazlitt, at present NEWSWEEK's "Business Tides" columnist, who succeeded Mencken as editor of the American Mercury. All this is by way of pointing out that Schriftgiesser had a good time doing the Mencken story in this week's Books department.

Newsweek April 5, 1948.