

# TELEVISION

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FALL 1966

# QUARTERLY

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THE JOURNAL OF THE  
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF  
TELEVISION ARTS  
AND SCIENCES

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## NOTES ON MOUSETRAP BUILDING

Granting the necessity for continuing reform in any progressive democratic society, most of those who earnestly seek change within our broadcasting system have been more hindrance than help. They begin, as have all reformers, from the premise that somewhere there exists an ideal model, and we need only set about replicating it if we are to create an electronic nirvana. The more fanatic among them have embraced the conviction that change, if it is to come, must be forced. Underlying this argument is the creation of "diversity" in choice—but only among the more restricted choices *they* are willing to offer. Above all, most reformers proceed from the same erroneous assumption—that commercial interests in broadcasting have led to a debasement of taste and stultification of intellect among masses of men which cannot be overcome other than by total upheaval. The argument insists that if other interests had gained control over our media at the outset, it would not now be so difficult for earnest men to attract multitudes to consider serious matters.

In advancing this logic, reformers tend to paint hazy pastels of the way in which other free nations have solved these matters by placing the responsibility for broadcast content in the hands of one or another guardian group(s)—governmental bureaucracies, appointed commissions, and various political or educational elites. It is time that these "models" were subject to analysis, and the first several essays in this issue of *Television Quarterly* may help the reader to understand the nature of forces at work in the free world today. One doubts if the more volatile critics of American broadcasting will be swayed, but reasonable men may, upon reading these essays, be stimulated to some deeper reflection on a system of communications which, to paraphrase Churchill on democracy, is the "worst system in the world—except for all the others."

In a two-part report, **Richard Kahlenberg** and **David Attenborough** describe a recent and continuing experiment in diversity, BBC-2, which has undergone considerable re-thinking since its inception in 1964. An outside observer, Kahlenberg records that it has simply failed to achieve its goals. The audience ignored its offerings, and the resulting overhaul in scheduling would make an American post-Nielsen program shake-up seem mild (perhaps even less cynical) in comparison. In defense of BBC-2, Attenborough attempts to establish a rationale for the experiment by arguing that it may be possible for the new service to retain a large and faithful audience while still giving significant attention to "minority" interests.

The same conditions which, Kahlenberg maintains, were responsible for the sweeping overhaul of BBC-2 policies in 1964 are reviewed in a different light in **Frank Iezzi's** scholarly overview of the growth of European "pirate" broad-



casting. Iezzi calls attention to the fact that the existence of pirate "Top-Forty" radio stations has created problems within the British Government (and others) which can no longer be solved by such simple expedencies as having the Home Fleet blow them out of the water. British listenership to the pirates has been estimated at 25 million (over one-half of the adult population), the shock waves have begun to spread through Parliament, and there is concern in some quarters that restrictions upon the pirates might bring political downfall to those who advocate a limiting of this "service." Indeed, it is now likely that Britain will permit some kind of commercial radio broadcasting for the first time.

The state of affairs in Britain, Scandinavia, and Holland confirms once more the logic of Frank Stanton's observation that a mass medium must either serve a broad middle level of taste and interest or cease to exist. Those who would still insist that this situation is simply the outgrowth of a "commercial plot," might also consider that even DeGaulle has come to recognize its ultimate truth. Richard Hauser's amusing analysis of French television (where what appears on the screen is apparently a rare admixture of scenic glory, passionate "art-for-art's-sake" declamation and "paternal" guidance) ends with a serious question: how can a television service which, by government decree, is committed to allowing the viewer an option to judge for himself, perform that function when the same government restricts the options?

It is an irony that in those very nations where the needs are greatest the means are fewest. In the concluding essay of the section devoted to analysis of international broadcast systems, **Ranjan Borra** describes the slow evolution of a TV system in India and observes that while it is far from a reality, it will one day come of age.

At the risk of forcing conclusions, these impartial accounts of what is happening throughout the free world seem to reflect a similar theme. Shaw once said that "if you do not get what you like, you will be forced to like what you get," and this credo—the slogan of the reformers—has apparently been adopted by millions in every nation under analysis here. The message reads: a growing impatience with bureaucratic or "guardian class" control; an indifference to the dull programming it creates; and a growing demand for commercial involvement in broadcast systems.

To all of this the reformer may respond with other long-standing slogans ("cheap stuff drives good off the market," "cynical catering to the lowest common denominator"), but for some reason these no longer seem useful, or very realistic, to us. It is long past time for a more honest and less abrasive appraisal of our system and its capacities than the reformers have been willing to extend.

A. W. B.

**RICHARD KAHLENBERG** is presently a Ph.D. candidate and teaching assistant in the Film Section of the School of Speech at Northwestern University. After completing his M.S. degree at the Boston University School of Public Communication in 1962, Mr. Kahlenberg served for three years as a Foreign Service Officer of the United States Information Agency. He served the USIA in Washington and Vienna, and was Deputy Cultural Attaché in Berlin.

Educated in the Natural Sciences Tripos at Cambridge, **DAVID ATTENBOROUGH** joined BBC-TV as a trainee producer in 1952. He was responsible for BBC travel and exploration programs from 1955 to 1964, and was appointed Controller for BBC-2 in 1965. Among his production credits at BBC are *The Crossing of Antarctica*, *Traveler's Tales*, *Adventure* and *Zoo Quest*.

# BBC-2: AN EXPERIMENT IN DIVERSITY

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RICHARD KAHLENBERG,  
DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

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RICHARD KAHLENBERG

## *A BEGINNING*

In April of 1964, the British Broadcasting Corporation launched BBC-2, a television service designed to complement BBC-TV (now renamed BBC-1), which first went on the air in 1936, and the Independent Television Authority, whose commercially sponsored programs were first broadcast in 1953.

In the period of 20 months after the service was initially authorized, the Corporation had to increase its staff by one-third, build a backlog of programs sufficient to sustain 30 hours of new TV programming a week on the new network, prepare a technical network of over 50 primary and relay transmitters and mount a large promotion campaign to acquaint the public with the fact of BBC-2's existence. Beyond these lay an even greater challenge—the new network was to employ the UHF-style of transmission, using a 625-line definition rather than the 405 lines currently in use in England.

At this stage it is possible to review the evolution of BBC-2 only during the crucial months immediately before and just after the date it first went on the air, with emphasis on the programming policy of the network during 1963 and 1964, with some initial comments on the financial and technical problems involved. I have not attempted to evaluate BBC-2's performance following the extensive changes in its program schedule in fall, 1964.

Two powerful groups—TV equipment manufacturers and certain liberal segments of the British government—were the prime movers in the launching of BBC-2. The TV manufacturers wanted

to boost lagging sales of receivers and station equipment. The government was interested in preparing for the integration of British television into continental TV systems which operated on 625 lines, as well as switching over entirely to UHF transmission.

The cost to BBC for this gigantic project has been estimated at \$112 million. The new network costs over \$25 million a year to operate. In three years, BBC-2 UHF transmitters will cover 90 per cent of the possible viewing homes in Britain. In eight to ten years, the Post Office has hopes of completing the switch to 625-line UHF transmission for all British television—including BBC-1, BBC-2, and all the stations operating on a commercial basis. As BBC-2 went on the air, Corporation technicians had already begun conversion of all television equipment to combined 405-625 line capability. This combination would permit joint use by both corporation networks, and the eventual use of 625 lines only.

In 1963, the Post Office began returning to the Corporation all (rather than the customary three-fourths) of the TV set owner license fee it collects. In late 1965, the government provided an additional source of funds by raising the TV set license fee from \$11.40 to \$14.00 per year. BBC had been asking for a \$16.00 fee for years, and by 1964 was so short of funds that it had to borrow \$30 million from the City of London to continue the work of launching BBC-2. The Corporation normally receives over \$100 million in income from TV license fees but it estimated that the new enterprise, together with the growing costs of production and the expense of switching over to 625-line UHF, would require a doubling of its annual income.

Britain has a television audience of 44.8 million. When BBC-2 first went on the air, covering only the London area, it was estimated that 750,000 people had access to VHF-UHF receivers. An extensive promotional campaign for UHF was conducted on television by BBC-1, and in the print media by the set manufacturers. Set sales rose, but not spectacularly, to a level where, in 1964, three million people in London and Birmingham (where UHF was introduced six months following the opening in London) were estimated as potential UHF viewers. To promote sale of all-channel sets, special UHF broadcasts were initiated in January, 1964, using first quality feature films and re-runs of BBC-1's best programs of years past.

Preliminary plans for full-scale programming on the new service were first discussed in public in March, 1963, by Sir Charles Ford,

Chairman of the BBC Board of Governors. He pledged that BBC-2 would be "...very different from BBC-1 and not a diluted version of those programs. An overall control [board] for both programs would see that they were complementary and provide genuine alternatives of choice."

The man chosen to mount the programming for BBC-2 was 34-year-old Michael Peacock, then head of the BBC-TV current affairs department, who had served with the Corporation for 12 years. In May, 1963, Peacock issued a statement which set forth his goals:

BBC-2 will be beamed at as big an audience as possible in an all-out endeavor to get the public in millions to switch to UHF-625. . . . The success of BBC-2 will depend on the quality of programs we can offer. Even good programs won't be enough to overcome the inertia of the average viewer when faced with the prospect of spending money on converting his set or erecting a new aerial. BBC-2 will not be minority television or a cultural ghetto where highbrows make programs for highbrows. It will in fact be a balanced program covering the whole range of TV—from westerns to opera to news to Sammy Davis, Jr. to full-length plays to boxing matches. . . . The problem of 625 is that we must appeal to millions instead of thousands. But this doesn't mean I will be competing with BBC-1. The new service will be a planned alternative. When either BBC channel is showing a minority program, chances are that the other will schedule a program with wider audience appeal. . . . Every evening, BBC-2 will have a big program "main dish," whatever the category, of 75 or 90 minutes. The supporting programs would be aimed at trying to hold the "main-dish" audience for the whole evening. . . . Saturday afternoon we will broadcast anything but sports because BBC-1 traditionally has sports then. . . . We will broadcast for a total of 30 hours per week. Five more hours will be added as soon as we can do so.

There are at least two distinct goals embodied in this general plan. The main tasks—attracting a large audience and at the same time offering a significant number of programs consciously planned for a minority audience—seemed contradictory. Yet the attempt to achieve these goals seems evident in Peacock's actions throughout the first year of BBC-2. He managed to pursue both goals simultaneously until it became clear to the proponents of each that radical change in favor of one was necessary to keep the service moving forward.

Despite this effort to ride in two directions, BBC-2 attracted a flow of excellent program management from the commercial television stations. Many of these same people had emigrated to commercial TV in 1953 when it began, and were returning to BBC. Their reasons were many, and BBC was willing to offer realistic salaries.

In November, 1963, Peacock announced the basic outlines of the new program schedule. Up to 30 hours of prime evening time each week were to assume an "all-evening identity, each of the seven evenings of the week devoted to a theme—a deliberate homogeneity of program output instead of a more orthodox succession of contrasting programs." In this program plan, Monday evenings were given over to straight family entertainment including vaudeville, situation comedy, pop music and light drama. The later hours of the evening were to be left flexible in order to take advantage of entertainment as it happens, such as Eurovision specials. Tuesday's schedule was envisioned as a sort of "classroom-of-the-air" for adult listeners, and was designed to include a series aimed at increasing popular awareness of the problems of science, economics and technology. Of this innovation, Sir Hugh Greene, Chairman of the BBC, observed that "for the first time, the public will be served with education through TV at peak viewing hours, and it will be fascinating to see what percentage of the population makes use of this." Wednesday was designed as a "re-run night" and would include outstanding programs from BBC-1 and BBC-2. Thursday evening was planned to satisfy minority interests and would feature minor sports and pastimes—material of interest to motorists, film buffs, and do-it-yourself viewers. Friday was designated as family drama night and would offer narrative drama. At the end of the evening, a report on the activities of Parliament was scheduled.

On Saturday afternoons, while BBC-1 carried sports, BBC-2 scheduled offerings for women, teen-agers and children. The evening hours were to hold serious shows, including historical drama, serialized episodes from such classics as *Madame Bovary*, and a science magazine. Late night programs were to feature international cabaret and/or open-end discussion programs. Sunday was planned as a "king-sized production night." Important full-length plays, commissioned operas, ballets, concerts and continental films were to be programmed, along with an in-depth study of a current political or social issue. The day would end with an "advanced" thriller.

To all this Peacock added, "We shall have to work on a very tight

budget, as money for programs is not immediately forthcoming." Here was the rub. By 1964, all of the best British talent, especially variety and light-entertainment writing talent, was tied up in lucrative long-range contracts with the commercial stations or BBC-1. Peacock had either to offer them more money than the competition, or turn to other nations as sources. He had a certain advantage over the talent scouts for commercial TV, because a BBC man representing BBC-1 and BBC-2 could offer several kinds of TV exposure in Britain to an American or European performer or producer. Because of its rigid quota restrictions (14 per cent) on foreign programs, Britain had once been a buyer's market. The new network's entrance into competition made it a seller's market. Previously, the going rate for the best shows was \$8,000 per broadcast. Peacock had to pay \$15,000 for each of three Danny Kaye shows, one of which was to be the first "main-dish" program on BBC-2.

It will be noted in the program line-up below that the percentage of American material seems very high. The 14 per cent quota restriction was observed very formally, and applied only to filmed or taped television programs bought directly from U. S. producers. It did not apply to American scripts or performers. The formats of American panel and quiz shows have long been copied on British television with some success. One such transfer failed in the pilot stage, however. This was an attempt to duplicate the Jack Parr-Johnny Carson type of *Tonight* magazine show. The pilot videotape with Robert Morley acting as host failed to live up to Peacock's expectations.

These problems notwithstanding, Peacock brought the following program schedule on the air in April, 1964:

#### FRIDAY

- 7:20 *Lineup* (Program preview.)
- 7:30 *Story Parade* (75-minute dramas based on modern novels.)
- 8:45 *Arrest and Trial* (American series.)
- 10:00 News
- 10:30 *Westminster at Work* (Review of the week in Parliament.)

#### SATURDAY

- 3:10 *Compact* (Repeat of BBC-1 soap opera.)
- 4:00 *Open House* (Variety series to star such performers as Ethel Mer- man, Tony Bennett, Nat "King" Cole, Shelley Berman, Nichols and May, and Jimmy Durante.)
- 6:00 Closedown
- 7:30 *West is West* (Documentary on the western United States shot by BBC team. Alternated with the BBC-2 originated program, *The Great War*.)
- 8:00 *Madame Bovary* (Serialized drama. Also planned were four-part versions of *Ann Veronica*, *Mary Barton*, *Witchwood*, and others.)

- 8:45 Alternating non-fiction: *Horizon* (science magazine), *Writer's World* (authors), and *Workshop* (serious music.)
- 9:30 *International Cabaret* (Variety series with scheduled appearances by American performers Diahann Carroll, Gordon and Sheila MacRae, Mel Torme, Margaret Whiting, and others.)
- 10:15 *Conversations for Tomorrow* (J. P. Priestley in after-dinner talks with guests.)

#### SUNDAY

- 7:00 News for the Deaf
- 7:25 Regular News
- 7:30 *Theatre 625* (Drama featuring original full-length plays and major feature films, including titles from the Corporation's recently acquired stock of post-1948 Paramount films.)
- 9:00 *Encounter* (Public affairs.)
- 9:30 *Melissa* (Six-part thriller melodrama.)
- 10:00 *Best of Both Worlds* (Light music featuring leading composers and arrangers. About half of these programs featured American personalities such as André Previn, Oscar Peterson, The Modern Jazz Quartet, and others.)
- 10:30 Closedown

#### MONDAY

- 7:20 *Lineup*
- 7:30 *Impromptu* (Experimental, unrehearsed-comedy.)
- 8:00 *Danny Kaye Special* (American series.)
- 8:50 *The Virginian* (American series.)
- 10:05 News
- 10:35 Closedown

#### TUESDAY

- 7:20 *Lineup*
- 7:30 *Tuesday Term* (Adult education.)
- 9:45 *Jazz 625* (Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, others.)
- 10:30 News
- 11:00 Closedown

#### WEDNESDAY

- 7:20 *Lineup*
- 7:30 Re-run (BBC-TV documentary on natural history.)
- 8:30 *Madame Bovary* (Repeat from previous Friday.)
- 9:15 Re-run (BBC program.)
- 10:00 News
- 10:30 Closedown

#### THURSDAY

- 7:20 *Lineup*
- 7:30 *Time Out* (Magazine show describing such leisure-time activities as sailing and fishing. Includes a regular 20-minute slot devoted to motoring.)
- 9:00 Travel films and travel-oriented documentaries.
- 9:30 *Midweek Music* (Live popular music.)
- 10:15 News and closedown

Given this schedule, and taking into account all of the natural difficulties attending the entire project, how was this experiment in diversity received?

Although BBC does not recognize the results of the Television Audience Measurement rating service in England (it prefers to con-



duct its own polls), the TAM ratings are widely accepted as indicative of the reception accorded BBC-2 when it began. The Corporation did not release the figures of its own rating service. In homes equipped to receive all three channels, the new channel in its first fortnight received an average of only 14 per cent of the viewing time, with BBC-1 taking 35 per cent and the commercial stations 50 per cent. Then, as the novelty of watching the new channel wore off, the figures dropped to an average of two per cent for BBC-2. Finally, its share of audience fell below the figure necessary to register at all on the TAM scale.

Even within these meagre audience figures some trends may be observed. The biggest audience-pullers were Danny Kaye and *The Virginian*, with 26 and 39 per cent respectively of the 3-channel-equipped homes. Next came *Arrest and Trial* with 15 per cent. The only British program attracting a fair-sized audience was *Melissa*, a thriller. The remaining British programs drew two, three and sometimes six per cent of the audience. The top shows were the "quota" American shows. The audience figures were a surprise to many, including Peacock.

The reasons for BBC-2's failure to attract huge audiences are many and complicated. The commercial networks and BBC-1 had so many battle-tested hit series on the air—and had played them against one another with such skill—that the evenings were saturated with hit shows. To be sure, BBC-1 carried occasional minority shows, and at such hours BBC-2 was supposed to have come forth with hit entertainment. But the audience apparently switched to commercial television, which was lying in wait with a familiar and popular show. Only the new American shows on BBC-2 seemed to attract attention in this sort of competition. British shows on BBC-2 seemed unable to "pull," while British shows on BBC-1 and commercial TV continued to attract millions.

Since, at the time of BBC-2's launching, all of the top ten shows on the other networks were British in origin, it seems certain that lack of access to experienced TV writing talent hurt BBC-2 in this area. Some observers have blamed a lack of sufficient promotion for UHF itself. UHF ownership did not become "the thing" in time to help BBC-2's launching. General promotion for the second service also seems to have lacked the necessary punch, as low viewership by UHF owners indicated. Associated Rediffusion, a large commercial station in London, stole some thunder from the BBC-2 innovation by launching a revamped A-R program schedule the day *before*

BBC-2's scheduled debut and by renaming itself simply "Rediffusion." All its theme-songs, title cards, advertising copy, and so forth were changed amidst an atmosphere of great to-do.

Peacock moved ahead with his initial format for five months, adding a "rock 'n roll" show Mondays and Thursdays. He managed to attract 30 per cent of the available audience during these hours. Existing shows were shifted within their evening line-up in order to deal with competition offered by the other two networks. But 1964 public opinion polls still indicated that the number of Britons intending to buy or convert to UHF at any time in the future remained at a low four per cent. After five months of BBC-2 operation and the expenditure of millions of dollars to convert the broadcast sector to UHF, only seven to eight per cent of the homes in the U. K. could receive the service. More drastic steps seemed in order.

In September, 1964, BBC experienced one of the most far-reaching shake-ups in broadcast programming the Corporation had ever known. Almost all of the ideas which had influenced the launching of BBC-2 were cast aside and an all-out "hit-and-hold" policy—aimed straight at the mass audience—was initiated. The "all-evening" approach was scrapped. Individual shows which had attracted attention on any given evening were retained but some were shifted to new times and nights.

The major changes in the schedule listed above are as follows: On Monday, the unrehearsed-comedy effort was replaced with a 25-minute non-stop "rock 'n roll" show. *The Virginian* was retained but Danny Kaye was moved to Wednesday. Tuesday's schedule was strengthened with *Arrest and Trial* (changed from Friday), and Paramount post-1948 films were added. The adult education program, *Tuesday Term* was retained, but content of wider interest was sought. Wednesday evenings were redesigned to feature comedy. *The Danny Kaye Special* moved in from Monday. A British comedy program, *The Likely Lads*, was added, as were comedy specials comparable to such reviews as *Beyond the Fringe*. Thursday was also recast. The magazine leisure-time show, *Time Out*, was "pepped up," and West End "smash hits" of former years were telecast. On Friday, *Arrest and Trial* was moved into the opening hour and an American comedy show was added. The American series, *Great Adventure*, was slotted into Saturday evenings, along with specials on soccer. The "rock 'n roll" show telecast on Monday was repeated, and a jazz show which had been telecast on Tuesday was moved in to round out a wide-appeal Saturday schedule. A new panel quiz

game was added to the Sunday schedule along with a documentary series, *The Great War*. Other significant changes and additions were made. Shows that survived were frequently “shaken up” and made more lively.

With this new schedule BBC-2 began its 1965 season. Its competitive position, however, improved only slightly. The average share of audience levelled off at about 60 per cent for commercial stations, 30 to 35 per cent for BBC-1, and ten to 15 per cent for BBC-2. Hit shows often re-distributed their percentages within the averages. Since early 1965 there have been continuing adjustments in programming, but the 1964 revisions seem to have been the most violent.

Whatever conclusions one may derive from this overview, the Corporation is to be commended for its flexibility—involving a willingness to “face facts” on some matters and cling to principles on others. The original BBC-2 plan was bold and truly innovative. If it succeeds—even with considerable modification—it might establish a model for television broadcasting throughout the world.

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

### *A RATIONALE*

In the two years of BBC-2's short life, it has been accused and flattered, blamed and congratulated, for a bewildering and often contradictory variety of reasons. Company reports in the *London Times* and the *Financial Times* have complained that the network did not “come up to expectations.” Sometimes they have been even blunter and called it “a failure.” The *Daily Express*, on the other hand, congratulated us on carrying some of the best programs in world television, and Cassandra wrote in the *Daily Mirror*: “Frequently it is superb, and there is no service that I have seen anywhere else in the world that can compare with it.” The television trade press has suggested that BBC-2 is an intellectual's ghetto; and yet there are those who castigate us for failing to put out even one program with any really solid intellectual content.

Viewers' reactions vary from angry complaints that none of our programs could possibly interest anyone, to frequent cries of frustration from people who claim that the BBC is behaving in a most

cynical fashion and quite deliberately removing all the decent programs from BBC-1 and putting them on BBC-2. One viewer angrily wrote: "What does the BBC think it is trying to do, deliberately force people to buy BBC-2 sets?"

All criticism, of course, is made in the light of an assumed standard or target. But only too often, those making the criticisms do not state explicitly what target they are measuring the network against. It is worthwhile, therefore, to examine for a moment some of the targets that other people have suggested for BBC-2 and to consider why, in fact, we may not aim at them.

Those people who have dismissed BBC-2 as a flop, have done so, by and large, because they believe that the network's objective should be to attract the largest possible audience in the shortest possible time, and to hold them. Naturally enough, many of the supporters of this point of view are television dealers and manufacturers. It is hard to blame them. Their objective, after all, is to sell as many sets as possible, and they looked to the advent of BBC-2 to give their sales a boost. They argue that the best way to do so is to make BBC-2 a mass-appeal program service.

Quite obviously, the way to gather an immense audience very quickly is to put on the most popular programs—by which I mean programs that attract the biggest possible audience. We have a fairly accurate idea of what such programs are, whether we follow the BBC's Audience Research findings or those of TAM. They are: domestic serials, pop shows, quiz shows, spy fantasies, and serial dramas. These are formats that have been evolved, refined and perfected by networks all over the world. They are well-trying and successful, and none the worse for that. It follows, therefore, that if BBC-2 wants to attract large audiences fast, these are the sort of programs that it must schedule. What is more, it must schedule them early in the evening to take advantage of the principle that is well understood by all program planners—that if you do not grab a large audience early, you will never get one at all. In short, to implement such a policy means to produce programs that are largely carbon copies of existing programs and to schedule them in such a way that they clash head-on with similar mass-appeal programs being shown on other networks.

One characteristic of BBC-2 is incontrovertible. It has cost and is costing a great deal of money: from viewers, in terms of new sets and special aerials; from the BBC, in terms of programs; and from the country as a whole for new transmitters. To sanction this enormous

expenditure and then to use it merely to produce more of the same, would, I believe, be indefensible. It is for this reason that I reject the target of "instant mass audiences."

The second policy that has been recommended to us is that we should become a high-brow network catering exclusively to intellectuals. I have already indicated that the cost of creating and running the network is immense, and I believe that it would be wholly unacceptable to devote all this money to the delectation of one tiny minority. A variant on this policy suggests that while the network should not perhaps be so dauntingly intellectual, it should, instead, be the equivalent of the Home Service on radio; that BBC-1 should change its nature, transfer its more serious programs to BBC-2, and so become a television version of the Light Program. This particular division of function is not a practical proposition and will not be for several years to come. Until such time as the coverage of BBC-2's transmitters is as great as BBC-1's, and until the vast majority of viewers in Britain have UHF sets, it is unthinkable that BBC-1 should unbalance its current service by handing over its political and arts magazines, its programs of serious music, and its documentaries to a network still only viewable by a minority. Such a distortion would be a gross deprivation to an immense number of viewers.

And so BBC-2 cannot be either an imitation of existing networks nor an exclusive preserve for intellectuals. There is, however, a real demand from viewers that cannot be met by BBC-1 and ITV alone. Competition between networks brings many advantages. This is not the time to examine or debate them, but few of us would deny that they exist. Nonetheless, it also brings one great disadvantage. Competition, in the end, results in like being scheduled opposite like. A comedy show on one network is transmitted while another comedy show is on the other network. On Saturday afternoons, both networks will devote their time to sports and anyone who is not a sports enthusiast has a bleak time if he wants to be entertained by television. Furthermore, mass-appeal programs will be placed by both networks early in the evening, and programs which appeal to a smaller viewership will be scheduled at the end of the evening. I do not have to labor the point. No one denies that viewers have little choice. Here, surely is an important and urgent demand which only BBC-2 can meet.

What kind of service should BBC-2 strive to create? I have already suggested that it should not be our function to produce additional

versions of well-tried and frequently-exploited formats. There is a further implication in what I have said about our function as a complementary network. BBC-2 is not a service which can or should stand by itself, and it is not therefore part of its task to be a totally comprehensive service operating on the premise that the bulk of its viewers seldom look at any other network. In short, we are *not* in competition with BBC-1. If we were, then we should have to schedule a regular current affairs program; we should have to have regular religious services; our news would ignore the timing of BBC-1's news, and we should have to provide a news service early in the evening; not to mention the desirability, if we were to be fully comprehensive, of having our own pop shows and our own twice-weekly serials.

But this is not the situation. We can and should realize that these functions are now being served by BBC-1. After all, there are no BBC-2 viewers who cannot also receive BBC-1. The two networks should be planned as a closely integrated, unified service. Since BBC-1 has *Panorama* and ITV has *This Week*, there is no need for BBC-2 to mount another similar program and no need for visiting dignitaries, cabinet ministers and union leaders about to strike to appear three times to say the same thing in three different programs within the same week. If we are to be a proper supplement, we must instead produce programs that provide something new, something that cannot be matched elsewhere. We must endeavor to produce programs that—either in their stars, their style or their subject matter—differ crucially from any program being scheduled by any other network. That is, of course, an enormously ambitious target.

As far as stars are concerned, we can sometimes present an important and popular artist and retain his services almost exclusively on BBC-2. Danny Kaye is an example. Sometimes we can create new stars and new teams. Dudley Moore and Peter Cook formed their partnership and still originate their series on BBC-2. Sometimes we can give an opportunity to performers who were hitherto unknown, like Rodney Bewes and James Bolan—*The Likely Lads*. If well-known artists come to perform for us, then it is up to us to help devise formats that are as different as possible from anything they have done elsewhere. This is an opportunity to experiment, which many performers have welcomed and have carried through with great success—performers like Joyce Grenfell, Peter Ustinov, Larry Adler, Terry Scott and Ted Ray.

We can experiment with style in many ways, and one of the most

important is to treat programs in a much more detailed and lengthy way than is possible elsewhere. We can even devote a whole evening to one single topic. We have in the past mounted two long debates: one on the economic situation and another on Rhodesia, both of which ran for several hours and which attracted considerable numbers of viewers—which surprised even the most optimistic of us. The Rhodesia debate, for example, far from losing viewers as the evening wore on, in fact increased its audience.

There are many other such projects which we have in mind in all spheres. None of them, I suspect, could possibly be placed on other networks without great difficulty or without alienating a substantial proportion of viewers. For if your ambition is to be a comprehensive and balanced service, then you will certainly breed resentment if, for a whole evening, you cater only to the tastes of tennis enthusiasts, followers of the political scene, or opera lovers. Here, then, is an area in which BBC-2 alone can operate freely.

The third distinctive quality we can seek, in addition to stars and style, relates to subject matter. None of us working for BBC-2 is so vain as to believe that we alone have a monopoly of new ideas in this field—that we have such exceptional talents that we can devise enough new, sparkling, original programs to fill a whole schedule, at the same time attracting enormous audiences. We recognize that most of the program ideas that will occur to us will certainly, at some time or another, occur to other people. They may have been rejects, however, because they were experimental, and BBC-2 is happy to experiment.

I am aware that the logic seems questionable. One might well say, "In other words, the new programs you are considering are, in fact, minority programs, but you have already rejected the concept of a schedule composed of minority offerings." To me there are two widespread misconceptions about minority programs. The first is that a minority is an audience of a few thousand only. In my terms this is not so. There are subjects which are regarded in television as minority subjects, but which are, nonetheless, of interest to several millions of people. These are the subjects we should be concerned with.

The second illusion is that a minority program is the same thing as an intellectual program. This, of course, is complete nonsense. Every one of us has a minority interest, no matter what the height of our brow. Golf, jazz, motoring, folk music, thriller serials, archaeology, the stock market, techniques of acting, music, sociology, for-

eign films, rugby, science fiction and science itself—all these are subjects of minority interest. They span the whole spectrum of intellect. None of them is dealt with in a regular continuing way by either BBC-1 or ITV. All of them figure prominently in BBC-2 schedules.

This, then, is our policy. To present new programs and so schedule them that they supplement and complement BBC-1's schedule. But how is this being received? What obstacles are we encountering that prevent us from attracting a larger audience—for we are by no means satisfied with the size of audience we have at the moment.

In the first place, the very fact that we are broadcasting on the UHF band is a severe handicap. It means that hardly anyone can receive our programs satisfactorily without spending between five to ten pounds on an aerial. Many people have to spend a great deal more. They have to get their receiver modified or even buy a completely new one and that may cost them up to 90 pounds. This is a substantial deterrent to watching BBC-2. Nonetheless, our achievement is by no means negligible. In less than two years, nearly a quarter of the 23 million people in the coverage area of BBC-2 now have UHF sets in their homes. We have in fact an audience of some five million.

A second delay in our growth is caused by the time that it takes to build a completely new network of transmitters. UHF presents severe problems to the engineer. Its transmissions differ markedly from VHF transmissions. They are much more akin to the nature of light and are, therefore, much more readily interfered with by hills. Even large office blocks can cast a shadow in which it is impossible to receive BBC-2. As a result, many more transmitters are required to cover the country than are necessary for BBC-1 operating on VHF. Furthermore, there is only a very small number of manufacturers in Britain who can undertake the extremely complex and sophisticated work of designing and building directional UHF transmitting aerials.

As a result, the spread of BBC-2 over the country has not been as rapid as any of us would have wished. At this writing we have six major transmitters—in London, Birmingham, South Wales, Lancashire, the Isle of Wight and South Yorkshire—the last still operating on low power. We hope that another six will be opening this year so that by the time BBC-2 arrives at its third birthday some 70 per cent of the country will be covered.



But even when the transmitters are built and when the viewer has obtained his UHF set, BBC-2 still has another major battle to win—a battle in the minds of viewers. All of us are creatures of habit. All of us have our loyalties. For years we have been making a regular date with Perry Mason, Ena Sharples, Dr. Finlay and Inspector Barlow. It takes a great deal to break that loyalty. Not only that, but a large number of us have yet to acquire the attitude of mind that leads to consciously consulting the schedule listings and making a selection of programs that are of particular interest to us. On many occasions the decision will not lie with one person alone but with the consensus of family opinion. It is hardly surprising that the habit of shopping around scarcely exists, for up to now there has been no real encouragement for anyone to do so. When BBC-1 was a monopoly, there was, of course, no other program to turn to, and it was then that viewers acquired the habit of watching one television network from the beginning of the evening till the end. When ITV arrived, it was not possible to arrange common time-breaks between the two networks and indeed such junctions hardly ever occurred. And so the viewer still seldom turned the knob on his set unless out of total boredom. Now that there is an opportunity to select easily between BBC-1 and BBC-2, we should not be surprised if people are somewhat slow in taking advantage of it. Nonetheless, we must do what we can to encourage it. The most potent method of doing so is to announce on BBC-1 at common junctions, the two alternative programs that await the viewer.

I was recently expounding our notion of two integrated and complementary networks to an American television journalist. He was impressed by the idea. To him it represented an ideal form of television. But he was unconvinced it would ever work. He had been all over the world, he said, and had seen television in many countries where there were several networks operating, but none of them could achieve the sort of integration I described. Marvelous though it sounds to the viewer, all networks are fundamentally in competition with one another. He could not believe that BBC-1 and BBC-2 would not eventually be in competition. I know that he was correct in the first part of his statement. There *is* no other country with two networks that are closely integrated, but I was able to prove my point on the second question only by asking: "If BBC-2 was in competition, is it likely that BBC-1 would regularly promote its competitor by announcements on its own air?" He was convinced.

As a result of these measures, viewers are watching BBC-2 in in-

creasing numbers. Some of our programs regularly attract more viewers among UHF set owners than are watching either BBC-1 or ITV. But as long as we continue to schedule the so-called minority type of program, then there will always be many occasions throughout the week when our audience is very much smaller than it is for both of the other channels. As a result, a statistic which shows an average audience per program taken over a week will appear depressingly small. But I do not believe that this form of statistic is one that has a great deal of relevance to the kind of enterprise in which BBC-2 is engaged. The statistic in which I am much more interested is formulated in a quite different way. It expresses its findings in such terms as, for example, 70 per cent of UHF viewers watched at least six BBC-2 programs each week. That is what we should strive for and that is what I believe we can achieve.

Were such a statistic to be true, then we should be justified in saying that BBC-2 is not a minority service, but a service which appeals to the *majority* of viewers, though not all at the same time.

# THE POLITICS OF PIRACY

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FRANK IEZZI

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Surprisingly little has been reported in American professional broadcasting publications, commercial or academic, about that colorful and provocative addition to the broadcasting fraternity—the “pirate” broadcaster. To be sure, pirate broadcasting, when loosely defined as “illegal” broadcasting, has been part of the scene since broadcasting began, there having been more than 300 “illegal” broadcasting operations to date.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, however, the term “pirate” broadcasting refers to the presenting of radio or television programs for commercial profit to an audience whose government has not officially assigned a legal frequency to the operation. The term is not used to encompass those “illegal” stations which operate for political or propaganda rather than commercial purposes—such as the *Voice of America*—or those commercial stations using an unauthorized frequency but enjoying governmental sanction—such as *Radio Luxemburg*.

The purpose of this article is to describe the past and present—and to speculate about the future—of the three major pirate broadcasting ventures fitting the definition, all of which operate or have operated in Europe. In rough chronological order, these would be in Scandinavia, in the Netherlands and in Great Britain.

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## SCANDINAVIA

### *RADIO MERCUR*

The pirate commercial radio movement in Europe began in August, 1958, when a Dane named Fogh, seeking a lucrative way of investing some of his capital, established *Radio Mercur*. He obtained a 120-ton trawler, named it "Cheetah I," equipped it with a homemade 2-3 kilowatt transmitter and 100-foot antenna, and started FM radio broadcasting on an unauthorized frequency of 89.55 megacycles. He anchored his ship in the waters of the sound between Denmark and Sweden, where from a technical view, he was afforded the maximum coverage which such limited power could provide. In the legal view (although the point was and is still open to interpretation), it was outside the three-mile limit of jurisdiction of either nation, and hence subject to international and not national law.

The location was most strategic, however, from a psychological point of view. The coverage pattern included a part of Sweden known as the Skana, whose uniqueness encouraged *Radio Mercur* supporters to feel that it should have its own broadcasting service. The Skana, the western-most area of Sweden, has been the rope in a tug of war which has characterized relations between these countries for centuries. The inhabitants—though proud and loyal Swedish citizens—are largely of Danish ancestry. Danish is spoken widely through the area and when Swedish is spoken it is with a Danish accent. Further, the Skana contains more than one and a half million people, and is more densely populated than any other area of Sweden. Citizens in the area have a regional pride, and they felt that having their own radio service, pirate or otherwise, was not unreasonable. Negative governmental reaction notwithstanding, no steps were taken to put *Radio Mercur* out of commission.

Programs were presented from 6 A.M. to 11 A.M. and from 5 P.M. to midnight. They were presented in Danish since they were ostensibly for Copenhagen listeners although, of course, Skana listeners understood Danish. Programming consisted primarily of popular music but a fair part of the broadcasting week was devoted to classical music, public affairs, educational programs, and editorials. It was the latter, perhaps, that rankled government officials most about *Radio Mercur*. The editorials were openly and specifically critical, although constructively so, of governmental action—and frequently inaction—on social problems.

What the government failed to accomplish, the forces of nature did. In August, 1958, a sea-storm broke the mast of the "Cheetah I." Broadcasting was interrupted as she drifted helplessly into port for repairs in Sweden. Undaunted, *Radio Mercur* resumed activity in December, 1958, when one Lars-Eric Swensson bought a few hours of time each week for programs in Swedish beamed primarily to the Swedish audience. Swensson employed a Mrs. Britt Wadner, who figures prominently in the continuing battle for pirate commercial radio. Mr. Swensson set up offices and studios in Sweden. Audience size and support grew. The best survey showed that 76 per cent of the audience was already addicted to the pirate's "sound" even though listening involved making costly technical adjustments to the receiving apparatus.

In 1960, Britt Wadner secured new financial support, and in September she announced that *Radio Mercur* would operate from a sturdy new ship—called "Cheetah II"—equipped with two separate FM transmitters of 7-8 kilowatts each. The first transmitter was used to continue *Radio Mercur* broadcasts in Danish on 88.0 megacycles from 6 A.M. to midnight. The second transmitter carried programs in Swedish on 89.55 megacycles from 7 A.M. to 8 P.M. and from 10 P.M. to midnight (after Swedish TV signed off). The new service was, significantly, named *Radio Skana*. For a limited portion of the week, both transmitters were used for experimental stereo broadcasting.

Considering the formidable financial investment in the venture, it is natural that the voice of discretion began to be heard among the financial backers. One of the bankers backing the operation demanded that the provocative editorializing cease and that greater energy and attention be devoted to the revenue-producing function of the enterprise. At this point a number of dissidents, primarily Danes, "mutinied" and set up an entity known as DCR (*Danish Commercial Radio*). The group bought a 240-ton ship called "Lucky Star," anchored it next to "Cheetah II," and began competitive FM broadcasting—including editorials—on 96.4 megacycles from 3:30 P.M. to midnight. In a competitive move, *Radio Mercur* sent "Cheetah I" to the northwestern coast of Denmark, but the ocean waters were too rough for the frail ship so she returned to the harbor of Copenhagen. It soon became apparent, however, that DCR's noble motives in continuing the battle for free speech were no competition for *Radio Mercur*. DCR was absorbed by the latter in January, 1962.

By April, 1962, the governmental showdown with pirate commercial radio was at hand. The Danish Government moved first. Despite a valiant effort by *Radio Mercur* and its listeners (who numbered more than 10,000), the head of Danish communications decreed that no Danish companies would be allowed to buy time on pirate stations, and that all Danish citizens active in such broadcasting were liable to arrest. On January 31, 1962, the Danish pirates said a tearful farewell to listeners of "Lucky Star" and "Cheetah II."

#### RADIO NORD

Shortly after *Radio Mercur* got underway in 1958, an American contractor from Texas, Robert Thompson—then visiting in Stockholm—turned on his hotel radio and decided that he did not like what he heard. He determined to do something about Swedish radio, so he bought a 3,300-ton German coastal freighter, equipped it with a 20-kilowatt transmitter, and began planning his own pirate operation. Thompson hired a crew, purchased a supply of popular records and enlisted a few American disk jockeys. He named the ship "*Bon Jour*," anchored it some three miles off the shore of Stockholm and, in March, 1961, began broadcasting to Swedish citizens on *Radio Nord*. The broadcasts, reaching 200 miles inland, were an immediate success. Sponsors were eager—at \$40 for a 60-second prime-time spot—to reach *Radio Nord*'s growing and enthusiastic audience.

The Swedish Government made a mild first move by threatening to confiscate the ship and its equipment, should the "*Bon Jour*" be found in Swedish waters. When the audience grew to three million listeners, it became apparent that more stringent action was necessary. On the recommendation of the Nordic Council of the Scandinavian Inter-parliamentary Advisory Committee (composed of representatives from Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland), Sweden's Parliament followed Denmark's lead by making it a crime to supply pirate ships with naval stores or advertising copy. In August, 1962, *Radio Nord* ceased operations.

#### RADIO SYD

Despite these legislative actions against *Radio Mercur* and *Radio Nord*, Mrs. Wadner remained undaunted. She bought the "Cheetah I," established *Radio Syd* and began broadcasting programs to Sweden on 89.6 megacycles FM from 6 A.M. to 3 A.M. daily. Anticipating the law forbidding Swedish nationals to supply pirate ships or to provide commercial copy, Mrs. Wadner began this new operation with a three-month supply of stores and commercials.

Two weeks went by while Danes, Swedes and the rest of the world wondered at the audacity of the Pirate Queen. Heartened by her bold attitude, the "Lucky Star" and the "Cheetah II" resumed broadcasting in Danish, this time with German financial backing and with non-Danish announcers and technicians. On August 16, 1962, Danish police boarded the "Lucky Star," made some arrests and confiscated the ship. The move was of doubtful legality, however, even in the opinion of Stefan Hurwitz, who serves as "ombudsman"—an unofficial "chief of the Supreme Court"—in Denmark.

The Swedish Government seemingly decided in favor of indirect harassment of *Radio Syd*. On short notice, the frequency of the government station was moved nearer to *Radio Syd's*, causing the pirate to find another frequency or break the law by interfering with a government channel. *Radio Syd* persisted. Despite a three-month interruption for repairs, by April, 1963, listener support—and personal support for Mrs. Wadner—had assumed sizeable proportions. Kjell Eckholm, an energetic citizen committed to the cause of regional, free radio for the Skana area, formed *Club Radio Syd* to lend financial and psychological support to the cause. Nine thousand dues-paying members were enrolled on short notice.

Anticipating a drastic retaliatory move by the Swedish Government, *Club Radio Syd* held several public rallies to crystallize further support for the Pirate Queen and the cause of free broadcasting. At one such meeting more than 45,000 supporters congregated to hear impassioned speeches and listen to pop music performers who, understandably, donated their services. After "Cheetah I" ran aground during a storm in September, 1964, *Club Radio Syd* helped Mrs. Wadner buy a new 470-ton ship equipped with a professional 7-kilowatt Siemens transmitter.

The public demonstrations and the new ship began to stir the Swedish Government. In November, Mrs. Wadner revealed that she had also equipped her new ship with a homemade UHF television transmitter and a number of German TV cameras and had conducted successful test transmissions. The government was now ready for direct action against the Pirate Queen. In December, *Radio Syd* advised its listeners that the ship had to be taken to England for technical overhauling and would return after the winter freeze, to broadcast radio and TV signals.

The opportunity for government intervention was at hand. Once *Radio Syd* signed off, a newly-appointed Minister of Communica-

tions announced that henceforth it would be a crime for a Swedish national to own an illegal broadcasting transmitter and for Swedish businessmen to sponsor any broadcasts on a pirate station. Mrs. Wadner might have survived the latter stipulation by accepting international sponsors, but the former left her with only three options. She could assign ownership to a non-Swedish source and continue to operate, since the law made it a crime to *own*, not to *operate*, an illegal transmitter. The Pirate Queen deemed this act of subterfuge as morally offensive. She could abandon the cause and close down, but she found this course equally offensive, since *Radio Syd* was by now a matter of deep principle for her and the people of the Skana region. Finally, she could go to jail as a final gesture of defiance. She chose jail.

As of September, 1966, all is seemingly quiet on the pirate broadcasting scene in Sweden. When I spoke with Mrs. Wadner a few weeks ago, she was about to leave for Switzerland and Great Britain "on broadcasting business." It is my guess that we have not heard the last word from the colorful Pirate Queen who tried to bring free and commercial radio and television to Sweden. In any event, she has left her mark. Swedish state-controlled radio now devotes a substantial portion of its broadcast time to popular music.

## HOLLAND

### *DUTCH PIRATE RADIO*

Among the most frequent visitors to Denmark's *Radio Mercur* in 1959 were a number of Dutch entrepreneurs. Perhaps it is only small coincidence that early in April, 1960, *Radio Veronica* began to broadcast from a ship just outside the territorial waters of Holland. Owned and operated by the three brothers of the prominent Verway family of Holland, *Radio Veronica* is the only pirate station presently operating in continental Europe.

Even though the operation is illegal, *Radio Veronica* maintains an administrative office and taping studio on land in Hilversum, Holland. The existence and the physical location of *Radio Veronica* headquarters are something of an open secret, so I visited the offices and talked with some of the "pirates."

The Program Director, who doubles as a disk jockey, is the oldest of the group of eight disk jockeys who operate *Radio Veronica*. He is twenty-five. The Business Manager is an impressive, dignified gentleman who resembles a small-town banker, and I had a pleasant



chat with him. Because *Radio Veronica* tries to be discreet about the amount and kind of publicity it encourages, he was a bit reserved. He showed me a wall-size bulletin board to which were affixed thousands of colored map pins indicating the schedule of commercial messages for the next year. He indicated that virtually all sorts of products, national and international, are advertised but that—in order not to twist the tail of the tiger—*Radio Veronica* shys away from controversial advertising, particularly messages in behalf of political parties, family-planning agencies, and the like.

It was obvious that *Radio Veronica*, in contrast to other pirates, operates a dignified, respectable and discreet "shop." The "Corporation" pays state taxes and full royalties to performers and musical unions. Since they enjoy a monopoly over the pirate broadcasting market in Holland, they try to avoid making waves (no pun intended). *Radio Veronica* broadcasts from 6 A.M. to midnight every day. Although it carries weekly Indonesian, Spanish and Italian language shows—as well as occasional classical music programs—the basic fare is "Top-Forty" popular tunes interspersed with commercials. The appeal seems to extend beyond teen-agers to housewives and businessmen.

It is difficult to speculate upon the future of *Radio Veronica*. Its survival seems assured so long as the reputation of the Verway brothers remains high, the operation remains discreet and responsible, and the appetite of the Dutch audience for "Top-Forty" records continues. *Radio Veronica* seems to be doing no harm. Voices of protest are still heard but they are fewer and less sanguine than at first.

#### *DUTCH PIRATE TV*<sup>2</sup>

Until September, 1964, Dutch TV was monopolized by five broadcasting organizations representing major political and religious pressure groups. These five were subsidized, on a pro-rated basis according to the size of their membership, by the \$10 license fee paid by each TV set owner. They also shared the air time, on a similar pro-rated basis, on the two non-commercial channels used in Holland.

In September, 1964, *North Sea-TV* was established. It consisted of a time-selling and packaging agency located on land in Amsterdam and a transmitting facility which had been erected on an artificial "island" six miles off the Dutch coastline. The land-side offices assembled the 16mm film reels that comprised the programs—chiefly British and American adventure series—that were broadcast. These

film reels, complete with interspersed commercials, were then transported by helicopter or hydrofoil boat to the seaside offices seven days in advance of air-time.

*North Sea-TV's* programs were broadcast every evening from 6:30 to 8:00 and again from 10:00 to 11:30. The best audience measurement efforts indicated that from the outset more than 250,000 viewers watched pirate TV programs with impressive regularity. Sponsors rushed to participate.

But the success of *North Sea-TV* was short-lived. In late 1964, the Dutch Government began negotiating a bill which would enable Dutch authorities to occupy the artificial island and to force *North Sea-TV* off the air. The proposed bill was based upon a 1958 United Nations Convention which defined the limits of continental shelves over which coastal states hold sovereignty. The government asserted that this dictum should include artificial structures erected on the continental shelf. At 8 A.M. on December 18, 1964, a small police task force invaded the island, legally confiscated the transmitter and *North Sea-TV* was no more.

What has been the impact of this pirate venture? First, during *North Sea-TV's* short life it provided a dramatic demonstration that the Dutch TV audience was bored with the staid, bland and sterile, state-supervised "establishment" TV fare and was eager for something more vital and enjoyable.

It also showed Dutch businessmen that TV could be a lucrative and persuasive medium for advertising. In fact, on January 2, 1965, Reuters reported that government proposals for Dutch radio and TV reorganization would for the first time allow commercial advertising for one to three minutes before and after news bulletins. Under this proposal the maximum amount of radio advertising time allowed in a day is 24 minutes and for TV, 15 minutes. Most of the income from the advertising would be used to finance programs. For the first three years, however, the remaining income would be offered to the Press, should there be evidence of marked loss of newspaper income due to TV and radio advertising.

## GREAT BRITAIN

### *PIRATE RADIO IN BRITAIN*

As of September 15, 1966, ten pirate radio stations operate just outside the territorial waters of Great Britain,<sup>3</sup> although the number will very likely change upward by the time this appears in print. On July 28th of this year, the Labour government presented

to the Commons the long-threatened bill against the pirates. With its issuance, the plot thickens in the dramatic story of pirate broadcasting in Europe.

The first pirate station in Britain, *Radio Caroline* (named after President Kennedy's daughter), was launched on March 28, 1964. It is reported that the idea of operating the station came as the result of a chance meeting in a Soho pub of a bright young Irishman, Ronan O'Rahilly (who operated a 7,000-member teen-age club in Soho), and Allan Crawford, an astute Australian businessman and music publisher. Intrigued by the high-yield, high-risk aspects of the Dutch and Scandinavian operations, O'Rahilly and Crawford bought two ships, both fitted in the shipyard owned by Ronan's father in Eire. *Caroline North* was anchored off the Isle of Man and *Caroline South* off the coast of Harwich. Both began to beam "Top-Forty" pop records to the northern and southern areas of Britain. At present, the *Caroline* operation is directed by 37-year-old Phillip Solomon, the largest single shareholder with a \$500,000 interest in the venture.

*Radio Caroline* was an immediate popular and financial success, and it was to be expected that its monopoly would be short-lived. In December, 1964, another of four major British pirates, *Radio London*, appeared on the scene with more professional performers and technicians, better equipment, more administrative know-how, and \$1,400,000 in financial backing. As one indication of *Radio London's* greater professional acumen, they chose a spot on the dial just between the BBC's Home and Light Programs so that the listener turning from Home to Light would have to encounter *Radio London*. Headed by 37-year-old Philip Birch, *Radio London* is anchored strategically only a few miles north of *Radio Caroline* just outside British territorial waters off Harwich. *Radio London*, like *Caroline*, is strictly a "Top-Forty" pop tune station of the "auditory wallpaper" variety, appealing mainly to teen-agers but with a strong bias toward men. The station is reported to have earned nearly \$1,600,000 to date.

The next prominent member of the "pirate pack" is *Radio 390*, headed by Ted Allbeury, which began in September, 1965. Unlike *Radio Caroline* and *Radio London*, which operate from ships, *Radio 390* broadcasts from an abandoned World War II fort off the coast of Kent, which fact makes it more vulnerable to governmental crack-down. (Against such a possibility, Allbeury has an option to lease the venerable "Cheetah II" from Mrs. Britt Wadner.)

*Radio 390* is far more urbane than *Caroline* or *London*, directing

itself less toward teen-agers and more toward housewives and businessmen. The music *390* presents is sentimental and slightly syrupy—mainly “square” ballads, show tunes and “evergreens” of the Glenn Miller-bordering-on-Lawrence Welk genre. *Radio 390* rejects the idea of disk jockeys and prefers to employ announcers with marked British accents. Mr. Allbeury explained to me that he presents no news programs because housewives are not interested in news and, for the few who might be, today’s news is too disturbing and unnerving. He believes that his station serves as a friend and companion for lonely people—housewives and other shut-ins.

It was not long, of course, before American speculators got into the act. A few months ago—in May, 1966, the establishment of *Britain Radio* and its companion station, *Radio England*, operating from the same ship (significantly named the “*Laissez Faire*”) brought American-style “formula” radio to the pirate scene. *Britain Radio* is directed by 40-year-old William Vick, an ex-Monsanto oilman. It is almost wholly American-backed, with supporters ready, willing and able to sink \$8 million into the venture. The “*Laissez Faire*” is anchored four miles east of Harwich and is powerful enough to cover all of Britain and all of Europe’s western seaboard. “Swinging *Radio England*” presents pop music 24 hours a day and, on another frequency, *Britain Radio* spews out 21 hours of non-pop light music each day.

The remaining pirates operating at this writing are:

*Radio Scotland*, located on a lightship off the East Coast of Scotland, with a listening audience of three million and a potential audience of 12 million in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England.

*Radio City*, operating from an abandoned World War II fort in the Thames Estuary and broadcasting “Top-Forty” pop tunes since its inception as the second British pirate in September, 1964.

*Radio Essex*, operating from a similar abandoned fort just north of *Radio City* and *Radio 390*. The programming is a blend of “potted-palm” tunes and musical-comedy hits for housewives during the day and “Top-Forty” pop hits for the transistorized teen-age set later in the evening.

*Radio 270* in the North, broadcasting from a Dutch lugger anchored off Scotland’s eastern shore to an audience exceeding two and a half million. It began in May, 1966.

What, and how valid, are the major governmental objections to the pirates?

First, there is the matter of illegality *qua* illegality. The government asserts that the only legal basis on which European countries share the use of radio frequencies was determined by the international agreement effected in Copenhagen in 1948. Since all the pirates simply started using their frequencies without said authorization, these stations are illegal. The pirates counter with the argument that only 208 frequencies were allocated in the Copenhagen Plan, but there are now 312 radio stations operating which were not authorized in 1948 and which are therefore likewise illegal. These include the *Voice of America*, the *Armed Forces Network*, *Radio Vatican City*, *Radio Berlin*, and more than 300 others. The pirates take refuge in a semantic preserve by saying they are not "illegal," but only "unauthorized." The British Postmaster General, who is in charge of all forms of public communications, maintains that while all European nations have had to make alterations in their frequency usage internally, since 1948 none have done so in a manner that would infringe on frequencies assigned to other countries.

The second government objection is that the pirates' illegal use of their unauthorized frequencies interferes with the authorized use of said frequencies by those to whom they had been assigned. The Postmaster General points out that *Radio 390* interferes with a legal Swedish station. Also, the unauthorized frequencies used by pirates are too close to those used by ships at sea, hence particularly dangerous during distress and rescue operations. He denies the pirates' allegation that they act as a navigational aid for shipping and aircraft rather than as a danger.

Finally, the government asserts that pirate broadcasts interfere with the commercial trawler fleet operations which use radio to track fish and obtain vital market information. The Postmaster General adds that engineers not subject to official licensing and supervision might, through incompetence or carelessness, be especially liable to cause such alleged interference.

The pirates counter the serious charge of interference in several ways. They point out that they are no worse offenders than are others, that almost any medium-wave station can occasionally interfere with other broadcasts and—perhaps most significantly—that all the government would have to do to eliminate such alleged interference would be to grant them a suitable frequency. The Postmaster General counters that there remain no "spare" frequencies

available in the broadcast spectrum on which any station with a working radius of ten miles over land could operate without causing interference. He believes that, with the wave lengths available to Great Britain, it is all he can do to maintain national coverage of two broadcasting services and near-national coverage of a third.

The pirate rebuttal to the assertion that there are no remaining "spare" wave lengths is made by Philip Birch, director of *Radio London*:

The wave length problem is not insoluble. The 1948 Copenhagen Plan assigned wave lengths at 9KC intervals on the medium waveband, giving about 160 frequencies. Technical advances would possibly allow this interval to be narrowed and the number of stations to be increased, and there remains frequency modulation (FM), under-developed mainly because mere repetition of medium waveband programs provides no incentive for the public to buy FM sets.

The interference problem can be beaten. This arises mainly at night, when signals carry further. In America, where all 2,700 stations are under FCC control, each one reduces power after dark and interference is avoided. This practice is not generally followed in Europe. Another technique available is the use of directional antennae.

In fact, stations of low power would be adequate for many areas here, and using modern techniques it would be feasible for up to half a dozen such stations, suitably spaced geographically, to share the same frequency.

Still another charge levelled against pirates by the government is that they flagrantly disregard British copyright law. Two organizations are involved. There is the Performing Rights Society which protects the composer and the lyric writer. The pirates point out that the PRS has accepted payments from *Radio Caroline* and *Radio London* and that other pirates are about to start making such payments. On closer investigation, however, I learned that said payments are reduced ones, since PRS feels that something is better than nothing.

The other organization involved is Phonographic Performance Limited, set up by the recording industry to collect copyright fees due the recording companies for public performance of their disks. In the United States, the purchaser of a recording may play it for profit without paying the manufacturer of the record. In Great Britain, the record company retains control over its property and can specify how much "needle time" it will allow the broadcaster. The BBC is allowed to use recordings in less than 20 per cent of its total schedule. The rest must be talk or live music. The result is

that 600 musicians have full-time, year-round employment with the BBC. The pirates admit they do not pay recording companies but insist that if they were given a land base of operation the heavy costs of high-sea operation would be eliminated so they could pay such fees. With regard to "needle time," the pirates contend, this might bring an end to those restrictive practices of record companies which, by limiting the use of sold recordings, only serve to protect second-rate musicians.

The aforementioned objections to the pirates are not, in my opinion, the real reasons for the government's adamant stand. The pirates pay no government taxes at a time when the British economy is foundering. If their operation is in fact a financial bonanza, the government wants "a slice of the action." Secondly, many fear an escalation in the government-pirate battle. Ten pirates now operate, and more are on the way. There is speculation that new operators might include not only those irresponsible elements who are commercially motivated, but those who are politically motivated as well. There is substantial evidence that *Radio Freedom*, a putative propaganda offshore-radio station, will start to broadcast political messages on behalf of the Ian Smith Rhodesian regime and other anti-government, anti-Establishment causes. In answering an MP's charge that *Radio Freedom* is "sinister," a spokesman for this new pirate venture said its purpose would be:

... to set aright the gagged broadcasts of the systems of the Establishment radiated by courtesy of vested power... There is nothing "sinister" about the truth. *Radio Freedom* will continue apace with the increasing demand to offer an alternative radio link with the politically aware in Britain. The listeners may not necessarily agree but they have the right to hear them, discuss them should they wish.

The station will be supported by public donation, with \$130,000 already collected for a 50 kilowatt transmitter.

Finally, a major reason for the government's vehement opposition to the pirates is that they pose a real threat to the survival of the BBC as it presently operates. An audience measurement survey conducted by the National Opinion Poll in March, 1966, reveals that about 25 million Britons over the age of 17 (just under half of the nation's population) are already addicted to the pirate "sound" and a plateau of growth is nowhere in sight.

In view of those real and apparent objections to the pirate stations, why has not the British Government made decisive moves to take them off the air? As early as December 8, 1965, then-Postmaster

General Anthony Wedgewood Benn said publicly that he would prosecute forthwith, under the terms of the Wireless Telegraphy Act, the three pirates operating from the forts within territorial waters as well as those on ships anchored outside the three mile limit. Aside from an occasional repetition of the threat, little more was heard from Mr. Benn thereafter. Even if the Postmaster General were to ignore the formidable doubts over the legality of prosecution, it must occur to him that such a move would have serious international implications and might create severe domestic problems for the Labour party.

Internationally, Great Britain, like most of the ten nations who signed the Council of Europe's Strasbourg Agreement to create a uniform law against pirate radio, was less than enthusiastic about signing. Britain did so only with the provision that the decision to enforce the law on the domestic scene be subject to ratification by the government. (The real enthusiasts for the bill were the Scandinavians, who were being plagued by *Radio Nord* and *Radio Syd*.) Since the pirates take the precaution of being legally and officially registered in other sovereign nations, since they operate in international waters, and since they pose no military threat, any move by Great Britain against the pirates, might bring her to the International Court in The Hague. Even were Britain to win her case, she might lose in the long run. As a great maritime power, Britain traditionally has been loathe to interfere with the freedom of the seas. Any such action might only set a precedent for actions against her extensive merchant fleet.

Domestically, the Labour government survives by a dangerously slim majority. There is strong feeling that the government might fall were it to seriously antagonize a sizeable portion of the 25 million pirate radio listeners by putting the stations out of commission. But on June 20, 1966, a macabre development forced the government's hand, and may bring the pirate drama to a climax.

It seems that during the middle of the night a party of longshoremen and one woman invaded the abandoned fort housing *Radio City* and took over the premises by force. Major Oliver Smedley, a war hero, prominent politician and one of the earliest pirates, admitted that he was behind the raid. He reported that Reginald Calvert, owner of *Radio City*, was about to make a deal with *Radio London* which involved the use of a transmitter which belonged to Smedley. When Calvert heard about the raid, he telephoned Scotland Yard to ask their aid in recovering the fort. He was told that his pirate oper-



ation placed him beyond legal protection, and so took matters into his own hands. He called on Major Smedley at his home for a showdown. There was a rifle shot and police found the body of Calvert with a gaping hole in the chest. Major Smedley faced a charge of manslaughter, and was acquitted.

The incident illustrated dramatically that anarchy breeds violence. Clearly, something would have to be done about the pirates without further delay. In the middle of July, Mr. Benn was replaced as Postmaster General by Mr. Edward Short, who decided he had to take action. On July 28, 1966, he presented to the Commons the Marine Etc. Broadcasting (Offences) Bill.

The bill, patterned after the Council of Europe's Strasbourg Agreement of January, 1965, is far-reaching. Under its provisions, broadcasting from ships or maritime structures such as abandoned forts around Britain's shores will be unlawful. Whether master of a ship, a ship owner, or a broadcaster, anyone involved in operating such a station will be guilty of an offence. The bill also applies to any British subject who arranges for someone outside the United Kingdom to so broadcast from a ship. Anyone who serves or supplies pirate stations, provides, installs or repairs technical equipment, or participates in any way to advertise on such a station will be liable to fine and arrest for a period of two years.

Until this bill was presented, the pirates had little to do with each other. They differed sharply in temperament, background, and what they felt a pirate station ought to be and to do. The bill, however, has made it apparent to them that they had better hang together. While all seek to draw closer together for their common defense, each still reacts in his own unique way to the threatening bill. *Radio London* indicates that it will attempt to increase its advertising of international products and will install higher-powered transmitters in order to operate from the waters of Spain or Portugal, which did not participate in the Strasbourg Agreement. *Radio London's* Public Relations Director adds: "I am sure the government will not be happy if we start advertising overseas products, like Japanese goods, in this country." *Radio 390's* avuncular Ted Allbeury has asked listeners to protest enactment of the bill in letters to their MP's. *Radio 270's* disk jockeys are selling T-shirts with "Fight For Freedom" on them. Another pirate has threatened to give free air time to regular advertisers at first but then accept payment "under the table" at some secret future time.

There was immediate negative reaction to the bill by several

Conservative MP's, who describe it as a "kill-joy" bill. They contend that it is "defeatist" in that it makes no provision for legitimate local broadcasting stations to satisfy the popular demand for light music "without taking a penny more out of pockets of people already controlled and overtaxed by a disgraced government." They have called upon Commons to deny the bill a second reading. To meet this "defeatist" charge, the government has both short- and long-term plans.

The short-term plan is to set up *Radio 270* as a 24-hour-a-day operation using the frequency of the Light Program and emphasizing pop music designed to satisfy the 25 million Britons who listen to the pirates. To get around the "needle time" limitation, *Radio 270* would use music tapes made in their studios. *Radio Caroline's* director, Phillip Solomon, summarized the reaction of the rest of the pirates: "This is absolutely ridiculous for a nation on the verge of bankruptcy! A program of this sort will cost in the region of five million pounds (\$14 million) a year to run and even more to start. Where is this money to come from?" Ronan O'Rahilly, 26-year-old founder of *Radio Caroline*, pointedly (if not grammatically) adds: "Instead of spending millions in taxpayer's money, why don't the government set up an independent government body and let offshore stations come to land? With control—and no expense—the government can supply the demand (for pop music) and get revenue." This sort of comment will be difficult to dismiss when next the Commons convenes.

The government's long-range plan is to establish a government authority which would produce a national popular program. It would control a network of some 200 local stations providing local news and features. The service would be financed by national and local advertising messages, but these would not be linked with any particular program.

Whether the Marine Etc. Broadcasting (Offences) Bill will be passed and implemented,<sup>4</sup> in which case pirate TV<sup>5</sup> and radio will cease, will determine whether the drama of pirate broadcasting is already played out or whether the climax and denouement are merely postponed. In any event, the public seems to have responded to the service which has been offered in a most positive way, and in one way or another its voice will be heard.

## NOTES

1. According to Radio Regulations Treaty (International) signed in Geneva in 1959 and adopted, Special Rules Relating to Broadcasting, 3 Section 1, "The establishment and use of broadcasting stations (sound broadcasting and TV broadcasting stations) on board ship, aircraft or any other floating or air-borne objects outside national territories is prohibited in accordance with International Treaty." See A. J. P. Tammes' article, "Freedom of the High Seas: Legitimacy of a Television Island," *European Broadcasting Union Review*, Part B, General and Legal, No. 86b, July, 1965, pp. 38-40.
2. For a more complete discussion of this venture, see my "TV Piracy on the High Seas," *Television Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 1, Winter, 1965, pp. 23-28.
3. *Manx Radio*, operating on the Isle of Man with a broadcasting range of coverage limited to the island, is the only legal commercial radio station in the United Kingdom. The island enjoys a degree of self-government which accounts for its permission to operate a commercial radio station, an enterprise prohibited elsewhere in Great Britain. *Manx Radio* had to start on VHF only, even though 90 per cent of set owners did not possess VHF sets. The station closes down at 7 P.M. except on weekends. Operating expenditure is \$70,000 a year but, by selling time to local sponsors, *Radio Manx* is about to begin operating in the black. *Radio Manx* broadcasts relatively little pop music. The ratio of music to speech is 65 to 35 per cent. They were begrudgingly granted a special dispensation from the Performing Right Tribunal to bend the "needle time" restriction on the use of recorded music. British Government advisers are keeping an eye on the success of *Manx Radio* as they consider ways of filling the void when and if they succeed in their effort to close down the pirates.
4. A few days after this article went to press, overt steps were taken against the pirate stations operating from disused World War II forts in the Thames Estuary. On September 22, Postmaster General Short lodged criminal charges against *Radio 390* for operating without a license. Although *Radio 390* is eight miles from land, and therefore outside the three-mile limit, the fort can be considered within British territory because of special rules about estuaries. On September 28, *Radio Essex* was similarly charged. The cases will be heard by a panel of magistrates in Canterbury on November 24, 1966. It is rumoured that *Radio City*, the third Thames Estuary fort, and *Radio Scotland*, which operates from an immobile lightship off the coast of Scotland, are next on the Postmaster General's agenda.
5. On May 1, 1966, the news broke that the first determined and heavily-backed effort to start a 625-line pirate TV service is about to get underway, having reportedly completed successful secret test transmissions. The man seemingly behind the plan is Phillip Solomon of *Radio Caroline*. The Swedish ship, "Cheetah II," which Solomon has been renting from Mrs. Wadner, is equipped with a powerful TV transmitter as well as radio equipment. Speculation is that the proposed TV transmission service will be coupled with another local pirate radio station.

Some of the cultural attitudes and achievements of the few in the twentieth century—some of the good traits, such as a willingness to experiment, as well as some of the bad ones, such as spiritual hypochondria—have certainly, as they always do, been taken over partially and in other forms by the many. But it may be doubted whether the attitudes of the many in the West—even in that supposedly intellectual land, France—are so despairing of Progress, of better things, moral as well as material, of orthodox democracy as are our intellectuals, and in particular among the intellectuals our best-known writers and artists. The many actually seem often to enjoy Atlantic City, superhighways, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, the gladiatorial exercise we call professional football, the form of leather we know as “pizza,” and much, much else that makes the despair of their betters. We may put the matter more simply: the masses in the West still believe in Progress, which is after all, a form of belief in utopia.

...One of the core elements in the classic utopia, a belief in the possibility of cumulative melioristic reform, not hopelessly piecemeal, temporary, mere balancing a step backward by one forward—but, in brief, Progress—is clearly alive among the many in the West and, though not dead, very much weakened among the intellectual few. It may indeed perish from the earth, and for other reasons than its abandonment by the intellectuals. But it will not survive forever in our Western society *without the support of the intellectuals*. It is possible that this core of the democratic utopian drive can once more gain the support of the intellectuals if they will but be a little more patient with ordinary human nature, a little more willing to accept without despair the evidence that man's own cerebral cortex is never fully his master, if they will respect the average man's reluctance to be wholly shepherded even by the kindest and most intelligent of shepherds, and if they can, without abandoning all they have gained in depth from the revival of the tragic outlook in our own time, from our devotion to science and the “reality-principle” recapture—even in their abandonment of any religious revelation from beyond this universe—something of the hopes of their grandfathers. For liberty, equality, fraternity are not going to survive without some touch of faith, hope, and charity, even—rather, above all—among the intellectuals.

*Crane Brinton*  
*“Utopia and Democracy”*  
Daedalus  
Spring, 1965

# SMALL SCREENS AND SERVING GIRLS— TV IN FRANCE

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RICHARD HAUSER

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One of France's top-ranking ministers once described the communications system in his country quite aptly:

The connecting line of execution extends downwards uninterrupted from the minister to the individual subject, transmitting the law and orders from the government unto the last ramification of the social order, with the speed of electric fluid.

His name was Chaptal, he was in the service of Napoleon Bonaparte, and his comment is over 150 years old. He was speaking, of course, of the extreme bureaucratization of the Napoleonic Code, a body of regulatory laws whose impact upon French government is still felt in 1966. Today, any one of DeGaulle's underlings in the *Office de la Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française*\* might repeat Chaptal's words, with no less vigor. Their model is DeGaulle himself:

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\*In February of 1964, the *Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française* became an "office." The most important changes which took place under this reform were (1) the placing of broadcasting under the supervision (rather than the direct control) of the Minister of Information, and (2) the reorganization of the administrative body as a "major public concern." Both reforms were designed to set up the O.R.T.F. as an autonomous unit, freeing it from government control. It is difficult to see the practical results of this sweeping paper reorganization.

Radio and television are assuming a unique role of representation. That image which we all hold of France and the image which others hold of our nation depends now, to a great extent, on what is henceforward seen, heard, understood and on what strikes simultaneously innumerable masses of people.

DeGaulle's estimation of the importance of television is clearly demonstrated by his own appearances on it. The capabilities which he feels to be within the medium are an integral part of a vast plan to reveal the glory of the French nation to itself and to the world.

To understand this attitude on the part of France's Chief Executive is to understand much of the programming policy of French television. The paternalism of the state institution implies, above all, an aristocratic concern for the well-being of a developing child, and the O.R.T.F. does more than a mediocre job of providing program fare to uplift the French people. The goal of broadcasters, as well as of government officials, is an enlightened multitude, participating in a common intellectual and artistic heritage.

The O.R.T.F., however, has yet to cultivate a large and, more importantly, a *faithful* audience. According to some statistics which are not officially recognized, more Frenchmen listen to the Saar-based, commercially-supported *Europe n° 1* than to the three national radio networks combined. Snubbed by the more vocal intellectuals, state networks have had to scramble to win back the greater, less articulate number. To do so, however, they had to prove themselves more willing to please than they had in the past.

A certain amount of campaigning is being done to win over a larger public. Summer listeners to *Paris-Inter*, France's radio concession to popular taste, were frequently reminded by messages like these that television was the going remedy for hollow winter evening hours:

So the paid vacation's about to end? And you don't wanta turn in your water-wings and leave your beach-towel out there on the sand? Don't wanta go back to dreary city life?

Don't be that way! Bounce back smiling! Come home to a grin—get your own TV set!

C'mon—a little screen in the house...

How about it?

(August 19, 1965)

The slightly nervous quality in the above commercial is usual when advertising is heard on the air-waves: publicity is allowed only for products whose successful sale is in the national interest. Government officials are apparently placing television in the critical category.

The publicity campaign is a strange, two-pronged affair: on the one hand, the medium must be made attractive and accessible to the working-man's diluted taste and thin pocket-book; on the other, it must be made a respectable diversion for the educated, semi-aristocratic elite. To attain both ends, O.R.T.F. officials have had to make concessions. In the 50's, they claimed transcendent significance for television programming; the public just sat there, and bore the moral weight with a patient equanimity. In the 60's, the O.R.T.F. claims less for its programming and is gradually winning a public for itself. But the progress is frustratingly slow.

Among the intellectuals, the absence of the *boîte à concierge* (serving-woman's diversion) is still hailed with as much enthusiasm as the new set in a provincial town. The Parisian intellectual will go to the theatre or wait long hours in the rain to buy tickets to Béjart's new ballet. But it seldom occurs to him to turn on the television set, where he can appreciate Béjart, already a familiar figure on the small screen, or the Barrault troupe or the *Comédie-Française*.

When the newly-reorganized O.R.T.F. completed installation of the first relay stations of its second TV network in April of 1964, it made a rather startling pronouncement: "The Public of the second network wants a happier television, a 'rosier' one, a more relaxed viewing." For the first time, administrators found themselves admitting television's essential recreational vocation.

The public, though unwashed, is admitted to have certain preferences as to the bath in which it is plunged; and deodorized classics be damned, these preferences must be taken into account when laying out the programming schedule.

When O.R.T.F. officials act in the name of the "public" they are trying to please, they are aiming their policies at some six million set-owners. Statisticians count about four viewers per set, which means that nearly half of the French population sees some television every day.

In the present economy, however, many more Frenchmen could own a set than do. There is no longer any problem of reception: at present, 97 per cent of the national territory can receive the broad-

casts of the first network, and, by the last month of 1965, 70 per cent of France was covered by the second network. As *Télé-7 Jours*, France's alarmist version of *TV Guide*, grumbled:

Six million receiving sets is not anything to get excited about, since this number, huge in appearance, is clearly less than was anticipated; it shows, quite simply, that television isn't progressing at the hoped-for rate.

By comparison with the television boom that took hold in the United States in the late 40's, the spreading of sets throughout France has been far from spectacular. But growth has been steady—throughout 1964, the number of television sets jumped each month at the regular rate of 200,000 new receivers.

By 1965, the French were thoroughly familiar with TV, and certain programming tendencies were becoming apparent: 1) a gradual increase in the amount of television fare offered: 28 hours in 1948, almost 45 hours in the mid-50's, and finally close to 70 hours (including in-school telecasts) in the mid-60's, with 25 hours of alternative programming on the second network; 2) an attempt to order the program-day in accordance with the audience available at any particular hour; 3) a consequent standardization of program schedules (uninterrupted programming, precise starting-times, certain days for certain kinds of shows); 4) a remarkably consistent program-week with respect to the types of fare offered, with the exception of variety shows, which represent only 21–22 per cent of the total schedule as compared to a peak of 28 per cent in the middle and late 50's; 5) a schedule characterized by a heavy dosage of informational shows and documentaries, accounting for almost half of the entire programming schedule from the mid-50's to the present; and 6) a high percentage of comedy and drama in the mid-50's (20 per cent of the schedule) has dwindled until strictly dramatic shows represent only five per cent of the current schedule (the *number* of dramatic presentations has remained at two or three each week).

Despite these adjustments to public demand, the O.R.T.F. is not as successful as it might be. Just as the O.R.T.F. is a mouth-piece for government policy, so does it attempt to control artistry and taste. But individual expression, in a regime noted for its intolerance of political deviation, somehow gets confused with left-wing, socially-involved presentations. In wanting to reflect the nature of the French people, the O.R.T.F. finds that the mirror-image sometimes conflicts with official policy, and that popular acceptance of a particular series is not always synonymous with government approval.



A case in point is *La caméra explore le temps*, one of the oldest and most popular series appearing on French television. The program is a skillful historical investigation of events which were the talk of their own day. Abruptly, for no announced reason and at the peak of its success, the series was cancelled. The name of the program's director, Stelio Lorenzi, was "no longer pronounced around the O.R.T.F."

It happens that Lorenzi is a Communist. He has espoused a number of causes which, because they have primarily involved labor disputes, impeded the smooth functioning of the O.R.T.F. itself. Administrators were more willing to brave public protest than to keep a trouble-maker in the brood. *L'Express*, when Lorenzi's dismissal was announced, blared: "Witch-hunt at the O.R.T.F.!"

Content of the program tended toward criticism of the Establishment and sometimes directly solicited a modest revolt among the viewers. The second-to-the-last program of the series, "*L'Affaire Ledru*," was decidedly anti-Establishment: the story concerned an indisputably moral lawyer, bent on defending the highest principles, who is duped and forced into ignominious retirement by bribing, back-slapping court officials. Ledru = Lorenzi? Not unlikely. Ledru is, as was the Joan of Arc of an earlier show, a prototype: the besieged intellectual-visionary, caught in the toils of officialdom and checkmated at every turn. The protagonist is provided no exit into the arena of action in the modern world, and finds himself forced into open revolt, which usually results in his utter ruin.

To underline the series' message, each program ended with a debate between André Castelot and Alain Decaux, the producers. A cozy little chat, supposedly, but strangely lacking in spontaneity. As the *Ledru* debate ended, for example, Castelot turned to the audience and said, confidentially: "And so, once more we have seen powers of Big Money triumph over an innocent person. But as for me—and you, *chers amis téléspectateurs*, we'll take the innocent, the little person, anytime, won't we...?" Fortunately (depending upon your side of the fence), the series had redeeming qualities which counteracted the off-the-stiff-cuff remarks of Castelot and Decaux and made them semi-palatable.

As coda to the *affaire Ledru-Lorenzi*, *Télé-7 Jours* recently conducted an inquiry into its readers' tastes. The results: *La caméra explore le temps*, four months after it had been officially suppressed, came out on top. And 60,000 Frenchmen....

Propagandist drama is far from being the only thing about French

television that is likely to disorient the American viewer: the program-day itself, though now standardized as mentioned above, is impossible to decipher without the aid of a guide such as is provided in capsulated form in the daily newspapers, or more thoroughly in *Télé-7 Jours* and a competing Catholic weekly, *Télérama*. Programs are likely to vary in starting-time either way by several minutes, and they don't fall into our neat categories of 15 minutes, half-hour or hour. A sample hour taken from current schedules reads: 19:00, 19:20, 19:25, 19:40, 19:55 and 20:00. An Elizabethan drama completed for the current television season runs two hours and 25 minutes—without interruptions.

One of the most popular literary discussion programs, *Lectures pour tous*, has an established time of 50 minutes, which length has caused the program's host, Jean-Pol Fouchet, to be cut off three times in the past year, jut before getting to the segment where he discusses recent books on controversial current events. Fouchet claims that the slights are no accident, and his friends cite, not surprisingly, political conservatism as cause.

Such tactics have led *Télé-7 Jours* to refer with more than a little justification to the O.R.T.F.'s *désinvolture* (cavalier fashion). Still, O.R.T.F. really has little to worry about if it does not meet a particular programming obligation. Its directors can sit tight in their official monopoly until the storm blows over in the press, confident that French viewers won't be going anywhere. What else would they look at, after all? (French viewers near the borders do have alternative foreign viewing. Most recently, viewers in Strasbourg could see the head of the French Communist Party, barred from the airwaves at home, on German television—where he was billed, in typical West European fashion, as a "Marxist, not a Communist.")

The American observer is sure to notice that there is no advertising on French television, and, if he is typical, will be strangely bothered by its absence—something like the artificial leg which one has grown to love in spite of its human inadequacy. Programs butt into each other, a perfunctory "black" thrown in to separate them. Should a program run shorter than foreseen by a few minutes, an ever-ready modernistic clock flashes onto the screen.

American series, when aired on French television, suffer greatly from the suppression of advertising. Little bits and pieces of episode, dubbed somewhat less than neatly into French, succeed each other with no intervening commercial message. The French have also done away with the ever-present situation-comedy laugh-track,

which carries so much of the action through the pause for laughter and audience reaction. As a result, comic rhythm seems false, now too swift, now too slow.

Given that a dramatic show should stop only when it ends and not before, the dramatic sense of time is often strikingly altered. To the American viewer, it seems distorted. In linking scenes, even over a considerable period of time or change of place, French television directors often rely on the simply "cut." For the American viewer, who interprets this directorial command as meaning that time and place have not changed, the result is confusing. Sometimes it appears as if new characters have suddenly popped into the room or as if something has been "left out" (the ad?). The rhythm is often breath-taking, shot succeeding shot so quickly that even the French find themselves dragged along at the aesthetic whim of the overzealous director.

Nor is subject-matter on the dramatic shows particularly conducive to light, relaxed viewing. Comedy and television "make a sad household," as the French producers say. The statistics cited, if they don't testify to the truth of this statement, afford evidence of its application to French televised fare. The raft of productions being lined up at the Buttes-Chaumont studios for '65-'66 presentation afforded a graphic illustration of this impression-turned-principle. In their Studio 14, seven deaths took place last summer in two dramatic shows and as many weeks. Here's the bloody score:

- 2—stabblings (one quite gory)
- 1—rattling death at a virtuous old age (length contingent on virtue)
- 1—insanity leading to painful coma and lingering extinction (the French have never got over Ophelia)
- 1—vein-opening (*both* wrists)
- 1—suicide by the knife (breast)
- 1—broken heart (a favorite which doesn't have to be dramatically justified)

Next door, they were rehearsing a well-known drama, often billed as the "only 20th-century miracle play," in which a sweet young thing, dying of leprosy anyhow, gets crushed under a wagon, pushed upon her by her vengeful sister.

Some of this blood, of course, will demand the famous *carre blanc* (a small white square, flashed on the screen) which precedes any telecast meant only for adult eyes and ears. There is little to indicate that this warning is respected in the average French household, which is no less indulgent than its American counterpart. And artis-

tic endeavor in the country of Racine, apostle of gory purity, and Hugo, purveyor of pure gore, can hardly be constrained. Alain Boudet, a bright young light among French television directors, when eyebrows were arched at a number of diaphanous negligees in one of his recent productions, shrieked: "The *carre blanc* be damned! It's all for art!"

Granted, many of the incidents and practices mentioned above would prove disconcerting to the average American viewer. Given time, however, and a rudimentary understanding of the framework in which these traits are found, they can become positively endearing. The evening of television viewing becomes a sort of game—one in which spectator and administrator spend a considerable amount of time trying to out-guess each other.

The television-viewing situation is, most simply, something to be dealt with, and the Frenchman exercises a homely kind of control over what he will see and how he will see it. Given this choice, a certain emotional well-being, and a copy of today's opposition press under his chair, the French television viewer may even be among the blessed. That he is obliged to sift the good from the bad, that he is called upon every so often to *judge*, is a tendency inclining towards health.

Still, the conflict of French TV remains unresolved. It is this option to judge which is restricted by government control; and it is the exercise of such judgment which the O.R.T.F. seeks to cultivate in the viewing public.

# TV IN INDIA

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RANJAN BORRA

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Although radio broadcasting in India dates back to 1927, the country delayed launching its television experiment until 1959. The government owned-and-operated *All India Radio* (the only broadcast network) hesitated to introduce television for several reasons. It was thought that the prohibitive cost of a television set plus the narrowly restricted areas of transmission would fail to justify the heavy initial and operating expenditures. Furthermore, it was felt that the foreign exchange resources of the country could be used more profitably than for the importation of television sets. However, successful experiments with television in other Asian countries provided some motivation.

In 1956, the Indian delegation to UNESCO submitted a proposal regarding the establishment of a pilot TV center to further educational and community development. The UNESCO General Conference authorized the organization of pilot projects which would assist member states in "the fuller use of press, film, radio and television for educational, scientific and cultural purposes." The transmitter and studio were completed in August, 1959. A total of 71 TV sets (40 of which were supplied by UNESCO) were then distributed to schools and community viewing centers; and India's television was inaugurated on September 15, 1959.

The experimental project covered the period from September, 1959, to December, 1960. During this time, one-hour evening pro-

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grams were broadcast twice a week. Transmission was limited within a 15-mile radius. It covered the cities of Delhi and New Delhi, and a few neighboring villages. TV sets were installed in 20 community centers within the area of transmission. Tele-clubs were formed at these centers, each having an average viewing audience of 150 to 300 people. A list of guiding points was issued to each tele-club and members were expected to have discussions after viewing programs. The programming schedule included illustrated talks, interviews, discussions, documentaries, plays, features, puppet shows, dance and music.

Television in India, however, was not launched without criticism. Critics argued that India could hardly afford the luxury of television when basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter were yet to be fulfilled. The enormous capital outlay required for the TV project could very well be used to alleviate the economic hardship of the masses. The Indian Government was challenged to prove a point: that the amount withheld from immediate concerns would produce greater long-range benefits if invested in a television project. With TV in India still in its infancy, no one can claim that the point has been proved. However, two experiments in the field have successfully demonstrated the social and educational potential of television in developing countries like India.

The UNESCO-sponsored project of social education through television began in December, 1960, and continued until May, 1961. (It has been described in detail in the UNESCO publication series "Reports and Papers on Mass Communication: No. 38.") Under this project, 20 special telecasts on the general theme "Responsibilities of Citizenship" were directed to over 400 members of the 20 tele-clubs organized for the purpose. Specific topics included: 1) Traffic and Road Sense; 2) Dangers to Community Health; 3) Adulteration of Food-stuffs and Drugs; 4) Manners of a Citizen; and 5) Encroachment of Public Property and Town Planning. These programs were designed to achieve three basic objectives: a) to increase the knowledge of tele-club members by communicating new information on the selected subjects; b) to influence the attitudes of the members on certain issues arising from program content; and c) to suggest directions in which groups and individuals could organize some follow-up activity. The basic purpose of the project was to assess the usefulness of television for social education. This was done by measuring shifts in information, attitudes and behavior on the part of the sample audience as a result of viewing the special

telecasts. The success of this pilot project silenced much of the original criticism. It demonstrated the importance of TV as an agent of social education in a country where illiteracy remains a problem of the first magnitude.

The second experiment involved a program of educational television for the Delhi school system. This program was assisted by a Ford Foundation grant of \$474,500 during a four-year period. This grant was authorized in 1960, and telecasts directed to schools commenced the following year. These in-school instructional programs are telecast on a regular basis and their schedule is entirely separate from the daily regular programming. The teaching project started in 1961 with lessons in physics, chemistry, English and Hindi for ninth grade students in Delhi. In 1962, the project was extended for tenth grade students as well. The scope of the programs was gradually broadened to encompass students of both higher and lower grades. It is estimated that today over 24,000 students in the Delhi area learn science through television. More than 70,000 students participate in English lessons, and nearly 35,000 receive instruction in social studies through the medium.

Daily TV programming began in Delhi on August 15, 1965, the 18th anniversary of India's independence. With the beginning of daily telecasts, steps were taken to improve program content. Emphasis on social education has shifted to include a wide variety of items: music, drama, children's and women's programs are presented three days a week. There are also newscasts, documentaries and features. The small film unit has tried to give coverage to items of local interest.

It is important, however, to bear in mind the shortcomings and limitations of Indian television. For one thing, there is no network coverage of the entire nation; Indian television remains restricted to the area of Delhi city and its suburbs. TV sets are scarce. Apart from schools and community viewing centers, they are a luxury for the privileged few. The production and presentation techniques are still amateurish, and programs suffer from overtones of government publicity.

The supply of TV sets poses a major problem since India has no TV manufacturing industry and the foreign exchange arrangements are inadequate. The experimental station began with only 71 sets and has been able to acquire only 3000 sets to this date. Some 484 sets are located at 243 secondary schools of Delhi. The rest are distributed among community viewing centers, tele-clubs and

hospitals. Cabinet Ministers, dignitaries and high government officials have TV sets in their homes. But to the majority of Delhi's two and a half million residents, television is not yet a reality.

Another problem looming large before the administration is the acute shortage of trained personnel. The entire operation is now being run by people from *All India Radio*; people with little or no professional training in television. A few have received brief training overseas, but even that is but a poor substitute for professional experience. Till such time as India develops institutions for training in television, the crew for any expanded TV organization can be built up only by encouraging interested people to acquire the necessary skill abroad.

In December, 1964, the Indian Government appointed a committee to investigate, define and determine the roles of the various media units of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry. Headed by a veteran administrator, Mr. A. K. Chanda, it came to be known as the Chanda Committee on Broadcasting and Information Media. In May, 1966, the Committee submitted its report to the Indian Parliament. It recommended the establishment of a national TV network, and of a television manufacturing industry. It further suggested that foreign collaboration should be sought for this purpose, and a "package deal" worked out with the collaborator, perhaps through the formation of some sort of consortium. Until India can manufacture her own TV sets, they should be imported duty-free.

In its blueprint for a national TV network, the Committee has recommended that by the end of India's fifth Five Year Plan in 1976, television stations should be established in all cities with a population of 100,000 or more. On this basis, 113 towns in an area of 573,000 square miles, or 47 per cent of the total area of the country, would be covered. If the Committee's recommendations are adopted, the Indian audience is likely to get its first taste of commercials, both on radio and television. In fact, it would be almost impossible to finance an extensive television service without defraying at least a part of the cost through commercials.

The question whether *All India Radio* and Indian television should remain as government agencies or be allowed to function as corporations with limited government control was a subject of some controversy for a number of years. The government attitude has been to retain broadcasting under its rigid control, and any proposals to the contrary were quickly rejected. But now the Chanda Committee has reversed the trend by proposing that Indian broad-



casting should be released from government ownership and that both radio and television should be run as separate and autonomous corporations. This would constitute the biggest change in the history of broadcasting in India. The Committee has stated that "to develop on correct lines, television must not be hampered by the limitations of a department. It should have a broader outlook, greater flexibility and freedom of action which the corporate form alone can give." The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which has been managing both radio and television ever since their inception, has been criticized by the Chanda Committee for its "half-hearted and hesitant way" of handling the TV expansion project for the country. It has strongly recommended that a national network should no longer be delayed.

This blueprint seems rather belated when it is noted that 19 Asian and 14 African nations already have television operating on full scale. In addition, TV services are being planned by Israel, Jordan, Aden, Burma, Tunisia and Senegal. However, the transition from government ownership to a corporate management of broadcasting may very well mark the ushering in of a new era of television in India. The television age is far from being a reality there. But the infant is certain to survive and grow.

While the larger struggle for control of broadcast systems continues, the internal challenges are no less important to the creative communicators who work within the systems. Here, **Stuart Hood** and **Doreen Stephens** consider some aspects of creative programming in Britain. Mr. Hood presents an overview of the situation in which the British writer finds himself. Miss Stephens stresses the necessity for intelligent standards in children's programs, recounting her own experiences in development of such programs for BBC-TV.

# THE BRITISH TELEVISION WRITER

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STUART HOOD

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The British television writer occupies much the same position in the industry as the small shopkeeper and craftsman in the British economy. We still have small family businesses; you can still find a shoemaker to sole a pair of shoes; a carpenter to repair a fitting. The supermarkets have not yet triumphed; but they will very shortly do so. So probably will the team of writers, the script doctors and the techniques of the production line.

In British television, however, most writers, still think of themselves as individual craftsmen, creating out of their own resources dramatic works which bear the stamp of the author's personality—modified, if necessary, to meet the needs of the buyer or the network—but still individual products. This attitude towards their work is accompanied by a certain arrogance. An American producer working in England has remarked with some astonishment on the way a British author will come along with a first draft and be taken aback by the producer's apparently contradictory reactions. These are (a) that the draft is fine, but that (b) it will have to be rewritten several times until it meets the producer's specifications. British television writers are, if you like, still living in the 19th century, which saw the emergence of the free artist from the century-old bond of patron-

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**STUART HOOD** took his M.A. degree at Edinburgh University in 1938. Mr. Hood joined BBC in 1946 as a sub-editor in the BBC's Foreign Services, was later Editor of Television News and Controller of Programs for BBC-TV. He also served as Program Head for Rediffusion TV. Mr. Hood has written three novels and has translated a number of Italian and German histories of art. He presently writes a column for *The New Statesman*.

age. He was then a free agent who created out of inner necessity and was (sometimes) prepared to starve in a garret to do so. Today, garrets tend to become penthouses. Some sacrifice of principle may be required to pay penthouse rents.

The work of the British television writer differs from that of his American counterpart in three important respects. The first of these is that he works almost entirely for studios equipped with electronic cameras. His work is recorded on videotape with film inserts for exteriors—although these, too, may be shot as remotes. In spite of the advantages of film when it comes to selling television programs, both the BBC and the independent companies of the commercial network are committed to electronic techniques. Associated Television, having managed to sell its product on the American market, is the only organization equipped for working with both film and tape. The television writer is therefore committed to the slower tempo of electronic shooting and, above all, of electronic editing. This accounts for the very noticeable difference in pace between American and British products.

The second difference which sets the British writer apart concerns the categories of program on which he works, some of which have almost entirely disappeared from the American television screen. There is still a large demand for the "single shot" play—a dramatic work 30 to 90 minutes in length. The two networks between them screen at least 200 of these a year. These are thought of as prestige pieces and are usually original dramatic works, but occasionally are adaptations from novels or short stories. Close to them in genre are the anthology plays, which are grouped under umbrella titles like *Love Story* or *Blackmail*. In this category, the writer is given a theme which he may treat with considerable liberty. Thereafter come the familiar episodic series, in which the characters and format are given, and the daily soap opera in which story-line and characters are provided and the writer has merely to fill in the dialogue.

The third and last distinction between American and British writing springs from the way in which the British networks schedule programs. Series will be run for 26 episodes, for instance, and then rested. An anthology may consist of only 13 plays; it may even run for as few as seven weeks. Runs of 39 weeks or more are exceptions. These are factors which have an immediate bearing on the earning power of the television writer.

The top fee a TV craftsman may hope to earn from a "single shot" play of 90 minutes is currently still in the region of \$3,300;

the average figure is likely to be around \$2,200. His earnings decrease proportionately for the 75 and 60-minute play and can theoretically fall as low as the basic minimum, a pittance of just under \$700. To be fair to the networks, this minimum is an historical curiosity and is never applied. A new bottom figure is at present being canvassed by the Writers' Guild, which is aiming at something like \$2,200 and would probably settle for \$1,275. The 50-minute anthology play has a price range from just over \$2,000 to a lower limit of \$1,100. The average fee hovers about \$1,800. For an episode in a series, a writer may expect to pick up a top fee of \$1,800; the average is around \$1,500. A 30-minute serial episode will earn him between \$550 and \$900. On a daily soap opera he will aim, if he is wise, at a year's contract.

A good writer can hope to have the ideas and energy to write a maximum of three full-length plays a year. That will bring him, if he can command a fee slightly above the average, \$6,600. If he is very energetic he may also write as part of the team on a series, delivering perhaps four scripts out of 26, for which he can hope to earn \$7,000. If he writes no "single shot" plays, he can probably work on two series and double the figure. If, however, he is contracted to work on a soap opera he can probably earn something like \$11,000 for a year's work. Admittedly, he is then less likely to earn residuals from foreign sales, which range from 100 per cent for the United States to 15 per cent for Europe.

The dilemma of the writer is clear from these figures: he cannot hope to make a reasonable living as a serious dramatist on television. He must diversify, supplementing his earnings either by writing anthology plays or episodes for a series—or even go into the field of television documentaries. Because his rewards are small, he is constantly tempted to write too much and to expend himself. It is for this reason that some writers—and a good many agents—tend to look on television as a great maw which swallows up good writers and, having sucked them dry, spits them out again. There are, naturally, a number of highly professional writers who, by writing plays and episodes, and also by acting as script-editors, make a very reasonable living. But it is fair to say that much of British television writing is amateur and that the number of writers who progress from that status to professionalism is relatively small.

It is this phenomenon which explains in part the persistence of the television play. The writers have fought strongly for its retention in the schedule because it affords an outlet, a possibility of escape

from what they feel would otherwise be an intolerable grind. The television organizations back the genre because it throws up new writers whom they can then ask to work on series and anthologies. They also champion it because it represents a contribution to culture. What both writers and TV networks resent strongly is being asked whether it is possible to find for a single slot 52 plays good enough to screen—and good enough to please a large public. In recent years, the BBC in particular has had to face a major disagreement in its top echelons. One school of thought maintained that not only were good plays scarce, but bad ones kept other good programs off the air. Another group held that no self-respecting television organization could cut back on its presentation of plays. The supporters of the drama won. It has to be conceded that they have, during the last year, maintained an astonishingly high standard. They were, of course, strongly backed in their struggle by the Writers' Guild and, outside television, by various upholders of traditional values whose knowledge of television was not conspicuous.

The British television writer, then, is still the craftsman, working freely in the medium, reasonably secure in his relationships with the organizations for which he works—and capable of saying, when asked to write another six episodes of a format he has developed, "I don't think I have got another six. Try again in six months." He is respected as a craftsman but his earnings, measured as a percentage of the overall budget of any production, are very small. His dilemma is that to increase his earnings he may have to forfeit some of this independence. Perhaps, like all craftsmen, he belongs to a dying tradition. What has cheered him greatly is to see that in the United States there are signs of the return of the "single shot" drama. If it succeeds in establishing itself once more, he will take courage from across the Atlantic and hope that the individual act of creation may continue to find its place in the schedules.

# CHILDREN'S TV IN BRITAIN

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DOREEN STEPHENS

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The BBC's efforts in programming for children are founded on certain principles, the most important of which is the belief that children must be treated as people. It is a sin to condescend or to talk down to them. You cannot assume they are cut off from life. Any attempt to keep young children wrapped in a protective, sentimental cloak is a disservice to them. They have access to so many sources of information that they live in a kind of mini-adult world. They need fantasy, but not solely of the fairy queen, fairy godmother, Jack Frost, Man in the Moon type. They need programs related to the world today.

People generally are more sophisticated, so too are children. For their own protection, children need to grow up aware that the world is not a perfect place, that unfortunately there is a great deal of frustration, sadness, cruelty, unkindness and violence in it. Television can help them come to terms with real life, and by itself is unlikely to do harm. The violence in itself is not injurious; the excitement it creates can provide a valuable release from tension. But material which undermines a child's sense of security within the home, or displays sadistic cruelty or brutality must be avoided

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*DOREEN STEPHENS* won the Gilchrist Medal and gained the Diploma in Social Studies at London University in 1944. An active champion of women's involvement in political life, Miss Stephens joined BBC in 1953 as Editor, Women's Programs, Television. In 1964, she was appointed Head of Family Programs, Television.

as much as possible. If violence is necessary to a story, and it abounds even in many of the most famous classic stories, then it should not be shown in compelling close-ups nor should the shots be held for too long. Stories in which difficult and dangerous situations arise are permissible if the child's state of anxiety is relieved before the end and is not sustained for too long. Anxiety can be more dangerous to a child than violence.

One of the most common mistakes in children's television programming is the use of children in the programs for no better reason than that the program is intended for children. But children live in an adult world also. They may enjoy playing with other children, but for a full and developing life they need adults. If an adventure story is built around children and really good child actors can be found, then the use of children on television is sensible. In a quiz or competition program, good child competitors are justified. But the use of second-rate performers just because they are children is never good programming. They may please the adult viewers, who find them sweet, but child viewers will probably be bored by them. The use of children as props is condescension of the worst kind. Furthermore, children participating in a program can act as a barrier limiting the involvement of the viewing child. He tends to feel shut out, as if looking in from the outside on a party that he cannot share. Children on the set cannot be handled without a loss of concentration on the child viewing at home.

Two years ago, the BBC started a second channel on UHF. The opportunity was taken to introduce a new daily (Monday through Friday) program for pre-school children. A young woman with three children of her own, Joy Whitby, was given the assignment. She had had previous experience on a radio program for very young children which used the softer traditional approach to young children and their needs. (Plenty of delightful entertainment, but rarely anything to stimulate the child and extend his interests.) She had only nine weeks in which to launch the new program but instead of rushing in, she calmly sought experts and authorities in this field. The consultations have continued ever since. The result was encouraging and the support has been enthusiastic. She realized she had to appeal to an audience of varied interests and ages. There's the only child, the practical child, the child with imagination, the country child and the town child. The final formula was necessarily flexible: a sense of security is maintained by using the same setting all the time, and by having a story as a nucleus from which to build



the program out. Within this framework, the program *Play School* suggests and demonstrates the raw materials for practical play, or for dressing up; it teaches children how to look after pets, and how to play endless games of pretend. It can satisfy and stimulate their curiosity about the outside world, show them how pajamas are made, and what a nursery school or hospital is really like.

When it came to deciding just how the programs should be presented, Joy Whitby was determined that she wanted neither a sugary compeer with a safe face, an "uncle figure," nor the dreadfully kind of person who thinks he has a mission to understand children. She wanted the young viewers to meet the kind of people she likes to meet herself. Now she has a team of about a dozen talented young men and women, mostly parents of young children—all with the ability to work without formal scripts and with genuine warmth of personality. She pairs them together—one man, one woman—for a week at a time in continually changing combinations.

Even when compared with the *Romper Room* type of child's program, the success of *Play School*, with its hard-core content instead of the traditional soft-center, has been immediate. Experience gained from it is being applied in the scripting and presentation of specially made puppet film series for very young children. These shows may well become, through constant repetition, the television equivalent of a child's favorite story book. Both the puppets and the method of using them have been adapted to television to provide modern reality through fantasy. Old and new ways of living and working are juxtaposed: the modern farmer, mechanically milking his cows and sending his eggs to the packing station is presented alongside the old-fashioned village miller, with his hand-milked single cow and free range eggs. Commentary in the new series strictly avoids being coy, refusing to make concessions because the audience is young. Music has been specially written and is sophisticated. These new programs are not only entertaining, but are demanding and stimulating. Their reception by children and their parents has been enthusiastic.

Another new BBC program, *Jackanory*, has successfully met the challenge of the commercial channel. The show runs for 15 minutes, Monday through Friday, and is entertaining but quite demanding. It asks children to give their full attention, to use their imagination, to listen. It is a storytelling program, but it too makes no concessions. Its content is drawn from the whole range of traditional, classic and modern story material. People such as Sir Compton

Mackenzie, James Robertson Justice, Lee Montague, and Margaret Rutherford have appeared on the show. Content has ranged from Greek and Scottish legends to *Emil and the Detectives*. Within three weeks, the series had broken through on the ratings. This is sure proof that with sufficient care and creative thought, worthwhile program material can compete successfully with the easy entertainments otherwise offered to young children.

This same point has been made in programs for children between five and 14 years old. Both the BBC and the commercial channel, ITV, are in direct competition with children's programming between the hours of 5 P.M. and 6 P.M., Monday through Friday. After a demanding day at school, children should be provided with relaxation and entertainment. The schedule should cover the whole range of programming: variety, comedy, adventure, American westerns, cartoons, European films (fully dubbed or with English narrative added), and magazine programs of topical information and general knowledge. Children are hungry for information, and such programs widen their experience. We have proved that if worthwhile content is presented with imagination, most children will choose the programs that add to their experience. They will, for a time, passively watch second-rate programs. They will, however, become actively involved with programs that feed their curiosity and stimulate their imagination.

Longest running and most successful of the information magazine programs is *Blue Peter*, named after the flag flown just before a ship sets sail. It is a program in search of adventure, designed to increase the child's general experience. The average winter viewing figure is between seven and eight million per program. As much information as possible is included. The program has three regular presenters: Christopher Trace, Valerie Singleton and John Noakes. These three are the program's common denominator: they introduce each edition, take part in many of the items and in much of the special filming. It is the general policy of the Program Editor, Bidy Baxter, to use experts for research and information, but not for program appearances. The material is put over by Chris, John and Valerie. Dull "talking-head" type interviews are avoided. By demonstrating how to make items, children are left with the desire to create something after the program. Special instruction leaflets are made available for models shown on the program. The children write in an average of 1,000 letters a week with suggestions and ideas for the program, and send in a continual stream of models they have

created themselves. Wherever possible, these are adapted and used on the program. *Blue Peter* badges are given, but only when they have been earned. A card-indexing system ensures that a child does not get the same letter of congratulation twice. Apart from the presenters, the content of each program can never be anticipated. Items are kept short, visual and active. A child knows that if one item does not particularly appeal, another and quite different one will follow any minute. The excellent presentation is sufficiently interesting to carry them over. Another important ingredient of this program is its permanent pets: two dogs, a Siamese cat, a tortoise and shortly, by choice of the children, a parrot. Through these animals, the many children denied pets of their own are given an outlet for their natural desire to have a pet.

From time to time, the program invites children to participate in special projects—the collection of tinfoil for the purchase of a guide dog for the blind. They collected over six tons in two weeks, enough to provide training for two dogs. More recently, parcels of old woollens were collected and sold for \$30,000. The money is being used to supply farm implements and seed for a village in Uganda. Regular film items in the program will follow the progress of the project.

The format for *Blue Peter* has been an exciting experiment in dealing with the non-captive school-age audience. Results have been extremely encouraging, and the program successfully withstood the onslaught of pop groups, quizzes, and similar attractions competing on the commercial channel.

Altogether, ten hours of programming a week are transmitted by the British Broadcasting Corporation for a young target audience within the age range from two to 14. The policy of presenting programs of quality, without condescension or concession, but devised to give real enjoyment to children, has paid off handsomely. Clear thinking and logical progression, coupled with wit and humor, are the keys to writing and producing worthwhile programs for children and, for that matter, adults.

For the reader who may have forgotten that American television is not quite rid of its own storms and stresses, a couple of reminders are included herewith. **Roy Huggins** wonders whether the creator of TV drama can ever discover an audience's true reaction to his work, and offers suggestions as to how the "response gap" might be bridged. **Samuel Becker** reviews the basic communications research which has been conducted in relation to civil rights and cautions broadcasters to consider the true effectiveness of their approaches to the issues involved.

# TELEVISION: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

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ROY HUGGINS

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One of Hollywood's favorite open-end discussions concerns the difference between making films for television and making films for theatres. Almost as many answers have been given as there are people entitled to give one. A list of the differences most often cited would have to include size of screen, size of budget, length of shooting schedules, footage restrictions in TV, the pressures of the deadline, plus a long list of special opinions, like that of Raymond Chandler, who once said that the big difference was words. "Words are more important in TV because the lunkheads would think nothing was happening and go out for a beer."

The size of the screen makes a difference if you're discussing a 70 mm epic, but less than five per cent of our motion picture output fits this category. Theatrical films vary in length from 75 minutes to four hours, but most run about two hours. *The Virginian* runs 76 minutes, and this season the two-hour film for TV made its debut. Budgets and shooting schedules ought to make an enormous difference, but the evidence that they actually do is clear only to agonized accountants. Most of the arguments ultimately invite the comment that a difference that doesn't make any difference is no difference.

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A 1939 *summa cum laude* graduate of U.C.L.A., **ROY HUGGINS** was a successful novelist and magazine writer before turning to television in 1955. He produced the first season of *Cheyenne* and created and produced pilots for *Maverick*, *Colt .45*, and *77 Sunset Strip*. He served as Executive Producer for such series as *Bus Stop*, *The Virginian*, and *Kraft Theatre*. He is presently Executive Producer for *Run For Your Life*, which he also created. Mr. Huggins won a 1959 Emmy as producer of *Maverick*.

When I came into TV in 1956, I was an advocate of the immovable deadline argument. But in 1958 I learned the answer, the One True Difference, and became a zealot. All conversions result from a searing experience, and so did mine. The experience was a *Maverick* episode called "Gun-Shy."

It was a rather special episode and it had received an enormous amount of publicity before and during shooting. The first cut of the film was run for me on a Friday evening. It had been put together with touching care by the editor and by one of my colleagues, who had had as much to do with the project as I from its inception. The show was on footage, and my colleague felt strongly that it was ready for delivery. I felt just as strongly that it was not. And since I had a profound respect for his talent and opinion, I had a problem. I spent the weekend struggling with that problem, and some time after midnight that Sunday, the answer seemed suddenly as obvious as a missing thumb. If "Gun-Shy" had not been made for TV, my friend and I would not be quarreling. We would be taking the film to a theatre and letting an audience give us the answer. So I found an audience, which hated the show; changes were made, another audience was assembled, which loved the show, and it was delivered to the network. Neither audience was adequate. Both groups were too small and too professional to be relied upon, but nothing better was available. "Gun-Shy" was telecast, favorably reviewed, and given a high score by Nielsen, which made the sponsors happy but told us very little. Maybe my colleague was right. Maybe I was.

And that is *the* difference. With the coming of television, writers, directors, producers and actors at last forfeited all contact with audiences. The history of drama has, until today, been a history of transmission, reception and response. In the medieval period of English drama, the Corpus Christi processions, with their mystery and miracle plays, were organized through the trade guilds, and it was sometimes hard to tell the audience from the players. Things got sorted out later on, especially after the actors formed their own guilds, but audiences continued to be an active part of an equation whose total was the social art of the drama. The creative people put the work together, but suffered through preparations and rehearsals in about the same anxious spirit as a bride: the actual performance was all that mattered. The truth happened, the work of art came into being—or didn't—only when the equation was completed, when the writer's work was performed by actors before an audience.

Playwrights still use audiences as an integral part of the creative process. It is called the out-of-town tryout. And sometimes those audiences say all there is to say. Tennessee Williams can say it isn't so with a *Milk Train*, but no playwright has ever been able to claim a success ungranted by an audience—except in television, where it happens frequently each season. Motion picture producers and directors, many of whom unfailingly ignore the advice of professionals highly paid to provide it, attend “sneak” previews with clammy hands and an esteem for the audience amounting to awe. And if the audience likes the picture, the awe turns to ripe reverence. No producer has ever been known to say, “They're wrong,” except in a croaking voice while wondering how much re-shooting he may have to do.

The creative people in motion pictures, including the actors, *could* cut themselves off from the audience: they need not attend previews or regular showings, but I have never known one who has failed to do so. Sitting in the darkness of a theatre watching something you have written or directed or produced, surrounded by men and women unknown to you, and to whom you are equally unknown, is always a harrowing, racking experience, and sometimes an indescribably excruciating one. You look, but what you see is alien to you. That scene you prized so highly appears to have been re-cut and lengthened, and you suspect the projectionist of running it at 50 feet a minute instead of 90. A scene you almost deleted takes on new meaning because a line, or just a look in an actor's eye has produced a reaction you didn't expect, and the scene is alive and working. Not just for the audience, but for you, and for the first time. What you are doing is seeing your film through the eyes of that audience, cued by their restlessness or their laughter, or—sweetest of all—by their breathless silence.

The experience is chastening, often painful, but seldom misleading, and the picture finally released is the better for it. And each time something has been learned—even when there is no remedy. Next time. . .

This is the creative confrontation that is never experienced by the television writer, director, producer or actor. Nor do we have even a faintly adequate substitute for it. As the song goes, “we get letters.” Many of the letters addressed to producers, writers and directors are literate and thoughtful, but they represent one individual's opinion, and an opinion deeply flawed: that viewer also saw the show without an audience.

Do the ratings tell us anything? Yes, but no one knows quite what. A high rating may indicate that the show the week *before* was well liked—or it may not. A declining rating within the hour may tell you that the show did not hold the attention of the audience. But it could indicate something else, or nothing at all: a decline of two or three points is well within the admitted margin of error of the system. The ratings tell the sponsor whether or not he has made a good buy. They may even tell the creative people something. But they do not substitute for an audience; they do not restore the old equation.

Last season, Universal City Studios began a program that is now bringing 20,000 visitors to the studio each week. They come from every state of the Union, in all ages and sexes, and from every economic group except the indigent and the ridiculously wealthy. And they all have television sets. A few months ago, I met with the studio executives responsible for that program and asked a question: Could they supply me with an audience? They could and they did.

Every episode of *Run For Your Life* is now shown at least once to an audience of approximately 100 people. They see the picture with the final music-and-effects track. Negative has not yet been cut and changes can still be made. I sit with the audience looking like a refugee from the State of Washington, which I am. I watch the film and I see it as if for the first time. A laugh goes up that shouldn't be there; a trim will fix it. An episode assumed to be the best choice to open the season is not received as well as two others, which now become candidates. A scene we had thought was funny doesn't get a single laugh, and it is clear why: it isn't funny. That will be a little harder to fix.

Is this putting too much faith in a group of amateurs? I don't think so: that's what an audience is. And we do not rely merely on cues picked up from the audience during the runnings, or on the insights gained by being there with them. After the running, the audience is asked to complete a brief questionnaire somewhat akin to the traditional motion picture preview card. These responses have been enormously helpful in revealing ambiguities, confusions, oversights and flat errors.

Restoring contact with a live audience is not the answer to all our troubles in television. Shaw doubtless had something when he remarked after one of his own openings that the play was a success but the audience had failed. But the results of the experiment thus far have been more stimulating, more helpful and more edifying



than we had dared to expect, and have given strong support to the suspicion that popular drama which is transmitted and received, but to which there is no meaningful response, may not remain popular for long.

It is much too early for predictions or recommendations, but even at this stage the results would seem to merit at least a review by the Television Academy, looking toward the possibility of providing television's creative personnel with an opportunity to re-establish communication with the lost audience.

# RESEARCH FINDINGS IN BROADCASTING AND CIVIL RIGHTS

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SAMUEL BECKER

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In the Spring, 1966, issue of *Television Quarterly*, Joseph Brechner asserted that it is the responsibility of broadcasters "to convert desegregation laws into a nationally acceptable behavior pattern." He suggests that this can be done, at least in part, by "reporting and explaining the complexity of racial issues." While I agree with Brechner's intentions and his belief that broadcasters have a responsibility in this area, I fear that he oversimplifies the complexity of the task. Good intentions are not enough if we are to make a significant hole in the walls of prejudice surrounding the American Negro. A great deal of time has been wasted, and actual harm often done, by people with the very best intentions. Constructive action requires not only good intentions or valuable goals, but a good set of means as well. I believe that the probability of our finding a good set of means can be increased if we study the evidence from communication research and from other behavioral research.

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If we look at the research done on causes of prejudice and the research concerning the use of communication to overcome prejudice, our initial reaction is almost certain to be one of dismay and discouragement. We know from this research that, given an audience which can be *forced* to expose itself to our broadcasts, we can produce at least short-term changes in attitudes toward other groups. But, fortunately or unfortunately, most broadcasters are unable to force audiences to expose themselves to these messages, so that doesn't help.

Though we do not know how to make all persuasive campaigns succeed, we know some reasons why many of them fail. We know that the people who voluntarily expose themselves to persuasive messages tend to be the ones who are already in agreement with the point of view expressed. Those who are not in agreement with the persuasive messages tend not to expose themselves to these messages; or if they do become exposed, tend to misperceive the point of the messages; or if they perceive the point correctly, tend to "forget" the parts of the message which run counter to their attitudes. This is what Joseph T. Klapper<sup>1</sup> and others have termed "selective exposure," "selective perception," and "selective retention." For example, Paul Lazarsfeld<sup>2</sup> has described the incident of the radio series which was designed to better human relations. Each program told about a different nationality and the things it had contributed to American culture. It was hoped that this would help to teach tolerance of other nationalities. The only problem was that the audience for each program turned out to be mainly from the national group which was being discussed. Thus, it appeared that there was little chance to teach tolerance or anything else because the audiences already approved of what was being said. The classic case of selective perception is that in which a series of cartoons featuring a very unattractive individual was shown displaying his prejudices against minority groups.<sup>3</sup> The purpose was to show the stupidity of bigots. The problem was that those at whom the cartoons were aimed, those who were highly prejudiced, tended to misperceive the point of the cartoons. Some with very strong prejudices even perceived the purpose of these cartoons as being to encourage prejudice.

Recent research has also provided some verification for the hypothesis that being *against* something is not simply the other side of the coin from being *for* something. In many attitude areas, persons with unfavorable attitudes are more consistent, more difficult to change than persons with favorable ones. "A favorable attitude

is, in a way, an open, 'variant' attitude, and thereby less definite. An unfavorable attitude is both more closed and more clearly structured."<sup>4</sup> Thus, those who favor desegregation of schools, equal economic opportunities, etc., may be more susceptible to change than those who are against these notions.

It is true, however, that *some* who disagree with our message *do* expose themselves to it and perceive it correctly and remember it. Some of these are even affected by our message, and change their opinions and behavior in the direction advocated. Thus, we need continued study of ways to enlarge the size of these deviant groups. This is where research is needed.

There are some positive suggestions which can be made now for both media people and others working for the civil rights of minority groups. Most of these points are derived from clues in existing research evidence. All need specific testing and, hopefully, verification. However, we cannot wait for such testing to be done. We must begin acting on the best guesses which we can muster.

In planning programs designed to reduce prejudice, the content and approach must be determined not only by your goals but also by the types of persons whom you are trying to affect. For example, there is a great deal of difference between the approach one must take to those who have been labelled the "unprejudiced discriminators," the "prejudiced non-discriminators," and the "prejudiced discriminators."<sup>5</sup> The unprejudiced discriminator is the person who feels no antipathy toward minority groups, but supports discrimination if it is easier or profitable. He must be made to believe that following his own opinions in non-discrimination will be rewarding. The prejudiced non-discriminator, like the unprejudiced discriminator, is also a person of expediency. He can be kept from discriminating only by an environment that makes discrimination costly or painful. Our third type, the prejudiced discriminator, is the most difficult of all. He tends to behave in prejudiced ways even when such discrimination is apparently punished. This is the most complex case. We must try to discover what support he is getting for his existing behavior; where his behavior is being reinforced. I will return to this group later as I speak of personality factors and reference group factors in prejudice.

It is a mistake to believe that simply telling people more about minority groups, making them more familiar with "the truth," will lessen prejudice. The assumption that the more we know about a group the less likely we are to dislike them is exceedingly question-

able. Evidence indicates that if we graph knowledge of a minority group against prejudice toward that group, the lowest dip in the curve of knowledge is for the indifferent individuals. Those on the ends of the curve, those who are lowest in prejudice and, more importantly, those who are *high* in prejudice, tend to have the most knowledge of the minority group.<sup>6</sup> One study, for example, indicates that the individuals who are most accurate at selecting photographs of Jews from a large group of photographs are the individuals who are most anti-Semitic.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, it should be obvious that not all information about a minority group functions in the same way. Though the *amounts* of information about minority groups seem to be more or less equal for both the highly prejudiced and the unprejudiced, there is also some evidence that the *kinds* of knowledge of the two groups may differ. There is evidence, for example, that "acquaintance with Negroes of relatively high occupational status is an important factor in determining favorable attitudes of white persons toward Negroes."<sup>8</sup> This is certainly consistent with our knowledge of learning theory and the vast amount of research evidence that supports it. The constant pairing of a concept, such as Jew or Mexican, with a label, such as convict or laborer or philanthropist or scientist, will soon cause the attitude which we have toward the label to attach itself to the concept. We would expect, for example, if a criminal's race is identified only when he is Negro, that the audience will eventually come to believe almost all criminals are Negro. (Most television stations do not use this racial label, but they show photographs of Negro suspects and criminals. With a photograph, labeling becomes unnecessary; one can get the same effect, perhaps even more strongly.) The question of association is also related to my next suggestion. Because of the success the mass media have had in selling soap and cigarettes, the power of the media to affect public attitudes on such issues as prejudice is usually overrated. What is overlooked in this sort of reasoning is that advertising does not need to deal with the problem of converting well-learned or ego-involved attitudes; it needs only to associate a product with an existing drive or behavior. For example, advertising does not convert the individual who is against cleanliness into a regular bather; it rather takes the individual who already wants to be clean and says "Here is a brand of soap that will do the job."

In the success of advertising, though, there are also suggestions for those who wish to use the media to sell an idea. The first is that

we should examine our audience for an existing drive or behavior with which we can associate our idea. Why should they behave in non-prejudiced ways? With which of their present behaviors is this (behavior) consistent? As some researchers have noted, prejudice is functional; it is *used* by the prejudiced individual. How can *non*-prejudice be made functional for the individual? How can it benefit him?

The second suggestion which comes from observing successful advertising campaigns, and unsuccessful human-relations campaigns, is related to the relative degree of specificity in each. The successful advertisement reminds us of one of our needs and then suggests a very specific thing that we can do. It does not say that if you want to catch a husband it is usually better not to stink; it says that if you want to catch a husband, use Dial soap. We need to suggest very positive and specific actions which our audience can take to advance civil rights.

Research also indicates that if we are trying to change the attitudes of prejudiced persons, it is best not to remind them of their initial attitudes. A familiar phenomenon occurs when a person states an opinion—commits himself—and then tends to believe that he is stuck with the opinion. In other words, he is harder to shift from this opinion than if he did not first commit himself. (There is a great amount of evidence on this score.) However, there is also evidence of a similar *external* commitment effect.<sup>9</sup> Researchers, for example, have taken Southern college students who had earlier been found to be somewhat pro-segregationist and, just before having them listen to an anti-segregation radio program, told them that they were selected to evaluate the program because it was known they were for segregation. When attitudes were tested following the program, these subjects changed attitude significantly *less* than students with similar initial attitudes who had been told nothing before they heard the program or students with similar initial pro-segregation attitudes who were told that they were selected because it was known they were against segregation. In other words, reminding the audience beforehand that they were against the point of view expressed seemed to have the same result as audience members committing themselves prior to hearing the program. It seemed to anchor the negative attitudes so that it became more difficult to change them. Therefore, we must not remind audiences of their biases as we work at changing these biases.

Most of these suggestions are related to the content of telecasts designed to reduce prejudiced behaviors. Another such suggestion grows out of some research which compared the effects of various kinds of messages in improving attitudes toward Negroes.<sup>10</sup> This research showed rather consistently that printed materials which attempted to give prejudiced persons some insight into themselves were more effective at reducing prejudice than materials which attempted to provide an understanding of Negroes. In the former case, subjects read materials on the relationship between prejudice and mechanisms of ego-defense; in the latter, subjects read materials on the concept of cultural relativity which aimed at a re-evaluation of Negroes from a new frame of reference. In other words, for many prejudiced individuals, knowledge of the characteristics of the groups against which they are prejudiced is irrelevant. For these kinds of individuals, therefore, providing information about these groups is a waste of time. Again, this points up the importance of understanding the motivation or support being given a particular attitude before we design a message for either weakening or strengthening the attitude. Another type of individual not affected by information about Negroes is the type some clinical psychologists term "high ego-defenders." These are the individuals usually called simply "defensive." For these individuals, the content of a message makes little difference. What seems to affect them most is their perception of how the majority of their peers feel. In other words, they are most responsive to conformity pressures.

This last is related to a hypothesis about prejudice and discrimination which seems to be gaining more and more advocates among behavioral scientists. That is, that much of what we take to be prejudice is simply the acceptance of general social norms. There seem to be too many apparently prejudiced individuals without serious personal frustrations or insecurities, too many who have had no bad experiences with Negroes to make these adequate explanations for the amount of discrimination we see about us.<sup>11</sup> Instead, the problem may be in what the individual has *perceived* to be the *norm* in his particular culture. Therefore, our most fruitful procedure may be to change this perception. This might be done in large part by arranging for our broadcasts to be bolstered by inter-personal communication. Research indicates pretty clearly that if those who are exposed to persuasive messages in the media do not find support for the media point of view in their inter-personal contacts or among their reference groups (the groups to

which all of us look for cues as to how to behave or for support in our attitudes), they will quickly discount our messages. We can overcome this by planning our media campaigns cooperatively with other groups in the community interested in bettering human relations. These groups can provide face-to-face reinforcement for the message. They can serve as reference groups to which the members of the audience can turn for these new attitudes; they can provide norms which are consistent with the messages transmitted by the media.

Related to this is an approach in broadcasting suggested by some research in social psychology. Most of us have *many* reference groups to which we look, consciously or unconsciously, for guidance on attitudes and behavior. These reference groups may be the family, our local union, the country club, a close group of friends, the church, etc. Obviously, the behavioral norms of the groups are not always consistent with each other. As a matter of fact, they are quite often inconsistent. It appears that our broadcasts may be most effective if we can find the reference groups of the audience whose norms are most consistent with those we espouse, and make these reference groups more salient for the audience. For example, we can select those community groups, (either formal or informal) which are working for civil rights *and* which we feel our particular audience feels close to, admires, or wants to be a part of, and then be sure that the relationship of these groups to equal rights is made perfectly clear to the audience. All of the research on social pressure indicates that the more individuals feel that their reference groups (or the majority of their peers) are against prejudice, the more likely they are to become less prejudiced.<sup>12</sup>

We must realize that even though we may see little direct effect of our broadcasts, the programs probably serve as a source of social support for both the old and the newly converted believers in equal rights. In addition, the chances are good that programs on civil rights supply information and ideas to opinion leaders in the community which they can use in bettering human relations. This is the idea of the "two-step flow of communication;"<sup>13</sup> that is, that the media of communication do not have a direct effect on audience behavior but instead affect opinion leaders who, in turn, affect the bulk of the people.

If we are speaking of rather extreme social changes rather than the acceleration or modification of ongoing changes, or if we are considering the conversion to new attitudes rather than the shaping



or making salient of existing attitudes, the two-step flow idea appears sound. It has many implications for using broadcasting to improve human relations. However, let us not be too quick to discard the idea that broadcasting may also have a fairly direct effect on a large portion of the audience. In many kinds of situations, researchers have found media effects where there appeared to be no intervening opinion leaders. Forgetting, for the moment, the clearly established effects of advertising, we can find many other examples. Peterson and Thurstone<sup>14</sup> have found that the attitudes of junior and senior high school students who had little exposure to either Negroes, Chinese, or Germans, could be influenced by motion pictures. The anti-Negro film, *Birth of a Nation*, resulted in a striking increase in hostile attitudes which was still apparent in 62 per cent of the cases five months after exposure to the film. Viewing a pro-Chinese film and a pro-German film resulted in more favorable attitudes toward these groups. It was also found that rather simple dramatic films which used a mixed cast of white and Negro characters could change attitudes of high school students who, again, had had relatively little exposure to Negroes.<sup>15</sup> There is similar evidence, from a study showing television's influence on stereotyping,<sup>16</sup> that the media can have a great influence in those areas in which individuals have relatively unstructured attitudes and little knowledge.

Those concerned only with situations of extreme discrimination in employment, education, political rights, or where there is actual or threatened violence, may see little value in the fact that the media often have a strong and direct effect where attitudes are relatively unstructured. I believe, however, that this opens an extremely important area. I feel that we cannot afford to expend all of our efforts in putting out the brush fires or major conflagrations resulting from prejudice and hatred. We must invest a fair proportion of our efforts toward seeing that the need for such fire fighting is eliminated in the next generation, or the one that succeeds it. In other words, we must start to inoculate our children against the disease of racial or religious prejudice. And these, in a large proportion of cases, are the individuals in our society with relatively unstructured attitudes on this subject. They can be influenced, as we have shown. Giving them a great amount of knowledge and understanding and affection for other kinds of people, which the media can do very well, may prove to be almost as effective a vaccine as Jonas Salk and his colleagues developed for polio.

I mentioned earlier the importance of focusing any given broad-

cast upon a specific issue. However, as I am sure you noted at the time, in speaking of specificity, I was not very specific. I would like to be now. I believe that there are four very specific things which broadcasters can do relatively easily which may prove to be of great long-range benefit to the cause of equal rights.

We can actively publicize and support the action programs initiated by human relations groups, inter-faith councils, and others. Because broadcasters tend to be looked up to in most communities, our support helps to establish a public standard or norm. We can legitimize many of these activities.

Secondly, through editorials and the publicity of newscasts, we can help to promote new legislation aimed at equalizing opportunities for all. Many behavioral scientists believe that this is the ultimate key to eliminating discrimination in this country.

As one has said:

The establishment of a legal norm creates a public conscience and a standard for expected behavior that check *overt* signs of prejudice. Legislation aims not at controlling prejudice, but only its open expression. But when expression changes, thoughts too, in the long run, are likely to fall into line.<sup>17</sup>

My third specific suggestion is that once this legislation is passed, broadcasters help to acquaint those who are affected with the details. If informed of the details of the laws people are more likely to abide by them. Also, and more usually, many of those whom the laws were designed to help are unaware of the laws or of their relationship to them. They need to know what these laws are, how they have been used by other minority groups, and how they might use them. Thus, broadcasting can help them to help themselves.

My last specific suggestion is concerned with something which I believe only the mass media can do. Clearly, the public morality in this country in regard to racial and religious prejudice has changed a great deal in the past decade or two. In most parts of the country, public policy and public attitudes are turning against any act of discrimination. Note the word "public" in that statement—*public* policy and *public* attitudes. The *public* norm is becoming equality for all. For many of us, however, this public norm is rather burdensome. We are neither too quick nor too harsh in applying the regulations or the norms, especially for ourselves. Because we remain tolerant of the intolerant, our prejudiced acts continue to be "privately tolerable." What broadcasters can do is to shake us

out of this fantasy-land. Though "privately tolerable," these acts are simply not "publicly acknowledgeable" for most of us or for our communities. Thus publicity, by forcing us to acknowledge these deviations from public norms, forces us to take a stand. It forces us to acknowledge our two faces, or to acquiesce and make our private and our public morality approximate each other. We can no longer evade the issue. As Lazarsfeld and Merton have said: "Publicity closes the gap between 'private attitudes' and 'public morality.'"<sup>18</sup> The mass media are best suited to serve this publicizing function, this enforcement of our public norms. Broadcasters can work to disclose and publicize any act of discrimination in their communities. One example of this is the increasing publicity given to the discrimination policies of many private clubs, and to the fact that the so-called "private club" is not nearly as private as it claims to be. In most communities, a great deal of business is carried out at the local country club. Those who are excluded from this club for religious or racial reasons are actually being excluded also from certain economic opportunities. Publicity of these facts by the media is slowly breaking down the "gentlemen's agreements" which are keeping these clubs white, Protestant, native-born American. Another example of publicity closing the gap between private attitudes and public morality may be seen in many Northern colleges and universities which are being literally forced to act in accord with their public principles. Because of publicity generated by their student newspapers, many of these schools have been forced to enact more stringent anti-bias regulations or to enforce more strictly the existing regulations.

Many of my friends in broadcasting, when we talk about working toward better human relations, tell me that it is a waste of time. They tell me that "these things go slowly, you can't force them, we must simply wait for the right time." They may be right. These changes will come at the right time, but it is men who will make that right time. Broadcasters can be among these men. However difficult, however slowly, however hopeless at times, I can think of no better way for one to help meet his responsibility as a broadcaster than to work toward better relations among men. It will not be an easy task, but some attention to the research on human behavior may make our efforts more effective.

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This past fall, *Gertrude Berg* died in New York City. At *Television Quarterly's* request, former Editorial Board Chairman **Max Wylie** prepared the following brief eulogy to this beloved star of American radio and television.

IN MEMORIAM:

## GOODBYE, MOLLY GOLDBERG

*"Who's at the door? Anybody? Yes, Molly. About 100 million of us, waiting to hear your voice again. So hurry back, whatever you're doing. What are you doing, by the way?"*

**MOLLY:** I'm up to the pots already. And the dishes are dribbling. Why I cook vegetables I don't know. Who eats them? Nobody. Jake, take a towel. (*Jake takes towel. David enters.*)

**DAVID:** Shall I bring rolls for breakfast, Molly? Or something whatever?

**MOLLY:** I have everything. Don't forget to remember me. (*David goes.*)

**JAKE:** They're all going off to see the new machine. Rosie. Sammy. David. Something else to cope with—television!

**MOLLY:** You can't stop evolution, Jake! It's the law of gravity. Maybe to buy a set is not such a bad idea. Keep the children...

**JAKE:** Buy a set! Maybe I should acquaint you also with some facts of life, Molly! We just moved. Six rooms! Lest you forget!

**MOLLY:** I'm aware.

**JAKE:** You expressed the desire for a broadloom. Reaching from wall to wall. Including foyer. And Rosie wants four posts on her bed. With canopies.

**MOLLY:** I was only thinking...it would be better to be within the family circle. That's all I'm saying. I like to know where my children's environment is. Parents and teachers recommend environment. If environment is what parents are responsible for...After all, it don't mean wall-to-wall or six rooms... It means—

- JAKE:** Where is written it means television?
- MOLLY:** It's part of the new era.
- JAKE:** The new era will have to wait! We can't afford it, Molly! And don't start! Period! (*Dishes are finished. Jake hangs up towel. Molly goes into dining-room, Jake following. They sit at table.*)
- MOLLY:** All right, it's period. I'll play you a pishe payshe. Comma! And a semi-colon also. (*Jake deals out cards. Molly goes right on.*) Irregardless—it's a miracle. I could never understand verbal words coming in the air. And now pictures.
- JAKE:** Pick up your cards.
- MOLLY:** A person could think, if you can't have mink, you shouldn't have less—
- JAKE:** Molly! Please! Speak English! Who understands your hieroglyphics?
- MOLLY:** I was planning for Easter to buy a neckpiece—I was saving it personally, Jake. Out of my person—
- JAKE:** So? If you want a scarf?
- MOLLY:** A scarf is only something for a neck, Jake.
- JAKE:** I heard of it. So how much did you save already out of your personal?
- MOLLY:** I'll count. (*She starts walking around apartment; takes change and small bills out of cups; from behind picture frames; from four different pocketbooks; from sewing machine drawers. Sits down again, starts counting. Jake watches intently.*)
- JAKE:** If I ask you a question, will you answer me?
- MOLLY:** If I have the answer, why not?
- JAKE:** Why do you save from your personal? Have I ever...?

**MOLLY:** No.

**JAKE:** Then?

**MOLLY:** For moments like this. For things that are not necessities. It's easier to get along without some necessities than a few little luxuries. So I save from the necessities to buy some of the luxuries. . .

**JAKE:** Like maybe it's a television set?

**MOLLY:** That's only for instance.

**JAKE:** How much have you got?

**MOLLY:** Not enough.

**JAKE:** How much more?

**MOLLY:** Half.

**JAKE:** You need another half to your half?

**MOLLY:** Uh-huh.

**JAKE:** (*Rising and going off.*) Oi! Who can fight evolution in the new era!

**MOLLY:** So where are you going?

**JAKE:** To write in the check book. What else!

The next afternoon the set arrived. (You knew that.) Molly passed fruit, made cocoa, received a dozen neighbors, many of them self-invited and quite unknown to her. She never saw ten seconds of television. But she did take a sharp look at the contract—"a year's guarantee to adjust." And a sharper look at Mitchell Siegel, the young man who did the installing. Mitchell said yes please, and no thank you. "Polite, with education." And he wasn't married. Molly knew because she asked him.

"A young man coming in to adjust—"

"Adjust? Already?"

"Jake, Rosalie will be grown up. With a young man coming in to adjust. After all, a year is a long time to adjust. I'm only suggesting a suggestion."



There was a brave tentativeness about all her proposals, tentative because of the world's habit to doubt or to rebuff; brave because she'd take her convictions right into the principal's office and lay them out. (Shyly, of course.)

Gertrude Berg lived on New York's west side, in the Majestic Apartments. For many years she rose at five each day to write her shows. The city was quiet then. Love of family—yours and mine as much as her own—was in every line. "Yoo-hoo! Mrs. Bloom!" by its inflection alone, committed her totally to the goodness of man, to the enduring joy of honest neighborliness, the quiet thrill of meat markets, holidays, graduations, recipes, wallpaper patterns.

Her own speech was pure. She had to master the accent by hard application. She had to eavesdrop to collect the idiom that made her famous.

In rehearsal, around the table in Studio 4, she'd kick off her slippers—she had very dainty feet—and a sort of glow would stand over these first run-throughs. It would be there still at sign-off.

One day Gertrude had a letter from a nun in the Midwest. It pleased her more than anything she ever got:

"The sisters in the order to which I belong have heard no radio during Lent. Do you think we might be sent copies of the Goldbergs for the six weeks we've had to miss?"

No one ever wanted to leave Gertrude Berg. And no one has. I always felt lucky whenever we rode the same elevator.

*Max Wylie*

# BOOKS IN REVIEW

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Robert E. Summers and Harrison B. Summers. *BROADCASTING AND THE PUBLIC*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1966.

About every five years, a new text on broadcasting is released. Depending upon primary focus, said book falls in either of two categories: the first deals with the skills of program manufacture; the second describes the broadcast program distribution system, both past and present. *Broadcasting and the Public* belongs to the latter category.

While reading the book I became convinced it is a darned good book, even discounting my natural prejudice for most things Summerian. To protect against this prejudice, I sat down to read, mull over, and compare this book and two other books written by different authors (or sets of authors) whose publication dates span a ten-year period. Out of this comparative reading came two rules: (1) the areas you *must* cover do not change, (2) within these areas, the change is frighteningly rapid. Each volume has essentially the same major elements: (1) broadcasting's societal importance, (2) comparative systems, (3) advertising and advertising agency functions, (4) audience measurement, (5) the FCC's role, (6) networks and stations, (7) critics and criticism, (8) history, (9) educational broadcasting, (10) programs, and (11) the public interest. The order may vary, one author adding technical data, another production information; but the skeleton remains the same. In fact, even the meat is often alike. (Each tome quoted Hoover at the 1924 conference, albeit different quotes.) Many of the same sources and data are used to reach the same conclusions.

Why do we need another book? Clearly, one major value is the updating. This updating occurs in three forms, the most obvious being a recounting of totally new events which have occurred since the last volume. Additionally, general data and trends shown therein are brought forward for comparison. More importantly, historical events, either once of great import or entirely ignored, are placed in better perspective.

However, the real value of this volume arises from the backgrounds and interests of Summers, *pere*, and Summers *filis*. H. B. Summers has been teaching or working in the field since the early 30's. His interests have centered on programming and program history—particularly network operations but also including local programming. In addition, he has long been interested in audience measurement, regulation—particularly as it affects programming, and comparative systems. Son Robert shares the interest in audience measurement but approaches the field from a management view concerned with economics, personnel and similar foci. He too has had a long teaching and professional career. That they should write a book together appeared inevitable.

Out of this combination of drives comes an approach long needed. The attitudes underlying the book have produced an economic treatise on the facts of industrial life. While the authors do not actually write in this language, we are shown an industry whose business is the manufacture of a product (programs), and whose distribution system simply takes one consumable commodity to ten million homes rather than ten million commodities to ten million homes.

It is a mass-produced product for a mass audience and everyone's concern up and down the production-distribution line is similar to that in any other industrial plant dealing with the public. Interestingly, the concern with quality control is much the same, too.

As expected, the recognition of the product's importance means considerably more emphasis on programming history, both network and local. No general text gives as much historical data on programs and the economic and management problems in producing them. The emphasis on the role of sponsors and broadcasters, not as bogeymen but as entrepreneurs investing risk capital on a "line," is welcome and refreshing. The approach also has produced a great deal of new, different data in each of the basic categories, much of this personally ferreted out by the authors.

No book is without shortcomings. For a book of this type, the shortcomings are minor and relatively insignificant. Some will disagree with the authors' conclusions about educational broadcasting or some other area. Naturally, a few errors in dates will be found. In spots, additional references would have been useful to scholars. The major problem arises from one of the things which makes the book valuable—time. As you read, you wish the authors could have written it yesterday taking into account developments of this year as well. Obviously, another four or five years will produce another updating book. I hope the next one is as good.

J. M. Ripley, II

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Sir Herbert Read. *TO HELL WITH CULTURE, AND OTHER ESSAYS ON ART AND SOCIETY*. New York: Schocken Books, 1964.

Because the managers of the new institutions of mass production and communication for the most part are much more sensitive and highly educated than the average consumer, they usually find it necessary to devise rationales justifying the gap between what they make for the consumption of others and what they in fact themselves admire. And because American intellectuals have for the most part made a career of avoiding these vulgar new institutions like the plague, almost as a matter of principle, most of the rationales media policymakers have devised tend to be without esthetic depth and historical perspective. The old dodge about giving the public what it *wants* blinks the fact that newer media create the newest sorts of wants every day yet these new wants are not often congruent with unfulfilled needs of a basic kind.

In broadcasting, another characteristic response is to try to compensate for utter triviality in fiction genres with a seriousness in nonfiction which is as high and infrequent as the former is low and endemic. Culture with a capital "C" pretends to compensate for an ultimately humanly unsatisfying "culture" in the anthropological sense, i.e., the total learned behavior of a particular society. Prestige operas make up for quiz sprees, a few meticulously researched documentaries make up for endless hours of diversion from threatening social change.

These false responses, of course, are not limited to broadcasting, or mass communication. They are part of the growing pains of industrialization: building a Lincoln Center for Culture instead of razing Harlem is the architectural equivalent of what used to be called "the Sunday ghetto" on TV—before sports

spilled over from Saturday afternoons. And "cardboard" bread, TV dinners, borax furniture and shoddy fashions are metaphors of consumer nondurables which "satisfy" the untutored taste of the mass consumer who needs help to become a demanding patron of the popular arts. (The schools are only now beginning to accept the responsibility of being the fulcrum for raising mass aspiration in the arts of mass production and communication.)

The failure of the schools to come to imaginative terms with what might be called the "anti-curriculum" of advertising education has meant much frustration and virtual futility in most classrooms. Sir Herbert Read assesses this new problem of the anti-curriculum brilliantly in *To Hell with Culture*:

We may educate the child in school but outside the school another educational process goes on all the time—the influence of the child's environment. There is no good purpose in developing the creative and appreciative impulses in the child if at the same time we compel it to inhabit ugly schools, go home through ugly streets and to live in an ugly house surrounded by ugly objects. And so, insensibly we are led to the wider social problem. Education alone will not suffice, because education can only be partial and is perhaps impossible in the chaos of ugliness which the industrial age has created.

Media managers, living in the nicest suburbs, working in swank studio-offices, vacationing in an island jetaway, can easily forget that pervasive ugliness, but most of their clients in the mass audience have no such pleasant alternatives.

The great merit of Read's analysis is his insistence that concern with the epiphenomena of Culture is almost *de facto* proof that no real cultivation is humanizing the society as a whole. The "only on Sunday" museum syndrome, after all, is almost as new as the industrial revolution itself, the first such buildings generally being the recently and hastily vacated palaces of European royalty. Culture, in any meaningful definition of that honorific term, must refer to everyday life, to the texture of daily experience, to what it's like to work and play in a particular society at all levels. Take care that those human requirements are humane, and Culture with a capital "C" will follow in due course. The cultured Greeks, Read notes,

...had no word for culture. They had good architects, good sculptors, good poets, just as they had good craftsmen and good statesmen. They knew that their way of life was a good way of life, and they were willing if necessary to fight to defend it. But it would never have occurred to them that they had a separate commodity, culture—something to be given a trademark by their academicians, something to be acquired by superior people with sufficient time and money, something to be exported to foreign countries along with figs and olives.

Marshall McLuhan reminds us that when you ask the Balinese what *their* arts are, their reply is devastating to the Culture-panicking American: they don't have any; they just do everything as well as they can!

Frontier squalor and esthetic desolation got Americans off on the wrong track in this Culture Business; we began to pretend to believe we could hang European facades over our underdeveloped realities, making American architecture, as Mark Twain put it, a case of Queen Anne fronts and Mary Ann behinds.

Ultimately, however, an industrial civilization like ours will be judged not by the pre-industrial art it can legally loot and stuff into its museums, but by

the median quality of what it does daily for all the people. In such a view, the truthfulness and taste of TV advertising is as important as the most abstruse philosophical speculation as an index to our bread and butter culture. The nourishing potential of our television entertainment is more crucial than the number of ballet and opera companies we subsidize into existence; the adequacy of our public schools every bit as important as the giganticism of major research libraries. If we are ever to fulfill the potential of a mass culture, it will come not from preserving old buildings for nostalgic reasons or counting the number of people who spend ten microseconds in front of an overpriced Rembrandt at the Metropolitan Museum, but rather from businessmen who encourage the highest possible craftsmanship in the words and things consumed everyday in the metabolism of our high-velocity economy.

Turning the everyday landscape into a junkyard cannot be paid for by pious genuflections in the direction of Culture as a good thing. That is really robbing Peter to praise Paul shallowly. The managers of abundance who run the institutions of mass production and mass communication had better listen soon to what Yehudi Menuhin said when he was made Freeman of the City at the Edinburgh Festival in 1965:

Art cannot exist only in the hands of specialists for it will wither on its pedestal. It must dig deep into the very substance of life. It must be restored to the little man. Our daily tasks, even cooking, cleaning, thinking, talking, building, as well as music, painting, and poetry, are the birthright of every human being. I would like to equate all work with art and all art with joy and satisfaction. If war can be equated with art, surely work can.

To hell with pseudo-Culture of the only-on-Sunday variety.

Broadcasting which takes seriously the arts of informing, entertaining and marketing doesn't need a Ghetto to feel unguilty in. Like Moliere's newly-rich gentleman astonished at the realization he had been speaking prose all along without knowing it, media managers who insist on integrity in the words and images their craftsmen use will be responsible for creating the only kind of culture that matters. Culture, like happiness it turns out, cannot be pursued for its own sake. Both come from doing needed tasks as superbly as possible.

Beaver College

**Patrick Hazard**

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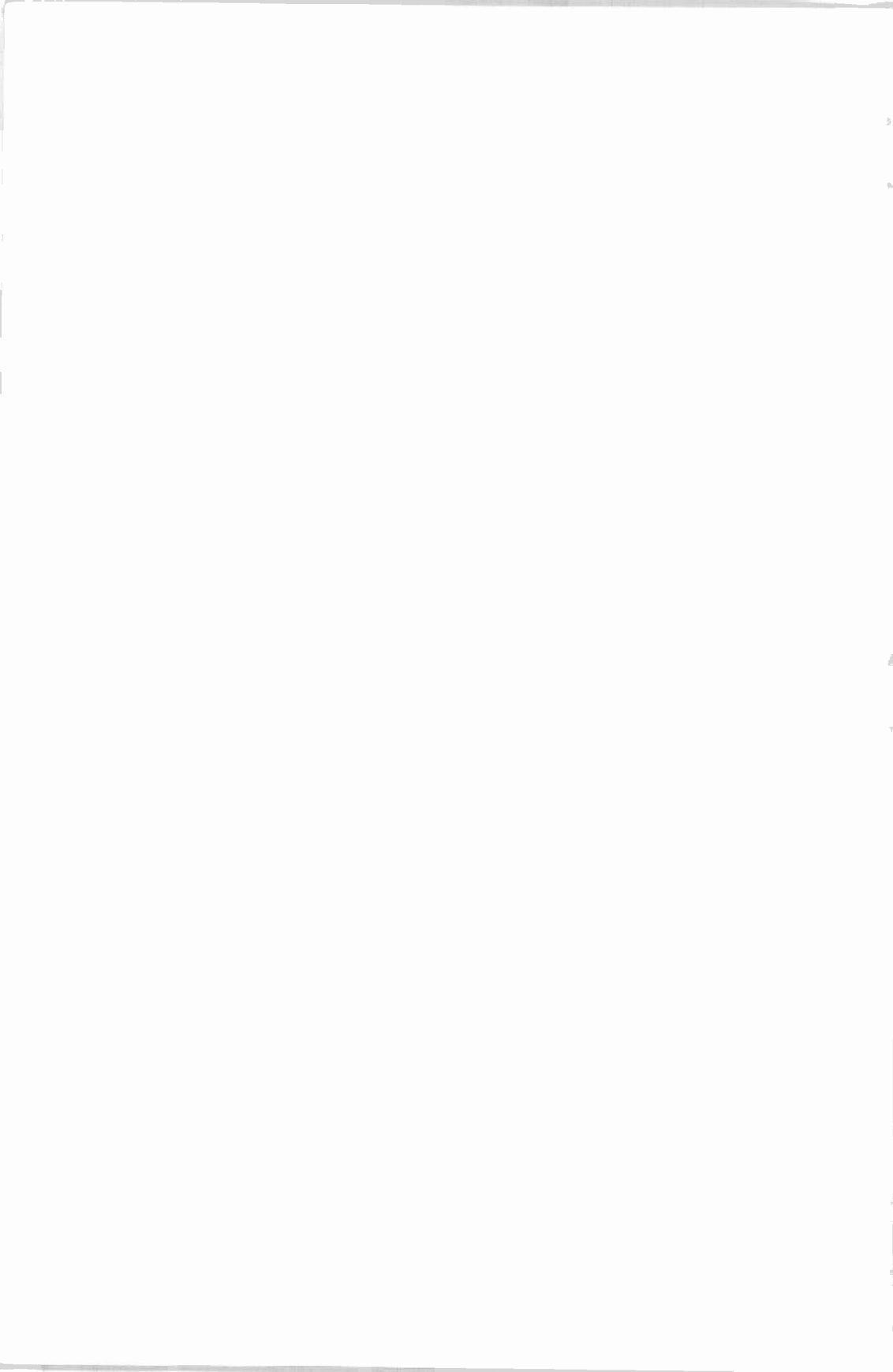
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