

# Communications Research

1948-1949

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## Preface

THE WAR and its aftermath made it necessary to interrupt the "Radio Research" series of which two volumes have appeared. In the meantime, not only radio but all the other media of mass communication have made great progress in their research activity.

When the editors turned to the preparation of a new volume they were convinced that the whole field of communications research should be covered simultaneously. The techniques which are used to study the attitudes of readers are similar to those by which radio listeners are investigated. We understand the audience structure of one medium better if we use for comparison data available on all the others. It was, therefore, finally decided that now that the publication of the series is resumed they would use the more general title "Communications Research."

The present volume contains mainly studies which were organized by Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research in the last two years of the war and in the time since. The contributions of a few welcome guests are included. It is hoped that as the field expands further, more outside contributions of importance will be available for inclusion in future volumes.

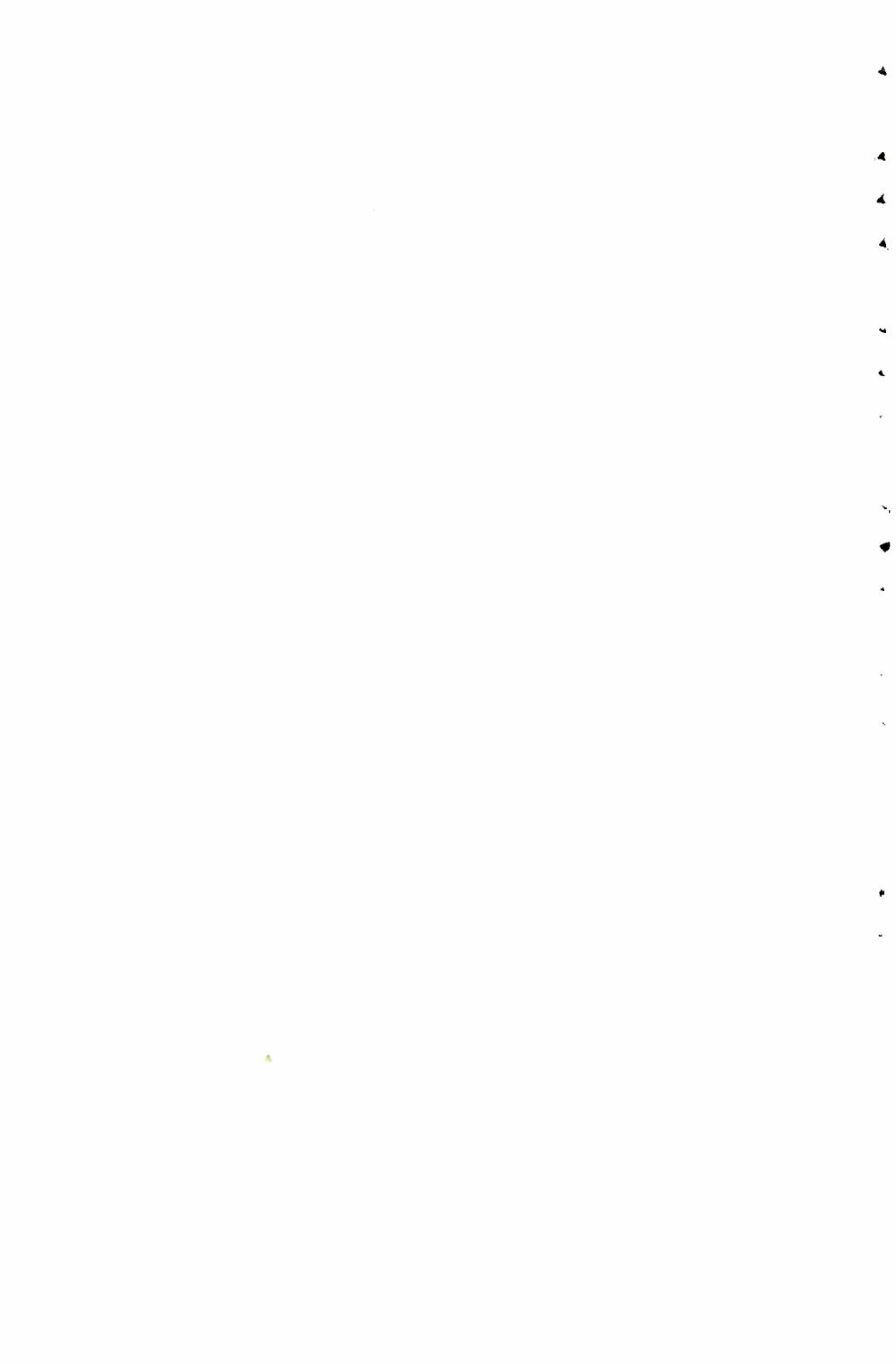
The laborious work of editing all the present papers, of balancing size and emphasis, and of checking on all data and conclusions was done by Mr. Joseph T. Klapper, Research Associate at the Bureau. The editors of the volume are greatly indebted to him for the devotion with which he applied his abilities and judgment to the job.

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# Introduction

A few remarks on some of the studies included in this book should be helpful to the reader. It is no longer necessary today either to justify communications research as a special discipline or to outline its general scope. Because the field has developed so rapidly and because its pioneers have been a rather closely knit group, it has been taught in a surprisingly similar way at many universities. Although no general textbook yet exists, two recent symposia present very good general pictures. One is Wilbur Schramm's *Communications in Modern Society*,<sup>1</sup> which contains a well organized bibliography and which is in general oriented toward the practical ends which communications can serve. The other work, Lyman Bryson's *The Communication of Ideas*,<sup>2</sup> has a more philosophical orientation. Both volumes are organized around the central idea that it is important to know "who says what to whom with what effect" in the media of mass communications.

At the beginning of the 1930's John Marshall sensed the need of integrating several elements which had developed in various areas of the humanities and the social sciences. A few psychologists, for example, had studied the effects of movies on children and had published their findings as the well-known Payne Fund studies. Harold Lasswell had initiated the whole trend of propaganda analysis. Rosten had already begun to investigate the personnel and the general institutional setup of the communications industries. The growing radio industry furnished a steady stream of statistics on listening habits. For some time, both literary criticism and, occasionally, sociological research had considered the relationship between society and writing. To combine all these elements into a clearly recognizable pattern of intellectual endeavor, two things were needed: a general philosophical orientation and a systematic body of research techniques.

The central problem is now recognized to be about as follows. Im-

<sup>1</sup> Wilbur Schramm (ed), *Communications in Modern Society*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1948).

<sup>2</sup> Lyman Bryson (ed), *The Communication of Ideas*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, for Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1948).

pressive technological developments and coincident advances in general education have led to a rapid increase of literacy. But what people can now read, see, and hear is provided in the main by a number of large-scale, fairly centralized communications industries. What, then, are the effects of this general development on the spiritual and social life of our times? Since these central agencies have means of collecting and presenting facts to which no single individual could have access, this development in communications may provide a greatly broadened range of interesting information. But on the other hand, if the communications industry were not continually aware of its social responsibility, the same development might lead toward uniformity and bias in social thinking. Perhaps the most involved of all implications is the question of what relationship should exist between the wants of the audience and the cultural function of the industry. In order to keep financially alive, the industry must serve the largest possible number of people. But in order to best serve the whole community, the industry should be the voice of its intellectually and morally most advanced sector.

No one believes that there are any ready answers to this vast array of problems. But everyone realizes that a necessary, although not a sufficient, condition for such answers is the accumulation and interpretation of facts from every corner of the communications field. Thus communications research becomes an important element in the formulation of both policy and social philosophy.

Research, however, cannot serve these functions until its own methodologies are thoroughly integrated. Until the statistical data provided by the communications industry, the findings of laboratory experiments, the observations of the analytic psychologist, and the interpretations of the sociologist are meshed with each other, we will never have any solid knowledge of the field. Nothing could be more detrimental than to sacrifice the careful development of appropriate research methods on the altar of quick findings. And real contributions can be expected only from those methods which, as they are used in successive studies, are applied to wider and wider fields.

The present volume is witness that advances have been made toward both goals: research has been oriented toward progressively

broader problems coincident with the broadening of the methodology itself.

In regard to the first goal, the attention of the reader is particularly invited to the study of broadcasting in Russia—probably the first comprehensive description of how radio is run behind the Iron Curtain. The unusual length of the paper is due to the many details necessary to permit readers to form their own judgments on so complex a topic. The editors hope that this paper will help bring institutional analysis to its legitimate place among the techniques of communications research. It is also hoped that this contribution will stimulate further studies, in which whole communications systems are analytically compared. It is quite obvious that many such investigations could be profitably undertaken. In this country alone, for instance, the useful studies of self-regulation in the movie industry are not as yet paralleled by similar studies in regard to the radio industry. As regards other nations, we have already heard much about those European systems in which the government bears the essential responsibility for broadcasting, but we know little about such mixed systems as exist in the British dominions. Again, we know that the artistic character of European and American films is quite unlike. We do not know, however, whether a different cultural background, a different financial structure, or some other basic difference accounts for these variations. To note one further example, the fact that most European newspapers are not self-supporting may be related to their being technically less developed than American papers, but also less sensational and more serious in tone. Here, again, comprehensive studies are necessary to further explain these differences and to gauge their social effects.

The study of institutional structure will, however, never give a full picture of such social effects. We also need detailed psychological analyses of what is happening to the reader or the listener—to the members of the mass communications audience. To provide such a picture, two major techniques—experimentation and skillful detailed interviews—are available individually and in combination. One of the studies presented in this volume offers an example of a successful combination of the two. During a newspaper strike, which offered a kind of natural experimental opportunity, detailed interviews were

held to determine what missing the newspaper meant to various people. It should not be difficult to think of similar situations for further experiments of this kind. Too little attention has been paid, for instance, to the experiences of Americans who live abroad for a time and are therefore subject to different communication stimuli. Because many of us become so used to our regular environment that we can no longer discern its effect upon us, even changes of residence within this country should give rise to interesting observations which would otherwise be overlooked.

The study dealing with children's comics is also of a descriptive psychological nature, but covers a somewhat broader field. Studies of this sort provide very necessary and valuable information, but their particular character gives us occasion to point out that the very aspects which make such studies valuable should not tempt their readers to over wide generalizations. For example, there has recently been much public discussion as to the merits and demerits of children reading comics. The study in this volume was done several years ago and deals only with certain specific kinds of comics. It does not include some of the types which figure most prominently in the present controversy. Further, and equally important, it aims at clarifying basic psychological processes and not at yielding at once statistical findings. This type of work, thus, is an indispensable pre-condition but not a substitute for large-scale statistical surveys.

The idea of various steps equally necessary in the development of research brings us to the second major guiding point of this volume, the integration of methods. The unfortunate impression is often created that while good solid statistics are what the practical man needs for his work, the more subtle approaches are restricted to the ivory tower of the academician. Actually, the most useful results stem from the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Several papers in this volume, therefore, involve just such two-pronged efforts.

The study on "deviant cases," for example, deals directly with the relationship between statistical cross-tabulations and detailed case studies. Another study deals with the relationship between magazine reading and personal influence in a community. Though relatively brief and devoted mainly to the clarification of the problem in all its many ramifications, the ideas developed in this paper have since been

applied to various large-scale studies.<sup>3</sup> It is now being more and more widely realized that the effect of the mass media cannot be really understood unless we simultaneously study the transmission of ideas in personal contacts between people. There are many persons, for example, who do not themselves read books, but who are influenced by books through other people who have read them. And there are many who exercise influence only because the mass media provide them with the material and the devices with which to influence others.

A third study in this group deals with "overlapping magazine readership" and may at first appear to be rather specialized. The study proposes that magazines can be classified according to the way their readers behave. If the same people are likely to read several given magazines, then there must be something common to those magazines which distinguishes them from other magazines which the same people do not read. The reasoning on which this study is based is obviously quite general. Factors common to a variety of radio programs, for example, can be identified if we analyze the distribution of listeners among various patterns of program combinations.<sup>4</sup> The same general concept in fact suggests a far more general technique for studying the "meaning" of many kinds of material. When we talk about broad social matters we necessarily use such broad terms as "liberty," "justice," or "culture." It is well known that many controversies arise because we don't really know whether different people mean the same thing when they use these words. The technique here developed to classify magazines has since been expanded into a much more general technique to classify and elucidate any kind of communicated content.<sup>5</sup>

The present volume also presents, quite advisedly, two papers which bear closely upon the practical operations of a specific communications industry. One is a general survey of radio programs, while the other deals with a network's program policies regarding its morning hours. Communications research is an expensive under-

<sup>3</sup> P. F. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson, and H. Gaudet, *The People's Choice* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1944). See also *The Flow of Influence in an American Community*, to be published in this series.

<sup>4</sup> Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Patricia L. Kendall, *Radio Listening in America* (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1948).

<sup>5</sup> This technique has been described in Chapters 10 and 11 of a report by the Research Branch, Morale Division of the War Department, to be published by the Princeton University Press in 1949.

taking. It could not go on if the communications industries were not contributing funds, and they would not contribute funds if they did not see some practical returns. This relationship, however, should not be conceived as necessarily narrow. The ultimate value of a study lies not only in what it contributes to the day-to-day operation of a newspaper or a radio station. Everything which enlarges systematic knowledge will at some time be of practical value.

From this point of view, it seems necessary to especially stress one shortcoming of this volume. It contains no material about movies.<sup>6</sup> The movie industry has had a rather hectic relationship with research. Some of the first communications studies were done in connection with movie problems. Movies are especially well suited to experimental work, as was demonstrated by the large number of film studies performed by the Army during the war.<sup>7</sup> The movie industry also has a natural source of statistics in its box office reports. And in recent years, as can be learned from the trade press, quite a number of companies have done public opinion work and used the type of "program analysis" which was presented in a previous volume of this series.<sup>8</sup> But somehow no systematic integration of research, such as has been made for the printed media and the radio, has yet been made in regard to the movies. The editors of *Communications Research* hope that the next volume will help to remedy this situation.

The most spectacular development in the communications field at this moment is undoubtedly the rapid expansion of television. A large number of studies seem to be under way but the scene is still continuously shifting and no general findings are yet available.

The purpose of these volumes is not merely to report on progress already made. Their aim is to contribute by the very existence of this periodic publication to a continuous integration of the theoretical and practical aspects of investigations in the field of mass media of communications.

#### THE EDITORS

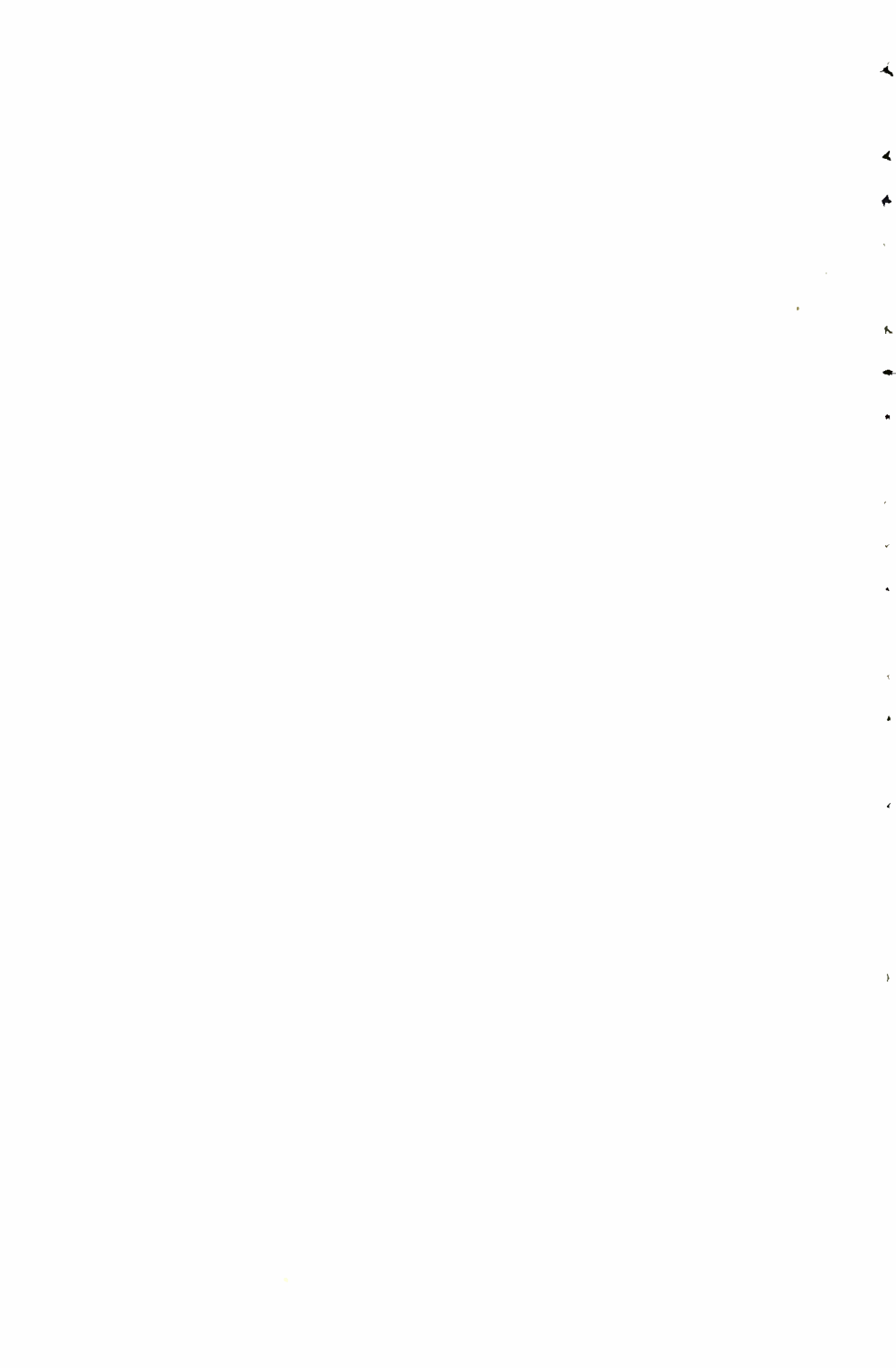
<sup>6</sup> One interesting movie experiment undertaken by the Research Department of the American Jewish Committee was postponed for later publication, when it is hoped that more movie material will be available.

<sup>7</sup> See Volume 3 of the Research Branch publication mentioned in footnote 5 above.

<sup>8</sup> Tore Hallonquist and Edward A. Suchman, "Listening to the Listener," in *Radio Research 1942-43* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944).



## I. AMERICAN MASS MEDIA IN ACTION



# THE CHILDREN TALK ABOUT COMICS

By Katherine M. Wolf and Marjorie Fiske



## I. INTRODUCTION

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### THE PROBLEM

THIS study is the first, to the authors' knowledge, which has attempted to get any direct information about the impact of comic book reading on children. A vast new medium of communication has been developed in the past few years and now reaches probably at least as many children as are exposed to motion pictures and radio, for which elaborate research projects have long since been in operation. Although a new generation is growing up under the influence of this medium, sociologists, psychologists, educators, and publishers have to date been able to do little but speculate as to how this medium influences the behavior, attitudes, and developmental pattern of that generation.

This study does not purport to provide the final answer to these questions. The objectives, in fact, are rather modest: to procure from a small, but representative, group of children between seven and seventeen *their own* reports about their comic book reading experience, and to get from those reports some impression of the motives for and effects of comic book reading among different groups in relation to their general behavior, interests, and attitudes.

### THE SAMPLE AND THE METHODS

The emphasis was on gaining insight into the nature of comic book reading experiences among different kinds of children rather

than on procuring a quantitative picture of how many and what kinds of comics are read by the population at large. Detailed interviews were therefore held with a sample restricted to 104 children, carefully stratified according to age, sex, and economic status. Slightly more than half were eleven or twelve years old,<sup>1</sup> and the rest were fairly evenly distributed down to seven and up to seventeen. Notice was also taken of the numbers of brothers and sisters in the family, because of the possible influence of siblings on comic reading behavior. Approximately three-fourths of the interviews were done in greater New York (in public and private schools, settlement houses and private homes); the remaining fourth were done for checking purposes in rural areas of Connecticut.<sup>2</sup>

Each child was interviewed for more than an hour, during which time he was asked various questions concerning his comic reading habits, background, and social adjustment. In addition, his behavior was observed while he read a Superman story and was subjected to certain deliberate distractions. Interviewers were provided with an "interview guide"<sup>3</sup> but were instructed to allow the children to talk on more or less at will, so long as the discussion remained relevant to reading comics.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The bulk of the interviews were made with eleven- and twelve-year-olds because the sponsors and directors alike felt that this was the period of most intensive comic book reading. It developed, however, that there are other critical age periods as well.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed statistical breakdown of the sample is on file at Columbia University, Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y. See Appendix D, p. 307 below.

<sup>3</sup> The Interview Guide and instructions for interviewers are on file at Columbia University, Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y. See Appendix D, p. 307, below.

<sup>4</sup> Since all children did not answer an identical set of questions, the total figure appearing in tables is not always 104.



## II. VARIATIONS IN CHOICE: THREE STAGES IN COMIC READING

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### THE THREE TYPES OF COMICS

Most educators, parents, and other adults concerned with the effects of comic reading tend to lump all comics together, sometimes indiscriminately labeling all of them as "trash." But not so with the children. For them comics are as varied in content and appeal as motion pictures, radio programs, and books are for adults. Examination of the comics for which the interviewed children expressed preference revealed three major groupings, of which the children were themselves aware: (A) comics of the Walt Disney "funny animal" type, (B) adventure, crime, and mystery comics of the Superman type, and (C) educational comics of the True and Classic type. A brief description of these three kinds of comics will indicate the characteristics most peculiar to each.

*Group A*, comics of the Walt Disney type, are peopled almost exclusively by animals such as Bugs Bunny, Super Rabbit, and Porky Pig who, except for their appearance, have all the characteristics of humans. They walk upright, talk, have a family life, go to school, take baths, and so on. The plots of these comics usually revolve around homey, everyday matters and are very simple in a psychological sense. The characters do not have wild and fantastic adventures but rather, as one child put it, "they have the everyday life." In other words, they are fantastic in their appearance, but plausible in their behavior.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> There are occasional exceptions, wherein a "funny animal" has fantastic adventures similar to those found in adventure and mystery comics with human characters. But a thoroughgoing typology of comics would undoubtedly reveal that almost all animal comics adhere to a relatively simple action pattern.

The people are so lifelike—they are only little pigs and rabbits, *but they act just like people.* (Girl—12—C)<sup>6</sup>

In *Group B*, comprising comics of the adventure, mystery, and crime type, the situation is reversed. The characters look like human beings and they live in perfectly normal houses and towns. But unlike the “funny animals” these characters do not confine their activities or their powers to ordinary, everyday doings. They have “lots of adventures and exciting things always happen” and they have “strange powers” such as the ability to fly, X-ray vision, or the ability to move through solids or become invisible. Usually, however, it is the hero alone who has such powers, and he uses them exclusively to help “good people.” The characters who are not good people are invariably extreme villains who are inevitably punished by the hero. Thus the “bad” people always go to jail or get killed, or at least get punished in some satisfactory way, while the “good” people always come out on top; the endings are always happy:

*It always turns out the way I want it to turn out.* I begin a story and find that the crooks rob a lot of jewelry and so before I end the story I think that *I want them to go to jail and so it ends up they always do go to jail.* (Girl—8—C).

From a psychological standpoint, both heroes and villains are unrealistic. Not only are they completely black or completely white, not only do the heroes usually “win” through superior physical powers rather than through intelligence or insight, but the factors responsible for making people black or white, good or bad, are usually obscure. The implication is that the hero was “born good” and the villain was “born evil.” As in action stories of other media, no social or psychological forces seem to be operating. Furthermore, in most comics of this type the concept of a character as good or bad is usually dependent on the hero’s opinion:<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Respondents are labeled A, B, C, and D, according to income level.

<sup>7</sup> While the hero’s judgment seems to be the factor responsible for the conscious decision of the child as to who is good and who is evil, the different color sometimes used for the villains may serve as an unconscious clue. Very few readers, however, are consciously aware of the significance of the colors purple and green. Most children who do notice the difference simply think “the purple ones are in the shade.”

I knew Easy was really innocent because Superman believed in him. (Girl—12—B)

In short, fantastic adventure comics of the Superman type are peopled by creatures who look like human beings and live in towns and cities just like those we ourselves live in, but who do not behave like human beings. Not only do they do things impossible for ordinary humans, but they fail to display any of the nuances of normal human behavior. The physical setting is realistic, but the psychological setting is unrealistic.

True and Classic comics, *Group C*, are numerically insignificant in comparison to *Groups A* and *B*, but constitute a qualitatively distinct type. Usually they are adaptations of books or other factual or educational material. Here the physical settings are just as realistic as those in *Group A*, and the characters, inasmuch as they represent historical figures or almost equally well-known fictional persons, are naturally made to look as physically realistic as possible. Their actions, in contrast to those of the characters in *Group B*, are perfectly plausible: they do not fly, nor have X-ray vision, nor are they physically invulnerable. Nevertheless, psychologically they adhere to the pattern of extremes, being wholly good or wholly bad persons. Almost invariably in these comics, too, justice prevails and virtue is rewarded. Thus while there is no overt indication that they differ from human beings, the characters in True and Classic comics seem to be psychologically nearly as primitive as those in *Group B*.

### THREE STAGES IN COMIC READING

Analysis of the children's preferences among comic books<sup>8</sup> revealed that the children not only tend to group comics into the three cate-

<sup>8</sup> Several criteria were used to determine which comic books were preferred by the different children. Each child was of course asked to express his comic book preferences in so many words in answer to the question "What comics do you like best?" But analysis of the rest of his statements about his comic reading habits and attitudes often revealed that he confused comics read the most (because of availability) with comics liked best. Careful attention was therefore paid to all of the child's statements revealing how he felt about different types of comics, to his behavior while reading the Superman story, to his attitude toward the other stories in the book, and to his retrospective reports about the kinds of comics he used to like best. It was thus possible to determine for each child the kind of comic book which he himself found most satisfying.

gories described, but that they progress through the categories as they grow older.

TABLE I  
*Types of Comic Books Preferred at Different Ages*

| <i>Type of Comic Book Preferred</i>  | <i>Age</i>                 |                    |                         |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|                                      | <i>10 Years or Younger</i> | <i>11-12 Years</i> | <i>12 Years or More</i> |
|                                      | <i>%</i>                   | <i>%</i>           | <i>%</i>                |
| "Funny Animal" Comics . . . . .      | 25                         | —                  | —                       |
| Fantastic Adventure Comics . . . . . | 68                         | 63                 | 35                      |
| True and Classic . . . . .           | —                          | 30                 | 65                      |
| None . . . . .                       | 7                          | 7                  | —                       |
| Total per cent . . . . .             | 100                        | 100                | 100                     |
| Number of cases . . . . .            | 28                         | 56                 | 20                      |

Two trends are noticeable in Table 1. In the first place, children over ten never say they like funny animal comics best, while 25 per cent of the youngest children prefer this type. Secondly, interest in true and classic comics increases very drastically with age. In other words, although adventure comics are read by the majority of children up through twelve years, there is nevertheless a distinct developmental pattern in comic book *preference*, from fantastic through adventure to true and classic types.<sup>9</sup> Evidence provided by Table 1 is corroborated by the reports of the children themselves, some of whom seem to be well aware of past and future changes in their comic book preferences:

I like comics like Bugs Bunny. True Comics are a little grown-up for me. (Girl—9—C)

Famous Funnies is for younger children. It tells about birds and things. They have a story about Cheery Chirrup. He goes to school.

<sup>9</sup> The seemingly inconsistent fact that there are proportionately a few more of the youngest children preferring fantastic adventure comics will be clarified at length in Chapter III. Briefly, it is explained by the proportionately greater number of comic book fans, who prefer fantastic adventure comics regardless of age, in this group. (See Table 2, page 25). In other words, this development pattern of comic book choices should be construed as typical for the normal child who is a moderate reader.



He is a bird. I am getting more interested in the others now. *When I was about seven I began reading it and liked it until last year.* Then I found out that the mysteries were better. (Boy—9—B)

The children's awareness of transitions is also indicated in their reports of how much comic reading they do. Children in the last comic reading phase, i.e., thirteen years or older, tend to read fewer comics than they used to; 72 per cent claim they read fewer than they did two years ago, while less than 50 per cent of the children in the younger age groups report any such reduction (Appendix B, Table 1). As we shall see later, this quantitative change is largely the result of the changing function which comics play for children during their three reading stages.

To summarize, then, "funny animal" comics, when they are preferred at all, are chosen by the youngest children. The eleven- and twelve-year-olds progress to a preference for fantastic adventure comics with realistic characters and settings but with unrealistic behavior; older children tend, in the great majority, to seek out comics with the greatest degree of physical realism.

### THE THREE FUNCTIONS OF COMICS

Since a child's comic preferences progress through three clearly marked stages, it would appear that the gratification which the child derives from comic reading must likewise change. Analysis of the remarks made by the children themselves reveals just what gratifications are involved at the three different levels.

#### *The Alice-in-Wonderland function*

Children in the first stage, i.e., those who prefer animal comics, differ from older children in their insistence on variety and on plausibility of *action*.

Such children, in the first place, read many more comics than do the children in the older groups. Approximately 83 per cent of the children under eleven reported reading more than two comics a week, as compared with 50 per cent of the older children. Eighty-seven per cent of the older children reread comics, while in the younger group, where variety is sought, only 65 per cent reread old stories.

The younger children's demand for variety is extended to the characters of the stories. In explaining what they like about their favorite comics, they emphasize not one particular character, but the fact that there are "all kinds" of characters. They seem to wish to fill their fantasy world with as great a variety of characters as may be possible.

I like Merry Melodies and Looney Tunes and Bugs Bunny and Porky Pig and Henry Hawk . . . sometimes I borrow them from friends. . . . *They get different kinds*, Donald Duck, Raggedy Ann, Homing Pigeon, and Andy Pandy. (Girl—7—B)

But children in this stage particularly enjoy seeing these various creatures do homey, everyday things:

I like to read about a squirrel and its *mother giving her a peanut*, or like baby chicks, and sometimes I like to read about *rabbits jumping in little holes, all kinds of funny things*. (Girl—9—C)

They do not like the fantastic characters to have fantastic or improbable adventures not "all about murder and things, I don't like those." The characters must do the things the child himself does, so that they can be ruminated about comfortably in bed:

It [animal comics] is better than Superman. It is more interesting . . . *every time I go to bed I think about it*. . . . When Porky Pig and Bugs Bunny walk in the woods and see the skunk, *the skunk smelled and they had to take a bath*. (Boy—10—C)

But the reality and plausibility these children like pertains exclusively to action, and not to the appearance of the character. Animals who walk and talk but who do "everyday things," are "realistic," but human beings who have high adventures, who can fly, and who commit murder are regarded as "fantastic." A duck with a name who squabbles with his friend makes much more sense than Superman.

They [animal comics] aren't fantastic like some other comics. I don't like *the fantastic kind, there's no truth in them*, and they are not any good because they are just fantastic. And how they do it, they try to worry you, so I just don't like them, I don't like them. I don't like the ones that can fly like Superman, no person can fly unless he has some kind of an airplane. *The others aren't fantastic, they have the*

*everyday life*, like in one of them Donald Duck wants his putty and Jones won't give him back his putty, [etc.]. (Boy—7—A)

I don't like Superman, I don't know what it is about, it is a lot of junk. *I don't like it because he has no wings*. I don't know how he can fly. There is no such thing as Superman is there? (Girl—7—B)

It appears that if Superman were a talking bird with real feathery wings he would be much more believable for children in this stage than he is in his present guise.

The demand for variety and plausibility of action seems to take root in the children's habit of projecting themselves into the characters. Such projection is easy only when the characters do things which the children themselves can do. As soon as the characters behave in a different way, the projective process becomes impossible:

Sometimes I pretend I am an animal. Sometimes I pretend I am a rabbit, sometimes I'm an elephant. *I had to quit being an elephant because I have to use my arm for my trunk so I can't walk on one hand in the front, that isn't what an elephant does so I haven't been doing that so much*. (Boy—7—A)

Psychologists have long been aware of the child's need for projection, and have in fact written of the *egocentric* or *animistic* stage, in which the child, by the process of projection, experiences an almost limitless number of selves. He can be a rabbit, a duck, a pig, any number of things, at will. In fact, as many parents of a young child must have observed, at any given moment he is more likely to be someone else than he is to be himself.

The usual psychological explanation for this period is that the child's mental equipment is still undeveloped, and that he is not able to see the difference between himself and these other selves which he so readily adopts. Our material suggests, however, that it is not so much that the child cannot see the difference—after all, most children see considerable differences between themselves and Superman—but rather that he has a basic need to constantly enrich his fantasy life with new characters. So long as they are reading Superman they not only become invincible, but they perform, vicariously, all of his remarkable feats.

There are times that I don't like to read True Comics. They are very slow, none of these impossible things can happen there, *they don't*

*get me right, in the right spot.* They get me down in pep because there is nothing there like adventure or *bullets that bounce off you or being able to hold up a house.* . . . (Boy—13—B)

When I go to sleep I think I'm Superman. *I zoom right through a man's stomach.* . . . I don't know the man but he is big and strong and I come along and zoom. *I go flying around* and see some Germans and *I knock them out.* If I could have a wish and be magic I'd like to be able to fly. I'd sit on a cloud and *be so strong.* Sometimes I'd go to the moon and there would be lots of people and they would say "Oh, Oh, he has power over me!" . . . I'd take my hand and crash a star, I'd lift a car and crash it. (Boy—9—C)

Superman is infallible as well as invincible. His ability to tell a "good" man from a "bad" man, though never explained in terms of intelligence or understanding, is unquestioned.

I felt this man [Codini] was not a criminal *because Superman wouldn't let him out of jail if he did not trust him.* (Girl—12—B)

It always just happens that *when Superman distrusts somebody they'll be guilty.* Superman is usually right—in fact always, and *that is very satisfying.* (Girl—11—B)

Superman is satisfying not only because he is invincible and infallible, but because in the world in which he functions he always "makes everything turn out right." For the child in this stage "happy endings," unvarying portrayals of good people being rewarded and bad people being punished, seem to set them temporarily at ease in a world which, they are beginning to see, does not actually function with such primitive simplicity (the majority believe that things in real life do not turn out the way they do in comics; see Appendix B, Table 3, p. 302).

I like ones like Superman and Captain Marvel because they always win. *It doesn't make you wonder.* (Boy—9—C)

When everything gets straightened out, Superman doesn't have to work so hard and he can get a rest. (Girl—9—B)

While actually reading Superman the child in this stage enters the private world of his hero, and almost leaves the real world behind.

Systematic observation of reading behavior revealed that the great majority of such children were wholly oblivious to nonverbal distractions. When the interviewer crossed the room or looked over the child's shoulder, there was little indication that the child was even aware of her presence (Appendix B, Table 4). That the majority did, however, respond to a direct question, suggests that they did not deliberately *exclude* others from their experience, but rather that they became so absorbed that they forgot that others were present.

For all their absorption, however, children in this stage are comparatively uninterested in the content and structure of the story, being rather wholly taken by the mood. Almost half claim they cannot tell how a story will turn out (Appendix B, Table 3), and the majority are unable to reproduce even half of the basic units of a Superman story they have just read (Appendix B, Table 5). Even children who were able to reproduce the content of a book they had recently read were completely incoherent when they retold the comic story (Appendix B, Table 6). Thus, it is apparently the mood, rather than the story, in which they become absorbed.

*It takes you into another world, it's exciting.* (Boy—12—C)

I try to prevent Mother from throwing them out. I like to look at them again. *Even if I remember them, it's just as interesting.* (Boy—12—B)

Judging from the children's own reports and the objective description of their reading behavior, the satisfaction derived from reading comics in this stage seems to be one primarily of escape from the real world into a world where the child becomes powerful. It is as though, realizing that he really cannot take all the shapes and forms he assumed in the earlier period, the child's ego becomes deflated. He finds that he is only one small person, after all, and that the world is a very large and confusing place over which he has no control. By reading about invincible heroes he becomes an invincible hero for a time. He gains reassurance by *identifying* with an inflated ego, and the physical realism of the settings in which Superman and his counterparts operate facilitates the process. This is a world much like our own, but, for the child unable as yet to cope with the complexities of

life, it has all the additional charm of being on a psychological level in which everything is both understandable and predictable.

Comics are good, they tell what's this, and this man a crook or something. *That's what most people like, they like to see what is what.* (Girl—10—C)

*Batman stage: the invincibility of the vincible.* But for the normal child this oversimplified world in which he can live as an invulnerable hero does not long continue to be completely satisfying. There comes a time when he can find little satisfaction in Superman's ordered world and his extra-realistic powers. The dissatisfaction is first manifested in the child's inability to credit Superman's extra-human powers.

I used to like exciting ones, but they seem to have gone bad. Like *Superman, I don't like him anymore . . . he's too untrue.* (Boy—9—B)

I consider Superman impossible. . . . *How can a man fly?* (Boy—13—B)

*I like the comics that can really happen,* when somebody doesn't have to get into a costume to fly and can have bullets shot at him that bounce right off. *I don't believe anybody could fly.* (Boy—12—A)

As the child develops, the dissatisfaction is extended to include the improbability of the situations:

The adventures in Superman are not interesting. Just seems that *he gets into things that could not happen . . . men come from Mars in desolate swamps and Lois Lane gets captured and there are men with iron gloves, all improbable things.* (Girl—11—A)

And finally as the child begins to find that reality is often unpredictable, he becomes irritated by the similarity and rigid structure of the Superman stories.

Most of the time in Superman *you can tell how it will end.* You know he will jump in when necessary and the crooks will go to jail. (Girl—12—B)

I don't think Superman is exciting. *Every story is just like each other.* (Boy—12—B)

It usually turns out well, always ends happy. *You can always guess the criminal . . . they have too many hints in the beginning.* I used to love them much more than I do now. *I never had the idea that the same things happened over and over again.* (Girl—13—A)

As though ashamed of their recent identification, some children in this stage develop intense antagonism toward Superman's invulnerability. They want Superman to have some weakness of his own, and not always to emerge wholly victorious.

Have Superman get captured, so he can't get away, *gas him* so that he can only get away after the person he wants to save is dead. *Nothing ever happens to Superman.* (Boy—12—B)

I do not enjoy reading the impossible ones [like Superman and Captain Marvel] because *they always win in the end by impossible means.* *If they only caught a few of the gangsters I would like it better, but they always succeed 100 per cent.* (Boy—13—B)

*Once in a while I wish something would happen to Superman.* (Boy—12—C)

These children are obviously too close to the period in which they needed the assurance of a completely invincible hero to be able either to laugh at themselves for having been so gullible as really to believe in Superman, or to laugh at Superman as fantastic but amusing fiction. A little later they may, and in fact often do, say, "Oh, I was just a child then. What can you expect?" As yet, however, they are too close to their previous faith in Superman to exhibit such objectivity. The conflict is not completely resolved; the child still needs the ego inflation available in identifying with a hero, but the hero must not be completely beyond the pale of real possibility. Accordingly, the children nurse a desire for happy endings, so long as they are not too happy:

*Yes, I like a happy ending, but once in a while I'd like to see the criminal get away.* I have never really seen any happy endings in real life. (Boy—12—B)

And superior physical achievements are still gratifying, so long as magic is not absolutely essential. That a man could fly is of course absurd, but there just might be a man sufficiently agile to leap from house to house.

I consider Superman impossible and all those like it—Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, and Flash. How can a man fly? *Batman is not impossible like those others.* The way he captures crooks is more real. Batman and Robin team up, they act as regular men. *They may jump from house to house but not from city to city or country to country.* (Boy—13—B)

And so Batman and others of his vulnerable ilk take precedence over the Super-folk.

I prefer Batman most. I like it most because it is exciting, much more exciting than Superman. Batman is in *real danger*. Sometimes he almost gets killed by Joker. Superman is never in *real danger*. *He never is almost-nearly killed.* (Boy—12—C)

Batman is a little more real than the others. He was *vulnerable*. *He could die but he never does.* (Girl—15—A)

I like the Superman type *as long as they are able to be killed*. Batman is better than Superman in this respect. (Girl—12—B)

Wonder Woman is interesting, there is adventure in it. She is better than Superman because *she does not seem to do the impossible*, she acts like a human being, like she really is. (Girl—12—B)

Batman's assistant, a normal but agile boy who can do nearly everything that Batman does, provides a particularly appropriate object of identification:

I like Batman best. *I like that because he has a little boy to help him and because the boy is around our age. They do some things we would like to do: like flying through air* (Girl—12—A)

But despite their growing sophistication in distinguishing the possible and the impossible, the psychological satisfaction of children in the Batman phase are still fundamentally the same as those for whom Superman is still *the hero*:

Wonder Woman does so many things for a woman, like holding things up in the air and all. *I wish my mother could . . . she only weighs 115. She gets colds quite a bit.* (Girl—12—D)



### *The Reader's Digest function*

At about the age of thirteen the normal child begins to cut down his comic reading, and to restrict himself largely to those comics which are based on actual events.

This development is in keeping with his previous transitions. Having turned from Superman to the more "true" Batman, he comes finally to reject Batman as likewise unrealistic.

I like True adventure that can really happen. I think I have outgrown make-believe. When you are younger you enjoy these make-believe things. Everybody reads them. When I was ten I liked Superman best. *I liked to be him.* I still like Dick Tracy, Detective. When I was younger I used to make up stories about Superman; he always used to lick them all. Now you know one person can't win all the time. *I lost interest in Superman when the war came: real heroes, like Eisenhower, sprang up during the war* and I like reading about them better. (Boy—13—B)

Artificiality of *either* character or situation is no longer satisfying to the child who now consciously desires to learn about the real world:

I don't think that you learn anything from . . . Batman and Wonder Woman; you could not learn anything very much *because it is not real.* . . . (Girl—12—A)

I like True Comics, they are true facts about famous men, about war; *you can believe them* and those things still happen. The other stuff about Superman is so impossible. Batman is all right. But I don't enjoy reading the impossible ones because *they always win in the end by impossible means.* I read the impossible ones, too, but I wouldn't buy them. (Boy—13—B)

For children in this stage, reality involves unpredictable elements.

You usually know how the comic stories will end, except in Classic Comics. *There it's unexpected.* Like in the Corsican Brothers, one died in the end. (Boy—12—C)

If the main character is Superman or Batman or one of those, *I can always tell how the story will end.* My father says that Superman always *has* to get out of trouble, otherwise there would be no more comics. (Girl—13—C)

For the first time, the children also demand psychological reality.

You don't know how real comics will end. Superman you know because they are always the same. In real comics there was the life of Leonardo da Vinci. He died in prison. He was a great man and you did not expect him to die unhappily. . . . In these comic books they just talk, talk and don't describe things. In some good comics [True] *they describe how you feel. It is real, you can understand how he feels. In the others like Superman, you don't know how they feel.* (Boy—12—B)

More interested in the world of reality than in the world of comics, children in the Indian summer of comic book reading turn to other media and to other activities. Comics are relegated to a subordinate position, and are deliberately chosen to serve a sort of encyclopedic or Reader's Digest function, providing facts and immediately practical suggestions.

*Calling All Girls is better because it has all the things that girls our age like: ideas for making different things, and stories. I haven't been reading Batman and Superman and Wonder Woman as much as I used to in the 4th and 5th grade—everybody likes Superman because he's so fantastic, but I think he's a little too fantastic. After you begin to grow up you know these things are not true and then you like better the kind like Calling All Girls because it is about girls of your own age and you know it is sort of true. But I still read the others.* (Girl—12—A)

When I got to the fourth grade I started to read adventure [comics]. Up to then I did not understand and did not like them, because when you are little you just don't like shooting. Later on, you know it is just make-believe and it doesn't bother you. Then you like to read it. It is thrilling. You like the action. When I got to the 6th and 7th grade I switched to movie magazines. *I have not lost interest yet in comics, but I am more interested in movie magazines. . . . I like True Comics.* (Girl—12—B)

I like to read Seventeen. That is a magazine for girls. It is a new one. *They have things to do in it, how to plan a party, how to make yourself older, how to make yourself prettier.* (Girl—12—B)

I prefer, fishing, swimming, hunting . . . all outdoor sports . . . to reading comics. (Boy—12—B)

The interview data is thus in accord with the psychological finding that at about the age of thirteen the child begins to have a growing conviction of his own powers and his own importance. Ego-identification with an invincible hero is no longer necessary, and the child seeks instead for facts and advice which will help him in direct participation in the real world.

But although the comic habit is thus broken, the child usually does not reject comics entirely. As a rule, a brief period of antagonism gives way to a more detached attitude which allows him to turn back to comics for simple relaxation. Thus a child who has just entered the invincible hero stage will be hostile toward "funny animal" comics.

I don't like funny animal comics. *They are so unreal.* They have such silly things in them, like Super Rabbit. It is like Superman except that it is a rabbit. I don't like that. It is better when it is about people . . . then it is more real. I like unreal things, but I like them about people, not about animals. (Girl—12—B)

But a child who has graduated to the third, or True Comics stage, and is thus hostile toward Superman, can turn back to the funny animals for fun.

I like true characters and historical characters like in Classic Comics, but *I read Donald Duck for enjoyment. Superman is too fantastic for me.* (Boy—12—C)

And as the child matures, even Superman can become a source of simple relaxation.

Four years ago I liked Batman because he seemed a little more real than the others. He was vulnerable. *I like Superman again lately, because he is more gay; there is a girl in the picture . . . comics are just a pastime.* (Girl—15—A)

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The normal child needs different kinds of comics at different stages of his development. In the character of animal comics he finds objects for his early projective needs, and later, in invincible heroes, he finds objects for ego-inflation. Indeed, comics seem suitable devices for the child to satisfy these needs, for in each of the types preferred in the two early stages one realistic element serves as a bridge to that unrealistic element which the child finds most alluring. Thus projection is facilitated in the first stage by the perfectly realistic behavior of the "funny animals," and in the second stage by the realistic appearance of both the physical scene and the invulnerable or quasi-invulnerable heroes.

In regard to providing identification objects comics meet the developmental needs of today's children more effectively than did the literature available to the last generation. Fairy tales, which were the closest psychological equivalent of the "funny animal" comics were not only peopled with fanciful creatures, but these fanciful creatures did fantastic rather than "everyday things." The Three Little Pigs, for example, are not only fanciful creatures in appearance, but they have adventures with a wolf which no child is likely to have. There is no realistic behavior to serve as a bridge for projection into unrealistic characters. Similarly the heroes of mythology, who might be considered analogous to Superman and Batman in that they are invincible figures, not only have superhuman powers but they live in an unreal world, devoid of modern clothes, familiar houses and city streets such as facilitate the child's identification with Superman.

At about twelve, as most psychologists and parents know, the normally maturing child begins to seek tools for coping with the real world; he needs true stories and real facts. This does not mean, however, that he no longer reads comics. He usually does and he usually reads all kinds. He turns to true or classic type comics to supplement the facts and insights he gains from more formal reading of history and current events and from experiences with real people. But he also turns back to other kinds of comics for relaxation, much as the college professor or business executive reads mystery stories.

In general, children entering a new stage of comic reading, usually reject the comics of which they were most fond in the immediately preceding stage; they are still too close to their earlier needs to view such comics objectively. Later, when the child becomes completely emancipated from the earlier need, he turns back to his early favorites for simple amusement.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The motives and satisfactions of comic reading by adults merits special investigation. See Appendix C, p. 305.



### III. THE FANS

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#### THE THREE TYPES OF COMIC READERS

OBSERVATION of the behavior of children while reading comics, and attention to their own discussions about such reading, reveals that children vary considerably in the degree of their interest in comic reading. Three types of comic readers can be distinguished: the comic book fans (37 per cent), the moderate readers (48 per cent), and those who are indifferent or hostile (15 per cent).

*Comic fans* are children, whose interest in comics is patently violent and excessive. They prefer comic reading to all other activities and if left to their own devices would apparently do nothing else.

I love to read comics. *There is nothing I like more.* (Boy—12—C)

I love comics; this week I read two. *I would like to read three or four a day.* (Girl—11—C)

[If I could have any books I wanted] I would pick comic books first. I would probably read the others sometime but *I would rather read the comic books the first chance I can.* (Girl—12—B)

If I had five dollars I would go out and buy comic books (For all of it?) Yes. Once I did it. My uncle gave me five dollars and *I went and bought 49 comic books for five dollars.* (Boy—10—D)

Once in possession of a comic book, the fan cannot stop reading.

Sometimes *I would not even go to bed.* I read 'til twelve if I have books. (Boy—10—D)

Once I start reading a comic, *I can't put it down.* (Girl—11—C)

And after the comic book is read, it remains a treasured possession.

Any that I like really well like Batman and Superman I keep, like I would keep a set of books. I put them in the book case and then if I like I can go back and reread them. *I never throw Batman and Superman away. I have a bookcase this high [four feet] and it has three shelves and one shelf is full of Batman, and one shelf is full of Superman* and I am starting on another shelf. (Boy—12—C)

Even in front of an observer in a new situation, the fan reading a comic becomes so absorbed that the rest of the world is forgotten.

(Interviewer's observation)

First turned pages up to end of the story, remarked:

"It is a big story." Kept mouth half open, moved lips while reading. Twitched, blinked his eyes . . . later started to grimace with his mouth. When someone came into the room to make a telephone call, he did not pay any attention. In answer to question if it was interesting, he only nodded. Did not lift his head when interviewer looked over his shoulder, but interrupted himself on page 10 to see how much more there was. Towards the end he repeatedly rubbed his neck and stretched uncomfortably. When he had finished he made a half sighing, half whistling sound and put the book down with an expression of relief." (Boy—11—D)

(Interviewer's observation)

Did not look up at all while I walked around, or while some 50-odd children came storming in to wash their hands at a basin in the corner of the room. Towards the middle of the story he began edging in on the book, sitting more on the edge of the chair, perilously so, and about 4 pages from the end became really immersed with both elbows and arms flat down on the table and his chin on his hands, only moving his arms down the page as he read. (Boy—12—C)

*Moderate readers* enjoy comic reading but only as a pastime, as one activity among others.

I read them *just for fun*. It is a lot of fun. I think it keeps up morale. It is a *good pastime*. (Boy—12—B)

Although they are interested while reading, and can in fact become quite absorbed, everything that goes on in the world around them has equal, or even greater importance than the comic reading.

(Interviewer's observation)

She seemed conscious all the time of my presence though she didn't

look at me often. When I got up and moved around the room, she looked up under her eyelashes secretly. She conscientiously checked the pictures. When I looked over her shoulder at the book, she turned and looked at me, smiling. (Girl—10—C)

*Indifferent or hostile readers*<sup>11</sup> find comics "unreasonable and very trite." Some such readers adopt an attitude of apparent neutrality and indifference.

I don't read comics over because *I hardly ever read them*, but I read books over. (Boy—11—C)

Others, however, seem to be hostile toward comics with the same vehemence with which the fan asserts love, admiration, and interest.

Superman is a *lot of junk*. (Girl—7—B)

They are *trash*—the sort of *thing that children who are not well brought up read*. They are so *boring*. Prefer to read Dumas. (Boy—12—A)

Such hostility at times appeared during the interview when the child was asked to read the Superman stories.

It is going to be hard to go through this book. *I don't care what happens to him*. I would rather not read it. [Did not finish the story]. (Girl—10—C)

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PATTERN OF FANS

### *The fan not merely an excessive reader*

A classification according to degree, such as the classification of comic readers according to degree of interest, always presupposes a continuous scale subdivided more or less arbitrarily into different sections. In classifying the children according to degree of interest, however, the investigators were surprised to discover that arbitrary decision was never necessary. No child appeared to be on a borderline, nor in a transitory state between stages. Stage characteristics

<sup>11</sup> Indifferent and hostile readers are here grouped together because (1) indifference in regard to a developmental need is always suspect of being repressed hostility, and (2) both indifference and hostility seem, in this case, to be reactions to parental objections. (See pp. 38-42)



were, in fact, so clear-cut as to suggest the possibility that the groups at the various stages differed not only *quantitatively* but also *qualitatively*, i.e., that comic reading served qualitatively different functions for fans than it did for moderate readers. In order to identify this difference, fans and moderate readers were classified according to the function comics served for each of them individually.

TABLE 2  
*Interest in Comic Books and Function of Comic Reading*

| Interest               | Function                        |                             |                             | Total<br>% |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
|                        | <i>Alice-in-Wonderland</i><br>% | <i>Invincible Hero</i><br>% | <i>Reader's Digest</i><br>% |            |
| Fans.....              | 5                               | 82                          | 13                          | 100 (38)   |
| Moderate Readers.....  | 8                               | 58                          | 34                          | 100 (50)   |
| Number of cases... 104 |                                 |                             |                             |            |

As revealed in Table 2, this classification conclusively demonstrated that fans did differ from moderate readers according to *quality* as well as quantity of interest; for 82 per cent of all fans the comics serve the invincible hero function.

### *The fan not simply a second stage reader: Superman a god*

The conclusion that one is tempted to draw, i.e., that fans are simply in the second stage of comic reading, is however invalid. Were this the case, fans would be found among the eleven- and twelve-year age group. But when the age groups are classified according to degree of interest, no such marked modality of fans is revealed. Indeed, the eleven- and twelve-year age group contains a slightly smaller proportion of fans than do the older or younger groups.

Children for whom comics satisfy the invincible hero need are thus found in all age groups. Whereas the moderate reader goes through the three stages of comic book needs, the fans derive the same gratification regardless of which age group they are in. This fact explains the greater popularity of Superman comics for children in all ages,<sup>12</sup> but it also suggests that the invincible hero gratification of the fan is

<sup>12</sup> See Table 1, page 8.

not quite the same as the invincible hero gratification for the moderate reader.

The moderate reader of the second stage characteristically wants to identify with an invincible hero because at this period in his develop-

TABLE 3  
*Interest in Comics and Age Groups*

| Age                    | Degree of Interest |                    |                          | Total %  |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------|
|                        | Fans %             | Moderate Readers % | Indifferent or Hostile % |          |
| 10 years or less.....  | 43                 | 46                 | 11                       | 100 (28) |
| 11 and 12 years.....   | 34                 | 52                 | 14                       | 100 (56) |
| 13 years or more.....  | 35                 | 40                 | 25                       | 100 (20) |
| Number of cases... 104 |                    |                    |                          |          |

ment he needs a means of inflating his ego. His wish to succeed in this identification is so real and concrete that he tries to find out how he can best go about doing it.

I like to find out where Superman is, where he has his place for training and how he can't be heard. (Boy—10—C)

The fan, on the other hand, is wholly aware that he could never even remotely resemble Superman. Superhuman powers are definitely out of his reach and he knows it.

I'd like to be some of these people, but *it would never be any good because it's impossible*. This magnetic stick might be good, but a person can't fly with it. (Boy—14—D)

Awareness of the impossibility apparently overpowers the wish to identify. Superman therefore ceases to be an identification object for the fan, and becomes an omniscient all-powerful creature, in extreme contrast to the fan himself, who, having lost the wish to identify, stands in humble awe.

I like Superman better than the others because *they can't do everything Superman can do*. Batman can't fly and that is very important. [Would you like to be able to fly?] I would like to be able to fly if

everybody else did, *but otherwise it would be kind of conspicuous.*  
(Girl—12—B)

For this special role, Superman must be literally *all-powerful*. Not only must he have superhuman characteristics, but he must have no human characteristics at all. His disguise as the mortal and timid Clark Kent is distasteful.

*Clark Kent shouldn't wear glasses. He's Superman.* They make him look weak. The good men are strong. In the beginning I thought he [Easy Pickings] would be bad, he was so weak looking. I don't like the skinny men who are supposed to be good. (Girl—10—A)

Superman in disguise [as Clark Kent] *acts too timid.*  
(Girl—12—B)

*I would not want Superman to be like other people.* He should be different. Otherwise he would not be as popular. *I like the idea* of a person doing what others can't do. (Girl—12—B)

For the fan is apparently a child whose peace and security have been in some way so undermined that he needs not merely an invincible hero with which to identify, but rather a god, a being wholly different from men, a creature of unalterable perfection, dedicated to the protection of the otherwise insecure child.

The fervent worship of Superman finds almost literal expression among the more troubled children. Thus a boy for whom all has not been going well conjures up a vision of the savior:

*Sometimes in the night time . . . I think of Superman, how he flies through the air and then goes down and saves somebody, goes up again.* (Boy—14—C)

and a seventeen-year-old girl, dreaming of being in mortal danger, cries, "*Superman! Superman! Where are you?*"

For some fans, the consolatory function of Superman is less dramatically religious, less metaphysical. Superman is not a personalized savior, but he is a comfort and solace at times of stress, and especially at night, when the insecurity is deepest.

*When I am sick, when my nerves are all twisted, when I am worried, I read comics and they help me.* (Boy—12—C)

In Winter I like to read. *At night when it gets dark.* (Boy—11—C)

I like *mystery comics at night, and funny ones in the daytime.*  
(Boy—13—C)

But whether as a personalized or generic savior, Superman must be all-powerful, and his victories must be complete triumphs of both might and right. If a Superman story as originally published does not satisfy the need to see Superman functioning as a god, the fan changes the story. Actually, 85 per cent of the fans do so. The story must not only have a happy ending, but all details must be settled, and clearly set in order.

And Superman . . . put them in jail. *And the money that they stole was put back in the bank* and this other man went straight.  
(Boy—10—D)

Two further bits of evidence confirming and to some degree explaining the fans' tendency to deify Superman are provided by the quantitative data concerning the background of the children.

The tendency to become a fan is positively correlated with the degree of personalization in the child's religious background. Thus, of the Catholic children, to whom angels and patron saints are most familiar, 55 per cent had become fans, while among Jewish children, for whom intermediaries between themselves and deity were least familiar, only 19 per cent had become fans.

Secondly, the tendency to become a fan is positively correlated with physical incapacity. Of the children below normal height for their age, 52 per cent had become fans, while only 16 per cent of those tall for their age were anything other than moderate readers. The finding suggests that the physically weaker children, barred from achieving status in physical competition with their contemporaries, turn hopelessly away from identification with a physically superior human, and seek solace instead in the worship of a distant and omnipotent personal protector.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF BEING A FAN

Interview data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively to determine the effects on the child's personality of the pattern of excessive comic reading and the worship of Superman.

The children were classified according to their adjustment to reality, into four groups, viz.:<sup>13</sup>

1. *Normal children*
2. *Problem children*: those who showed only isolated psychological difficulties.
3. *Neurotic children*: those whose problems had affected their entire behavior pattern.
4. *Psychotic children*: those who had lost touch with objective reality.

Cross classification of children by degree of psychological adjustment and degree of interest in comic reading reveals that only one fan is psychotic and a bare handful of fans are normal children. But a marked correlation is revealed between neuroticism and being a fan. Of all the neurotic children, 50 per cent are fans and only 33 per cent moderate readers, while for problem children the proportion is almost exactly reversed, 54 per cent being moderate readers and only 32 per cent fans.

That the fan does indeed become neurotic, i.e., that the habit and characteristics of comic reading gradually engulf his life and affect his entire behavior pattern, is empirically verifiable from the children's responses to interview questions. The fan is seen (1) to be interested only in the general aura of the story, as manifested by its triumphant conclusion; (2) to deliberately lift comic reading to a position superior to that of other activities, including eating; and (3) to extend to various other activities the habits of thought characteristic of comic reading.

### ***"The last chapter means everything"***

Although fans read comics with greater intensity than do other children, they are never able to retell the story coherently.

(Group Interview)

Well, I saw one of them . . . yes, and these men had—I don't know—but anyhow, somehow or other, they had gotten these prisoners out of jail; and he cut a ring. They were all gathered around the

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix A, p. 299. The terms "neurotic" and "psychotic" are used only as distinguishing tabs, and are to be understood only as defined above rather than in the technical psychiatric sense.

train, and he put his arm lasso-like *and caught them . . .* he caught all the prisoners.

Superman was—there was a man falling out of a truck—and he was a robber. Superman ran and grabbed him. They had Superman locked up. After they had him locked with chains, they did not think he could get loose. At the end he got loose and caught the robbers. (Girl—12—D)

The children are often aware that they forget the story as soon as they have read it.

Only last night I read one, *I forgot which*. I read it lots of times, but I don't read the name. It was about Superman and Batman. (Boy—11—C)

[While reading] Yeah, you see these are crooks and they knock this man out. . . . ["Tell me the story later."] *Then I'll forget it*. (Boy—11—C)

I have about 10 at home. *I read them and forget them, and then read them the second time*. (Boy—10—D)

For actually they are not interested in the story at all, considering it only an irritating delay before Superman's final triumph over evil.

The beginning was boring—I *liked the climax when it begins to get wild*. (Boy—9—C)

*The last chapter means everything*. (Boy—11—D)

[After having read the beginning of Superman story] Oh, that was a whole lot of junk and *then came the exciting part*. (Girl—9—B)

It is not the details of development, but rather the general aura which the child finds fascinating. In this general aura he can re-experience his anxieties and yet know that the subject of the anxieties will be overcome.

They are *murder* stories [Batman, etc.]. You sit down. It is *exciting*. Sometimes there is crime and I don't like to read and *sometimes I love to . . .* because they are exciting and then go to bed and think about it. . . . They are scary. . . . *I like to be scared*. (Girl—14—C)

He can give way to aggressiveness without guilt feelings, because the experience is being sanctioned by the quasi-god Superman.

In the Superman stories, *I don't want them to escape right away. It is more exciting if they have to stay if there's going to be an explosion.* (Girl—9—B)

And Superman's sanction is adequate to override parental opinion.

I like mysteries and things like that. *Mother doesn't like the killings, but I do.* (Girl—9—B)

### *Comic reading made prepossessive*

The fan gradually convinces himself that comic reading is the most important and most prepossessive of all activities. Placed in competition with other activities, comic reading at first emerges in a dead heat.

I have a special ability. *I can read and talk and read and listen and think all at the same time. I can sing while I am reading the comics.* (Boy—9—B)

Then comic reading becomes distinguished from other activities, developing its own peculiar accouterments:

*When I read comics, I always gotta eat something. I just feel hungry when I read. My mouth gets tired when I read and I feel like I am hungry and I want to eat.* (Boy—10—C)

Later the fan begins to realize that combining activities is not wholly possible, and the victory begins to go to comics.

I listen to the radio usually when I read comics. Once I listened to the radio, read a comic book and knitted. *I did not get much out of any.* I could not concentrate on the radio, I dropped stitches. (Girl—12—B)

At last comic reading emerges supreme and prepossessive.

I take a bath or brush my hair while I read comics. I don't pay much attention to brushing my hair: *comics are more important.* It relaxes you to read in the bath tub or when I am lying flat on my bed or the floor or somebody else's bed. (Girl—12—B)

Sometimes I read and eat—*I don't even know what I am eating.* I finish the whole plate and I am still eating and I don't even know. (Boy—11—D)

(Interviewer's observations)

Became absorbed immediately. Never looked up. Did not even look up when interviewer got up and walked around the room. When interviewer asked her if it were interesting, she did not say a word—just nodded her head in the affirmative and went right on reading. Did not seem to notice when interviewer read over her shoulder.

(Girl—14—C)

(During the interview, respondent keeps glancing at the comic book, occasionally becoming so absorbed that he does not hear interviewer's questions)

There is one thing which is wrong with me, just like now. I'm getting so interested in this I almost don't hear you. I get so interested I just get lost. I can't remember anything, I get lost in the funny book, to see what happens. (Boy—13—B)

Finally the prepossession becomes so great that the fan accepts it as perfectly natural.

*I read them all immediately. I don't think this is a lot.*  
(Boy—10—D)

### *Comic reading habits extended to other activities*

For the fan for whom comic reading has become a prepossessive activity, the habits of thought characteristic of that reading gradually extend into other spheres of behavior.

Reading of noncomic material suffers an early and thorough subjection. Thus a thirteen-year-old from a privileged home and school environment cannot coherently retell the story of a book, but remembers only the triumph of good over evil, the presence of a savior, and unimportant incidents of action and visual detail.

(*The Seventh Cross*)

This is about this war prisoner in a German prison camp. He was once a soldier *either from France or Belgium*.<sup>14</sup> He was *saved by the Underground*. [Who were the Underground?] They were the *men who were not caught by the Germans*. I liked when he climbed over the wall and cut his hand and a police motorcycle went by. He went

<sup>14</sup> Actually, the hero is an anti-Nazi German. But to this fan Germany is evil, and France and Belgium are good, although weak and in need of the Saviour Underground.



into a shed and took a boy's jacket. He went to his friends who would help him and . . . had a heart like a pumpkin and he helped him. (Girl—13—B)

Books in general become unsatisfying. Unlike the comics they do not provide visual communication, and delay the action too long.

There is *more meaning in a picture than in a thousand words*, as the poet said. (Girl—13—C)

*The more excitement the better*. I don't like when they waste time with conversations and *they just talk about something* which is not necessary for action. (Boy—12—C)

*It bores me to read a book*. I never finish. I *never read more than 3 pages*. (Boy—12—C)

Books are furthermore bad because they do not comply with the whole-hog law of comics. Compromise is less easily experienced, and is therefore distressing and in fact unreal.

Sometimes in books the end is wrong [not happy]. It *gets me mad when one thing is wrong though, like when Beth dies in Little Women*. When EVERYTHING is wrong in the book it doesn't matter so much. In the Purple Heart it *seemed more real because they all got killed. That's the way it really happens*. (Girl—12—B)

Comic books, of course, reflect the truth. They are the final source of information.

I read a funny book for my report of course. The teacher said to give a report on current events, so I took it from True Comics. (Girl—12—A)

When discrepancies between reality and comics are perceived, reality is criticized against the comic standard.

I imagine that if there were real men like Superman or Batman—all those—how much sooner the war would be over. If they are so good, so strong, they could save gas, carry bombs and drop them and kill Hitler. They could get to him and his bullets could not get them. I imagine these things at night before going to bed after I read a book about Superman. (Boy—12—B)

In some of the hard cases probably the police department won't take the time or *don't have the brains* to really find out who is guilty, but in the comics there is Superman and Batman and Robin and Wonder Woman and *they have got brains*. (Girl—12—B)

And in extreme cases, reality is frankly rejected:

*I don't play "cops and robbers" and cowboys anymore. I would rather read about those things. It is more fun than playing.* (Boy—12—C)

*I don't think I like True Comics too well, because they are true.* (Girl—12—A)

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Children's experiences in comic reading fall into one of two patterns which differ qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

The normal child is a "moderate reader" who uses comics as a means of ego-strengthening. In the early or "funny animal" stage, he expands his ego-experience through projection. Later, in the "adventure" stage, he inflates his ego by identification with an invincible hero. Finally, he stands on his own feet, and employs "true" comics as a tool for the real adventure which is life itself. He may turn back to his earlier comic favorites, but he now reads them only as a means of relaxation. For the normal child, then, comics are a means of healthful ego-strengthening and anon a source of amusement.

Other children do not seem to be so eager to fortify themselves for the experience of life. They seem not yet to have emancipated themselves from their parents to any great degree and are both incapable and unwilling to assume responsibility on their own. But their belief in their parents seems nevertheless to have been shaken. The experiences of seven or eight years have apparently shown them that all human beings are imperfect, and that one cannot always rely on their insight, their justice, or their efficiency; they have apparently witnessed instances in which their parents manifested injustice, ignorance, or weakness.

They therefore search for a more perfect father-figure, a being who is omnipotent but, at the same time, tangible and feasible. And such a father-figure they find in Superman. These children become fans.

The comics, by providing an authority and power which settles the more difficult or ultimate issues, enables these children to perform their daily tasks without too much anxiety.

For normal children, then, the comics function as an adaptation mechanism, and efficiently satisfy real developmental needs.

For the maladjusted child, the comics satisfy, just as efficiently, an equally intense emotional need, but here the need itself is not so readily outgrown. The religion of comics is not easily given up, for the child is frightened, and no new religion beckons.

But the possible dangerous effects of comics on fans must not be overestimated. The child's problems existed before he became a fan, and the comics came along to relieve him. That he became a fan can no more be blamed upon the comics, than morphine can itself be blamed when a person becomes a drug addict. The drug addict, of course, might have found a better solution for his problems if there were no morphine available. Or, and perhaps better, there may be a drug which bestows the benefits of morphine without the dangers of morphine. And comics are, of course, more easily manipulated than are drugs.



## IV. PARENTS ON COMICS

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PARENTAL attitudes toward comic reading have various effects on the child's comic reading experiences.

Since this study is directed exclusively upon the experiences of the children themselves, no parents were interviewed, parental attitudes being examined only through the children's reports. The study thus offers no complete nor unbiased picture of parental intentions and techniques, but rather reveals the effect of parental attitudes as those attitudes are interpreted and modified by the child himself in relation to his own world and his own comic reading habits.<sup>15</sup>

In discussing their parents' attitudes toward comics, the children speak on the one hand of *sporadic pedagogical interference*, and on the other of a *general home atmosphere* regarding comics. Since these two modes of influence apparently differ both in form and in effect, they will be treated separately.

### THE EFFECT OF SPORADIC PEDAGOGICAL INTERFERENCE

#### *Parental attitude*

On the basis of the children's reports, parents were classified as shown in Table 4.

Inspection of Table 4 reveals two striking facts which in turn de-

<sup>15</sup> The children's reports probably give a more valid picture of parental attitudes than might be supposed, since the children tend both to understate and exaggerate parental objections to comics, and these two tendencies largely balance one another. The natural tendency of the children to minimize the criticisms brought against them is largely offset by their apparent feeling that "decent parents should be against comics." One girl, for example, first reported that her parents did not object to her reading comics, but after saying later that her teacher disapproved she retracted her early statement and reported that her parents also objected.

scribe the ambiguous status which parents grant to comics. On the one hand, general parental hostility toward comics is so great that *no parents actually make favorable statements* about them. On the other hand, comics are so institutional that *only 9 per cent of the parents practice any sort of prohibition whatever, and only 4 per cent prohibit comics entirely.*

TABLE 4  
*Attitudes of Parents Toward Comic Reading*

|                                       | %    |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Do not object.....                    | 54   |
| Do object.....                        | (46) |
| Prohibit all comic reading.....       | 4    |
| Prohibit certain types of comics..... | 5    |
| Do not prohibit any comics.....       | 37   |
|                                       | 100  |

With such diametrically opposed tendencies, it is no wonder that the adult suffers from tensions which erupt in the form of violent letters to editors, blaming the comics for everything from the children's bad language to international crises. Their tendency to accept comics frustrated by social taboo, and their tendency to reject comics frustrated by social habit, the parents become unable to direct realistic opposition against a real adversary and resort instead to blind, irrational blows at an inflated straw man. Their voiced objections to comics are for the most part vague, and their accusations, of doubtful validity.

Some parents, for example, dread that comics will prevent their children from becoming "cultured." They feel that by reading comics, the children will miss "all the finer things in life," and be exposed only to stimuli low in aesthetic or scientific qualities.

*It makes me miss good books.* (Boy—13—B)

*I should read something one can learn from.* (Girl—12—B)

*Mother doesn't like the way they are written and drawn.*  
(Boy—12—A)

Comics aren't literature . . . they are trash, bad education.  
(Girl—11—B)

They say it is silly to get a child's mind all filled up with that stuff.  
(Girl—13—C)

Other parents feel that comics are morally degrading. They believe that comics somehow "spoil" the child and may even foster juvenile delinquency. At the very least, they believe children may become spendthrifts by becoming accustomed to "throwing their money away" on comics.

A third group of parents believe that comics impair both the mental and physical health of their children. Some of these objections may have some basis in fact:

They say comics put influence on the children—*give them nightmares so they wake up at night with a scream.* (Girl—12—C)

But others are mere routine formulae:

They say it *spoils my eyes.* (Girl—12—C)

### *The children's reaction to parental criticism*

Such statements have practically no effect upon the children. There are approximately as many moderate comic readers among children whose parents object to comic reading as there are among children whose parents do not. The overwhelming majority of children (90 per cent) completely disregard their parents' objections to comics; 5 per cent manifest some conflict between parental prohibition and their own need for comic reading; and an additional 5 per cent heeds parental objections to the point of becoming indifferent or openly hostile toward comics.

*Disregard.* To the 90 per cent of the children who completely disregard their parents' objections, it seems wholly natural that their parents should object to comic book reading and equally natural that they should continue to read them.

Mother thinks I will outgrow them; she thinks it is a childish habit. But even if it is I *don't care to grow out of it so fast.* (Boy—11—A)

They don't like it when I read Superman, Batman and murder stories. . . . *But I like to read them.* Mother thinks I should do better with

my geography. She says they are a waste of time. *I read them, anyway.* (Girl—12—B)

The disregard may become a somewhat disdainful humoring of an "old-fashioned" parent who must be shielded from the realities of life.

Mother allows me to read only 2 a month. . . . Sometimes we buy 10 and 12 at once without mother's consent and we put them away in a closet and *we tell mother after a few weeks—a few at a time.* [Why, do you think, does your mother feel so strongly about your reading comics?] *Well, she is old-fashioned,* she doesn't believe in reading comics. (Boy—12—C)

If parental interference is such, however, that the beloved comics are themselves threatened, the child takes direct action. He may move to an environment in which he feels free from parental prohibition.

Once father threw Superman out of the car window. [Did you read them after your father objected?] *When he told me not to I did not read them in the house but my friend had a lot and I saw no objection to reading them there.* (Girl—12—A)

Or he may repay violence with violence, retaliating to his parents' disrespect for his property by ceasing to respect theirs.

They [parents] don't like them around. . . . My father, well, *he just throws them away, that's all, and then I have to buy a new one.* I can do that because I have an allowance and they keep forgetting to take off when they give me money. (Boy—9—B)

If the parents of these children thwart the actual practice of comic reading, they instil in the child no dislike of comics but only hostility toward themselves.

Mother won't allow Batman and Robin. Mother doesn't like Superman. *I read them when she is gone, but it is hard, because I have to get up all the time to make sure the door is locked. Cuz she'll tear them up. But then at night they are stolen and torn up and I know by whom.* (Girl—11—C)

This total disregard of parental objection by 90 per cent of the children is due in very large measure to the inconstancy displayed by

parents themselves. The children report that their parents, for all their objections, nevertheless provide comics under certain conditions.

My mother don't like us to read the murder comics. When she is in the house she gives us a beating if we read it. *But sometimes she wants quiet in the house and she lets us read it.* (Girl—10—C)

Parents also provide comics when the child is sick, cranky, or restless—in fact, in almost every situation where the child is seeking parental help. Small wonder, then, that the child's pleasant associations and the gratitude for help at difficult moments are transferred from the parents to the comics themselves. And the child naturally comes to feel that what is encouraged on a rainy day cannot be very wrong when the sun shines.

*Conflict.* Five per cent of the children who are in conflict are unable to disregard their parents' objections but are equally incapable, despite hard and honest effort, of giving up comic reading. Often the child is conscious of the resultant conflict.

Parents do not like us to read the comics. . . . At New Year's I stopped reading comics; I stopped long and made reading comics a *New Year's resolution. It is a very hard one to keep. I tried hard to keep it.* (Boy—12—B)

With others, the conflict is not conscious but becomes apparent in discrepancies between the child's verbal statement about comics and his behavior while reading comics, his retelling of a comic story, or his report about a Superman movie.

Funny books are not good for me. . . . I read comic books after school too—sometimes. But then I go out and play. I would rather go out and play than read them. . . . [But when asked if she remembered any other Superman plots she launched enthusiastically and with *growing excitement* into the story of Toyman. This recital lasted about 15 minutes and she remembered every detail, e.g., "the man built a \$20 arcade instead of a penny arcade, someone stole \$3 and 10 silver dollars," etc.] (Girl—9—B)

When I have a long trip on the subway and want to kill time I sometimes read the comics. I never buy them, though. . . . You asked me how many I read a week. A week? I read about one a month



... [But] I saw Superman in the movies and I must confess I was just as intrigued as the audience. I just wonder, how they portray such tricks. (Boy—12—A)

*Hostility.* The final 5 per cent of the children accept their parents' attitudes and become indifferent or hostile toward comics. They conform, on the surface, to the behavior desired by their parents.

[Laughing] No, *my parents don't read comics.* They are more educated than to read these things. *I don't like comics,* never read any ... maybe one in six months. (Boy—11—B)

But close analysis of these children's statements concerning other reading shows that although these parents had broken the habit of reading comic books, they had not changed the habits of thought characteristic of comic book reading. Other books are read by such children as if they were comics.

*Most books bore me.* A good book *must have excitement and adventure* and sad moments sometimes, *no dull moments; those I skip most of the time.* *I prefer books with illustrations.* *They give you an idea what the story is about.* (Boy—11—B)

The attitudes and behavior of such children suggest that they are one-time fans whose religious loyalties have been simply reversed. Parental objections have succeeded in depriving Superman of his role as beneficent deity. But the fan's need for seeing supernatural agencies at work around him has not been altered. Accordingly, the god of omnipotent good becomes a devil of omnipotent evil, and the religious pattern of reaction remains unchanged.

Joke books are bad in the night. *The joke books at night are the devil.* (Boy—11—D)

Superman's abnormal abilities and his violent triumphs, are all regarded as evil.

*I don't like Superman because he flies and kills with one hand and because he knows everything.* People don't know everything. (Girl—10—C)

With the same intensity with which he previously worshiped Superman, the one-time fan now avoids all of his characteristics.

I am against killing people. *Even bad people, even Germans, I hate to see go down.* The trouble with me is if somebody hits me *I don't have the nerve to hit back.* I know I should, but *I can't, can't, can't.* I just hold my hands back. *I know I should, but I can't.*  
(Boy—13—C)

Not only do 90 per cent of all children completely disregard parental objections to comics, but even among the 10 per cent who do heed these objections the psychological pattern of the comic reader remains substantially unchanged.

### THE EFFECT OF THE HOME ATMOSPHERE

Although the interviews were focused directly upon children's comic reading experiences rather than upon home atmosphere, the children's reports nevertheless reveal that the presence of certain conditions in the home tend to affect their comic reading habits in specific ways.

#### *The conducive atmosphere*

A child's home atmosphere is conducive to comic reading if other persons in the home also read comics. Such persons may, but need not be, the parents of the child.

*Father reads comics all the time. Whenever I want them he buys them.* I get one about every other day. *On Friday I get three or four—my aunt buys those; she gets paid on Fridays.* Her children are too young, but she likes them herself. (Girl—12—D)

I buy four a week. [Do you read more than that?] *We are five in the family. All buy comics and we trade.* (Boy—10—C)

Inspection of quantitative data (Appendix B, Table 7), strongly confirms the finding that the presence of comic readers in the household is conducive to the child becoming a fan. Of the twelve only children whose parents do not read comics, not one is a fan; but of the nineteen children whose parents read comics and who have siblings, who undoubtedly also read comics, 58 per cent are fans. Imitation of the behavior of others is clearly a strong impetus toward fanship. But imitation is not the whole story. Careful analysis of

Table 7 reveals conditions quite at odds with the known facts of children's initiative behavior.

Children in general are more inclined to follow the example of their elders than that of their contemporaries. But in regard to comic reading, this preference does not hold true. Of the children whose parents do not read comics, 37 per cent more fans are found among children with siblings than among only children; whereas of the children who have siblings, only 21 per cent more fans are found among those whose parents read comics, than among those who do not. The presence of siblings is thus revealed to be almost twice as potent an influence toward fanship as is the presence of comic reading parents.

The focus of the study was not such as to involve accumulating data to explain this oddity of behavioral influence. It is suggested, however, that either or both of two psychological phenomena may here be at work. (1) Comics are the butt of a social taboo. Rebels against social taboos tend to form "gangs," i.e., closely knit groups which possess their own rules of behavior. And "gang" formation is manifestly easier with contemporaries than with parents. (2) Almost half (44 per cent) of the children with siblings are fans, as opposed to only 7 per cent of the only children. Children with siblings are known to feel less secure regarding parental affection than are only children, and may thus be more likely to develop that reliance upon the invincible hero father-figure which is characteristic of the fan.

### *The non-conducive and the neutral atmosphere*

The children's reports, while not adequate to provide a comprehensive picture of home atmosphere not conducive to comic reading, nevertheless suggested that the comic reading habits of children of professional parents differed from those of nonprofessional parents. Further investigation along these lines led to surprisingly clear-cut findings. The children of professional parents and the children of nonprofessional parents were found to differ in comic reading behavior in four respects.

*Incidence of fanship.* Fifty-four per cent of the children of non-professional parents are fans, as compared with only 8 per cent among the children of professional parents. (Appendix B, Table 8)

*Functions served by comics.* As might be expected from the incidence of fandom, the majority (69 per cent) of the children of non-professional parents seek the invincible hero saga in comics, whereas for the majority (54 per cent) of the children of professional parents, comics serve the Reader's Digest function. (Appendix B, Table 9)

*Stage of comic reading.* As might be expected from the two findings noted above, children of professional parents advance to the third stage of comic reading before those of nonprofessional parents. Of children over thirteen years of age, 72 per cent of those who have nonprofessional parents are still in the Superman stage, whereas 88 per cent of those who have professional parents have passed on to the third (Reader's Digest) stage.

*Development of new interests.* The older children of professional parents readily explain that their decreasing interest in comics was accompanied or caused by the development of new interests, such as more diversified reading, hobbies, or participation in social affairs.

*I read more books and compose music instead.* (Boy—11—A)

*I read more books, have more homework; I like radio better than I did then. . . .* (Girl—12—B)

*I started hobbies, collecting coins.* I like very much to *play in the woods* and *make huts* and do *woodwork* and I like to *print* and I like *photography*. (Boy—12—A)

*I feel that I am more interested in what's going on in the world* and not those crazy things. (Boy—12—A)

*I have more homework to do* and then with *clubs* and everything I don't have as much time. (Girl—17—A)

The older children of nonprofessional parents, however, are hard put to it to describe what they do instead of reading comics. Their statements are as a rule vague and general, and when a specific activity is mentioned it seems merely to involve a different source for the same type of psychological satisfaction previously derived from comics.

*I like gangster pictures.* This week *I went every day* so far. I like it. It takes up a lot of time. (Boy—14—D).

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Parents manifest an ambiguous attitude toward their children's comic reading. No parents deliberately make favorable comments about comics, yet few actually prohibit comic reading by their children. Most attempt to curb the habit by sporadic pedagogical interference. *On the overwhelming majority (90 per cent) of the children, such interference has no effect whatever*, while in a small minority it produces a shifting, but no basic change, in the psychological pattern characteristic of comic reading.

*Home atmosphere, on the other hand, seems to be a basic factor in determining whether a child will be a moderate reader or fan.* Families which include comic readers generate fans, while in those which provide other interests (notably families headed by professional parents), the overwhelming majority of children become moderate comic readers.



## V. CHILDREN ON COMICS

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THE ambiguous attitude of adults toward comics is embryonically present in the children as well.

Children read comics and are, of course, unwilling to directly admit that such reading could have any harmful effect upon them. Asked, "Did comics ever make you do something bad?" every child without exception replied, "No."

The seed of the anti-comic prejudice is already apparent, however, for the child almost inevitably adopts a double standard. He exempts himself, on one pretext or another, from social jurisdiction, but the moment he is made a legislator he is ready to enforce the standard for others. When asked, "Do you think comics are good or bad for younger children?" Many children see potent dangers in the medium. The criticism of such children almost always conforms to one of three patterns according as the child is (1) in the late Superman stage, (2) an adult imitator, or (3) a self-reliant, mature child.

### CRITICISM BY CHILDREN IN THE LATE SUPERMAN STAGE: "IT MAKES THEM WANT TO FLY"

Many children in the late Superman stage, though still needing an invincible hero, have already begun to adopt the tabu seen in their elders. They see the Superman type of comic as vaguely "dangerous," but insofar as they themselves need it, they are at first hard put to it to specify the danger. Such children seemed to take advantage of the word "younger" in the question asked by the interviewer.

*For kids just learning to read it is apt to go to their heads.*  
(Boy—12—B)

Having thus convinced himself, illusorily of course, that he is speaking of someone other than himself, he becomes objective, and specifies the danger as literal and concrete, emphasizing always that he is speaking of children "younger" than himself. Such criticisms follow an almost undeviating pattern.

*When they are about four it's not good for them, because they might learn to do things because they think they are like Superman and they jump down and break a couple of legs. When you get as old as me, or even younger, you understand that it's not real.*<sup>16</sup>  
(Boy—11—D)

*Kids get into trouble . . . falling off a roof or something . . . 'cause they think they can fly like Superman.* (Girl—13—C)

Other children, a little unsure of themselves, present the same criticism but ascribe it to somewhat better authority.

*One boy jumped out of a window—thought he was Superman. My sister told me that.* (Boy—12—B)

Well, in some cases they are bad. There's a story—I don't know whether it is true—that a boy read Superman and thought he was Superman and jumped out of the window and thought he could fly and killed himself. (Boy—11—B)

### CRITICISM ON THE ADULT PATTERN

Many children describe the harmful effects which comics may have on *other*, usually *younger* children, by repeating verbatim the somewhat baseless criticisms they have heard from their parents. These children are invariably fans. They do not seem to realize that any conflict exists, and completely ignore their own experiences in comic reading. Making no effort to identify with other children, they simply parrot the criticisms of authority.

Thus we hear from the children, just as we heard from their parents, that comics deprive other children of culture.

<sup>16</sup> Note the careful, although illogical, distinction between himself and other children. This boy certainly knows that four-year-old children do not read, but he feels he must emphasize that the dangers exist only for persons much "younger" than he.

They are *bad for other children. It doesn't give them the impression of good reading.* (Boy—9—B)

The parental belief that comics are morally degrading is echoed by children who are not quite sure what immoral means.

*My little sisters [3 and 6] read comics. I don't want them to learn the words in them. Sometimes the pictures are no good; they have no pants on.* (Boy—9—C)

Juvenile delinquency and crime are again laid at the door of the comics.

Mother thinks it gives us bad ideas, *starts child delinquency. . . . It's never given me any, but it might give some.* (Girl—13—?)

*I don't think little children should read murders until they get to the 5th or 6th grade. They might want to grow up robbers.* (Boy—12—C)

Deleterious effects on mental and physical health are echoed in the parents' own words.

If you read *murder books, that's no good.* That I never read. Sometimes *boys that read it every day become murderers.* [Did you ever see or hear about such a case?] Yeah, some places. My friends tell me. Also, *it spoils your eyes.* (Boy—11—D)

[Are Comics good or bad for younger children?] It is *not good for their eyes.* If they are brought up by reading comics they are going to *spoil themselves because they spend money and money and money.* (Girl—12—C)

A peculiar but understandable twist appears in the idea that comic reading may prevent other children from growing up to be good parents.

If they read too many they *may grow up to let their own children grow wild* and do anything they please. (Boy—12—C)

#### CRITICISM BY SELF-RELIANT AND MATURE CHILDREN

A third group of children, all of whom are moderate readers, are apparently able to evaluate their own comic reading experiences and on the basis of these experiences to identify with younger children



and accurately evaluate the effects of comic reading. Unlike their parents, whose criticisms of comic reading are based on exaggerated if not wholly illusory dangers, these children seem to have discovered for themselves many of the facts demonstrated by this study.

Thus, such children realize that it is only the fan, and not the moderate reader, for whom comics are harmful.

Most people say they are bad. They are not bad, not *if you don't read too many*. (Boy—10—A)

They are also aware that comic reading follows a developmental pattern, and that for most children it is merely a matter of time until they stop reading too many comics.

I don't think comic books are bad for children. *We grow out of the comic stage*. [When is the comic stage?] From 8 to 11. Then we slowly outgrow them. (Girl—12—B)

These children, unlike their parents and friends, realize that the influence of anything is largely dependent on the psychological make-up of the persons being influenced. To be sure, this point is not usually made in scientific language.

I'd say they weren't very bad but they weren't good either. *It depends what kind of a child it was*. If it's a child of a *nervous* type it would affect them very badly. With other children it would probably not affect them at all. (Girl—12—A)

The mystery comics might give nightmares to some children, but not to all: *only to those who are nervous to begin with*. (Boy—11—A)

But some children even formulate the case in scientific accuracy and terminology.

I don't think they are bad. They *have a different reaction on different children*. You *have to know the emotional set-up of the child before* you can tell. (Girl—12—C)

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Children manifest the same ambivalence toward comics as do adults, believing themselves unsusceptible of harm but believing that comics may have deleterious effects on other children.

In describing these harmful effects, children in the second stage of comic reading are still concerned with their own conflict between need and a dimly realized taboo, and so speak of peculiarly concrete and somewhat ridiculous dangers.

A second group, composed of fans, refuse to see or face the conflict, ignore their own experiences entirely, and parrot their parents, i.e., by higher authority.

The third group, composed wholly of moderate readers, use their own experience to identify, as the fan cannot, with younger children, and thus accurately describe the effects of comic reading on such younger children.

The ambiguous attitude of society as a whole toward comics can thus be seen to be a self-generative vicious circle, in which the first two groups (the great majority) of children as well as almost all adults participate. The ambivalence of the parents, who never praise comics and often consider them seriously dangerous, generates a double standard of comic reading morality in the child, and this double standard becomes adult ambivalence as the child grows older. Yet, as this study has shown, comics satisfy a real developmental need in normal children and are harmful only for children who are already maladjusted and susceptible to harm.

Why comics *are considered* dangerous and whether their influence could be made more nearly universally beneficial are but two of the many questions which, by settling more basic questions, this study leaves to future investigators.

# AN ANALYSIS OF RADIO'S PROGRAMMING

*By Kenneth Baker*



## I. INTRODUCTION

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THE present study attempts to present basic factual information about the nature of American radio's actual program offerings.

Lack of such information has long been felt both by writers on radio and by the industry itself. Critics have been handicapped, for example, by lack of factual information on the diversity or proportionate frequency of the various types of programs. Radio stations themselves have felt the need of a yardstick against which they can compare their own operation. The flood of new personnel into radio during the past months has meant that the need for guidance, direction, and advice has never before been so acute. It is necessary to acquaint this new personnel with such concepts as balanced programming, diversity of accounts, etc., and this teaching and advice must be phrased in terms of experience. But, when we have only the vaguest notion of what that experience is or has been, we are hampered in our efforts to help the newcomer. Worse than that, if our advice is based upon a limited experience which may have no application to a specific problem, we may come to an entirely wrong conclusion and thus do damage where we had hoped to help. Furthermore, we must remember that the mistakes of any segment of the radio industry can and do reflect on the industry as a whole. We are therefore obligated to prevent as many of them as we can.

A further usefulness of the knowledge of what radio is offering accrues to the National Association of Broadcasters, because this or-

ganization has conducted and is conducting continuing studies of the public's reaction to radio in general and its evaluation of radio's performance. If these studies of public opinion can be paralleled by an adequate picture of what is actually being offered to the public, we may have the means at hand of evaluating the basis for the various facets of public reaction.

Lest the reader gain the impression from the above that the idea behind the present study is a new one, he should be reminded that this is not so. A need for this type of study—the over-all picture of radio's offerings—has been felt before by many others. The unique feature of this study is that this is the first time it has been conducted on a national scale, on all types of stations and networks.

Previous studies have been conducted but on a more limited scale. This fact alone, however, may make them more valuable from one point of view. Such studies do have more immediate and useful local applications. It might be pointed out in passing that, rather than consider a national study as an ultimate objective, it is to be hoped that it might serve as a stimulus and incentive for the conduct of local studies of the same type.

The pioneers and leaders in the field of program analysis have been the national networks, which have almost annually produced breakdowns of their program offerings both for their own managerial purposes and as a part of their appearances before the Federal Communications Commission. An occasional station has made a study of the programs listed for broadcast in its own community. The results of such an analysis can be and have been used for its own guidance in programming and sometimes to combat the public criticism that the local radio offerings are not diversified enough. In one or two instances a study of this type has been made by a university or someone with an academic interest in radio.

It was apparent from the outset that the present study could not be done using program logs from the entire industry. The demands of practicality restricted the data to the offerings of a sample of stations. Furthermore, to insure that co-operation would be at a maximum and that the collection of data would at once be feasible and efficient, only stations which were members of the National Association of Broadcasters were included in the sample.

The sample of stations whose program logs were included in this study was, therefore, drawn from the commercial AM stations within the continental limits of the United States which were members of the National Association of Broadcasters on November 1, 1946. No territorial stations were included, no noncommercial stations and, of course, no construction permit grantees. On November 1, 1946, there were 1025 commercial AM stations on the air. Of this number, 861 (84 per cent) were members of the Association.

From the above it is apparent that the results of the study are strictly projectable only to the membership of the Association. Whether they are also projectable to the entire industry boils down to a matter of differences between the composition of the Association membership and those stations that are not members. No thoroughgoing analysis has been made to determine what these differences are and whether they would produce any effect on the results of a study such as this one. Some obvious comparisons can be made. With regard to power, city size, and network affiliation, the two groups (members and nonmembers) compared as follows:

TABLE 1

| <i>Type of Station</i>     | <i>NAB</i>        |                |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
|                            | <i>Membership</i> | <i>Non-NAB</i> |
| <i>Power</i>               | <i>%</i>          | <i>%</i>       |
| Large.....                 | 10                | 10             |
| Medium.....                | 38                | 38             |
| Small.....                 | 52                | 52             |
|                            | 100               | 100            |
|                            | <i>NAB</i>        |                |
|                            | <i>Membership</i> | <i>Non-NAB</i> |
| <i>City Size</i>           |                   |                |
| 250,000 or more.....       | 29                | 29             |
| 50,000-250,000.....        | 21                | 23             |
| Less than 50,000.....      | 50                | 48             |
|                            | 100               | 100            |
|                            | <i>NAB</i>        |                |
|                            | <i>Membership</i> | <i>Non-NAB</i> |
| <i>Network Affiliation</i> |                   |                |
| Network affiliated.....    | 78                | 76             |
| Nonaffiliated.....         | 22                | 24             |
|                            | 100               | 100            |

It is not known whether NAB-member stations are "better managed," "more progressive" or whether they possess any other differentiating characteristics. For the time being, therefore, and until other evidence is offered to the contrary, we may feel safe in projecting most of the findings of this study to the industry as a whole. This suggestion is proposed simply as a stopgap in lieu of the present absence of other data which might have a greater statistical validity.

In order that the results of this study would be projectable to at least the NAB membership, the selection of the sample was by a randomized procedure. Although the selection of the actual stations to appear in the sample was done by the use of tables of random numbers, definite controls were established to produce representativeness in the following variables:

1. Power

- (a) Large Stations (7.5kw—50kw)
- (b) Medium Stations (500w—5kw)
- (c) Small Stations (250w & less)

2. Size of City

- (a) Large Cities (More than 250,000)\*
- (b) Medium Cities (50,000—250,000)\*
- (c) Small Cities (Less than 50,000)

3. Geographic Distribution†

- (a) New England
- (b) Middle Atlantic
- (c) East North Central
- (d) West North Central
- (e) South Atlantic
- (f) East South Central
- (g) West South Central
- (h) Mountain
- (i) Pacific

4. Network Affiliation

- (a) Stations were considered either as "affiliated" or "nonaffiliated" with one of the national networks. No attention was paid to affiliation with regional or state networks.

\* In the case of cities larger than 50,000, the population of the Metropolitan District was used.

† The U. S. Census Bureau's state groupings were used.

## 5. Part-time and Unlimited Operation

## (a) As specified by the Federal Communications Commission

One hundred stations were selected at random according to the above controls. Of this number, 85 stations returned usable data. Of the 15 stations not responding, 12 were small stations; 2 were medium stations; and 1 was a large station. Power was the only variable in which the nonrespondents distinguished themselves from the respondents. There was a slight, but not important difference in the proportion of nonaffiliated stations in the final sample. It may be said, therefore, that the sample was a little light with respect to the small, independent station. The differences between the sample and the population of stations in these respects, however, were less than 5 per cent. With respect to power and affiliation, the NAB membership and the sample compare as follows:

TABLE 2

| <i>Power</i>               | <i>Type of Station</i>  | <i>NAB</i>             | <i>Sample</i> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
|                            |                         | <i>Membership</i><br>% | %             |
| Large.....                 |                         | 10                     | 12            |
| Medium.....                |                         | 38                     | 41            |
| Small.....                 |                         | 52                     | 47            |
|                            |                         | 100                    | 100           |
| <i>Network Affiliation</i> |                         |                        |               |
|                            | Network affiliated..... | 78                     | 83            |
|                            | Nonaffiliated.....      | 22                     | 17            |
|                            |                         | 100                    | 100           |

The week of November 21-27, 1946, was selected for analysis simply on the basis of the fact that it occurred in the middle of the final quarter of 1946. There are always good reasons for and against the selection of any particular day or week in radio for close scrutiny. Almost always there is something to make the time atypical. The particular week selected, however, seemed to have a minimum of irregularities associated with it and in many other ways seemed to satisfy our desire to use a period for analysis that would be as informative as possible. Our period was purposely moved ahead of

Thanksgiving in order to avoid that holiday and the unusual seasonal activity between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Each station in the sample was asked to submit its program logs for three days of the test week. The three days' logs requested in each case were determined in advance by a randomized procedure. No advance notice was given either as to which stations were to be included or the particular days to be used in each case. The randomization was designed to produce 43 logs for each day of the test week except Wednesday. Nonrespondents reduced the logs actually received to the numbers shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3  
*Distribution of Logs by Day of the Week*

| <i>Monday</i><br><i>Nov. 25</i> | <i>Tuesday</i><br><i>Nov. 26</i> | <i>Wednesday</i><br><i>Nov. 27</i> | <i>Thursday</i><br><i>Nov. 21</i> | <i>Friday</i><br><i>Nov. 22</i> | <i>Saturday</i><br><i>Nov. 23</i> | <i>Sunday</i><br><i>Nov. 24</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 34                              | 37                               | 38                                 | 35                                | 36                              | 36                                | 37                              | 253          |

In an earlier attempt (February 1946) to obtain this type of data, it had been discovered that it was next to impossible for a stranger to work directly with the program logs themselves. Illegibility, irregularities, and other nonuniform features of some of the logs created a hopeless situation for one not familiar with the details of the station's operation. In the present study, therefore, it was decided to ask the stations only for that information from their logs which was to be needed in the analysis contemplated and to ask for this information in a uniform manner. A simple form incorporating spaces for supplying the needed information was sent to each station so that the analysis was performed on these abstracts of the logs rather than by using the logs themselves.

The information submitted by each station provided answers to the following questions:

1. At what time of the day did each program begin?
2. How long did it last?
3. What was the name of the individual or organization that broadcasted the program?
4. Was the program sponsored (paid for) or was it sustaining?



5. If the program was sponsored, what commodity or service was advertised?
6. What type of account sponsored the program? Local retail? Regional or National Spot? Network? Political?
7. What was the source of the program? Local live? Recorded or transcribed? Network? (News) Wire?

(These same seven questions were answered with respect to announcements)

8. How should the program be classified as to general type? (Stations were asked to classify programs in more than one category if they thought it desirable or necessary to do so.) The classifications used were:

- (a) News and News Commentators
- (b) Daytime Serial
- (c) Mystery Drama
- (d) Comedy Drama
- (e) All other Drama
- (f) Forums and Panels
- (g) Comedy and Variety
- (h) Quiz and Audience Participation
- (i) Old Familiar and Western Music
- (j) Popular and Dance Music
- (k) Classical and Semiclassical Music
- (l) Talks
- (m) Sports and Sports Commentators
- (n) Farm
- (o) Educational
- (p) Homemaking
- (q) Religion and Religious Music

The tables on the following pages summarize the outstanding features of the analysis. Most of these tables are self-explanatory and require no comment. Since the basic reason for this study was to produce descriptive data—rather than explanatory interpretations—further elucidations can be confined to footnotes or other brief annotations.



## II. TABLES

TABLE 4

*Types of Programs Making up the Broadcast Schedule  
Distributed by "Sustaining" vs. "Commercial" for all Types of Stations*

(Total Time on the Air of all Stations = 100%)

|                                      | Commercial |     | Sustaining |    | Total |       |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----|------------|----|-------|-------|
|                                      | %          | %   | %          | %  | %     | %     |
| Music Programs.....                  |            | 26* |            | 15 |       | 41    |
| Old Familiar and Western.....        | 5          |     | 2          |    | 7     |       |
| Popular and Dance.....               | 17         |     | 9          |    | 26    |       |
| Classical and Semiclassical.....     | 4          |     | 4          |    | 8     |       |
| Dramatic Programs.....               |            | 13  |            | 3  |       | 16    |
| Daytime Serials.....                 | 5          |     | 1          |    | 6     |       |
| Mystery Drama.....                   | 3          |     | †          |    | 3     |       |
| Comedy Drama.....                    | 2          |     | †          |    | 2     |       |
| Other Drama.....                     | 3          |     | 2          |    | 5     |       |
| News and Commentators.....           |            | 8   |            | 5  |       | 13    |
| Comedy and Variety.....              |            | 6   |            | 1  |       | 7     |
| Quiz and Audience Participation..... |            | 4   |            | 2  |       | 6     |
| Religion and Religious Music.....    |            | 4   |            | 2  |       | 6     |
| Sports and Sports Commentators.....  |            | 3   |            | 1  |       | 4     |
| Talks.....                           |            | 2   |            | 1  |       | 3     |
| Farm Programs.....                   |            | 1   |            | 1  |       | 2     |
| Forums and Panels.....               |            | †   |            | 1  |       | 1     |
| Homemaking Programs.....             |            | 1   |            | †  |       | 1     |
| Miscellaneous, unclassified.....     |            | †   |            | 2  |       | 2     |
|                                      |            |     |            |    |       | 102 ‡ |

Note 1: A sustaining program is here defined as any uninterrupted segment of the station's time which is five minutes or more in length and from which the station derives no income.

Note 2: Percentages are calculated from the *length* of the program in minutes so that long and short programs receive their proper weight.

\* Includes "participating" programs—in which announcements are read between musical selections—as "commercial" time.

† Less than 1 per cent.

‡ This column adds to slightly more than 100 per cent because a few programs were classified in more than one category.

TABLE 5  
*Types of Programs Making up the Broadcast Schedule  
 Distributed by Type of Station*

(Total Time on the Air for Each Type of Station = 100%)

| Program Type                              | Small<br>Stations<br>(250w<br>and less) |     | Medium<br>Stations<br>(500w<br>to 5kw) |      | Large<br>Stations<br>(7.5kw<br>to 50kw) |      | Total<br>Stations<br>(All<br>types) |      |
|---|---|-----|--|------|---|------|-------------------------------------|------|
|   | %                                       | %   | %                                      | %    | %                                       | %    | %                                   | %    |
| Music Programs . . . . .                  |   | 48  |  | 37   |   | 33   |                                     | 41   |
| Old Familiar and Western . . . . .        | 7                                       |     | 7                                      |      | 6                                       |      | 7                                   |      |
| Popular and Dance . . . . .               | 32                                      |     | 24                                     |      | 19                                      |      | 26                                  |      |
| Classical and Semiclassical . . . . .     | 9                                       |     | 6                                      |      | 8                                       |      | 8                                   |      |
| Dramatic Programs . . . . .               |   | 12  |  | 17   |   | 22   |                                     | 16   |
| Daytime Serials . . . . .                 | 4                                       |     | 6                                      |      | 10                                      |      | 6                                   |      |
| Mystery Drama . . . . .                   | 2                                       |     | 4                                      |      | 3                                       |      | 3                                   |      |
| Comedy Drama . . . . .                    | 2                                       |     | 2                                      |      | 4                                       |      | 2                                   |      |
| Other Drama . . . . .                     | 4                                       |     | 5                                      |      | 5                                       |      | 5                                   |      |
| News and Commentators . . . . .           |   | 11  |  | 14   |   | 14   |                                     | 13   |
| Comedy and Variety . . . . .              |   | 5   |  | 9    |   | 10   |                                     | 7    |
| Quiz and Audience participation . . . . . |   | 5   |  | 6    |   | 6    |                                     | 6    |
| Religion and Religious Music . . . . .    |   | 7   |  | 6    |   | 4    |                                     | 6    |
| Sports and Sports Commentators . . . . .  |   | 4   |  | 4    |   | 2    |                                     | 4    |
| Talks . . . . .                           |   | 2   |  | 2    |   | 4    |                                     | 3    |
| Farm Programs . . . . .                   |   | 2   |  | 2    |   | 3    |                                     | 2    |
| Forums and Panels . . . . .               |   | 1   |  | 1    |   | 1    |                                     | 1    |
| Homemaking Programs . . . . .             |   | 1   |  | 2    |   | 2    |                                     | 1    |
| Miscellaneous, unclassified . . . . .     |   | 2   |  | 1    |   | 2    |                                     | 2    |
|   |   | 100 |  | 101* |   | 103* |                                     | 102* |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* See footnote, Table 4.

TABLE 6  
*Per Cent of Broadcast Time Devoted to Sustaining Programs  
 By Size of Station*

(Total Time on the Air = 100%)

|                                   |                                 | <i>Monday<br/>thru<br/>Friday<br/>%</i> | <i>Saturday<br/>and<br/>Sunday<br/>%</i> | <i>Total<br/>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|----------|
| Large Stations<br>(7.5kw to 50kw) | { Sign-on to Noon . . . . .     | 23                                      | 68                                       | 33                 | 36       |
|                                   | { Noon to 6 P.M. . . . .        | 29                                      | 33                                       | 30                 |          |
|                                   | { 6 P.M. to Sign-off* . . . . . | 40                                      | 27                                       | 36                 |          |
| Medium Stations<br>(500w to 5kw)  | { Sign-on to Noon . . . . .     | 29                                      | 49                                       | 34                 | 30       |
|                                   | { Noon to 6 P.M. . . . .        | 27                                      | 20                                       | 25                 |          |
|                                   | { 6 P.M. to Sign-off* . . . . . | 35                                      | 27                                       | 33                 |          |
| Small Stations<br>(250w and less) | { Sign-on to Noon . . . . .     | 38                                      | 44                                       | 40                 | 37       |
|                                   | { Noon to 6 P.M. . . . .        | 37                                      | 31                                       | 35                 |          |
|                                   | { 6 P.M. to Sign-off* . . . . . | 40                                      | 43                                       | 41                 |          |
| Total                             | { Sign-on to Noon . . . . .     | 32                                      | 48                                       | 36                 | 34       |
|                                   | { Noon to 6 P.M. . . . .        | 31                                      | 27                                       | 30                 |          |
|                                   | { 6 P.M. to Sign-off* . . . . . | 37                                      | 35                                       | 37†                |          |

See Note 1, Table 4.

\* "Sign-off" time is taken as 1:30 A.M. for stations broadcasting all night.

† The period from 6 P.M. to Sign-off breaks down as follows:

6 P.M. to 8 P.M.—24 per cent sustaining

8 P.M. to 10 P.M.—30 per cent sustaining

10 P.M. to Sign-off—52 per cent sustaining

TABLE 7  
*Sustaining Programs*  
*Distributed by Type of Station and Source of Program*  
 (Total Sustaining Programmed Time = 100%)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Live<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Recorded or<br/>Transcribed<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Network*<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Wire †<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)               | 33                                       | 23  | 41                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)                | 21                                       | 25  | 51                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less)               | 14                                       | 29  | 54                                 | 4                                | = 100    |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All Stations)                       | 19                                       | 26  | 51                                 | 4                                | = 100    |
| Network † Affiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 19                                       | 21  | 57                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Nonaffiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)        | 24                                       | 63  | 3                                  | 10                               | = 100    |

See Notes 1 and 2, Table 4.

\* Includes all programs taken from state, regional, and national networks.

† Four national networks.

‡ The FCC's definition of a "wire program" was used: "A wire program is any program the text of which is distributed to a number of stations by telegraph, teletype, or similar means, and read in whole or in part by a local announcer."

TABLE 8

*Announcements*  
*Average Number per Station per Day by Kind of Account*

(Does not include commercial messages in sponsored programs)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Retail</i> | <i>Regional and<br/>National Spot</i> | <i>Sustaining</i> | <i>All<br/>Stations</i> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Large stations. . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)              | 13                      | 37                                    | 6                 | 56                      |
| Medium Stations. . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)               | 43                      | 23                                    | 9                 | 75                      |
| Small Stations. . . . .<br>(250w and less)              | 63                      | 13                                    | 6                 | 82                      |
| Average. . . . .<br>(All Stations)                      | 49                      | 20                                    | 7                 | 76                      |
| Network* Affiliated. . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 49                      | 21                                    | 7                 | 77                      |
| Nonaffiliated. . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)       | 47                      | 16                                    | 7                 | 70                      |

\* Four national networks.

Note 1: Projected to the industry, an average of 76 announcements per day per station is about 26,000,000 announcements per year (1946). This figure includes the station breaks and all announcements made separately or as part of participating programs. It does not include the commercial messages which are part of regularly sponsored commercial programs.

See Note 2, Table 4.

TABLE 9

*Announcements*  
*By Type of Station and Kind of Account*

(Does not include commercial messages in sponsored programs)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Retail<br/>%</i> | <i>Regional and<br/>National Spot<br/>%</i> | <i>Sustaining<br/>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------|----------|
| Large Stations. . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)              | 23                            | 66  | 11                      | = 100    |
| Medium Stations. . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)               | 57                            | 31  | 12                      | = 100    |
| Small Stations. . . . .<br>(250w and less)              | 77                            | 16  | 7                       | = 100    |
| Average. . . . .<br>(All Stations)                      | 64                            | 26  | 10                      | = 100    |
| Network* Affiliated. . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 64                            | 27  | 9                       | = 100    |
| Nonaffiliated. . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)       | 67                            | 23  | 10                      | = 100    |

\* Four national networks.

See Note 2, Table 4.

TABLE 10  
*Programmed Time*  
*Distributed by Type of Station and Kind of Account*  
 (Total Time on the Air = 100%)

|   | <i>Partici-<br/>pating and<br/>Announce-<br/>ment<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Local<br/>Retail<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Regional<br/>and<br/>National<br/>Spot<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Com-<br/>mercial*<br/>Network<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Sustaining<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|--|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)         | 10   | 7  | 13   | 34  | 36                                   | = 100    |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)          | 13   | 17   | 9  | 31  | 30                                   | = 100    |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less)         | 19   | 18   | 5  | 21  | 37                                   | = 100    |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All Stations)                 | 15   | 16   | 8  | 27  | 34                                   | = 100    |
| Network † Affiliated . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 13   | 15   | 8  | 30  | 34                                   | = 100    |
| Nonaffiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)  | 32   | 23   | 10   | 1   | 34                                   | = 100    |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* Includes all programs taken from state, regional and national networks.

† Four national networks.

TABLE 11  
*Commercial Programs*  
*Distributed by Type of Station and Source of Program*  
 (All Commercial Programs = 100%)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Live<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Recorded or<br/>Transcribed<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Network*<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Wire †<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)               | 23                                       | 20  | 55                                 | 2                                | = 100    |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)                | 19                                       | 29  | 49                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less)               | 14                                       | 44  | 39                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All Stations)                       | 17                                       | 35  | 45                                 | 3                                | = 100    |
| Network † Affiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 17                                       | 30  | 51                                 | 2                                | = 100    |
| Nonaffiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)        | 21                                       | 71  | 4                                  | 4                                | = 100    |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* Includes all programs taken from state, regional, and national networks.

† Four national networks.

‡ See footnote, Table 7.



TABLE 12

*Commercial Programs and Announcements  
Distributed by Type of Station and Commodity Advertised*

| Commodity*        | PROGRAMS<br>(Total Commercial Time = 100%) |          |         |           | ANNOUNCEMENTS<br>(Total Comml. Announcements = 100%) |          |         |           |
|-------------------|--|----------|---------|-----------|--|----------|---------|-----------|
|                   | Type of Station                            |          |         |           | Type of Station                                      |          |         |           |
|                   | Small %                                    | Medium % | Large % | Average % | Small %  | Medium % | Large % | Average % |
| Agriculture.....  | 1.7  | 2.4      | 1.8     | 2.1       | 1.3  | 2.3      | 0.9     | 1.7       |
| Alcoholic Bev..   | 1.9  | 2.1      | 1.6     | 1.9       | 1.8  | 3.0      | 2.6     | 2.4       |
| Amusements....    | 1.9  | 1.4      | 0.4     | 1.5       | 6.0  | 7.4      | 4.8     | 6.4       |
| Automotive.....   | 5.9  | 8.4      | 6.6     | 7.2       | 9.0  | 7.6      | 5.8     | 8.2       |
| Building Maters.  | 1.2  | 1.7      | 0.9     | 1.4       | 1.7  | 2.2      | 0.9     | 1.9       |
| Civc. & Polit.... | 0.3  | 0.1      | ...     | 0.2       | 0.2  | ...      | ...     | 0.1       |
| Confections.....  | 0.9  | 1.6      | 2.2     | 1.4       | 1.0  | 1.6      | 5.2     | 1.6       |
| Clnrs. & Lndrs... | 0.7  | 0.9      | 0.4     | 0.8       | 2.4  | 2.5      | 0.8     | 2.3       |
| Dept. Stores*...  | 7.1  | 7.8      | 4.5     | 7.1       | 17.3   | 14.3     | 5.5     | 15.1      |
| Educational....   | 0.6  | 0.1      | 0.1     | 0.3       | 0.4  | ...      | 0.1     | 0.2       |
| Financial.....    | 2.1  | 1.2      | 2.4     | 1.7       | 2.9  | 2.8      | 1.9     | 2.8       |
| Groceries*.....   | 24.0                                       | 27.0     | 29.2    | 26.1      | 13.3   | 15.2     | 21.7    | 14.8      |
| Househd Equip.    | 5.8  | 5.2      | 3.5     | 5.2       | 8.3  | 7.6      | 1.5     | 7.4       |
| Hotels & Rests..  | 0.8  | 0.4      | ...     | 0.5       | 4.7  | 2.4      | 0.4     | 3.4       |
| Industrial.....   | 1.1  | 1.5      | 1.7     | 1.4       | ...  | ...      | 0.2     | 0.1       |
| Insurance.....    | 1.4  | 1.5      | 1.3     | 1.4       | 0.5  | 0.7      | 1.0     | 0.6       |
| Jwly & Silver..   | 2.6  | 2.4      | 1.6     | 2.4       | 11.2   | 8.8      | 14.1    | 10.5      |
| Medicine.....     | 8.6  | 8.5      | 11.1    | 8.9       | 6.8  | 7.6      | 13.9    | 7.7       |
| Miscellaneous...  | 1.4  | 0.5      | 0.5     | 0.8       | 1.0  | 0.8      | 0.6     | 0.9       |
| Musical Insts.... | 2.1  | 0.7      | 0.4     | 1.2       | 0.9  | 0.6      | 0.1     | 0.7       |
| Office Spls.....  | 1.3  | 1.4      | 1.7     | 1.4       | 1.1  | 0.8      | 0.3     | 1.0       |
| Prof. Services... | 1.7  | 1.3      | 2.4     | 1.6       | 3.0  | 2.7      | 0.9     | 2.7       |
| Publications....  | 1.5  | 1.8      | 2.2     | 1.7       | 0.6  | 1.0      | 3.2     | 1.0       |
| Public Utills.... | 0.7  | 0.7      | 0.3     | 0.6       | 0.6  | 0.7      | 1.0     | 0.7       |
| Radio.....        | 1.4  | 1.2      | 0.4     | 1.2       | 0.8  | 0.8      | 0.4     | 0.7       |
| Religion.....     | 9.0  | 6.1      | 0.4     | 6.5       | ...  | 0.4      | ...     | 0.2       |
| Sporting Gds....  | 0.5  | 0.3      | 3.6     | 0.8       | 0.3  | 0.4      | 0.3     | 0.3       |
| Tobacco.....      | 3.2  | 3.0      | 2.8     | 3.0       | 0.2  | 0.6      | 1.1     | 0.4       |
| Toiletries*.....  | 8.0  | 8.4      | 15.9    | 9.3       | 1.0  | 3.9      | 9.4     | 2.8       |
| Transportation..  | 0.6  | 0.4      | 0.1     | 0.4       | 1.7  | 1.3      | 1.4     | 1.5       |
|                   | 100.0                                      | 100.0    | 100.0   | 100.0     | 100.0  | 100.0    | 100.0   | 100.0     |
|                   | Total Sponsored Time                       |          |         |           | Total Sponsored Announcements                        |          |         |           |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* See pp. 66-67 for definitions of each category.

## DEFINITIONS

of Commodity Classifications in Table 12

*Agriculture*—Farm equipment, implements, grain, feed, hides, fertilizer, farm sales and auctions, wholesale farm produce.

*Alcoholic Beverages*—Wines, beer, liquor, liquor stores.

*Amusements*—Movies, theaters, toys, sports events, parties, dances, bowling alleys, carnivals, fairs, etc. In addition, this group contains (courtesy) announcements for sponsored programs and other station and industry promotion (National Radio Week).

*Automotive*—Service stations, gasoline, oil, car repairs, car dealers and wreckers, accessories, tires.

*Building Materials*—Plumbing, insulation, flooring, linoleum, other construction materials, contractors and builders.

*Civic and Political*—Political campaigns, merchants associations, clubs, unions, fraternal.

*Confections*—Candy, ice cream, chewing gum, ice cream parlors.

*Cleaners and Launderers*—Dyeing, dry cleaning, valet services, clothing repair, shoe polish, laundering.

*Department, Specialty, Chain Department Stores, Variety and 5 and 10 Stores*—Clothing, dry goods, and institutional advertising. (If a commodity advertised in a particular broadcast was identifiable as belonging to another category, it was not included here except for Sears and Montgomery Ward broadcasts.)

*Educational*—Schools, colleges, special training schools, union education, job openings.

*Financial*—Banks, brokers, loans, real estate.

*Groceries*—All foods, laundry soaps and powders, soft drinks, disinfectants, floor wax, pet foods.

*Household Equipment*—All home furnishings, vacuum repair, hardware stores, furniture stores, refrigerators, stoves, kitchen equipment.

*Hotels and Restaurants*

*Industrial*—Heavy industry, institutional advertising for industry.

*Insurance*

*Jewelry and Silver*—Watches, jewelry repair, jewelry, silver.

*Medicine*—Laxatives, all patent medicines, drug stores.

*Miscellaneous*—Monuments, junk dealers, taxidermy, florists.

*Musical Instruments*—Phonographs and records, musical instruments, music stores. (Does not include radio receivers.)

*Office Supplies*—Pens, pencils, typewriters, greeting cards, printing, repairs, stationery.

*Professional Services*—Doctors, dentists, chiropractors, opticians, funeral and beauty parlors, photographers.

*Publications*—Magazines, newspapers, books, special subject bulletins.

*Public Utilities*

*Radio*—Receivers, parts and repair.

*Religion*

*Sporting Goods*—Sports equipment, cameras.

*Tobacco*

*Toiletries*—Facial soaps, shampoos, cosmetics, razors, hair tonics, soap flakes.

*Transportation*—Bus, railroads, travel agencies, airlines, moving vans, trucking, ships.

As an example of the type of analysis that can be made from these data, the following tables are presented. Two of these—relating to news broadcasts—show that nearly half of the news and comment on the air in November 1946 was not sponsored. They further indicate that there was a fairly uniform tendency on the part of all types of stations to carry about the same proportion of news programs. This may be interpreted as meaning that there is a saturation-point for news in the programming of most radio stations or that a station cannot carry more news programs than there is news to broadcast, although this matter should be examined more carefully from the standpoint of determining what kind of news (local, national, etc.) is carried. There is evidence to indicate that some stations might do well to broadcast more of certain types of news.

The listing of the sources of the news programs in Table 14 shows the importance of the networks and the wire news services in supplying the news. The dependence of the affiliated stations upon their networks and the equal reliance of the unaffiliated stations on the wire services is clearly demonstrated. It should also be noted, how-

ever, that a large share of the news in each type of station is of "local live" origination. Much of the latter, of course, is local news which is collected and dispensed by the stations themselves.

The analysis of the extent of religious programming displayed in Tables 15 and 16 reveals that 6 per cent of radio's time is devoted to this type of broadcast. Two-thirds of religious programs are sponsored. The place of the sponsored religious program in the commercial programs of small stations is brought out in Table 12. The present trend, however, in some parts of the country seems to be away from accepting sponsored religious programs. As contrasted with other types of programs, an outstanding feature of the religious program is its local origination indicating the widespread use of local churches and other religious organizations by all types of stations. Table 16 also points up the popularity of the transcribed religious broadcast. Since, however, most of these are sponsored, it is to be expected that this type of origination will appear less frequently in future studies.

TABLE 13

*News Programs and Commentators  
Distributed by Type of Station and Sponsorship*

(Total Time on the Air = 100%)

|  | <i>Sponsored<br/>News Programs<br/>and Commentators<br/>%</i> | <i>Sustaining<br/>News Programs<br/>and Commentators<br/>%</i> |   | <i>All<br/>News Programs<br/>and Commentators<br/>%</i> |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)              | 9   | 5  | = | 14  |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)               | 9   | 5  | = | 14  |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less)              | 7   | 5  | = | 12  |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All stations)                      | 8   | 5  | = | 13  |
| Network* Affiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 8   | 5  | = | 13  |
| Nonaffiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)       | 5   | 5  | = | 10  |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* Four national networks.

TABLE 14

*News Programs and Commentators  
Distributed by Type of Station and Source of Program*

(All News Programs and Commentators = 100%)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Live<br/>Programs</i> | <i>Recorded or<br/>Transcribed<br/>Programs</i> | <i>Network*</i><br><i>Programs</i> | <i>Wire †</i><br><i>Programs</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|   | <i>%</i>                           | <i>%</i>  | <i>%</i>                           | <i>%</i>                         |          |
| Large stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw)           | 48                                 | 2   | 35                                 | 15                               | = 100    |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)            | 31                                 | 1   | 46                                 | 22                               | = 100    |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less)           | 18                                 | 1   | 56                                 | 25                               | = 100    |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All stations)                   | 28                                 | 1   | 49                                 | 22                               | = 100    |
| Network † Affiliated . . .<br>(All sizes of stations) | 27                                 | 1   | 54                                 | 18                               | = 100    |
| Nonaffiliated . . . . .<br>(All sizes of stations)    | 41                                 | 1   | 3                                  | 55                               | = 100    |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* Includes all programs taken from state, regional, and national networks.

† Four national networks.

‡ See footnote, Table 7.

TABLE 15

*Programs of Religion and Religious Music  
Distributed by Type of Station and Sponsorship*

(Total Time on the Air for Each Type of Station = 100%)

|   | <i>Sponsored<br/>Religious<br/>Programs</i> | <i>Sustaining<br/>Religious<br/>Programs</i> |   | <i>All<br/>Religious<br/>Programs</i> |
|---|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
|   | <i>%</i>                                    | <i>%</i>                                     |   | <i>%</i>                              |
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw) | 2   | 2  | = | 4                                     |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)  | 4   | 2  | = | 6                                     |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less) | 4   | 3  | = | 7                                     |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All stations)         | 4   | 2  | = | 6                                     |

See Note 2, Table 4.

TABLE 16

*Programs of Religion and Religious Music  
Distributed by Type of Station and Source of Program*

(All Religious Programs = 100%)

|   | <i>Local<br/>Live<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Recorded or<br/>Transcribed<br/>Programs<br/>%</i> | <i>Network*<br/>Programs<br/>%    %</i> |       |
|---|--|---|---|-------|
| Large Stations . . . . .<br>(7.5kw to 50kw) | 56                                       | 18  | 26                                      | = 100 |
| Medium Stations . . . . .<br>(500w to 5kw)  | 42                                       | 28  | 30                                      | = 100 |
| Small Stations . . . . .<br>(250w and less) | 54                                       | 27  | 19                                      | = 100 |
| Average . . . . .<br>(All stations)         | 49                                       | 27  | 24                                      | = 100 |

See Note 2, Table 4.

\* Includes all programs taken from state, regional, and national networks.



### III. SUMMARY

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THE findings of this study may be summarized in a few tentative conclusions. These are offered with two suggestions: (1) that they be considered as the rough outline of radio broadcast programming as of November 1946, and (2) that they be kept in mind as the initial bench marks for trends and developments which may be reported in later studies of a similar nature.

1. Radio is predominantly musical. Nearly half of its time is consumed by programs which are essentially musical in character. When other programs in which music plays an important role are added to these, the proportion of radio time given to music is most impressive.

2. Over half of the musical time on the air is consumed by popular and dance music. The remainder of the time given to music is about equally divided between classical and semiclassical music on the one hand and old familiar, hillbilly, and western music on the other.

3. Dramatic programs occupy second place in radio programming when measured by the number of minutes consumed. Sixteen percent of radio's time is devoted to this type of program of which about 6 per cent is made up of the time taken by the daytime serial.

4. In third place in terms of the amount of time consumed in radio programming are the programs of news and news commentators. About one-eighth of radio's time is given to this type of program. There is little difference between the various types of stations in the amount of news they carry and there is clearly a rather heavy dependence upon the networks and the wire news sources for the news and the commentators.

5. All but about 10 per cent of the announcements carried by radio stations are commercially sponsored. When, however, the time con-

sumed by these announcements is added to the time consumed by commercial messages in sponsored programs, the total time devoted to commercial messages and announcements amounts to about 14 per cent of radio's total time on the air from sign-on to sign-off. This is the truly commercial portion of radio broadcasting.

6. About one-third of radio's time is not sponsored: another third is taken up by sponsored network programs; approximately one-fourth is sponsored by local retail and national spot accounts; and the remainder, consumed by programs with multiple sponsorship.

7. A heavy dependence upon the networks for both sponsored and unsponsored programs is clearly evident. The networks supply nearly half of the sponsored programs carried by stations throughout the country and at the same time furnish more than half of the programs for the unsponsored time of these stations.

8. The commodities and services which are advertised over the air are quite widely distributed as to kind, although, because of the nature of the medium, there are concentrations in those categories which include things to eat and things to wear. Drugs and toiletries also occupy important places in the list of advertised goods.



# RESEARCH FOR ACTION

By Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Helen Dinerman



## I. INTRODUCTION

---

IN 1944 the National Broadcasting Company undertook to re-examine its morning program schedule in order to determine whether a modified program policy might attract a larger audience. The present article is a condensation of the report made at the time and is designed to stress such findings as seemed to have importance above and beyond the immediate purposes of the original study. As will be seen, those findings stem from certain aspects of the study which are in themselves rather new.

In the first place, the study is focused primarily upon the *non-listener*. Research was directed toward determining why some people did not listen to the radio at all during morning hours and why others listened relatively little. It became necessary to combine several different approaches in order that the reasons and their practical implications might be clearly understood. There is not only one kind of nonlistener. Some women have psychological difficulties in listening at the same time as they do their housework; others dislike specific kinds of programs. Still others have too many competing interests. Obviously a variety of practical measures are necessary if these various kinds of nonlisteners are to be reclaimed.

Altogether the present study puts its main emphasis upon listener *types*. It is not concerned with the listeners to a single program, but attempts to classify people according to the program pattern in which they are most interested. Thus the morning listeners were divided

into those who like to listen to daytime serials and those who listen only to other programs. An effort was made to identify the distinguishing psychological characteristics of these different listener types, and so to understand what gratifications they derived from following their various listening patterns. This analysis led again to practical recommendations.

Finally, the investigation dealt not with radio listening in general, but rather with listening during a specifically limited time of day, namely, from nine in the morning until noon. The results of the study amply justified the desirability of such specification. It appears that there are problems peculiar to morning listening which do not arise at other times of the day. The commonest and most obvious, for example, is that during the morning most women must perform household tasks; a woman who tries to listen to the radio while cooking, cleaning, or perhaps moving about the house can be expected to make different demands of the programs than she would were she listening at leisure or during a family gathering.

Another study concerned specifically with afternoon listening would probably reveal other as yet uninvestigated factors which create problems for the listener. The common afternoon practice of visiting friends, for example, would probably be sufficient to place afternoon listening in a psychological context very different from that of morning listening, and so define a topic for extended investigation. The present study thus suggests the need of more, similarly specialized studies, directed toward evening listening, week-end listening, and the like. Certain findings here reported also suggest that seasonal differences in listening are a far more complex matter than has yet been realized and probably merit special investigation.

The more novel features of this study and the resultant findings all point in more or less the same direction. Radio research has previously been concerned either with radio listening as a whole or with listeners to a specific program. The current study suggests the need for more refined typologies of listeners. The "serious listening" pattern, preferences for "verbal" or for "musical" programs, the "mystery" listener, and many other such topics await investigation. Program ratings tell the broadcaster whether he was successful in amassing an audience. Program Analyzer investigations tell him how a specific

program can be made more successful. Listener typologies, properly developed and studied, will tell him how to build a balanced program schedule, one that takes into account the many different sectors and strata of which the actual and potential radio audience is composed. [ The present article is thus an exploratory attempt to make radio research a more useful tool for the broadcaster faced with problems of program policy. ]



## II. THE THREE BASIC SECTORS OF THE AVAILABLE MORNING AUDIENCE

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### “INACCESSIBLES” ELIMINATED FROM THE MORNING AUDIENCE

THE original sample consisted of 2650 women comprising a cross-section of women residents of New York, Cleveland, Chicago, and Kansas City.<sup>1</sup>

Analysis of identification and biographical data indicated that 34 per cent of these 2650 women were “inaccessible” as potential members of the morning audience. This Inaccessible group consisted of women employed during the morning hours (25 per cent) and others (9 per cent) who, although not employed, were prevented from listening to the radio in the morning by any of several physical, personal, or familial conditions. Included among these others were the women who had no access to a radio, the deaf, non-English-speakers for whom no native-tongue program was provided, and those who, because of the presence of sick persons or day-sleepers, were unable to use the radio during morning hours.

This Inaccessible group, although studied in other connections, was eliminated from the sample for purposes of the present research. All further discussion and analysis therefore bears exclusively upon the 66 per cent of the original sample who are “accessible” to morning radio listening, and are therefore actual or potential members of the morning audience. This group will hereafter be referred to as the *Morning Audience* and, in statistical context, as the *basic* sample (as contrasted with the *original* sample of 2650).

<sup>1</sup> A detailed statistical breakdown of the sample, together with other documentary material is on file at Columbia University. Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y. See Appendix H, p. 320, below.

### THREE SECTORS OF THE MORNING AUDIENCE ESTABLISHED

The Inaccessibles having been eliminated, each member of the morning audience was interviewed concerning her radio listening habits during the hours between 9 and 12 on weekday (Monday through Friday) mornings.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of their replies, the women were divided into three groups:

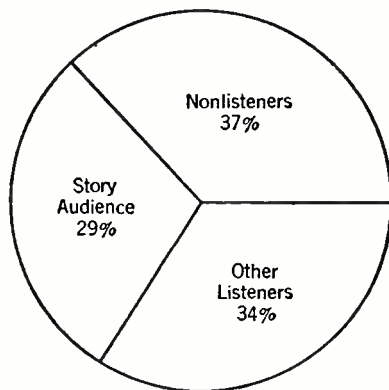


CHART I

#### THE THREE SECTORS OF THE MORNING AUDIENCE

*Nonlisteners* (37 per cent):<sup>3</sup> those women who asserted that they never listened to the radio between 9 and 12 on weekday mornings; *Story Audience* (29 per cent): those women who named serials to which they "usually" listened; and

*Other Listeners* (34 per cent): those women who named specific nonserial programs to which they "usually" listened, but named no serials at all.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A detailed discussion of methods used to determine the nature of respondents' listening habits is on file at Columbia University, the Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y. See Appendix H, p. 320, below.

<sup>3</sup> Percentage figures cited here and in Chart I, below, are weighted averages of percentages computed in two classifications of the same respondents, accomplished five months apart in order to test the reliability of the division. Computational details appear in footnote 10, page 83, below.

<sup>4</sup> Although all members of the Story Audience listen to serials regularly, it must not therefore be supposed that they listen to no other programs. The distinction between Story Audience and Other Listeners lies rather in the fact that the Story Audience regularly listens to serials while the Other Listeners usually do not listen to serials.

The relative size of these three sectors of the Morning Audience is graphically demonstrated in Chart I. It will be noted that the Morning Audience divided roughly into thirds. More precisely, the Non-listeners constitute the largest group and the Story Audience the smallest; the differences in size, however, are relatively small.<sup>5</sup>

### THE THREE-WAY DIVISION VALIDATED

The usefulness and validity of further research upon the three sectors of the Morning Audience could be assured only if the three-way division itself could be shown to be psychologically meaningful. That the sample could be divided into three groups on the basis of their alleged habits regarding serial listening could not in itself be regarded as adequate.

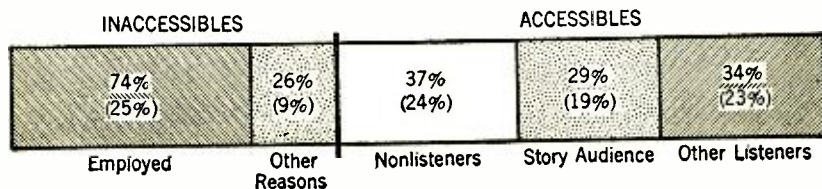
Further research was therefore undertaken to determine whether recognizably unique and comparatively permanent patterns of listening behavior and listening attitudes characterized each of the three groups. This research revealed that:

the Story Audience and the Other Listeners differed consistently and characteristically both in their actual listening habits and in projected hypothetical situations;

the three sectors differ consistently and characteristically in both the amount and type of their listening at various times of day;

70 per cent of the basic sample remained in the same sector during both winter and summer;

<sup>5</sup> Although irrelevant to the present study, a diagrammatic breakdown of the entire original sample according to morning listening habits is here presented as a matter of general interest. Parenthetical percentages refer to percent of original sample; nonparenthetical percentages refer to percent of Inaccessibles or Accessibles.



MORNING LISTENING HABITS OF ORIGINAL SAMPLE

the relative size of the Story Audience and Other Listeners sectors is in accord with figures obtained from three other independent studies.

Each of these findings is discussed in some detail below.

### *Story Audience and Other Listeners differ in desired and actual listening habits*

Each of the respondents was asked:

If there were only one station you could hear on your radio in the morning, would you like to have: (a) mainly serial stories; (b) hardly any serial stories but mainly music, news, talks, or quiz programs; (c) an equal amount of serial stories, and other programs?

Replies of the Story Audience and Other Listeners are presented diagrammatically in Chart II.

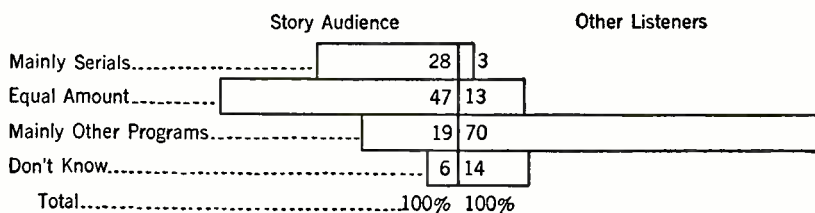


CHART II

PROGRAM POLICY OF STATION THAT TWO SECTORS OF THE MORNING AUDIENCE WOULD CHOOSE

It will be observed that the pattern of responses clearly differs for the two audience sectors. The Story Audience is most interested in mixed fare, and a sizable number would be satisfied with serials exclusively. The great majority of Other Listeners, however, strongly prefer nonserial programs, and only 13 per cent would be satisfied with a mixed diet. Compared to the Story Audience, more than twice as many Other Listeners are not sure of their choice.

These two distinct patterns of choice in a theoretical situation are quite in accord with the patterns of choice actually exercised by the two audience sectors. Each of the four cities represented in the basic

sample was served by three types of stations: those which offered between 9 and 12 an almost undiluted schedule of serials, those which offered only a few serials, and those which offered no serials whatever. Respondents were asked:

Which radio station do you think has the best programs in the morning?

Replies are presented diagrammatically in Chart III.<sup>6</sup>

|                          | Story Audience | Other Listeners |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Daytime Serial Stations. | 49             | 13              |
| Mixed Stations.....      | 21             | 9               |
| Other Stations.....      | 12             | 43              |
| None.....                | 18             | 35              |
| Total.....               | 100%           | 100%            |

CHART III

PROGRAM POLICY OF FAVORITE STATION OF TWO SECTORS  
OF THE MORNING AUDIENCE

Here again the Story Audience leans heavily toward the predominantly serial schedule and the mixed fare, although its choice between these two alternatives varies from its choice in the hypothetical situation. Here again the Other Listeners avoid the serial as much as possible, and again the proportion without definite preference is far larger than among the Story Audience.

The two listening sectors of the Morning Audience are thus seen to differ consistently and characteristically in both actual and desired listening habits.

*The three sectors differ in amount and type of listening throughout the day*

Each of the respondents was asked:

What hours do you usually listen to the radio weekday mornings between 9 and 12?

How much time do you usually spend listening to the radio in the afternoon (weekdays)?

<sup>6</sup> Respondents were permitted to name only one station.



How much time do you usually spend listening to the radio in the evening (weekdays)?

The average amount of time spent by each of the three sectors during the various parts of the day is presented in Chart IV.

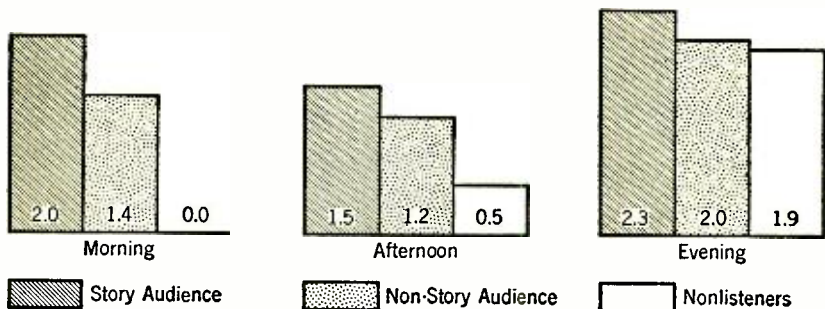


CHART IV

AVERAGE AMOUNT OF LISTENING AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF DAY  
BY THE THREE BASIC MORNING AUDIENCE SECTORS

It will be noted that at all times of the day the Story Audience listens most, the Other Listeners somewhat less, and the Morning Nonlisteners least of all. Even during evening hours, when the presence of family renders listening a less individual choice, the differences, although less marked, remain. The three sectors also differ in the kind of listening they do in nonmorning hours. All respondents were asked:

Do you listen to any serial stories regularly in the afternoon?

The various sectors replied affirmatively to the degree indicated in Table I.

TABLE I

*Proportion of Women in Each of Three Sectors Who Listen to  
Afternoon Daytime Serials*

|                              | %  |
|------------------------------|----|
| Morning Story Audience.....  | 63 |
| Morning Other Listeners..... | 28 |
| Morning Nonlisteners.....    | 18 |

The three sectors of the Morning Audience are thus seen to differ consistently and characteristically in the amount of listening at all times of day and in the type of listening during daylight hours.<sup>7</sup>

*70 per cent of basic sample remain sector-stable from summer to winter*

To determine whether the three-way division would remain stable despite seasonal fluctuation, the basic sample, which had been first interviewed in July 1944 were reinterviewed and reclassified the following December.<sup>8</sup>

The distribution of respondents among the three sectors in July and the distribution in December are presented in Chart V.

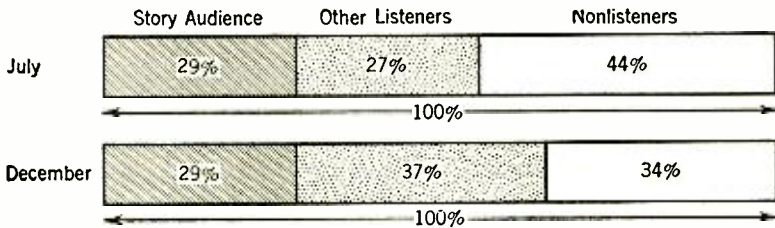


CHART V

THE THREE SECTORS OF THE MORNING AUDIENCE  
AT TWO TIMES OF THE YEAR

It must be remembered that the chart is not in itself an indication of the stability of the sectors, since it does not reveal those intersector shifts which were balanced by compensating shifts in the other direction. Actually 30 per cent of the reinterviewed respondents has shifted from one sector to another during the intervening five months. One third of these (10 per cent of the reinterviewed persons) had shifted from nonlistening during the summer to one of the listening sectors for the winter, a normal seasonal fluctuation which can be expected

<sup>7</sup> Respondents were not compared in regard to types of program tuned in during evening hours, since such selection is often family influenced.

<sup>8</sup> As a result of making four revisits, where necessary to find respondents at home, 80 per cent of the basic sample was reached for the second interview. Mortality was almost identical for each of the three sectors (20 per cent for Story Audience, 19 per cent for Other Listeners, and 22 per cent for Nonlisteners). Accordingly, no distortion through selective mortality need be expected.

to appear in any comparison of the summer and winter radio audience. An additional 20 per cent had shifted in such ways as almost wholly compensated each other.<sup>9</sup> Ignoring as unnecessary for the moment the complex details of these various shifts, the salient fact is that 70 per cent of the respondents remained in the same sector, throughout a period in which seasonal fluctuation is particularly strong.<sup>10</sup>

*Relative sizes of listening sectors confirmed by independent data*

The three-way division of the Morning Audience is not only psychologically meaningful, as has been demonstrated above, but is also statistically reliable. The relative size of the Story Audience and the Other Listeners group can be confirmed by independent data collected and graciously released by two other agencies and by additional independent data collected in a previous study by the Bureau of Applied Social Research.<sup>11</sup>

The present study indicates that of all women who are available for morning listening, 37 per cent do not actually listen (Nonlisteners), 29 per cent listen to serials regularly (Story Audience), and 34 per cent listen almost exclusively to nonserial programs (Other Listen-

<sup>9</sup> Chart V also reveals certain additional findings which, although not strictly relevant to the present study, are perhaps worthy of further investigation. It has long been known that the winter radio audience is larger than the summer audience and it has also been known that such seasonal fluctuation is greater for evening programs than for daytime programs. Chart V further suggests that serials are subject to far less fluctuation than are other daytime programs.

<sup>10</sup> It will be noted that the relative sizes of the three sectors, as stated for July and for December are in neither case in accord with the relative sizes cited in Chart I, p. 77, above. The figures in Chart I are in fact weighted averages of the figures in the July and December sections of Chart V. The December figures were regarded as characteristic for approximately 8 months of the year and were thus assigned a weight of 2; the July figures were regarded as characteristic for approximately 4 months of the year and were thus assigned a weight of 1. A given figure in Chart I is therefore obtained by doubling the appropriate Chart V—December figure, adding the appropriate Chart V—July figure, and dividing the sum by 3.

<sup>11</sup> The size of the Nonlisteners groups relative to the size of the listening sectors cannot be subjected to comparison with independent data. The proportion of the total sample which are nonlisteners is a function of how the sample was chosen. For example, a sample from which the deaf and the non-English-speaking were not excluded would contain a larger nonlistening group than would appear in the present study. Likewise a sample might be composed only of known listeners and so contain no nonlisteners whatever.

ers).<sup>12</sup> Thus, of the women who do in fact listen to morning programs, 46 per cent listen to serials and 54 per cent do not.]

The Pulse, Inc., at the request of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, studied the morning listening habits of 652 morning listeners selected at random in New York and Philadelphia. The investigators found that exactly 50 per cent of the sample listened to a serial during this time, while exactly 50 per cent did not.

The Katz Agency permitted the Bureau of Applied Social Research to examine 649 listening diaries kept by 649 listeners in Indianapolis, Ind., and in Yankton, S. D. Here again, exactly 50 per cent of the morning listeners were found to have listened to a daytime serial while 50 per cent had not.

Previous studies by the Bureau of Applied Social Research had indicated that of all women who listen to the radio during the morning or afternoon approximately 45 per cent listen to daytime serials.<sup>13</sup> The present study reveals that of all women who are available for morning listening, 29 per cent listen to morning serials,<sup>14</sup> and an additional 16 per cent listen to afternoon serials<sup>15</sup>—which is to say that of all women who listen at some time during the daylight hours, 45 per cent listen to a daytime serial.]

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Morning Radio Audience can be divided into three sectors of almost equal size, viz: *Nonlisteners*, who do not listen in the morning although they are physically able to do so; *Story Audience*, whose members listen regularly to at least one daytime serial; and *Other Listeners*, who listen almost exclusively to programs other than serials. This three-way division is psychologically meaningful. The listening sectors differ consistently and characteristically in both actual and

<sup>12</sup> See Chart I, p. 77, above.

<sup>13</sup> Herta Herzog, "What Do We Really Know About Daytime Serial Listeners?" Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Frank N. Stanton (eds.) *Radio Research 1942-1943* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1944) pp. 3-33.

<sup>14</sup> See Chart I, p. 77, above.

<sup>15</sup> See Table 1, p. 81, above and Chart I, p. 77, above. 28 per cent of Morning Other Listeners = .28 (34) % of basic sample = 9.5% of basic sample. 18% of Morning Nonlisteners = .18 (37) % of basic sample = 6.7% of basic sample. Per cent of basic sample who listen to serials in afternoon only thus = 9.5 + 6.7 = 16.

desired listening behavior. The three sectors differ consistently and characteristically in both the quantity and type of listening at various times of the day. Seventy per cent of the Morning Audience is sector-stable despite seasonal fluctuation.

The relative size of the two morning listening sectors (Story Audience and Other Listeners) is in accord with three sets of independent data and can therefore be regarded as statistically reliable.

The three-way division can thus be regarded as a meaningful and adequate base for further research. That research, however, will not be directed upon the Story Audience, of which much is already known, but rather upon the less known Nonlisteners and Other Listeners.



### III. THE NONLISTENERS

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#### NONLISTENERS OF FOUR TYPES

STUDENTS of radio, despite their intensive interest in radio listeners, have to date been peculiarly unconcerned with those persons who do not listen to the radio. Why such people do not listen and what might be done to interest them in radio are topics as yet almost wholly uninvestigated.

The neglect, especially on the part of the industry, is not hard to understand. In the first place, however difficult it may be to discover why people act as they do, it is far more difficult to determine why they do not act in a given way. It is thus far easier to compete for the attention of willing listeners than to overcome the resistance of absentees. And radio has so many listeners that the industry may well have felt no need to undertake difficult researches upon the heretics.

But the fact is that of all the women who are not physically unable to listen to radios, a full third rarely turn on the set in the morning. The neglected morning Nonlisteners are indeed legion, and are worthy of some careful attention. This chapter will attempt to throw some light upon their characteristics, and upon their motives for not listening, and to suggest how the industry or station managers might attract them to morning radio listening.

Each Nonlistener was asked why she did not listen to the radio. The answers, although sketchy, indicated that Nonlisteners, like all other people who do not act in a given way, could be divided into "won'ts" (24 per cent of Nonlisteners) and "prevented" (76 per cent of Nonlisteners)—into those who do not wish to listen to morning radio programs and those who would like to but are allegedly prevented.

The "won'ts" can be further divided into *Radio Resisters* and *Pro-*

*gram Resisters*. The *Radio Resisters*, who comprise just half of the won'ts, assert a dislike for radio in general:

I don't ever listen. I'm not a radio fiend.

I prefer doing other things. I don't care for the radio at all.

I'm too upset about my son overseas to listen to the radio.

*Program Resisters*, however, rather object to those specific types of programs which they believe dominate the morning radio scene.

Morning programs are too small-time.

I don't like the type of program. All I like is the news.

The stuff on the radio [in the morning] is all foolishness.

Don't find the [morning] programs interesting. They drive me crazy.

Serials are a disease.

Of the remaining 76 per cent of the Nonlisteners, the majority asserted that they were simply "too busy" to listen. But the student of human behavior knows that alleged lack of time is invariably a covering reason for a deliberate choice, or for more complex motivations. Accordingly, these alleged "can'ts" were investigated by more probing questions.<sup>16</sup>

Some of the women (13 per cent of the alleged "can'ts" and 18 per cent of all Nonlisteners) were found to be true "can'ts" or *Radio-Restricted*. The locus of their morning work physically prevents their listening to the morning programs:

The radio is in the living room and I am in the kitchen with the baby.

The radio is in the front of the house and I work in back.

Am all around the house. I couldn't very well carry the radio around with me.

The bulk of the Nonlisteners, however, (78 per cent of alleged "can'ts" and 58 per cent of all Nonlisteners) while not physically prevented from listening to morning programs, seemed to be *psychologically incapable* of listening and of simultaneously performing

<sup>16</sup> For example: "Why do you prefer listening in the afternoon or evening but not in the morning?"

"Could you listen while you are working if you wanted to?"

household chores. Some of this *One-Track-Mind* group objects that the radio "keeps me from my work":

I don't like anything to get my mind off my work.  
I want to hurry with my work and listening doesn't let me.

Others object that the work distracts their attention from the program:

I don't enjoy it unless I can just sit down and listen.  
Can't concentrate without sitting idle.  
When I am free to relax, that's when I listen to the radio.  
Can't hear well enough to understand the whole program while I'm busy doing housework.

The situation is perhaps best summed up by the woman who tersely asserted, "I don't prefer doing two things at once."

That a substantial number of women should apparently find it difficult to do housework and simultaneously to listen to the radio seemed a matter worthy of special exploration. Accordingly, every respondent<sup>17</sup> was asked:

Are you able to enjoy programs while you are working, or does it bother you to listen while working?

- a. (If "Bothers Me") What kinds especially bother you while working?
- b. (If "Able to Enjoy Program") Are there any particular kinds that do bother you while you are working? Yes\_\_\_No\_\_\_Don't know\_\_\_  
(1) (If "Yes") What kinds?

On the basis of their replies, the respondents were classified in one of four groups: those bothered by practically *all* kinds of programs; those bothered by *some* programs; those bothered by *no* programs; and, finally, those who claimed that they did not know if they were bothered or not. The relative size of these groups among Nonlisteners and among Listeners (Story Audience and Other Listeners) is diagrammatically stated in Chart VI.

It will be noted that almost two-thirds of the Nonlisteners experienced some difficulty in listening while working and that half of

<sup>17</sup> I.e., all members of the basic sample, including Story Audience, Nonlisteners, and Other Listeners.



these were bothered by *any* kind of program while doing household tasks. The Listeners had much less difficulty, only about one-third of the group reporting any difficulty whatever, and only 7 per cent reporting that they were bothered by all types of programs. Furthermore, for every one Listener who cannot answer the question, six

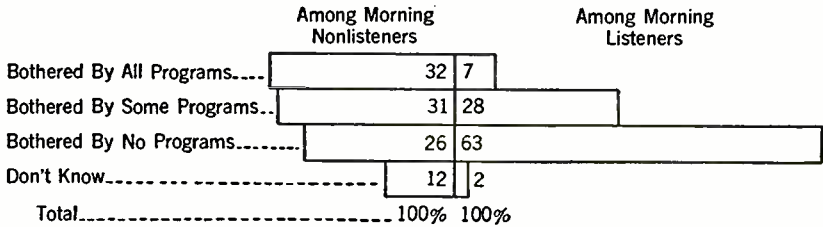


CHART VI

DEGREE TO WHICH WOMEN ARE BOTHERED BY RADIO WHILE DOING HOUSEWORK

Nonlisteners are unable to do so, probably because they have so completely rejected morning listening that they are no longer familiar with the problems such listening evokes.

One-track mindedness can therefore be regarded as a definitely existent phenomenon, and the chief cause of Nonlisteners avoiding morning radio. The phenomenon also plays an important role in restraining the amount of listening habitually practiced by Other Listeners.

| Restricted | One Track Mind | Radio     | Program |
|------------|----------------|-----------|---------|
|            |                | Resisters |         |
| 18         | 58             | 12        | 12      |

100%

CHART VII

THE FOUR GROUPS OF NONLISTENERS

**THE FOUR TYPES OF NONLISTENERS SEPARATELY CONSIDERED**

Investigation of the morning Nonlisteners indicates that this group, which comprises one-third of the potentially available female audience, can be subdivided into four groups, as indicated in Chart VII.

The possibilities and methods of attracting Nonlisteners to the morning radio audience vary from one to another of the four groups, each of which is discussed in turn below.<sup>18</sup>

### *The Radio-Restricted Group*

(18 per cent of the Nonlisteners; 7 per cent of basic sample)<sup>19</sup>

Radio-Restricted women are nonlisteners because the locus of their household duties prohibits them from being physically near the radio. An additional radio or a better position of the existent radio might well convert these women into morning listeners. Local radio stations interested in drawing Radio-Restricted women into the morning audience might do well to offer such women the services of a household engineer who could advise them on the best position for the radio. It is obviously questionable, however, whether such an involved service could profitably be maintained for only 7 per cent of the possible audience.

### *The One-Track-Mind Group*

(58 per cent of Nonlisteners; 22 per cent of basic sample)

The discovery of the existence and extent of the One-Track-Mind group is loaded with implications for both academic and commercial research.

It has long been considered a desirable characteristic of radio that it does not always require the complete and undivided attention of its listeners. Many persons, in fact, have cited this characteristic as

<sup>18</sup> Considered as a whole, the Nonlisteners possess certain personal characteristics which might well be expected in the light of their reasons for avoiding morning radio programs. Thus, they are somewhat older than the listeners. Of those women in the basic sample who were less than 35 years of age, 38 per cent were Nonlisteners, as compared to 48 per cent among those above 35. College educated women are also more common among them, there being 20 per cent more Nonlisteners among such women than among those with only a high school or grade school education. These older and more highly educated women appear for the most part among the Radio Resisters and Program Resisters. Women on the highest socio-economic level are also more common among the Nonlisteners than among the listeners.

<sup>19</sup> The Radio Restricted group must not be confused with those women who because of deafness, linguistic ability, night-shift work, or the like, are wholly unavailable for morning listening. Such women were excluded from the original sample (See Chapter II, p. 76, above).

their reason for preferring radio to other media of communication and entertainment.<sup>20</sup>

It now appears, however, that a good many women either cannot participate in such simultaneous activities, or find such participation unpleasant. What was previously regarded as one of radio's unquestioned advantages over other media is now found to be the essential deterrent in the case of 58 per cent of morning Nonlisteners.

No attack on the problem can be made, however, until more is known about the psychological nature of one-track-mindedness. It would be necessary to know, for example, whether one-track-mindedness is a comparatively constant aspect of basic personality structure or whether it varies with such externals as the age of the individual or the kinds of activities in which she tries to engage. To such questions as these, the industry might well devote research.

It is almost certain, moreover, that like all other manifestations of personality, one-track-mindedness varies in intensity from one individual to another. While some women are probably unable simultaneously to work and to listen to any radio program whatever, there are probably other women who would be able while working to listen to specific types of programs. The industry already distinguishes programs which *require close attention*, such as daytime serials, and those which are suitable for *background listening*. The phenomenon of one-track-mindedness suggests the possibility of a third type of program, designed for *oscillating listening*, that is, a program which a woman could enjoy for two or three minute periods of brief and semiautomatic relaxation from work. Such a program would necessarily have to consist of small subunits, each complete and coherent within itself. A program structure of this general sort is in fact already approximated by some of the quiz shows and breakfast club variety shows, and the success of these types may be due in part to their suitability for oscillating listening.

Although no program of this or any other type could attract the most intensely one-track-minded women, it would nevertheless appear that properly designed programs could attract at least a part of this 58 per cent of morning Nonlisteners.

<sup>20</sup> See Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1940).

### *The Radio Resisters Group*

(12 per cent of Nonlisteners; 4 per cent of basic sample)<sup>21</sup>

A rather small group of women do not like radio in general. Included within the group are both elderly women, into whose lives the relatively new medium of radio had little chance to become incorporated, and younger well-educated women who simply dislike radio. In comparison to the other Nonlisteners, five times as many avoid the radio even during the evening hours, and twice as many can name other types of recreational activity which they prefer to morning listening. Chief among these activities are reading and "just resting." This 12 per cent of morning Nonlisteners seem largely beyond the reach of any short-range program policy.

### *The Program Resisters Group*

(12 per cent of Nonlisteners; 4 per cent of basic sample)

Another small group of women avoid the radio in the morning because of their dislike of morning programs, and in particular because they believe that daytime serials make up most of the morning fare. Compared to other Nonlisteners, five times as many Program Resisters believe that daytime serials comprise the *entire* morning offering. These women, who are characteristically on a somewhat above average educational level, frequently listen to evening programs, but listen less during the afternoons, presumably because their objections to morning programs remain applicable. They frankly state that they would listen to the radio during the morning if the program fare were changed.

Station managers can therefore attract such women to morning listening by publicizing<sup>22</sup> already existent programs which are not

<sup>21</sup> Women were classified as *Radio Resisters* only if they (a) asserted they did not listen in the morning because they did not like *radio* (i.e., did not specifically refer to *morning* programs) and (b) also did not listen in the afternoon. Evening listening was not used as a classificational device, since it is likely to be co-determined by other members of the family.

Nonlisteners who (a) asserted a dislike of radio, without specifying dislike of morning programs, but (b) *did* listen in the afternoon were regarded as "one-track-minded" but imprecise in articulating their objections.

<sup>22</sup> The authors are aware that overcoming audience ignorance of existing programs is a difficult problem in its own right. Some research on audience building has already been accomplished by the present authors and various others, but more is greatly needed. In any event, a discussion of audience building does not fall within the scope of the present article.

daytime serials, and, if they so desire, by the provision and publicizing of additional atypical fare.

### CONCLUSION

Nonlisteners avoid morning radio primarily for one of four clearly defined reasons, and any attempt to attract this third of the available audience to morning listening must be designed with those specific reasons in mind. The chances of such attempts succeeding vary, furthermore, from group to group. The chances of converting the Radio Resisters seem for the present practically nil. Some of the Radio-Restricted group could probably be drawn into the Morning Audience, but the necessary techniques might be prohibitively expensive. A valid guess as to whether the large One-Track-Mind group could be converted must await further investigation of One-track-mindedness itself, but it seems unlikely that many of these women would change. It is perhaps more likely that as radio becomes more and more an integral part of American daily life, one-track-mindedness will slowly become a somewhat less common phenomenon.

Any great swelling of the morning listener ranks, however, will probably not be fed by the Nonlisteners. The bulk of the recruits are more likely to come from the Other Listeners, many of whom are ready to spend more time listening to the radio under changed program conditions.



#### IV. THE OTHER LISTENERS

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THE Nonlisteners having been investigated, research was next directed upon the Other Listeners, that third of the Morning Audience who do listen to the radio in the morning but who avoid its most characteristic feature, the daytime serial. An attempt was made to determine how the Other Listeners, as a group, differed from the Story Audience, and whether, despite their avoiding daytime serials, they were nevertheless satisfied with radio's morning offerings.

##### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD COMMUNICATION MEDIA

Study of the general attitudes, personal characteristics, and daily habits of Other Listeners indicates that as regards personality these women differ significantly from members of the Story Audience only in being less addicted to radio and in having a greater diversity of general interests.

Various studies accomplished by the Bureau of Applied Social Research were re-examined in 1943 by Herta Herzog in an effort to amass all information then available about daytime serial listeners.<sup>23</sup> By implication and comparison, Dr. Herzog also compiled a systematic body of knowledge about women who do not listen to serials. She found that the two groups did not differ significantly in age, degree of social participation, or in regard to various other indices of personality.<sup>24</sup> Women who did not listen to serials were found to be some-

<sup>23</sup> Herzog, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>24</sup> Dr. Herzog's suggestion that certain more refined psychological indices be used in further studies was carried out in part by the Columbia Broadcasting System. Findings were again negative.

what better educated and of somewhat higher socio-economic status, but the differences between the two groups in these regards were not very large and were derived mainly from the presence among those avoiding serials of more college educated women and more women in the highest income brackets; for the majority of women no great differences in age and education appeared.

The present study made no inquiry into most of the areas already investigated by Herzog, although some of her findings were incidentally confirmed. The slight difference in educational and socio-economic level reappeared, and because of the urban nature of the present sample it further appeared that the foreign-born are more likely to avoid serials, doubtless because of linguistic difficulties. Women with children under two years of age and those who regularly have daytime adult company were also found to be more frequent among the Other Listeners than among the Story Audience. These slight group differences were not felt to be particularly significant; the psychological motives at work seem fairly obvious, and the practical implications, not very great.

Both Herzog's investigation and the present study, however, reveal that in comparison to serial listeners the women who avoid serials are less addicted to radio as a medium of communication. Such women listen less at all hours of the day than do the serial listeners, and they are more annoyed by commercials. They are less likely to write letters to radio stations, and when given the choice between a radio and a newspaper are more likely than the serial listeners to choose the newspaper.

The present and previous studies also indicate that the women who avoid serials possess a wider range of interests than do the serial listeners. They are more interested in politics and are more likely to vote. In comparison to the serial listeners, a greater proportion of those who avoid serials prefer the more sophisticated magazines and indulge in more reading and more visiting. Asked in the course of the present study what extra-housekeeping activities occupied them during morning hours,<sup>25</sup> 16 per cent of the Other Listeners mentioned reading, visiting, or chatting with friends on the telephone, whereas only 8 per cent of the Story Audience indulged in such diversified activities.

<sup>25</sup> "What other things take up your time between 9 A.M. and 12?"

It thus appears that the most characteristic and consistent difference between the Other Listeners and the Story Audience lies in the Other Listeners' greater range of interests and, possibly resulting from that range, their being less addicted to radio as a medium of communication.

### THE OTHER LISTENERS NOTABLY DISSATISFIED

To determine whether the Other Listeners, despite their avoiding serials, were nevertheless satisfied with what the morning programs offered, all respondents in both the Story Audience and Other Listener sectors were asked two questions:

Are you satisfied with the kind of programs that are on during the morning hours? (Are you well satisfied, partly satisfied, or not satisfied?)

Would you listen more if some other kind of programs were on in the morning? (Yes—No—)<sup>26</sup>

The proportion of women in each sector who expressed dissatisfaction in answering either of these questions is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

*Proportion of Two Sectors of Morning Audience Who Exhibit Dissatisfaction by Either of Two Indices*

|  | <i>Story Audience</i><br>% | <i>Other Listeners</i><br>% |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Not well satisfied . . . . .                           | 18                         | 29                          |
| Would listen more to other kinds of programs . . . . . | 29                         | 40                          |

Inspection of Table 2 indicates that while no revolution of daytime listeners seems imminent, the majority being apparently satisfied, there is nevertheless considerable dissatisfaction on the part of women who do not listen to daytime serials. Most significant from a practical point of view is the indication that 40 per cent of the Other Listeners, which is to say 14 per cent of the entire available Morning Audience, would listen to the radio more if different programs were provided.

<sup>26</sup> Asked only of women who listened two hours or less between the hours of 9 A.M. and noon.



The task which confronts the practical investigator at this point obviously consists in determining what this dissatisfied group desires.

### SOURCES AND IMPLICATIONS OF OTHER LISTENER DISSATISFACTION

Dissatisfied radio listeners are in general more eager and able to describe what they do not like about existing programs than to describe in any detail the kind of programs they would prefer. The Other Listeners were indeed asked what they would like to have on the air but, as was expected, their replies were of less practical value than were their expressed dissatisfaction with existent morning radio fare. Accordingly, the apparent causes of that dissatisfaction will first be presented and the implications for a positive program policy change considered thereafter.

The data are drawn from three sources: (1) replies to direct queries as to what kinds of programs they wished were more frequent, what kinds they wished were less frequent, and whether they would listen more if programs were different;<sup>27</sup> (2) explanations by Other Listeners of why they disliked morning serials; and (3) comments by Other Listeners upon a breakfast club type of quiz show which the National Broadcasting System was then running as part of an experiment in audience building.<sup>28</sup>

The dissatisfaction of the Other Listeners always touches on one of two topics—one emotional, the other intellectual. On the one hand, morning programs do not fill an apparent need for relaxation from anxiety; on the other, these programs do not meet certain specific intellectual needs.

<sup>27</sup> "What kinds of programs would you like to have more of in the morning?"

"What kinds would you like to have less of?"

"Would you listen more if there were other kinds of programs on in the morning?"

<sup>28</sup> On this show contestants from the studio audience attempted to spot errors deliberately made by narrators. Gershwin, for example, would be identified as the composer of "Showboat" or St. Patrick as the patron saint of the Scots. Prizes were awarded and an atmosphere of informal audience participation encouraged. Music was employed both as a background and in the context of some of the narrations.

### *Need of Relaxation*

*The flight from involvement.* In commenting upon existing morning programs and in describing the programs they would prefer, the Other Listeners reveal what amounts to an actual fear of becoming emotionally excited or of becoming involved, however indirectly, in the troubles of other people, real or fictitious. Their dislike of serials is couched in terms of this desire to fly from anxiety.

Serials are too emotional and upsetting.

They . . . [are] full of everybody's troubles. We have enough of our own.

The stories are too morbid. During a war is no time for trouble. We have enough of our own.

The Other Listeners prefer programs like the experimental breakfast quiz show which relieve tension and seem somehow literally to give them courage.

I would like more cheerful serials. I want more laughs.

I am really entertained by "Breakfast Club" and "Breakfast at Sardi's." They take my mind off my troubles.

It is a lot of fun. We need something like that to pick us up.

It is a great morale builder.

I get a lift out of it. It helps me start my day.

Now this emotional involvement which the Other Listeners are so anxious to avoid is precisely what the serial fan fervently pursues.<sup>29</sup> And that one group's favorite meat should be the other group's most feared poison argues a basic difference between the groups. Whether the two groups may perhaps be characterized by different kinds of personal problems, whether the two differ in the ease or degree with which they identify with the story characters, or whether the difference is more deep-seated and obscure can be, at the moment, but matters of conjecture.

<sup>29</sup> "Some of the [serial] listeners enjoy the stories primarily as a means of letting themselves go emotionally. Others enjoy them because they provide the opportunity to fill their lives with happenings which they would like to experience for themselves. Still others enjoy them in a more realistic way because they furnish them with formulas to bear the kind of life they are living." (Herta Herzog, "On Borrowed Experience" *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, IX [1941], 1 [May].)

Some of the comments by Other Listeners, however, do suggest the somewhat daring hypothesis that a guilt complex may be here manifest. Some of these women condemn daytime serials on moralistic grounds.

They have too much scandal and smut. I don't care for stories that center around unhappy marriages, divorce and juvenile delinquency. Prefer stories around slightly higher type families than now and more wholesome.

They're divorce shows.

I like "Vic and Sade." It's so natural and clean. There's never any smut.

Now whatever charges may be brought against daytime serials, they cannot by any stretch of the imagination be reasonably called "smutty." They are in fact conventionally and highly moralistic, and studiously avoid questioning the accepted standards of the existing society. But they do portray human hesitancy and temptation. Some of the female characters do not love their husbands as much as they might wish; others covet their neighbors' goods. And it may well be that while some listeners work off their own small tensions and temptations by vicariously participating in the drama, others feel so guilty about these foibles and are so hard put to repress them that to hear them dramatized is a painful personal experience.

Such an interpretation is purely hypothetical, but it would do much to explain the intense fear of identifying with the characters which is characteristic of so many Other Listeners. In any case, whatever the basis of the fear, the program director who wishes to attract Other Listeners will have to bar from his product any technique or material which would permit the listener to identify with, or even to hear about, the troubles of real or fictitious persons.

*The flight from continuity.* To women who strongly wish to avoid emotional involvements, the serial form of the daytime serial is in itself a source of disquiet. The Other Listeners are loath to commit themselves to the demands of a daily routine.

If you miss one of the episodes, you are out of luck.

Too much trouble to remember to listen every day. I haven't the patience.

It annoys me to miss a couple of days or parts of a radio program. I'd rather not listen to that kind of program at all.

Fear again becomes evident in their concept of the serialized program as a dangerous drug, which is not only habit forming but which, by each necessary daily dose, raises its devotees to a point of high tension and leaves them nervously awaiting the next day's dose.

When you listen to a serial, it is like a magnet, and draws you to listen again. I haven't the time so I don't start listening.

Listening to those stories becomes a habit.

I don't like anything in serial form. I don't like to wait.

I get too nervous waiting for the climax.

Too much nervous tension. If I went away, I was always wishing I had stayed home because the next episode would be so thrilling.

For the program director who wishes to engage the attentions of Other Listeners, this intense dislike of the demands of continuity poses a serious problem. Serialization and the unresolved climax are traditional and successful devices for maintaining a loyal audience for given programs, and to preclude them leaves the program director the necessity of finding a substitute device. The outstanding personality of the star and distinguishing aspects of program content, supplemented by proper publicity, have been found adequate to maintain the audiences of some evening programs and might be as efficient for daylight offerings. Semiweekly or triweekly programs might be experimentally offered in place of some of the daily productions. In any case, the program director who desires to attract *and to hold* some of the Other Listeners must work toward the creation of some tension-free type of continuity.

*The flight from noise.* In their flight from emotional involvement and stress and their pursuit of soothing influences, the Other Listeners shy away from anything loud or noisy, regardless of its content. Their adverse comments upon the experimental breakfast quiz show focused almost wholly upon the cacophony accompanying the awards. Much of their criticism of daytime serials was similarly directed.

Too much crying and noise.

A lot of excitable women.

I don't like the voices of the characters.

It appears then that morning programs, especially those designed to attract the Other Listeners, should be aurally soothing. Musical programs, or interludes, for example, should probably not contain much hot jazz, and masters of ceremonies who speak in a warm, friendly fashion should be preferred to the peppy, high-pressure type.

In addition, and more importantly, programs designed for the Other Listeners, as their own comments have indicated, should avoid reminding them of their troubles, whether directly or by indirection, and should not attempt to maintain their loyalty by daily working up to unresolved climaxes.

But above and beyond these emotional attributes, such programs must also satisfy, at least to a greater extent than do most current programs, the Other Listeners' intellectual needs. The nature of those needs can, again, be discovered by analyzing the Other Listeners' comments upon serials and the experimental breakfast show, and by their own statements of what they desire from morning radio.

### *Love of learning*

The Other Listeners object to morning programs, and in particular to serials, on intellectual as well as emotional grounds. On the basis of their own comments, these women may be divided into two distinct groups: the *High-Brows* and the *Self-Improvers*.

*The High-Brows.* Whether because their intellectual tastes are really above being satisfied by morning programs, or whether they merely like to think of themselves as being on a high intellectual plane, many of the Other Listeners take a high-brow attitude toward most existent morning programs.

Some of the High-Brows, for example, reject daytime serials flatly and completely.

The stories are designed for people of low intelligence.

I'm too old to like these baby things.

Others seem at least to have listened, but to have lost interest because of the slow pace and the sameness of theme.

I think the stories are awful. They're all so much alike in plot. They're dull and not interesting.

All the stories are the same. They usually have the same material.

Like now,<sup>30</sup> everything is a war story. Before, it was Bob was sick or out of a job, or Mary left for another man.

Some of the High-Brows object not so much to the intellectual shortcomings of the program as rather to alleged defects of showmanship. Here again it is hard to tell whether these women have any real basis for their statements or whether they are simply adopting stereotype attitudes.

Morning programs are too small-time.

Talent on the evening shows is much finer. Shows in the morning are not up to par. The people are less outstanding.

Evening programs are not as sloppy as morning shows. The same talent is not available.

More experienced performers, more finished product in the evening. Morning programs sound amateurish. Should have more experienced men and smoother-sounding material.

When asked for suggestions as to the kind of programs which might better be offered, the High-Brows respond with a list which might have been issued by a Society for Higher Education through Radio:

music appreciation notes

travelogues

stories that mention current events

different political systems discussed freely, and political economy

stories of the development of our country

discussions of famous books

discussions of current events

talks on health

talks on child psychology

child training programs

Now these High-Brows do indeed include a relatively large number of college educated women. And it is a generally accepted fact that American radio does not, and cannot at this moment, serve the highly educated minority to their complete satisfaction. Unfortunately, the dissatisfaction of the highly educated is self-enlarging. Because programs designed to serve their needs are few and far between, they

<sup>30</sup> *I.e.*, 1944.

listen to the radio more rarely and less regularly than do the less educated. Accordingly they are less likely to happen upon the few "high-brow" programs which do exist, and they come to believe that the paucity of such programs is even greater than it actually is.

For this problem no wholly satisfactory solution has as yet been advanced. It might, of course, be possible for station managers to arrange for a few highly intellectualized programs to be broadcast at regularly scheduled morning hours, in the hope that these might in time attract a loyal audience of high-brows. But the demand for such programs comes from a relatively small group, and that the audience would ever attain any notable size seems extremely improbable. The High-Brows, in short, could be attracted to the morning audience by a comparatively clear cut change in program policy, but the practical wisdom of such a change is, at least for commercial radio, highly questionable.

*The Self-Improvers.* A second group of Other Listeners look upon the daytime serials and certain other morning programs not with distaste, but reproach. These women apparently feel that their intellectual stock is uncomfortably meager, and they look to radio for help.

I don't think it's [morning programs] worthwhile. I'd rather read a book.

Serials are not educational. They have no substance.

I want something to improve my mind.

These would-be Self-Improvers desire no theoretical or academic discussions but rather tidbits of concrete information. Commenting upon the experimental breakfast show, these women complained that the techniques used by the master of ceremonies prevented their learning anything. They desired him to point out and correct all errors which the contestant overlooked, and to emphasize the correction when the contestant succeeded. They desired him, for example, to say explicitly, "The son of Isaac was Jacob and not Joseph," and so to provide them with a complete item of information.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The desire for such informational tidbits has also been observed by Herta Herzog. See Herta Herzog, "Psychological Gratification in Daytime Radio Listening," in Eugene L. Hartley and Theodore M. Newcomb (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1947), pp. 561-565.

I would like to hear light, educational programs in the morning. Literature or topics of the times. I like quiz shows because you can learn from them.

I like discussions and quiz programs because of the mental stimulus of these programs. Would like more timely discussions and talks on literature, people, current events and health.

I'd like to listen to some good educational programs if they had them. Travel programs and the like.

They prefer their information personalized, and are therefore fond of women commentators, especially those who interview famous or "interesting" guests.

My favorite daytime show is Mary Margaret McBride. There are different points of interest because of her guests. I like it as a way of keeping up-to-date with various people of note.

I like Kate Smith. She talks about current happenings and news. She has interesting people from all parts of the country. It keeps you in touch with present day things.

More like Bessie Beatty and Mary Margaret McBride. They tell of people of interest doing important things. They have an inspirational effect on housewives.

The Self-Improvers would also like to get more helpful household hints from the morning's radio fare.<sup>32</sup> Program material which they would like to see increased includes

better menus and recipes

cooking programs

ration news

news of the best buys of the week

health programs and hints on food

shopping news

information on household matters, health, and nutrition

programs concerning home economics

The program manager who wishes to attract these would-be Self-Improvers to further morning listening faces a difficult but not insoluble problem. He can provide more of the kind of programs these

<sup>32</sup> As particularly good examples of such programs, respondents cited Handy Man, The Wife Saver, Mrs. Goes A-shopping, Eleanor Hanson, Victor Lindlahr, and Alfred McCann.



women now approve, such as quiz shows, or he can try to design new programs especially to interest and to benefit these Self-Improvers. To broadcast a series of extension courses is obviously not the answer, since these women do not want and are probably not able to absorb straight academic material. But their needs and desires can be met.

These women, for example, want and need more information presented from several points of view, about public issues. They also like to look at the world in personalized terms. Keeping these facts in mind, the enterprising program director and script writer might well fashion a discussion of local affairs which would provide a good deal of civic education and which might even reflect issues more national in scope.

The administrative difficulties attendant upon presenting programs so localized in appeal are by no means insoluble. A single network sustained program must, of course, have national appeal, but it may be worthwhile experimenting with network sustained programs in which several different scripts are simultaneously used in several regional divisions. The enterprising program manager should be able to conceive of other devices which, by sating the psychological needs of the Self-Improvers, would attract these women to further and more beneficial morning listening.

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Other Listeners spend some morning time listening to the radio but would spend more if the programs were more to their liking.

Some Other Listeners object to existent morning radio fare because such programs do not allow them to forget their troubles. The serialized nature of the story is to them a particular source of the tension they wish to avoid. Other programs they often find disturbing by virtue of the "noise." Some members of this group could undoubtedly be attracted to further daytime listening by programs which did not remind them of their troubles, avoided the device of unresolved climax, and were so designed as to be aurally soothing.

A second group of Other Listeners feel that most existing morning programs fail to sate their personal intellectual needs. Some of this group assume a high-brow attitude, entirely reject most morning pro-

grams, and demand that radio provide them with highly intellectualized lectures and discussions. While it would be comparatively simple for the industry to heed their requests, serving so small a minority at the expense of the majority is almost impossible for commercial radio and conceivably also unwise for a publicly owned radio in a democracy.

Of the Other Listeners who object to morning radio on intellectual grounds, some are not High-Brows but are rather would-be Self-Improvers. They demand that the radio supply them with useful tidbits of highly concrete information, preferably served up in personalized form. Programs designed to meet their desires and needs seem by no means beyond the capabilities of enterprising program managers.

In sum, a large number of Other Listeners would spend more morning time at the radio if their program desires were met, and those desires are in many cases not difficult to meet.



## V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A DETAILED study of women who comprise radio's potential morning audience indicates that these women can be classified into one of three almost equal-sized groups. Slightly less than one-third (29 per cent) constitute the Story Audience, which listens to serials regularly; slightly more than one-third (37 per cent) are morning Nonlisteners; and almost exactly one-third (34 per cent) listen regularly, but not to serial stories (Other Listeners). This three-way division is psychologically meaningful, and the relative sizes of the sectors remain stable, despite seasonal fluctuations.

Nonlisteners and Other Listeners are not currently served by radio to their own satisfaction. Some Nonlisteners could be attracted to morning listening, and a very sizable number of Other Listeners could be attracted to additional morning listening if the psychological characteristics of these groups were taken into account by station managers and program directors.

Consideration of these psychological characteristics indicates that while radio cannot today meet all the demands of all nonserial listeners, many of these listeners could be attracted to morning listening or to additional morning listening by wholly feasible modifications of program policy. A list of conditions upon which such policy modifications might best be directed is here provided, both by way of summary and as a convenience for the producer of morning nonserial programs.

1. There is need for programs which cheer, soothe, and in general divert the listeners' attention from their own troubles.

2. "Noise" greatly annoys many Other Listeners. Morning programs should thus provide no extreme aural stimulus, whether in tone of voice, type of music, or any other aspect of the program.

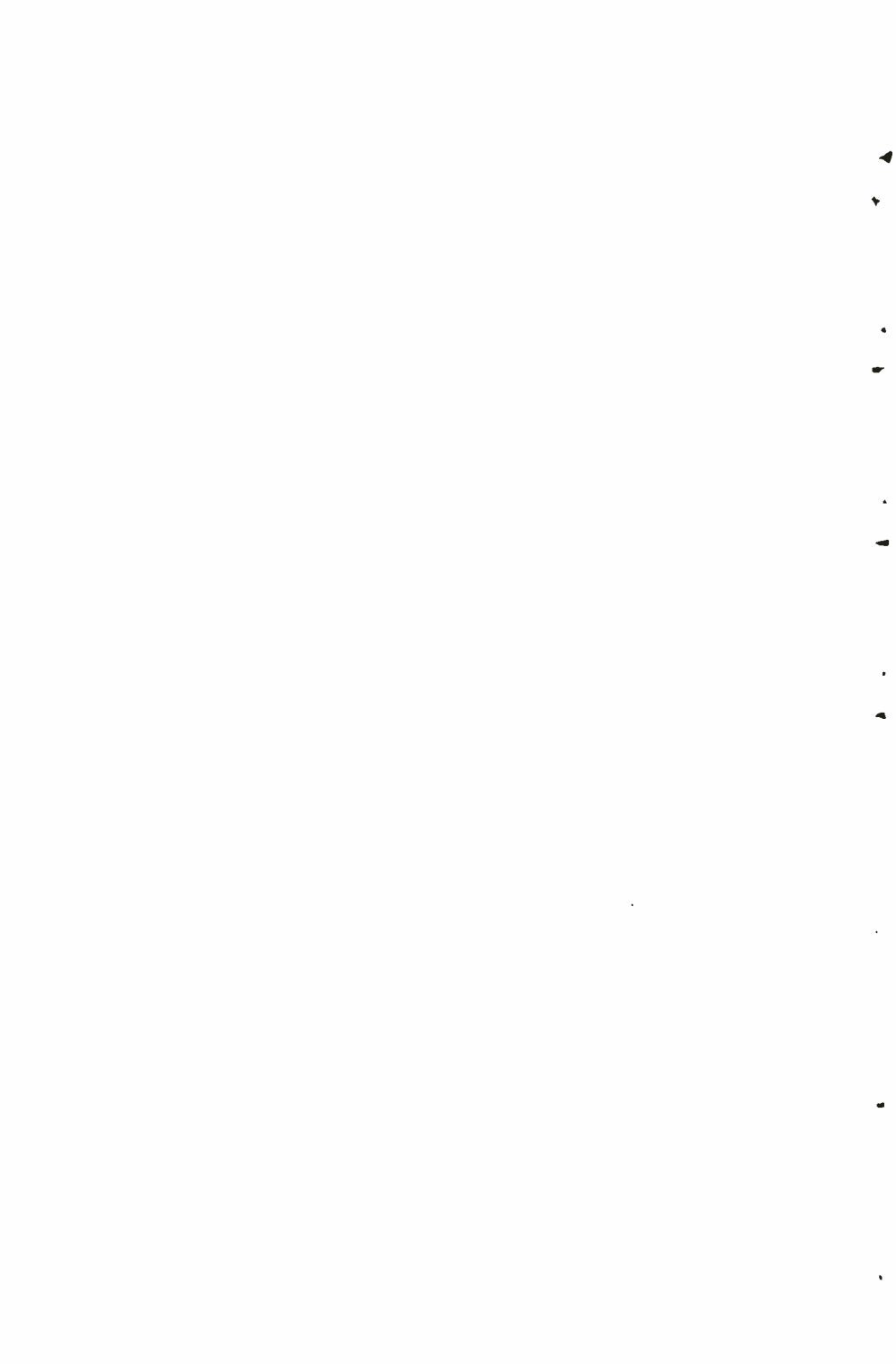
3. Suspense and tension are strongly disliked by Other Listeners. The producer of morning programs would do well to employ some device other than suspense to ensure day-to-day listening. An outstanding personality, a distinctive program idea, or some new device might serve this function.

4. Personalization and human interest are extremely attractive to women morning listeners, even though they may dislike serials.

5. Many Other Listeners expect the radio to serve an informational and educational function. While some of these women would like real discussions of public issues and cultural topics, the majority are more hungry for useful and concrete information relevant to their daily life and social intercourse. Carefully planned and cohesive quiz programs would be greatly liked and would fulfill a real intellectual need.

6. Music is the type of program most desired by women who dislike serials. Carefully planned scheduling of additional music programs would undoubtedly attract many Other Listeners to additional morning listening.

## II. PROGRESS IN COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH



# WHAT "MISSING THE NEWSPAPER" MEANS

By *Bernard Berelson*



## I. INTRODUCTION

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IN THE late afternoon of Saturday, June 30, 1945, the deliverymen of eight major New York City newspapers went on strike. They remained on strike for over two weeks, and during that period most New Yorkers were effectively deprived of their regular newspaper reading. They were able to buy the newspaper *PM* and a few minor and specialized papers at newsstands, and they could buy copies over the counter at central offices of some newspapers. But the favorite papers of most readers were simply inaccessible to them for seventeen days.

These unusual circumstances presented a good opportunity for various interested parties—advertisers, newspaper publishers, radio executives, social scientists—to gauge public attitudes toward the newspaper, and at least three general polls of opinion were independently conducted during the strike. Some if not all findings of two polls have been made public, one by the Elmo Roper agency and the other by Fact Finders Associates, Inc. This article is a report on the third, an exploratory survey conducted for the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University.

According to the published findings, the Roper and Fact Finder organizations directed their efforts to determining what people had done in order to keep up with the news, what parts of the newspaper they particularly missed, and how much they missed the newspapers as the strike went on. On no specific question are their results strictly

comparable, but in three ways they aimed at the same general attitudes or behavior, although in quite different ways. Both agencies attempted to get at the nature of the substitute for the newspaper, and in both cases respondents stressed that they listened to news broadcasts over the radio. Both attempted, in quite different ways, to discover what parts of the newspaper were particularly missed, and in both cases respondents stressed news (national, local, and war news) and advertising. Finally, both attempted to get at the degree to which the newspapers were actually missed, and in both cases respondents indicated that they missed the papers intensely.

Because the questions used by the two polling agencies differed greatly, the results are not strictly comparable. Furthermore, neither poll is able to interpret its data, which consist altogether of "surface facts," relevant only to the specific question at hand. Saying that one "misses the newspaper," or a part of it, can cover a variety of psychological reactions. What does "missing the newspaper" mean? Why do people miss it? Do they really miss the parts they claim, to the extent they claim? Why do they miss one part as against another? The Roper and Fact Finders polls bring little or nothing to bear on such questions, which are at the core of the basic problem, namely, to understand the function of the modern newspaper for its readers. Neither poll succeeds in getting at the more complex attitudinal matters operating in the situation.<sup>1</sup>

It was to attack this problem that the present study was conducted. At the end of the first week of the strike, the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University sponsored a quite different kind of study of people's reactions to the loss of their newspapers. Where the Roper and Fact Finders surveys were extensive, the Bureau's was intensive, designed to secure psychological insight in order to determine just what not having the newspaper meant to people. It is an axiom in social research, of course, that such studies can most readily be done during a crisis period like that represented by the newspaper strike. People are not only more conscious of what the newspaper means to them during such a "shock" period than they are under

<sup>1</sup>On the necessity of "probes" to elicit the real "meaning" of straight replies, see Hadley Cantril and Research Associates, *Gauging Public Opinion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), "Part One. Problems Involved in Setting the Issues."



normal conditions, but they also find it easier to be articulate about such matters.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, the Bureau conducted a small number (60) of intensive interviews.<sup>3</sup> The sample, stratified by rental areas in Manhattan, provided a good distribution by economic status although it was high in education. No attempt was made to secure statistically reliable data on poll questions of the Roper or Fact Finders sort (although for a few similar questions, such as what was missed in the papers, the results are the same as those from the Roper survey). Instead, the Bureau's interviews were designed to supply so-called qualitative data on the role of the newspaper for its readers, as that became evident at such a time. The results are not offered as scientific proof, but rather as a set of useful hypotheses.

In brief, then, the two polls on the subject present certain "surface facts," without knowing just what they mean. This study tries to suggest what "missing the newspaper" really means. Let us start with people's stereotyped responses to questions about missing the newspaper.

<sup>2</sup>For an experiment designed to test the intensity of news interest of people relying primarily on newspapers and of those relying primarily on radio, see Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1940), pp. 246-50. In this experiment, each group of respondents was deprived of its main source of news and their reactions to this situation were studied.

<sup>3</sup>A copy of the questionnaire appears in Appendix F, p. 309.



## II. THE ROLE OF THE NEWSPAPER: WHAT PEOPLE SAY

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BECAUSE of people's inclination to produce accepted slogans in answer to certain poll questions, there is always the danger that verbal response and actual behavior may not correspond. This danger was confirmed here. Intensive follow-up interviewing of the respondents demonstrated that practically everyone *pays tribute* to the value of the newspaper as a source of "serious" information about and interpretation of the world of public affairs, although not everyone uses it in that way. During the interview our respondents were asked whether they thought "it is very important that people read the newspapers or not." Almost everyone answered with a strong "Yes," and went on to specify that the importance of the newspaper lay in its informational and educational aspects. For most of the respondents, this specification referred to the newspaper as a source of news, narrowly defined, on public affairs.

However, not nearly so many people use the newspaper for this approved purpose, as several previous reading and information studies have shown. The general tribute without supporting behavior was evident in this study as well. When the respondents were given the opportunity to say spontaneously why they missed reading their regular newspapers, only a very few named a specific "serious" news event of the period (such as the Far Eastern war or the British elections) whereas many more answered with some variant of the "to-keep-informed" cliché or named another characteristic of the newspaper (e.g., its departmental features).

At another point in the interview, respondents were asked directly, "What news stories or events which happened last week (i.e., before

the strike) did you particularly miss not being able to follow up?" Almost half the respondents were unable to name any such story or event whereas others named such non-"serious" news stories as the then-current Stevens murder case. About a third of the respondents did cite a "serious" news event, most of them the Far Eastern war. Furthermore, directly following this question, the respondents were asked which of a list of six front-page stories of the week before they had missed "not being able to follow up in your regular paper."<sup>4</sup> Here, too, only a little more than a third of the respondents said that they had missed reading about the average serious event in this list. Thus, although almost all the respondents speak highly of the newspaper's value as a channel of "serious" information, only about a third of them seemed to miss it for that purpose.<sup>5</sup>

In brief, there seems to be an important difference between the respondents' *general* protestations of interest in the newspaper's "serious" purposes and their *specific* desires and practices in newspaper reading. The respondents' feeling that the newspaper "keeps me informed about the world" seems to be rather diffuse and amorphous, and not often attached to concrete news events of a "serious" nature. Again, for example, take the answer to our question, "Now that you don't read your regular newspaper, do you feel you know what's going on in the world?" Fully two-thirds of the respondents felt that they did not know what was going on although, as we have

<sup>4</sup>The six events were: Changes in President Truman's cabinet; developments in the Far Eastern War; the case of Mrs. Stevens; diplomatic events after the San Francisco Conference; the domestic food situation; the Langford murder case.

It should be mentioned in this connection that the strike occurred during a relatively quiescent news period. And this may have lowered the extent to which people missed reading about specific events.

<sup>5</sup>We attempted to get at the effect of the loss of newspapers upon the informational level of the respondents by asking them to identify a series of important news stories, pre-strike and intra-strike. On the whole, they were just as well informed about the intra-strike events as about the pre-strike events. However, this is inconclusive because it does not take into account either the fullness of information about such important stories or the extent of information about middle-sized and small news stories which do not get such extensive radio coverage.

Parenthetically, it is noteworthy that apparently no rumors gained currency during the newspaper strike. We tried to investigate the circulation of rumors by asking the respondents, "Have you heard from other people about any events or happenings which you haven't heard over the radio or read about?" This question drew a complete blank. Apparently access to the radio nipped any possible rumors in the bud.

seen, only about half that many had any notion of what in the world they wanted more information about. To miss the newspaper for its "serious" news value seems to be the accepted if not the automatic thing to say.

But this does not mean that the newspapers were not genuinely missed by their readers. There were many spontaneous mentions of the intensity with which the respondents missed their papers, and several of those who missed them a good deal at the beginning of the strike felt even more strongly about it as the week wore on. The question is, *why* did people miss the newspaper so keenly. However, let us first review the several uses to which readers typically put the newspaper. This is the next step in our effort to put content into a check mark on a poll questionnaire by suggesting what "missing the newspaper" really means.



### III. THE USES OF THE NEWSPAPER

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THE modern newspaper plays several roles for its readers. From the analysis of our intensive interviews, we have attempted to construct a typology of such roles, or functions, of the newspaper. Obviously the types enumerated here, while discrete, are not necessarily mutually exclusive for any one newspaper reader. Undoubtedly, different people read different parts of the newspaper for different reasons at different times. The major problem is to determine the conditions under which the newspaper fulfills such functions as those developed here—and perhaps others—for different kinds of people. In this connection, the special value of a small group of detailed interviews lies in the identification of hypotheses which can then be tested, one way or the other, by less intensive methods. In other words, such “qualitative” interviews suggest the proper questions which can then be asked, in lesser detail, for “quantitative” verification.

In this section we shall mention briefly several immediate uses of the newspaper which we found in the interviews. The illustrative quotations are typical of those appearing in the interviews. Some of these uses correspond to acknowledged purposes of the newspaper, others do not.

#### FOR INFORMATION ABOUT AND INTERPRETATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

There is a core of readers who find the newspaper indispensable as a source of information about and interpretation of the “serious” world of public affairs. It is important to stress, in this connection,

that this interest is not limited simply to the provision of full information about news events. Many people are also concerned with commentaries on current events from both editorials and columnists, which they use as a touchstone for their own opinions. For example:

I don't have the details now, I just have the result. It's almost like reading the headlines of the newspaper without following up the story. I miss the detail and the explanation of events leading up to the news. I like to get the story behind and the development leading up to—it's more penetrating . . . I like to analyze for myself why things do happen and after getting the writers' opinions of it from the various newspapers, in which each one portrays the story in a different manner, I have a broader view and a more detailed view when I formulate my own opinion.

#### ✓ AS A TOOL FOR DAILY LIVING

For some people the newspaper was missed because it was used as direct aid in everyday life. The respondents were asked, "Since you haven't been able to get your regular newspaper, have you found some things that you can't do as well without it?" Fully half of them indicated that they had been handicapped in some way. Many people found it difficult if not impossible to follow radio programs without the radio log published in the newspaper. Others who might have gone to a motion picture did not like the bother of phoning or walking around to find out what was on. A few business people missed such merchandising comments as the arrival of buyers; others were concerned about financial and stock exchange information. Several women interested in shopping were handicapped by the lack of advertisements. A few close relatives of returning soldiers were afraid they would miss details of embarkation news. A couple of women who regularly followed the obituary notices were afraid that acquaintances might die without their knowing it. Finally, there were scattered mentions of recipes and fashion notes and even the daily weather forecast in this connection. In short, there are many ways in which many people use the newspaper as a daily instrument or guide and it was missed accordingly.

### FOR RESPITE

Reading has respite value whenever it provides a vacation from personal care by transporting the reader outside his own immediate world. There is no question but that many newspaper stories with which people readily identify supply this "escape" function satisfactorily for large numbers of people. Exhibit A in this connection is the comics, which people report liking for their story and suspense value. Beyond this, however, the newspaper is able to refresh readers in other ways, by supplying them with appropriate psychological relaxation. The newspaper is particularly effective in fulfilling this need for relief from the boredom and dullness of everyday life not only because of the variety and richness of its "human interest" content or because of its inexpensive accessibility. In addition, the newspaper is a good vehicle for this purpose because it satisfies this need without much cost to the reader's conscience; the prestige value of the newspaper as an institution for "enlightening the citizenry" carries over to buttress this and other uses of the newspapers.

When you read it takes your mind off other things.

It [the strike] gave me nothing to do in between my work except to crochet, which does not take my mind off myself as much as reading.

I didn't know what to do with myself. I was depressed. There was nothing to read and pass the time. I got a paper on Wednesday and felt a whole lot better.

### FOR SOCIAL PRESTIGE

Another group of readers seem to use the newspaper because it enables them to appear informed in social gatherings. Thus the newspaper has conversational value. Readers not only can learn what has happened and then report it to their associates but can also find opinions and interpretations for use in discussions on public affairs. It is obvious how this use of the newspaper serves to increase the reader's prestige among his fellows. It is not that the newspapers' content is

good in itself but rather that it is good *for* something—and that something is putting up an impressive front to one's associates.

You have to read in order to keep up a conversation with other people. It is embarrassing not to know if you are in company who discuss the news.

Not that I am uneasy about what's happening but I like to know about the country so when people ask you questions you don't feel dumb and silly.

It makes me furious, absolutely furious, because I don't know what's going on and all my friends who are getting the papers do know.

### FOR SOCIAL CONTACT

The newspaper's human interest stories, personal advice column, gossip columns, and the like provide some readers with more than relief from their own cares and routine. They also supply guides to the prevailing morality, insight into private lives as well as opportunity for vicarious participation in them, and indirect "personal" contact with distinguished people.

One explanation of the role of the human interest story is that it provides a basis of common experience against which urban readers can check their own moral judgments and behavior (the "ethicizing" effect).<sup>6</sup> The requirements for such stories are that they shall be understandable in terms of the reader's own experience and that they shall be "interesting." (One respondent who read the tabloids although he disliked them remarked that "the *Times* isn't written interestingly enough" and that "PM is the most honest paper but should have more interesting stuff like the *Journal-American*.") From the comments of a few respondents, it appears that the human interest stories and the gossip columnists do serve something of this purpose. In fact, a few respondents indicated that they missed the newspaper because, so to speak, some of their friends resided in its pages. A few women who read the gossip columnists and the society pages inten-

<sup>6</sup> An extensive speculative analysis of this role of the newspaper's human interest story for the urban masses is reported by Helen MacGill Hughes, *News and the Human Interest Story* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940).



sively seemed to take an intimate personal interest in their favorite newspaper characters and to think of them in congenial terms.

I miss Doris Blake's column [advice to the lovelorn]. You get the opinions in Doris Blake of the girls and boys and I find that exciting. It's like true life—a girl expressing her life. It's like everyday happenings.

I always used to condemn the mud-slinging in the *News* and *Mirror*, and many times I swore I'd never buy them if it weren't for the features I like. But just the other day I said to a friend of mine that I'd never, never talk like that about the papers again, because now I know what it is to be without them.

I missed them [favorite columnists] for their information, their news, their interviews with various people, their interaction with people. It is interesting to know people's reactions. If you read the background of individuals, you can analyze them a little better.

I like the *Daily News*. It's called the "scandal sheet" but I like it. It was the first paper that I bought when I came to New York. When you live in a small town and read the papers you know everybody who's mentioned in the papers. The *News* is the closest thing to them. The pictures are interesting and it makes up for the lack of knowing people . . . You get used to certain people; they become part of your family, like Dorothy Kilgallen. That lost feeling of being without papers increases as the days go on. You see, I don't socialize much. There's no place that you can get Dorothy Kilgallen—chit-chat and gossip and Louella Parsons with Hollywood news.



#### IV. THE DESIRABILITY OF READING

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THIS brief review of some uses to which readers typically put the modern newspaper serves to introduce the following sections, in which we shall try to elaborate other (nonconscious) psychological reasons for the genuine interest in newspaper reading. Here again, we shall use material from our intensive interviews as illustrations.

There is some evidence in our interviews to indicate that *reading itself* regardless of content is a strongly and pleurably motivated act in urban society. The major substitute followed during the period ordinarily given to the reading of the newspaper was some *other* form of reading, of a non-“news” character.<sup>7</sup> For the most part, the content of such substitute reading seemed to be quite immaterial to the respondents, so long as “at least it was something to read”:

I read some old magazines I had.

I read whatever came to hand—books and magazines.

I read up on all the old magazines around the house.

I read whatever was lying around and others I hadn't had a chance to read before.

I went back to older magazines and read some parts I didn't usually read.

From such quotations one gets an impression that reading itself, rather than *what* is read, provides an important gratification for the

<sup>7</sup> The data on substitute activities were secured by asking the respondent to reconstruct the *first* occasion on which he missed his regular newspaper, with these questions:

“How did you feel the very first time you weren't able to get your paper(s)?”

“When was it that you first missed the newspaper?”

“What did you do then instead of reading the paper?”

Such questions not only help the respondent to recall his feelings and actions but also locate them in concrete behavior. We followed up by asking about substitute activities for the rest of the week.

respondents. The fact is, of course, that the act of reading carries a prestige component in American life which has not been completely countered by the rise of "propaganditis." After all, important childhood rewards, from both parent and teacher, are occasioned by success in reading and thus the act has extremely pleasant associations. Not only do the people of this country support libraries to promote the practice of reading; they also give considerable deference to the "well-read" man. In fact, the act of reading is connected with such approved symbols as "education," "good literature," "the full man," "intellectuality," and thus takes on its own aura of respectability and value.<sup>8</sup> And largely because of this aura, it is "better" to read something, anything, than to do nothing. For example, an elderly salesman told us:

Life is more monotonous without the paper. I didn't know what to do with myself. There was nothing to do to pass the time. It just doesn't work, nothing to pass the time.

One might speculate that in addition to the apparent desire of such people not to be left alone with their thoughts—in itself another gratification of reading to which we shall return—the Puritan ethic is at work in such cases. That is, such people may feel that it is some-

<sup>8</sup> The idea of reading as a nonconscious pleasurable activity can be pushed one step further in our data. There are a few references in psychoanalytic literature which associate reading with oral activity. The fullest development of this hypothesis appears in an article by James Strachey, "Some Unconscious Factors in Reading," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, XI (1930), 322-31, which deals with some oral associations with reading, some possible oral origins of the associations, and some unconscious functions of reading. Similar references appear in Edward Glover, "Notes on Oral Character Formation," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, VI (1925), 139. Some notes on the association between sucking activity and eye attention in the first few months of life appear in Margaret A. Ribble, *The Rights of Infants: Early Psychological Needs and Their Satisfaction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), p. 29. In view of this hypothetical background, it is worth noting that one group of responses in the interviews seems to illustrate this notion. Occasionally, in their spontaneous answers to general questions about missing the newspapers, the respondents used a figure of speech in describing how much they missed the newspaper. In almost every such case, the figure was an oral one: "A glass of water . . . a cup of coffee . . . smoking . . . an appetizer to dinner (radio to the newspaper) . . . thirsty for news . . . I felt as though someone had taken candy away from me just as I was going to put it in my mouth." While these remarks are of course not conclusive, they do suggest that the act of reading may serve some persons as a socially acceptable source of oral pleasure. Thus reading material may serve the function of a pacifier for adults.

how immoral to "waste" time and that this does not occur if one reads something, because of the "worthwhileness" of reading. In short, in explaining why people missed their regular newspapers, one must start by noting that the act of reading itself provides certain basic satisfaction, *without primary regard for the content of the reading matter.*



## V. ANOTHER USE OF THE NEWSPAPER

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WITHIN this context, what of the newspaper? Of the major sources of reading matter, the newspaper is the most accessible. It is also cheap and its contents can be conveniently taken in capsules (unlike the lengthier reading units in magazines and books). All in all, the newspaper is the most readily available and most easily consumed source of whatever gratifications derive from reading itself. In addition, there are some other general bases for the *intensity* with which people missed the newspaper.

References by several people to "not knowing what's going on" and to "feeling completely lost" illustrate the sort of *insecurity* of the respondent which was intensified by the loss of the newspaper:

I am like a fish out of water . . . I am lost and nervous. I'm ashamed to admit it.

I feel awfully lost. I like the feeling of being in touch with the world at large.

If I don't know what's going on next door, it hurts me. It's like being in jail not to have a paper.

You feel put out and isolated from the rest of the world.

It practically means isolation. We're at a loss without our paper.

In some way, apparently, the newspaper represented something like a safeguard and gave the respondents an assurance with which to counter the feelings of insecurity and anomie pervasive in modern society.

This need for the newspaper is further documented by references to the *ritualistic and near-compulsive character* of newspaper reading. Many people read their newspapers at a particular time of the day and as a secondary activity, while they are engaged in doing some-

thing else, such as eating, traveling to work, etc. Being deprived of the time-filler made the void especially noticeable and especially effective. At least half the respondents referred to the habit nature of the newspaper: "It's a habit . . . when you're used to something, you miss it . . . I had gotten used to read it at certain times . . . It's been a habit of mine for several years . . . You can't understand it not being there any more because you took it for granted . . . The habit's so strong . . . It's just a habit and it's hard to break it . . ." Some respondents used even stronger terms:

Something is missing in my life.

I am suffering! Seriously! I could not sleep, I missed it so.

There's a place in anyone's life for that, whether they're busy or not.

I sat around in the subway, staring, feeling out of place.

The strength of this near-compulsion to read the newspaper was illustrated in other ways. Such diverse newspapers as the tabloid *News* and the *Times* sold thousands of copies daily over the counter at their central offices. One respondent "went from stand to stand until I decided that it was just no use trying to get one." Another walked ten blocks looking for a paper; another went to her newsstand every night during the first week of the strike, hoping to get a paper. One young man reread out-of-date newspapers more thoroughly, "as a resort." Still other respondents admitted to reading the paper regularly even though they believed that they could spend their time more profitably:

It replaces good literature.

I usually spend my spare time reading the papers and put off reading books and studying languages or something that would be better for me . . . [Most of the paper] is just escape trash, except possibly the classified ads and I'm beginning to waste time reading them now, too, when there's no reason for it, just habit.

In this connection, the notion that knowledge is power sometimes appears. One man reported that he felt uneasy "because I don't know what I am missing—and when I don't know I worry." A few people even seemed to suggest that their being informed about the world had something to do with the control of it. A private secretary, for

example, recognizing that she was "just a little cog in the wheel," remarked sadly that she "felt cut off" but that "things go on whether you know about it or not." Presumably, the regular contact with the world through the columns of the newspaper gave this person the feeling that she was participating in the running of the world. But when the newspaper was withdrawn, she realized that her little contribution was not being missed.

This sort of analysis throws a new light on the fact that about twice as many people missed the newspaper *more* as this week went on than missed it less. For such people, the absence of the daily ritual was only intensified as the week wore on. Something that had filled a place in their lives was gone, and the adjustment to the new state of affairs was difficult to make. They missed the newspaper in the same sense that they would have missed any other instrument around which they had built a daily routine.

Only a few respondents gave an affirmative answer to our question, "Are there any reasons why you were relieved at not having a newspaper?" But even they revealed the near-compulsive nature of newspaper reading. In some cases the fascinating attraction of "illicit" content seemed to constitute the compelling factor, e.g., in the case of the middle-aged housewife who reported:

It was rather a relief not to have my nerves upset by stories of murders, rape, divorce, and the war . . . I think I'd go out more [without the newspapers] which would be good for me. Papers and their news can upset my attitude for the whole day—one gruesome tale after the other. My nerves would be better without the paper.

The typical scrupulousness of the compulsive character is apparent in this case of a middle-aged waiter who went out of his way to read political comment with which he strongly disagreed:

I hate the policy of the *Mirror* [his only newspaper] . . . the editorial writer and also the columnist DeCasseres. It's a pleasure not to read him . . . I didn't have an opportunity of disagreeing with Winchell.

In still other cases, the compulsion resembled an atonement for guilt feelings about nonparticipation in the war; the comments of two women respondents suggest that they had forced themselves to read the war news, as the least they could do in prosecuting the war:

Under the stress and strain of wartime conditions, my health was beginning to fail and I enjoyed being able to relax a little.

I've been reading war news so much, I've had enough of it.

A young housewife felt that it was her duty to follow the developments of the war "for the boys—the spirit of it." And such respondents were gratified at the newspaper strike because it provided them with a morally acceptable justification for not reading the newspaper, as they felt compelled to do. Once the matter was taken out of their hands they were relieved.





## VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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IN THIS article we have attempted to elaborate and “deepen” the answers to typical poll questions applied to a complex set of acts and feelings. We have tried to go beyond the general protestations of the newspaper’s indispensability and seek out some basic reader-gratifications which the newspaper supplies. In doing so,<sup>1</sup> we have noted certain typical uses of the modern newspaper—both “rational” (like the provision of news and information) and non-“rational” (like the provision of social contacts and, indirectly, social prestige).<sup>2</sup> In addition, however, we have hypothesized that reading has value per se in our society, value in which the newspaper shares as the most convenient supplier of reading matter.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the newspaper is missed because it serves as a (non-“rational”) source of security in a disturbing world and, finally, because the reading of the newspaper has become a ceremonial or ritualistic or near-compulsive act for many people. In this way, we have progressively tried to define, in psychological and sociological terms, what missing the newspaper really means.

# OVERLAPPING MAGAZINE READING: A New Method of Determining the Cultural Levels of Magazines

By *Babette Kass*



## I. INTRODUCTION: MAGAZINE READING AS AN INDEX

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SOCIAL scientists have always been keenly interested in determining which characteristics of persons can be meaningfully employed to group those persons, and thus to serve as tools for the discovery of further information about human social behavior. Such primary characteristics as sex, age, and occupation are time-honored in this employ, and have been used in almost every study of people as social beings. Less immediately obvious characteristics of respondents have often been similarly used, frequently to good avail.

It has been realized in relatively recent years that knowledge of an individual's reading habits is peculiarly informative in any study of that individual's behavior, and that reading habits are thus a potential source of informative characteristics.

Since almost all literate persons read magazines, it would seem likely that knowledge of an individual's magazine reading habits would to some degree describe that person, and provide a criterion, just as does his age or sex, both for grouping him with other similar persons and distinguishing him from other dissimilar persons.

Knowledge of what magazines a person reads, however, is obviously in itself inadequate for this purpose. If such information is to serve in any process of description, it must first be converted into an index. To know, for example, that a given respondent regularly reads *Cosmo-*

*politan* and *Redbook*, while another respondent regularly reads *American Home* and the *Saturday Evening Post* is valuable only insofar as these various magazines are known to contain specific and characteristic types of subject-matter, or to be of characteristic literary quality, or the like. In short, the names of the specific magazines are irrelevant, except insofar as some known aspect of these magazines can be interpreted as an index, which may then be related to the reader.

Various different indices can of course be obtained by classifying magazines in different ways. In search of such indices, magazines have at one time and another been classified according to subject-matter, price, nature of advertisements, relevance to human wants, and the like. This study, however, is concerned solely with methods of measuring the *cultural value* of periodicals. Three techniques already used in such measurement will be briefly described, and a proposed new method explained in some detail.



## II. THREE EXISTENT TECHNIQUES

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SEVERAL techniques have already been used in attempts to measure the cultural values of magazines. Perhaps the most significant of these are (1) Audience Stratification, (2) Content Criteria, and (3) Impressionistic Judgment.

*Audience Stratification* is based on the assumption that a magazine and its audience are to some degree mutually reflective; that if a given magazine is popular, for example, among persons of homogeneous cultural level, then that magazine may be said to be itself on that cultural level.<sup>1</sup>

*Content Criteria* presupposes that the cultural level of magazines are highly correlated with the "readability" of those magazines, readability being in turn defined in terms of comprehensibility, lucidity, and, in some instances, appeal. Cultural rating of magazines by this technique consists in a statistical analysis of the language in sample passages. Incidence of certain linguistic phenomena is noted and statistically treated to provide an index of readability, and so of cultural level.<sup>2</sup>

*Impressionistic Judgment* is based upon the belief that no absolute criteria of culture are known to be validly applicable to all people, but that evaluation of the cultural level of magazines may nevertheless be validly based upon the composite judgment of highly competent and well-informed individuals.

<sup>1</sup> For a major study employing this technique, see J. H. Foster, "An Approach to Fiction through the Characteristics of Its Readers," *Library Quarterly*, VI (1946). Miss Foster's findings are compared with the findings of the present study in Appendix G, p. 317, below.

<sup>2</sup> For a full discussion of this technique, see Rudolf E. Flesch, "Estimating the Comprehension Difficulties of Magazine Articles," *Journal of General Psychology*, XXVIII (1943), 63-80; also Irving Lorge, "Predicting Readability," *Teachers College Record*, XLV (1944), 404-19.

Two studies using this technique present results so similar as to validate both the individual studies and the technique as a whole. Because these results are used as a touchstone in the present discussion, these two studies will be described here in some detail. In 1934, Morgan and Leahy<sup>3</sup> rated the respective cultural levels of seventy-four magazines, while in 1941 Kerr and Remmers<sup>4</sup> similarly rated one hundred magazines.

In both studies, panels of "judges," who were known to be well read,

TABLE I

*Cultural Levels of Magazines As Determined By Impressionistic Judgment  
in Two Independent Studies*

|                                | Rank Orders |       |                                       | Rank Orders |       |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
|                                | M & L       | K & R |                                       | M & L       | K & R |
| American Magazine ..           | 34          | 28    | National Geographic..                 | 11          | 2     |
| American Mercury....           | 10          | 11    | New Republic.....                     | 6           | 8     |
| Argosy.....                    | 40          | 43    | Parent's Magazine....                 | 21          | 25    |
| Asia.....                      | 9           | 16    | Pathfinder.....                       | 35          | 34    |
| Better Homes &<br>Gardens..... | 20          | 15    | Photoplay.....                        | 43          | 42    |
| Breezy Stories.....            | 47          | 49    | Physical Culture.....                 | 42          | 40    |
| College Humor.....             | 41          | 44    | Popular Mechanics....                 | 29          | 33    |
| Collier's.....                 | 33          | 38    | Reader's Digest.....                  | 17          | 9     |
| Cosmopolitan.....              | 38          | 30    | Real Detective.....                   | 45          | 46    |
| Country Gentleman...           | 25          | 37    | Redbook.....                          | 37          | 36    |
| Current History.....           | 7           | 5     | Saturday Evening Post                 | 30          | 31    |
| Field & Stream.....            | 23          | 35    | Saturday Review of<br>Literature..... | 2           | 1     |
| Forum.....                     | 3           | 4     | Scientific American...                | 13          | 14    |
| Good Housekeeping...           | 26          | 26    | Scientific Monthly....                | 12          | 13    |
| Harper's.....                  | 5           | 3     | Short Stories.....                    | 44          | 39    |
| Harper's Bazaar.....           | 24          | 20    | Time.....                             | 15          | 7     |
| House Beautiful.....           | 16          | 23    | Travel.....                           | 14          | 19    |
| House & Garden.....            | 18          | 24    | True Confessions....                  | 49          | 48    |
| Hygeia.....                    | 22          | 21    | True Story.....                       | 48          | 47    |
| Ladies Home Journal .          | 28          | 27    | Vogue.....                            | 27          | 22    |
| Liberty.....                   | 39          | 41    | Western Story<br>Magazine.....        | 46          | 45    |
| Life.....                      | 31          | 17    | Woman's Home<br>Companion.....        | 32          | 32    |
| Living Age.....                | 8           | 12    | Yale Review.....                      | 1           | 10    |
| McCall's.....                  | 36          | 29    |                                       |             |       |
| Nation.....                    | 4           | 6     |                                       |             |       |
| Nation's Business....          | 19          | 18    |                                       |             |       |

<sup>3</sup> W. L. Morgan and A. M. Leahy, "The Cultural Content of General Interest Magazines," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXIV (1935).

<sup>4</sup> W. A. Kerr and H. H. Remmers, "Cultural Value of 100 Representative Magazines," *School & Society*, LIV (1941).

were provided with names of the magazines and asked to rate for cultural content each of those with which he was familiar. Forty-nine magazines were common to both studies. Table 1 presents these forty-nine magazines in alphabetical order, and gives for each the rank order assigned in each of the two studies.

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for the two rankings of these 49 magazines is .93.<sup>5</sup> The obvious significance of so high a correlation is increased when it is remembered that during the seven years between the studies several of the magazines underwent various substantial changes. The results of the two studies are thus so closely similar as substantially to confirm the validity of the technique, and to be susceptible of serving as a touchstone against which other techniques can be compared.

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all correlation coefficients cited in this article are positive.



### III. OVERLAPPING READING AS A CULTURAL INDEX

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#### THE CONCEPTS OF OVERLAPPING READING AND CULTURAL DISTANCE

THE present study undertakes to determine the cultural values of magazines by a new technique, which has been named "overlapping reading."

Most people read more than one magazine, and by the same token, most readers of a given magazine also read other magazines. A given magazine, moreover, tends to be read in combination with certain other specific magazines, i.e., certain magazines are read in combination comparatively often, while others are but rarely read in combination. The measurement of cultural value by the technique of overlapping reading is based on the theory that magazines which are frequently read together, i.e., for which readership largely overlaps, are in relatively close cultural proximity, while magazines for which there is little overlapping reading are culturally distant. In short, the degree of overlapping reading is believed to be closely and positively correlated with cultural proximity.<sup>6</sup>

The remaining portions of this article are devoted to an account of the experimental procedure by which this hypothesis was largely confirmed, and to a discussion of the implication of the finding.

#### SOURCE OF DATA

Readership figures for the various magazines considered were taken from data collected by Dr. F. L. Whan in 1942 in connection with a

<sup>6</sup> The concepts of overlapping reading and cultural proximity were developed from the concepts of "overlapping listening" and "psychological proximity" described by Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Helen Schneider in an unpublished study made for the National Broadcasting Company in 1944.

study of the Iowa Radio Audience. In the course of that study, Dr. Whan's representatives interviewed members of more than 9,000 Iowa homes, carefully selected to provide a representative sample of homes in the state<sup>7</sup> in regard to geographical location, size of community, and economic status of the occupants. Of the 9,218 persons interviewed, 5,344 were women who lived in homes equipped with radios.

Among other questions, these women were asked, "What magazines do you try to read regularly?" Replies were so tabulated as to provide exact information regarding both the actual magazines read by each woman and also the total number of these women who read any given magazine. Only the 17 magazines read by over 200 of these women were considered in the present study.

## PROCEDURE

### *Computation of $\phi$*

For each of the possible pairs of the seventeen magazines,<sup>8</sup> the amount of overlapping reading was noted and expressed as a proportion of the geometric mean of the numbers of persons who read either of the magazines. For convenience of reference, this proportion of overlap is designated as  $\phi$ .<sup>9</sup>

$\phi$  values for all 136 pairings of the seventeen magazines are presented in Chart I. The magazines themselves are listed simply in alphabetical order, from top to bottom and left to right.

<sup>7</sup> Insofar as Iowa is not a wholly "typical" American state, Dr. Whan's findings cannot be ipso facto regarded as valid for the country as a whole. However, there is little reason to suppose that the findings of the present study would substantially differ had the original data been drawn from interviews with a representative national sample. See Appendix H.

<sup>8</sup> Thus for  $16+15+14 \dots +1=136$  pairs.

<sup>9</sup> Thus when  $a$ =number reading Magazine A=250

$b$ =number reading Magazine B=210

$c$ =number reading both A and B=73

$G_{ab}$ =Geometric mean of  $a$  and  $b=\sqrt{a \cdot b}$ .

$$\text{then } \phi \text{ AB} = \frac{c}{G_{ab}} = \frac{73}{\sqrt{52500}} = \frac{73}{229} = .32$$

Although the use of an arithmetic mean might be defended when  $\phi$  is computed for only two magazines, the geometric mean is obviously preferable when  $\phi$  is computed for three or more magazines. Accordingly, the geometric mean has been adopted as the standard base for all computations of  $\phi$ .



CHART I

$\phi$  Values for Pairs Among Seventeen Magazines  
(Alphabetical Order)

|                                  | Amer | AH | BH&G | Col | Cos | GH | HH | LHJ | Lib | Life | Look | McC | RD | Rbk | SEP | TS | WHC |
|----------------------------------|------|----|------|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| 1. American.....                 | —    | 17 | 24   | 38  | 26  | 33 | 14 | 29  | 20  | 23   | 20   | 29  | 31 | 19  | 27  | 09 | 36  |
| 2. American Home. 17             | —    | 32 | 15   | 12  | 12  | 25 | 17 | 23  | 10  | 21   | 17   | 20  | 24 | 13  | 19  | 03 | 08  |
| 3. Better Homes & Gardens.....   | 24   | 32 | —    | 18  | 16  | 34 | 16 | 33  | 14  | 23   | 18   | 26  | 31 | 11  | 26  | 04 | 25  |
| 4. Collier's.....                | 38   | 15 | 18   | —   | 23  | 27 | 13 | 24  | 28  | 22   | 18   | 23  | 23 | 15  | 30  | 13 | 30  |
| 5. Cosmopolitan... 26            | 26   | 12 | 16   | 23  | —   | 28 | 07 | 19  | 15  | 17   | 14   | 22  | 21 | 28  | 17  | 05 | 19  |
| 6. Good Housekeeping. 33         | 33   | 25 | 34   | 27  | 28  | —  | 11 | 31  | 21  | 25   | 18   | 34  | 33 | 19  | 24  | 06 | 31  |
| 7. Household..... 14             | 14   | 17 | 16   | 13  | 07  | 11 | —  | 17  | 09  | 11   | 12   | 18  | 14 | 07  | 12  | 08 | 16  |
| 8. Ladies Home Journal.....      | 29   | 23 | 33   | 24  | 19  | 31 | 17 | —   | 16  | 24   | 21   | 36  | 30 | 15  | 29  | 07 | 39  |
| 9. Liberty.....                  | 20   | 10 | 14   | 28  | 15  | 21 | 09 | 16  | —   | 19   | 21   | 15  | 15 | 15  | 23  | 14 | 16  |
| 10. Life.....                    | 23   | 21 | 23   | 22  | 17  | 25 | 11 | 24  | 19  | —    | 39   | 21  | 34 | 11  | 25  | 09 | 22  |
| 11. Look.....                    | 20   | 17 | 18   | 18  | 14  | 18 | 12 | 21  | 21  | 39   | —    | 19  | 21 | 15  | 20  | 14 | 20  |
| 12. McCall's.....                | 29   | 20 | 26   | 23  | 22  | 34 | 18 | 36  | 15  | 21   | 19   | —   | 31 | 21  | 22  | 06 | 31  |
| 13. Reader's Digest. 31          | 31   | 24 | 31   | 23  | 21  | 33 | 14 | 30  | 15  | 34   | 21   | 31  | —  | 12  | 34  | 13 | 26  |
| 14. Reader's Digest. 19          | 19   | 13 | 11   | 15  | 28  | 19 | 07 | 15  | 15  | 11   | 15   | 21  | 12 | —   | 18  | 15 | 14  |
| 15. Saturday Evening Post.....   | 27   | 19 | 26   | 30  | 17  | 24 | 12 | 29  | 23  | 25   | 20   | 22  | 34 | 18  | —   | 09 | 25  |
| 16. True Story.....              | 09   | 03 | 04   | 13  | 05  | 06 | 08 | 07  | 14  | 09   | 14   | 06  | 13 | 15  | 09  | —  | 10  |
| 17. Woman's Home Companion... 36 | 36   | 08 | 25   | 30  | 19  | 31 | 16 | 39  | 16  | 22   | 20   | 31  | 26 | 14  | 25  | 10 | —   |

### *The $\phi$ values compared to impressionistic judgment rankings*

It had been previously decided that the cultural rankings given to magazines by the Morgan and Leahy and by the Kerr and Remmers studies<sup>10</sup> were sufficiently valid to be used as a touchstone. Accordingly, it became necessary to state the findings of the present study in such a way as to permit comparison with the cultural ranking provided in the two earlier studies.

Of the seventeen magazines considered in the current study, only fourteen had been previously rated by both Kerr and Remmers and Morgan and Leahy. Comparison was therefore restricted to the fourteen magazines common to all three studies<sup>11</sup> and was independently made with each of the two previous studies.

In Chart II, the magazines are listed in the cultural rank order given by Morgan and Leahy, and the  $\phi$  values are listed for each of the 91 possible pairs. Examination of the chart reveals a fairly close, but not perfect relationship between the Morgan and Leahy ranking and the  $\phi$  values.

If the basic hypothesis of the technique of overlapping reading is correct, i.e., if the cultural proximity of magazines can be determined by the degree of overlapping reading, and if into the bargain the cultural rank order of the fourteen magazines as so determined coincided exactly with the rank order determined by Morgan and Leahy, then the chart would reveal a perfect positive correlation.

Were such a perfect correlation to exist, the figures in any line or column would grow progressively smaller as they proceeded *away* from the diagonal dashes. This is to say that of all the  $\phi$  values pertaining to a given magazine, the highest would always occur in relation to one of the two magazines immediately adjacent in the Morgan and Leahy ranking, the next highest in relation to one of the next two adjacent magazines, and so on down to the lowest  $\phi$  value which

<sup>10</sup> See p. 137 above.

<sup>11</sup> The three magazines thus eliminated from comparison were *American Home*, *Household*, and *Look*.

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for ranking of the fourteen magazines by K & R and M & L is .81, as compared with .93 for all seventeen magazines. The lower coefficient is largely a product of the smaller  $n$ , which is particularly affecting in this computational technique that considers only rank order and ignores actual values.

CHART II

$\phi$  Values for Pairs Among Fourteen Magazines, Listed in Order of Morgan and Leaty's Cultural Ranking

|  | RD | BH&G | GH | LHJ | SEP | Life | WHC | Col | Amer | McC | Rbk | Cos | Lib | TS | Average of Diagonals |
|--|----|------|----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----------------------|
| 1. <i>Reader's Digest</i> . . . . .            | —  | 31   | 33 | 30  | 34  | 34   | 26  | 23  | 31   | 31  | 12  | 21  | 15  | 13 | 13                   |
| 2. <i>Better Homes &amp; Gardens</i> . . . . . | 31 | —    | 34 | 33  | 26  | 23   | 25  | 18  | 24   | 26  | 11  | 16  | 14  | 04 | 10                   |
| 3. <i>Good Housekeeping</i> . . . . .          | 33 | 34   | —  | 31  | 24  | 25   | 31  | 27  | 33   | 34  | 19  | 28  | 21  | 06 | 14                   |
| 4. <i>Ladies Home Journal</i> . . . . .        | 30 | 33   | 31 | —   | 29  | 24   | 39  | 24  | 29   | 36  | 15  | 19  | 16  | 07 | 17                   |
| 5. <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> . . . . .      | 34 | 26   | 24 | 29  | —   | 25   | 25  | 30  | 27   | 22  | 18  | 17  | 23  | 09 | 19                   |
| 6. <i>Life</i> . . . . .                       | 34 | 23   | 25 | 24  | 25  | —    | 22  | 22  | 23   | 21  | 11  | 17  | 19  | 09 | 21                   |
| 7. <i>Woman's Home Companion</i> . . . . .     | 26 | 25   | 31 | 39  | 25  | 22   | —   | 30  | 36   | 31  | 14  | 19  | 16  | 10 | 21                   |
| 8. <i>Colliers</i> . . . . .                   | 23 | 18   | 27 | 24  | 30  | 22   | 30  | —   | 38   | 23  | 15  | 23  | 28  | 13 | 22                   |
| 9. <i>American</i> . . . . .                   | 31 | 24   | 33 | 29  | 27  | 23   | 36  | 38  | —    | 29  | 19  | 26  | 20  | 09 | 23                   |
| 10. <i>McCall's</i> . . . . .                  | 31 | 26   | 34 | 36  | 22  | 21   | 31  | 23  | 29   | —   | 21  | 22  | 15  | 06 | 22                   |
| 11. <i>Redbook</i> . . . . .                   | 12 | 11   | 19 | 15  | 18  | 11   | 14  | 15  | 19   | 21  | —   | 28  | 15  | 15 | 25                   |
| 12. <i>Cosmopolitan</i> . . . . .              | 21 | 16   | 28 | 19  | 17  | 17   | 19  | 23  | 26   | 22  | 28  | —   | 15  | 05 | 23                   |
| 13. <i>Liberty</i> . . . . .                   | 15 | 14   | 21 | 16  | 23  | 19   | 16  | 28  | 20   | 15  | 15  | 15  | —   | 14 | 27                   |
| 14. <i>True Story</i> . . . . .                | 13 | 04   | 06 | 07  | 09  | 09   | 10  | 13  | 09   | 06  | 15  | 05  | 14  | —  | —                    |

would occur in relation to the magazine most distant in the Morgan and Leahy ranking.  $\phi$  values would thus correlate perfectly with cultural proximity on the Morgan and Leahy cultural axis.

The design of the matrix is such that the diagonal immediately adjacent to the diagonal of dashes contains the  $\phi$  values pertaining to magazines immediately adjacent in the Morgan and Leahy ranking. Accordingly, were the correlation perfect and positive, each of the two large triangles separated by the diagonal line of dashes would exhibit a perfect pyramid arrangement:<sup>12</sup>  $\phi$  values on the baseline (the diagonal adjacent to the dashes) would be high, and these values would progressively decrease, proceeding toward the point of the pyramid (extreme upper-right or lower-left corner), at which point the lowest  $\phi$  value would appear.

A cursory examination of Chart II reveals that there is an obvious marked tendency toward such a pattern, but that there are several cells which deviate from the directional progression of the diagonal in which they occur. The pattern, in short, is very evident, but it is imperfect.

The marked but imperfect relationship can be made the more conspicuous by taking the averages of the diagonals parallel to the dashes.

<sup>12</sup> These two triangles are of course identical. Any *column* of figures in the upper triangle, read from the top of the page toward the diagonal of dashes, is identical with the similarly titled *row* of figures in the lower triangle, read from the left to the diagonal of dashes. Likewise, any *row* of figures in the upper triangle, read from the diagonal to the right, is identical with the similarly titled *column* of figures in the lower triangle read from the diagonal toward the bottom of the page.

The identity of the triangles can perhaps be made clearest if expressed in modified geometric terms:

Let the upper left corner of the matrix be designated A  
 the upper right corner B  
 the lower left corner C  
 the lower right corner D

Let the term "=" be understood to mean identical in regard to included figures and the order thereof

Then  
 $AB=AC$   
 $BD=CD$   
 $AD=AD$   
 and

$\triangle ABD=\triangle ACD$

Accordingly, whatever conditions may be true of one triangle are likewise true of the other triangle.

CHART III

φ Values for Pairs Among Fourteen Magazines Listed in Order of Kerr and Remmers' Cultural Ranking

|  | RD | BH&G | Life | GH | LHJ | Amer | McC | Cos | SEP | WHC | Rbk | Col | Lib | TS | Average of Diagonals |
|--|----|------|------|----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----------------------|
| 1. <i>Reader's Digest</i> . . . . .            | —  | 31   | 34   | 33 | 30  | 31   | 31  | 21  | 34  | 26  | 12  | 23  | 15  | 13 | 13                   |
| 2. <i>Better Homes &amp; Gardens</i> . . . . . | 31 | —    | 23   | 34 | 33  | 24   | 26  | 16  | 26  | 25  | 11  | 18  | 14  | 04 | 10                   |
| 3. <i>Life</i> . . . . .                       | 34 | 23   | —    | 25 | 24  | 23   | 21  | 17  | 25  | 22  | 11  | 22  | 19  | 09 | 15                   |
| 4. <i>Good Housekeeping</i> . . . . .          | 33 | 34   | 25   | —  | 31  | 33   | 34  | 28  | 24  | 31  | 19  | 27  | 21  | 06 | 14                   |
| 5. <i>Ladies Home Journal</i> . . . . .        | 30 | 33   | 24   | 31 | —   | 29   | 36  | 19  | 29  | 39  | 15  | 24  | 16  | 07 | 17                   |
| 6. <i>American</i> . . . . .                   | 31 | 24   | 23   | 33 | 29  | —    | 29  | 26  | 27  | 36  | 19  | 38  | 20  | 09 | 20                   |
| 7. <i>McCall's</i> . . . . .                   | 31 | 26   | 21   | 34 | 36  | 29   | —   | 22  | 22  | 31  | 21  | 23  | 15  | 06 | 20                   |
| 8. <i>Cosmopolitan</i> . . . . .               | 21 | 16   | 17   | 28 | 19  | 26   | 22  | —   | 17  | 19  | 28  | 23  | 15  | 05 | 22                   |
| 9. <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> . . . . .      | 34 | 26   | 25   | 24 | 29  | 27   | 22  | 17  | —   | 25  | 18  | 30  | 23  | 09 | 23                   |
| 10. <i>Woman's Home Companion</i> . . . . .    | 26 | 25   | 22   | 31 | 39  | 36   | 31  | 19  | 25  | —   | 14  | 30  | 16  | 10 | 25                   |
| 11. <i>Redbook</i> . . . . .                   | 12 | 11   | 11   | 19 | 15  | 19   | 21  | 28  | 18  | 14  | —   | 15  | 15  | 15 | 26                   |
| 12. <i>Collier's</i> . . . . .                 | 23 | 18   | 22   | 27 | 24  | 38   | 23  | 23  | 30  | 30  | 15  | —   | 28  | 13 | 25                   |
| 13. <i>Liberty</i> . . . . .                   | 15 | 14   | 19   | 21 | 16  | 20   | 15  | 15  | 23  | 16  | 15  | 28  | —   | 14 | 23                   |
| 14. <i>True Story</i> . . . . .                | 13 | 04   | 09   | 06 | 07  | 09   | 06  | 05  | 09  | 10  | 15  | 13  | 14  | —  | —                    |

Were the correlation perfect, the diagonal immediately adjacent to the dashes would yield the highest average, the next diagonal the next highest, and so on to the most distant diagonal whose average would be the lowest. Such averages have been computed and appear at the right of Chart II. It is immediately obvious that the figures decrease markedly and comparatively regularly, but that the progression is not absolutely perfect.

Careful analysis of Chart II thus reveals a very close relationship, although not a perfect correlation, between the degree of overlapping reading and the cultural proximity of magazines on the Morgan and Leahy cultural axis. The operations accomplished in Chart II are repeated in Chart III for the Kerr and Remmers rank order of the fourteen magazines. A marked but not wholly perfect positive correlation is again evident.<sup>13</sup>

In general, therefore, it may be said that there is a high positive correlation between degree of overlapping reading<sup>14</sup> and cultural levels of magazines as determined by the method of impressionistic judgment. Insofar as those cultural levels are a valid touchstone, the technique of overlapping reading may be regarded as likewise valid.

### *φ value ranking*

*Magazines classified by type.* The basic technique of measuring cultural proximity by the degree of overlapping having been validated, it was decided to allow the findings of the current study to stand, as it were, on their own feet, and to then compare the resultant rank order with the touchstone studies. Hitherto, the  $\phi$  values had been set into a matrix determined in the one case by Morgan and Leahy and in the other by Kerr and Remmers. Now, however, it was decided to set up a matrix on the basis of the  $\phi$  values themselves, and to compare the resultant ranking with those established by the previous studies.

The seventeen magazines for which  $\phi$  values were originally com-

<sup>13</sup> The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for the Morgan and Leahy and the Kerr and Remmers ranking of the 14 magazines being .81, it would normally be expected that Charts II and III would not be greatly dissimilar. For the sake of completeness, however, both charts have been included.

<sup>14</sup> I.e., by respondents in a specific group. See footnote 6, above, and also Appendix H, p. 320, below.

puted represented various types. It was felt that overlapping reading among magazines of the same type might be a more reliable index of cultural proximity than overlapping reading among magazines of radically different types, and it was therefore decided to classify the magazines by types, and to set up the first matrix using only the magazines of the most well-represented type.

The seventeen magazines were therefore classified into five more or less obvious groups, as follows:

i. *Women's Original Fiction and Feature Monthlies*

Good Housekeeping

Ladies Home Journal

McCall's

Woman's Home Companion

ii. *Other Original Fiction and Feature Monthlies*

American

Cosmopolitan

Redbook

True Story

iii. *Original Home Improvement Monthlies*

American Home

Better Homes & Gardens

iv. *Original Fiction and Feature Weeklies*

Collier's

Liberty

Saturday Evening Post

v. *Atypical*

Household (monthly; geographically restricted distribution through grocery stores)

Life (weekly pictorial)

Look (semi-monthly pictorial)

Reader's Digest (monthly digest; reprints)

Inspection of the groups revealed that types i and ii, while distinct, are not very radically different one from the other; type iii differs noticeably from the other types, but is more akin to types i and ii than to types iv or v; type iv, while not textually radically different

CHART IV  
 $\phi$  Values for Pairs Among Ten Monthly Magazines Listed in Optimum Order of  $\phi$  Values

|  | AH | BH&G | LHJ | GH | McC | WHC | Amer | Cos | Rbk | TS | Average<br>of<br>Diagonals |
|--|----|------|-----|----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|----|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>American Home</i> .....              | —  | 32   | 23  | 25 | 20  | 08  | 17   | 12  | 13  | 03 | 03                         |
| 2. <i>Better Homes &amp; Gardens</i> ..... | 32 | —    | 33  | 34 | 26  | 25  | 24   | 16  | 11  | 04 | 09                         |
| 3. <i>Ladies Home Journal</i> .....        | 23 | 33   | —   | 31 | 36  | 39  | 29   | 19  | 15  | 07 | 10                         |
| 4. <i>Good Housekeeping</i> .....          | 25 | 34   | 31  | —  | 34  | 31  | 33   | 28  | 19  | 06 | 14                         |
| 5. <i>McCall's</i> .....                   | 20 | 26   | 36  | 34 | —   | 31  | 29   | 22  | 21  | 06 | 15                         |
| 6. <i>Woman's Home Companion</i> .....     | 08 | 25   | 39  | 31 | 31  | —   | 36   | 19  | 14  | 10 | 22                         |
| 7. <i>American</i> .....                   | 17 | 24   | 29  | 33 | 29  | 36  | —    | 26  | 19  | 09 | 24                         |
| 8. <i>Cosmopolitan</i> .....               | 12 | 16   | 19  | 28 | 22  | 19  | 26   | —   | 28  | 05 | 25                         |
| 9. <i>Redbook</i> .....                    | 13 | 11   | 15  | 19 | 21  | 14  | 19   | 28  | —   | 15 | 30                         |
| 10. <i>True Story</i> .....                | 03 | 04   | 07  | 06 | 06  | 10  | 09   | 05  | 15  | —  | —                          |



from type II, requires radically different reading habits by virtue of weekly rather than monthly appearance. The members of group V are wholly and radically distinct from all of the other types and from one another.

$\phi$  value matrix for types I, II, III. On the basis of these considerations, it was decided to construct the first  $\phi$  value matrix using the ten monthly magazines of types I, II, and III, but excluding the weeklies (type IV) and the highly atypical members of group V.

The matrix, which is here presented as Chart IV, was constructed simply by so ordering the magazines that the  $\phi$  values would conform most closely to a perfect pattern, i.e., that the averages of the diagonals parallel to the dashes would regularly decrease with each step further from the base line. This in turn assured that each large triangle would approach as closely as the  $\phi$  values permitted to being a perfect pyramid, with the highest figures on the base line and a steady decrease along each diagonal toward the corner point.

Examination of Chart IV shows that the averages do indeed decrease consistently from the base line of each triangle toward its corner point, and that the relationship within the triangles is very nearly perfect.

A convenient way of checking the degree to which this arrangement is imperfect is to note the number of "wrong-signed differences." On the hypothesis that a cultural axis or continuum is defined by the order of the magazine, it would be expected that the  $\phi$  values in each row and column would decrease steadily as they move farther from the diagonal line of dashes. Careful inspection of Chart IV reveals that this diminution occurs in all but 18 of 72 such steps possible in each of the two identical triangles. The differences are thus "correctly signed" (-) in 75.0 per cent of the steps and "wrong-signed" (+) in only 25.0 per cent.<sup>15</sup>

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for this ranking and Morgan and Leahy's ranking of nine of the ten magazines (*American Home* was not rated by Morgan and Leahy) is .92; the correlation between this ranking and the Kerr and Remmers ranking

<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to note, for purposes of comparison, that in Charts II and III there are 64 and 67 wrong-signed differences out of the 156, or 41.0 per cent and 43.0 per cent respectively.

CHART V  
*φ Values for Pairs Among Eleven Monthly Magazines Listed in Optimum Order of φ Values*

|  | AH | BH&G | RD | LHJ | GH | McC | WHC | Amer | Cos | Rbk | TS | Average<br>of<br>Diagonals |
|--|----|------|----|-----|----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|----|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>American Home</i> .....              | —  | 32   | 24 | 23  | 25 | 20  | 08  | 17   | 12  | 13  | 03 | 08                         |
| 2. <i>Better Homes &amp; Gardens</i> ..... | 32 | —    | 31 | 33  | 34 | 26  | 25  | 24   | 16  | 11  | 04 | 09                         |
| 3. <i>Reader's Digest</i> .....            | 24 | 31   | —  | 30  | 33 | 31  | 26  | 31   | 21  | 12  | 13 | 12                         |
| 4. <i>Ladies Home Journal</i> .....        | 23 | 33   | 30 | —   | 31 | 36  | 39  | 29   | 19  | 15  | 07 | 13                         |
| 5. <i>Good Housekeeping</i> .....          | 25 | 34   | 33 | 31  | —  | 34  | 31  | 33   | 28  | 19  | 06 | 15                         |
| 6. <i>McCall's</i> .....                   | 20 | 26   | 31 | 36  | 34 | —   | 31  | 29   | 22  | 21  | 06 | 20                         |
| 7. <i>Woman's Home Companion</i> .....     | 08 | 25   | 26 | 39  | 31 | 31  | —   | 36   | 19  | 14  | 10 | 24                         |
| 8. <i>American</i> .....                   | 17 | 24   | 31 | 29  | 33 | 29  | 36  | —    | 26  | 19  | 09 | 25                         |
| 9. <i>Cosmopolitan</i> .....               | 12 | 16   | 21 | 19  | 28 | 22  | 19  | 26   | —   | 28  | 05 | 25                         |
| 10. <i>Redbook</i> .....                   | 13 | 11   | 12 | 15  | 19 | 21  | 14  | 19   | 28  | —   | 15 | 29                         |
| 11. <i>True Story</i> .....                | 03 | 04   | 13 | 07  | 06 | 06  | 10  | 09   | 05  | 15  | —  | —                          |

of all ten is also .92. These coefficients indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the degree of overlapping reading of these monthly magazines and their cultural levels as determined by the method of impressionistic judgment.

φ value matrix for types I, II, III, and the Reader's Digest. To the matrix, or ranking, constructed for magazines of types I, II, and III, the *Reader's Digest*, being generally least unlike the already ordered ten magazines, was now added.

The resultant new matrix is here presented as Chart V. It will be observed that the progression of averages remains flawless, and that the proportion of "wrong-signed" differences (27 out of 90 = 30 per cent in each triangle) increases only slightly. Correlation between this ranking and the impressionistic judgment rankings remains substantially unaltered. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for this ranking and Morgan and Leahy's ranking of ten magazines (excluding *American Home*) is .93, while the coefficient for this ranking and Kerr and Remmers' ranking of all eleven is .91.

φ value matrix for types I, II, III, IV and the Reader's Digest. The three fiction and feature weeklies (type IV) were then inserted into their proper places. The resultant matrix is here presented as Chart VI.

The progression of averages will be observed to remain almost flawless, never reversing, although it does fail to change in two instances. The percentage of "wrong-signed" differences again increases but slightly, being now 30.8 (48 out of 156 in each triangle). Correlation with the impressionistic judgment rankings remains high. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for this ranking and the Morgan and Leahy ranking of thirteen magazines (excluding *American Home*) is .90, while the coefficient for this ranking and the Kerr and Remmers ranking of all fourteen is .82. Not only are these coefficients high in an absolute sense, but it must be recalled that the correlation between the two impressionistic judgment rankings for fourteen magazines<sup>16</sup> is itself .81, or less than the lower of the two coefficients for the current ranking and the impressionistic judgment rankings. The validity of overlapping reading as an indicator of the cultural

<sup>16</sup> Not including *American Home*, but including *Life*.

CHART VI  
*φ Values for Pairs Among Fourteen Magazines Listed in Optimum Order of φ Values*

|  | AH | BH&G | SEP | RD | LHJ | GH | McC | WHC | Amer | Col | Cos | Lib | Rbk | TS | Average<br>of<br>Diagonals |
|--|----|------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>American Home.</i>                       | —  | 32   | 19  | 24 | 23  | 25 | 20  | 08  | 17   | 15  | 12  | 10  | 13  | 03 | 03                         |
| 2. <i>Better Homes &amp; Gardens</i> . . . . . | 32 | —    | 26  | 31 | 33  | 34 | 26  | 25  | 24   | 18  | 16  | 14  | 11  | 04 | 09                         |
| 3. <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> . . . . .      | 19 | 26   | —   | 34 | 29  | 24 | 22  | 25  | 27   | 30  | 17  | 23  | 18  | 09 | 10                         |
| 4. <i>Reader's Digest.</i>                     | 24 | 31   | 34  | —  | 30  | 33 | 31  | 26  | 31   | 23  | 21  | 15  | 12  | 13 | 14                         |
| 5. <i>Ladies Home Journal</i> . . . . .        | 23 | 33   | 29  | 30 | —   | 31 | 36  | 39  | 29   | 24  | 19  | 16  | 15  | 07 | 15                         |
| 6. <i>Good Housekeeping.</i>                   | 25 | 34   | 24  | 33 | 31  | —  | 34  | 31  | 33   | 27  | 28  | 21  | 19  | 06 | 15                         |
| 7. <i>McCall's</i> . . . . .                   | 20 | 26   | 22  | 31 | 36  | 34 | —   | 31  | 29   | 23  | 22  | 15  | 21  | 06 | 18                         |
| 8. <i>Woman's Home Companion</i> . . . . .     | 08 | 25   | 25  | 26 | 39  | 31 | 31  | —   | 36   | 30  | 19  | 16  | 14  | 10 | 21                         |
| 9. <i>American</i> . . . . .                   | 17 | 24   | 27  | 31 | 29  | 33 | 29  | 36  | —    | 38  | 26  | 20  | 19  | 09 | 22                         |
| 10. <i>Collier's</i> . . . . .                 | 15 | 18   | 30  | 23 | 24  | 27 | 23  | 30  | 38   | —   | 23  | 28  | 15  | 13 | 23                         |
| 11. <i>Cosmopolitan</i> . . . . .              | 12 | 16   | 17  | 21 | 19  | 28 | 22  | 19  | 26   | 23  | —   | 15  | 28  | 05 | 24                         |
| 12. <i>Liberty</i> . . . . .                   | 10 | 14   | 23  | 15 | 16  | 21 | 15  | 16  | 20   | 28  | 15  | —   | 15  | 14 | 28                         |
| 13. <i>Redbook</i> . . . . .                   | 13 | 11   | 18  | 12 | 15  | 19 | 21  | 14  | 19   | 15  | 28  | 15  | —   | 15 | 28                         |
| 14. <i>True Story</i> . . . . .                | 03 | 04   | 09  | 13 | 07  | 06 | 06  | 10  | 09   | 13  | 05  | 14  | 15  | —  | —                          |

level of magazines can therefore be said to be to all intents and purposes statistically confirmed.<sup>17</sup>

### ANALYSIS OF DEVIATIONS

Most of the imperfections in the pattern in Chart VI are very probably due to the effect upon  $\phi$  values of (a) extreme difference or extreme similarity in the *types* of magazines involved, and (b) joint subscriptions.

#### *$\phi$ and magazine types*

Close examination of Chart VI will reveal that the two successive occurrences of the diagonal average of .15 is partly due to the disproportionately low  $\phi$  value of .17 for *Cosmopolitan* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. This aberrant value may very likely be due to the fact that *Cosmopolitan* is a monthly and the *Saturday Evening Post* a weekly. As previously noted, the  $\phi$  values computed for magazines of radically different types are probably not quite as valid indices of cultural proximity as are  $\phi$  values computed for more or less homogeneous magazines. This is particularly true when  $\phi$  is computed for a monthly and a weekly, since the two involve very different reading habits.

On the other hand,  $\phi$  values computed for extremely similar magazines are likely to be peculiarly high. Such high values are *not necessarily* poor indices, since the two very similar magazines are likely to be culturally closely akin. The tendency to such high  $\phi$  values for very similar magazines is probably the explanation for the sudden jump of diagonal averages from .24 to .28, and the resultant leveling at .28. Examination of the diagonal two spaces from the dashes will reveal that its peculiarly high average is likewise largely due to the high  $\phi$  values for very similar magazines; viz., *McCall's* and *Ladies Home Journal* (.36); *Liberty* and *Collier's* (.28); and *Redbook* and *Cosmopolitan* (.28).

<sup>17</sup> The technique cannot be applied, however, to picture magazines or other highly atypical publications. Introduction of the two picture magazines (*Life* and *Look*) or of the highly atypical *Household* was found seriously to distort the entire matrix. It was therefore concluded that the cultural proximity of picture or other highly atypical magazines, either to one another or to other types of magazines, could not be measured in terms of overlapping reading.

Careful analysis of Chart VI will reveal that of the few remaining deviations, many can be explained in similar terms, while several others can be explained on the basis of joint subscriptions.

### *$\phi$ and joint subscriptions*

A magazine publisher naturally encourages joint subscriptions to the several magazines published by his own firm. A high  $\phi$  value for magazines published by the same house is thus likely to be due in part to the existence of such joint subscriptions, and to be, as it were, partially a commercial artifact rather than wholly an index of cultural proximity. Somewhat disproportionately high  $\phi$  values which can be explained in these terms include *McCall's* and *Redbook* (.21), published by McCall Corporation; *Cosmopolitan* and *Good Housekeeping* (.28), published by Hearst Magazines, Inc.; and the *Woman's Home Companion*, *American*, and *Collier's* (WHC-Amer.: .36; WHC-Col.: .30; Amer.-Col.: .38), all of which are published by the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company.

### *An unexplained deviation*

No completely satisfactory explanation has been found for the disproportionately low  $\phi$  value of .08 for *American Home* and the *Woman's Home Companion*. Two hypotheses can, however, be offered in partial explanation.

It was at first thought that the explanation might lie in the contextual dissimilarity of the two magazines—that *American Home* might appeal largely to urban women, and *Woman's Home Companion* largely to the rural housewife. The readers of both magazines were therefore classified according to the size of the community in which they lived. Sixty-two per cent of the readers of *American Home* live in urban communities (with a population of over 2,500), as opposed to 50 per cent of the readers of the *Woman's Home Companion*. A second analysis showed that 32 per cent of the readers of *American Home* lived in cities of over 50,000 population, as compared with 24 per cent of the readers of the *Woman's Home Companion*. These figures obviously do not show large enough differences to account, except as one among several influences, for the very low  $\phi$  value.

Locus of publication may possibly be a causative factor. Both the *Woman's Home Companion* and the *American Home* are published in New York City, while *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Household*, both of which are somewhat similar to *American Home*, are published in Des Moines, Iowa, and Topeka, Kansas, respectively. Iowa women who read *Woman's Home Companion* and who wish to read a "home improvement" magazine may possibly find more personally interesting material and advertisements in *Better Homes and Gardens*, which is published in Iowa, or in *Household*, which is published in the Midwest, than they do in a magazine published on the Atlantic seaboard. The  $\phi$  values for *Woman's Home Companion* and the two Midwestern magazines seem to bear out this theory to some extent, being .25 for *Woman's Home Companion* and the Iowa-published *Better Homes and Gardens*, and .16 for *Woman's Home Companion* and the Kansas-published *Household*. An elaborate specially designed study would be necessary, however, to properly test this hypothesis.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A comparison of the rank order of fourteen magazines, obtained by measuring the degree of overlapping reading among 5,344 Iowa women correlates positively and almost perfectly with two inter-validating cultural rankings determined by the method of impressionistic judgment. The proportion of overlapping reading, here designated as  $\phi$ , is thus shown to be a valid measure of cultural proximity and therefore an index of the cultural level of magazines.

The validity of  $\phi$  values as an index of cultural proximity is reduced when they bear upon magazines (a) radically different in type, in which case they tend to be lower than cultural distances would warrant; (b) extremely similar in type and context, in which case they may tend to be somewhat higher than cultural distance would warrant; and (c) published by the same house, in which case they tend to reflect publishers' success in encouraging joint subscriptions, and so to be higher than cultural distance warrants.

Cultural proximity of picture magazines and other highly atypical periodicals cannot be measured in terms of the degree of overlapping reading.

# THE ANALYSIS OF DEVIANT CASES IN COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH

By Patricia L. Kendall and Katherine M. Wolf



## I. THE MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF DEVIANT CASE ANALYSIS

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THE ultimate objective of many social research undertakings is to make it possible to *predict* the behavior of particular types of individuals under specified conditions. When, for example, we study the reading habits of middle-class adults, or the development of ethnic attitudes, we attempt to locate the factors which determine the behavior or the attitude in the cases which we examine so that we can predict, and perhaps modify, the reading habits or the ethnic attitudes of persons not included in our sample.

At the present time, however, there are few, if any, generalizations in social research which permit completely accurate predictions. Every time that we try to apply our predictive schemes, we discover that there are a number of cases which do not exhibit the behavior or the attitudes which we expected of them: the persons with low income who vote for Republican candidates, the college graduates who depend on the radio as their primary source of news information, and so on.

Until recently such *deviant cases*, as they are called, were considered little more than a source of embarrassment to the researcher. He tried to "explain them away" as best he could so that his findings would present a neat bundle with no loose ends.

During the last decade, however, Paul F. Lazarsfeld has pointed



out<sup>1</sup> that the analysis of deviant cases can, by refining the theoretical structure of empirical studies, increase the predictive value of their findings. In other words, deviant case analysis can, and should, play a *positive* role in empirical research, rather than being merely the "tidying-up" process through which exceptions to the empirical rule are given some plausibility and thus disposed of.

The purpose of the present paper is to show how the analysis of deviant cases made it possible to predict with greater accuracy which individuals would correctly understand the message of a series of anti-prejudice cartoons. Before turning to that investigation, however, it may be profitable to indicate precisely how the analysis of deviant cases can accomplish the important theoretical task which Lazarsfeld assigns it.

First of all, through deviant case analysis the researcher is able to uncover relevant *additional factors* which had not previously been considered.<sup>2</sup> Predictive schemes can clearly be of greater or lesser complexity. At the one extreme are those which attempt to predict specified types of behavior on the basis of an allegedly exhaustive identification of *all* relevant factors. Such schemes, while the ideal of social research, are rarely attempted (and even more rarely achieved) because of the complexity of human behavior. At the other extreme are the schemes which attempt to predict behavior through knowledge of one or two factors which are postulated as "the" cause or causes. And it is these schemes, by far the most common in social research, which fail to account for the behavior of some of the individuals being studied.

The first function of deviant case analysis, then, is to move the latter type of predictive scheme in the direction of the former. Through careful analysis<sup>3</sup> of the cases which do not exhibit the expected behavior, the researcher recognizes the oversimplification of his

<sup>1</sup> In unpublished lectures on social research delivered in the Department of Sociology, Columbia University.

<sup>2</sup> This function has been recognized, and briefly commented on by other social scientists. See, for example, Paul Horst, *The Prediction of Personal Adjustment*, Social Science Research Council, Bulletin 48 (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1941), pp. 117-118; and Milton Gordon, "Sociological Law and the Deviant Case," *Sociometry*, X (1947), especially p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> Although detailed interviews are most frequently used, there is no specific technique for studying deviant cases. Such analysis can be achieved by virtually all of the methods of social research.

theoretical structure and becomes aware of the need for incorporating further variables into his predictive scheme. For example, researchers of the Princeton Office of Radio Research<sup>4</sup> attempted to determine why one-third of the listeners to Orson Welles' dramatization of "War of the Worlds" considered it a news-broadcast rather than a play. It was first believed by the researchers that whether a given listener would regard the broadcast as a play or a news report could be predicted from knowledge of the time at which the given listener first tuned in; it was believed that those who tuned in at the beginning and heard the opening announcements would not be misled, while those who tuned in late and thus missed the opening comments might well think that they were listening to a news-broadcast. Examination of the case-studies largely confirmed this expectation, but a number of deviant cases nevertheless appeared: approximately 15 per cent of those who had listened from the beginning of the broadcast had nevertheless considered it to be news.

Close analysis of these cases revealed that one reason<sup>5</sup> for their deviation was that during the Munich crisis of 1938 (approximately one month before the Orson Welles broadcast) listeners had become accustomed to having regular radio programs interrupted by news bulletins irrelevant to the scheduled program. The researchers therefore realized that listeners' reactions to the broadcast could not be predicted completely accurately solely by determining whether they had heard the opening announcements. Accurate prediction also required information on listeners' expectations in regard to scheduled programs being interrupted for the dissemination of important news.

In Mirra Komarovsky's study, *The Unemployed Man and His Family*,<sup>6</sup> the analysis of deviant cases similarly extended the theoretical structure. Komarovsky originally predicted that men whose authority in their families was based on their abilities as "good providers" would more frequently lose that authority when they became unem-

<sup>4</sup> See Hadley Cantril, Hazel Gaudet, and Herta Herzog, *The Invasion from Mars*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), pp. 76-79. The Princeton Office of Radio Research was the predecessor of the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University.

<sup>5</sup> Another reason will be discussed below when we consider the second function of deviant case analysis.

<sup>6</sup> Mirra Komarovsky, *The Unemployed Man and His Family* (New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1940). See especially pp. 57-58.

ployed than would men whose pre-unemployment authority rested on the love and admiration of their families. This prediction was borne out by a majority of the cases in her sample group. But in several families where the husband's authority had been based on his role as provider, the predicted loss of authority did not occur. Analysis of these deviant cases showed the necessity for including a further factor in the predictive scheme. Detailed study revealed that in most such families the wife was afraid of her husband and that this fear was so potent a factor that the husband was able to maintain his authority even when he could no longer act as provider.

The first function of deviant case analysis, then, is to correct the over-simplifications of predictive schemes by demonstrating the relevance of additional variables. The second function of this type of analysis is not to add anything to the scheme but rather to *refine the measurement of statistical variables used to locate the deviant cases.*

Virtually all social research assumes that it is valid procedure to use easily measured and easily manipulated indices in place of the complex and inaccessible concepts about which we should like ultimately to talk. The relative proportions of lawyers and ministers, for example, have been used as indices of the "secularization" of a community; Durkheim considered membership in specific religious groups, marital status, and rural-urban residence as indices of "social cohesion"; formal educational level is frequently used as an index of "mental sophistication" or "critical ability"; and so on. If social researchers questioned the legitimacy of substituting available indices for inaccessible concepts, they would soon be forced to close shop.

The crudity of the indices, however, sometimes prevents accurate prediction. When, for example, we predict that mentally sophisticated people will behave in some specified way, and attempt to confirm this expectation by examining the behavior of college graduates, we shall very probably discover a number of deviant cases. Analysis of these cases may reveal that formal education is not always the equivalent of mental sophistication, and that some of the college graduates whom we considered mentally sophisticated should more properly be classified as unsophisticated. Analysis of deviant cases will thus have indicated not the inadequacy of the basic predictive scheme, but rather

the inaccuracy of classification procedures and the crudity of our indices.

Robert K. Merton, in his study of responses to the Kate Smith war-bond selling marathon<sup>7</sup> predicted that listeners who were concerned about the safety of close relatives in the armed forces would be particularly vulnerable to Smith's accounts of the sacrifices which soldiers had made and were making in the war. Accordingly, he compared the responses of listeners who had close relatives in the armed forces and of those who did not. The findings largely confirmed his prediction but also revealed a number of deviant cases: listeners who had brothers, sons, and husbands in the armed forces, but who did not respond to the soldier-sacrifice theme. Re-examination of the interview records revealed that the crudity of the index used had led to the misclassification of all of these listeners. The mere fact of having a close relative in the armed forces was found to be in and of itself no indication of concern about their safety. The kin mentioned by these listeners were not in any immediate danger: some were stationed in the United States, some were overseas but in inactive theaters, and one was home on leave at the time of the marathon.

This example is particularly interesting, for it demonstrates that the discovery and analysis of deviant cases, while pointing out the necessity for refining crude indices, can often thereby confirm the researcher's hypothesis more adequately than might be possible were there no deviations. If, for example, *all* of the listeners with relatives in the armed forces had been particularly responsive to the soldier-sacrifice theme, Merton could not have argued so convincingly that it was their concern, their anxieties and fears, about their relatives which motivated their response. Another analyst might have advanced the counter-argument that the response was not emotionally motivated, but wholly rational—that these listeners recognized better than others the need for equipment to be purchased through war-bond sales. Deviant cases alone make it possible to choose between these two possible interpretations.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Robert K. Merton, *Mass Persuasion* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), pp. 125-130.

<sup>8</sup> The adequacy of deviant case analyses is checked in subsequent studies where the newly uncovered or newly refined variables are incorporated into the predictive scheme, and new cases examined to see whether errors in prediction have been decreased.

Deviant case analysis also served to refine the roughly constructed indices of the "invasion from Mars" study. As we remember, the analysts predicted that listeners who tuned in to the Orson Welles broadcast at the beginning would not mistake it for a news program. But, there were a number of early listeners who did make this mistake. Upon close analysis<sup>9</sup> the researchers found that, while for some of these listeners their predictive scheme was inadequate (familiarity with the practice of interrupting a scheduled program with news bulletins needed also to be taken into account), for other individuals it was the crudity of the indices which produced seemingly deviant behavior. The behavior of "tuning in at the beginning," was intended as an index of "hearing the opening announcements" or "attending to the broadcast from the beginning." But the researchers discovered that this behavior was not an infallible index. There were some listeners who said that, although they had tuned in the broadcast at the beginning, they had missed the opening announcements because, in conformity with their customary behavior, they disregarded the "opening commercials." By reclassifying such listeners as latecomers, errors in prediction were decreased.

This, then, is a rough summary of the major functions of deviant case analysis. The various points can be clarified if we follow through in detail the deviant case analysis of one study, noting in particular the specific contributions of such analysis to the study as a whole.

<sup>9</sup> See Cantril, Gaudet, and Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 80.



## II. DEVIANT CASE ANALYSIS IN THE MR. BIGGOTT STUDY: THE EXCEPTION REFINES THE RULE

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THE study we have chosen for this purpose is an attempt to discover the process through which readers misunderstood the message of a series of anti-prejudice cartoons. The study makes no effort to determine the "effects" of the cartoons on their readers, nor to analyze the audience of the cartoons as regards the number and type of persons who noticed them in newspapers and other printed media. It is rather an exploration of the psychological factors which permitted or hindered understanding.

### THE PREDICTIVE SCHEME

One hundred and sixty white, non-Jewish men from working class backgrounds formed our test public. They were questioned, in detailed interviews lasting from one to three hours, about their understanding of the cartoons, their reactions to the central character, Mr. Biggott, their own attitudes toward ethnic minorities, and so on.

The test cartoons themselves, three in number, were carefully selected from the larger series as depicting the most plausible and familiar situations in which prejudice might be involved. In each of them Mr. Biggott, the central character, is shown as a cantankerous and unattractive man of middle age and moderate income. In each of them he displays the anti-minority attitudes from which he earns his name. In the "Honor Roll" cartoon, for example, he glowers at a billboard on which the community war heroes are honored and says, "Berkowitz, Fabrizio, Ginsberg, Kelly—disgraceful!" In the second, or "Transfusion," cartoon his prejudices are widened to include not

only "foreigners" and "Jews" but also anyone who is not a Mayflower descendant: lying sick in bed, he tells a somewhat startled looking doctor, "In case I should need a transfusion, doctor, I want to make certain I don't get anything but blue, sixth-generation American blood!" In the final, or "Indian" cartoon Mr. Biggott tells a humble American Indian standing before his desk, "I'm sorry, Mr. Eagle-feather, but our company's policy is to employ 100 per cent Americans only." His prejudices keep him from seeing that he excludes the only "real" 100 per cent American.

From this brief description of the cartoon-content, it should be clear that the producers intended to ridicule prejudice, to suggest that only a person of Mr. Biggott's type would have the attitudes that he did. The "message" accordingly contained two elements. First of all, there was the relatively obvious one, the *reference to anti-minority attitudes*. Secondly, there were the *satirical elements*. This part of the cartoon message was more subtle than the first. In only one of the three cartoons (the "Indian" one) was Mr. Biggott's statement more erroneous than offensive, and the other intended cues to the satire were somewhat devious. The cartoon title, "Mr. Biggott," was noticed only by a handful of the men we interviewed, and even then it was not usually connected with the word "bigotry." The second cue, the cobweb trailing from Mr. Biggott's pin-point head, was supposed to emphasize the outmoded and old-fashioned character of Mr. Biggott's ideas. But it was . . . frequently misinterpreted: it was considered, among other things, to be "his thoughts oozing out," "the Stars and Stripes," a veil, a flycatcher, and a backscratcher.

Correct understanding, then required recognition of both of these elements, the reference to prejudice and the satire; misunderstanding occurred when one or both of the points were missed. How did our 160 respondents fare on this score?

#### TYPES AND FREQUENCY OF MISUNDERSTANDING

Careful analysis of the interviews showed that the cartoon message was interpreted in three different ways, only one of which represents correct understanding, and, what may seem more surprising, that

*approximately two-thirds* of our sample *misunderstood* the message of the cartoons.

Even after seeing all three cartoons, only 36 per cent of our sample avoided the pitfalls of understanding and recognized both the elements of prejudice and ridicule correctly. They said, for example:

*These cartoons might wake up some people to the fact that bigotry is foolish and childish. This gives the idea that bigots are lame-brained, as this cobweb and his pinpoint head show. (No evidence of prejudice, more than high school, Catholic)*<sup>10</sup>

But the large majority of our respondents, 64 per cent, fall on the other side of the understanding line. For them, the message was in some way distorted.

One group, 31 per cent of our sample, recognized neither the reference to prejudices nor the element of satire. Many of them, for example, saw no difference between the cartoons in the Mr. Biggott series and those they read in their daily newspapers and weekly magazines. In answer to the question, "Who do you think might put out such cartoons?" they typically said:

*Syndicates might put them out. We have misfortunes: deaths, hard luck and so forth, and the comics are for people. Some people are more mirthful than others. I'm mirthful myself. Those that are very mirthful read a lot of comics. Some have a lot of mirthfulness, some medium, and some are lacking in it. (Open prejudice, some grade school, Catholic)*

The possibly more serious type of misunderstanding occurred when the respondents understood the concern of the cartoons with prejudice, but failed to see their satirical elements. As a result of that failure, 33 per cent of our subjects misinterpreted the motives of the pro-

<sup>10</sup> Each respondent is described in regard to prejudice-type, education, and religion. In the present study we considered an individual prejudiced if any of his comments revealed a negative attitude toward one or more minority groups. But such comments can be expressed with varying directness. We therefore distinguished between two prejudice types: the "openly" prejudiced, who stated their anti-minority attitudes quite openly and frankly (40 per cent of our total sample), and the "latently" prejudiced, whose anti-minority attitudes appeared only as slips of the tongue, as afterthoughts, or in the dependent clauses of otherwise pro-minority sentences (27 per cent of the sample). 33 per cent showed no evidence of prejudice whatever.



ducers completely. *They believed that the cartoons were designed to create racial disturbances and to intensify existing prejudices!* Their answers to the question, "Who do you think might put out such cartoons?" were frequently of the following sort:

That's what I'd like to know. They're silly; *they're no joke*. This guy thinks other blood's not good enough for him. [What do you suppose is the purpose in putting out these cartoons?] *To get people prejudiced against religion or unions; maybe they want a change in the immigration laws.* (Open prejudice, some high school, Lutheran)

Not all of the respondents with "boomerang" understanding disapproved of the motives they attributed to the producers; not all of them were irate at being shown what they believed to be inflammatory propaganda. For instance, one respondent said:

[Who do you think might put out such cartoons?] Evidently people who don't like the Jews—if it's against the Jews. Maybe it's against the Italians. No, I guess it's against the Jews—you hear more against the Jews. [What purpose would they have in putting out such cartoons?] *To show that there are some people against the Jews, and to let other people feel freer to say they're against 'em too, I guess.* (Open prejudice, some high school, Protestant)

This respondent believes, in other words, that the cartoons are intended to give the reader the courage of his anti-Semitic convictions.

### CORRELATES OF UNDERSTANDING

The explanation of this large amount of misunderstanding turned out to be quite complicated. The major correlates of understanding were not, as we might have expected, the possession or lack of certain formal skills,<sup>11</sup> but rather the presence or absence of certain *predispositions* to understand. The first of these was related to the respondents'

<sup>11</sup> We did not disregard the possibility that it was formal skills such as educational training and familiarity with the cartoon medium which made for understanding, and the absence of these skills which made for misunderstanding. Our findings indicated, however, that while these skills played a role in *facilitating* understanding, they by no means guaranteed it. We therefore turned our attention to factors on a different psychological plane.

*prejudices*.<sup>12</sup> Because the cartoons portrayed bigots in such an uncomplimentary fashion, correct understanding carried with it a threat to the self-image of the prejudiced reader. He was therefore predisposed *not* to understand that the cartoons dealt with prejudices or that they ridiculed persons who held such attitudes. And, while it may not be immediately clear how a predisposition to misunderstand actually results in misunderstanding, our findings indicate that this relationship does exist, and that it is a close one.<sup>13</sup>

The second predisposition was related to the respondents' *awareness of and concern with* the problem of anti-minority prejudices. During the course of their interviews, a number of our respondents offered spontaneous and frequent condemnations of the type of behavior exhibited by Mr. Biggott. In addition their attitudes toward prejudice were highly conceptualized: they saw the larger implications of anti-minority attitudes as a divisive force in the labor movement, as a limitation on the effective functioning of democratic processes, and so on. This awareness and concern provided such respondents with a frame of reference which predisposed them to understand the cartoon message correctly. Our statistical results show that those with such a frame of reference understood the cartoons considerably more frequently than did the readers without this concern.<sup>14</sup>

On the basis of these two factors,<sup>15</sup> then, it is possible to distinguish three groups of respondents:

Group I. Those in whom *both factors operate to obstruct understanding*: they are prejudiced *and* unaware.

Group II. Those in whom the *two factors operate as cross-pressures*: they are either prejudiced and aware, or unprejudiced and unaware.

Group III. Those in whom *both factors operate to facilitate understanding*: they are unprejudiced *and* aware.

<sup>12</sup> See footnote 10, p. 162.

<sup>13</sup> This relationship persisted when educational level was held constant.

<sup>14</sup> This relationship was also independent of educational level.

<sup>15</sup> The original predictive scheme also included the factor of education, which, it will be remembered, was found to facilitate understanding. For the sake of simplicity, we disregard formal educational level here, and confine our attention to the two more important factors.

Examining the amount of understanding in each of these three groups provides a considerable refinement of our original finding that 64 per cent of the readers failed to understand the cartoon message correctly:

TABLE I  
*Number of Persons in Each Prejudice-Awareness Group Who Understand and Who Misunderstand*

|                | <i>Understand</i> | <i>Misunderstand</i> |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Group I.....   | 21                | 68                   |
| Group II.....  | 28                | 31                   |
| Group III..... | 8                 | 3                    |

This table also permits us to locate the deviant cases with which we shall be concerned: the 21 respondents in Group I who understand, and the three cases in Group III who misunderstand.

But, before we can turn our attention to these deviant cases, we must complete the development of our predictive scheme by discussing the *process* through which the 68 cases in Group I, predisposed as they were to misunderstanding, actually achieved that misunderstanding.

### PROCESS OF MISUNDERSTANDING

In tracing the process through which these 68 respondents arrived at their misunderstanding, we find our starting point in the fact that most of them *identified* with Mr. Biggott.<sup>16</sup> Coincident with this identification, there was in many cases a momentary flash of understanding, when respondents recognized that the producers of the cartoons were ridiculing persons with ethnic attitudes like those of

<sup>16</sup> By "identification" we mean the mental process through which a subject assumes the role of another person to such an extent that actions, either verbal or behavioral, directed toward the object of identification are experienced as directed toward the identifying person. Evidence of identification with Mr. Biggott was manifested by the subject's acting in one or more of the following ways: (a) explicitly affirming identification, saying, for example, "I guess I'm a Mr. Biggott"; (b) consistently and openly sympathizing with Mr. Biggott, expressing sorrow, for example, that Mr. Biggott looked so weak and sick in the "Transfusion" cartoon; (c) interpreting a threat to or criticism of Mr. Biggott as referring to himself, as, for example, becoming emotionally upset by the cobweb on Mr. Biggott's head.

Mr. Biggott. Thus, for example, when asked what the artist was trying to do, one respondent who had been openly sympathetic to Mr. Biggott answered:

I don't know. *Trying to make a chump out of me maybe.* (Open prejudices, grade school, Methodist)

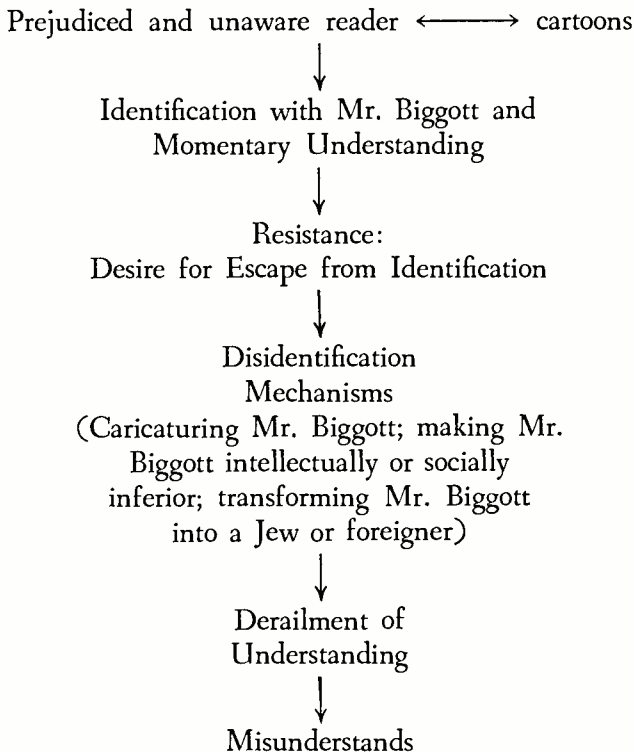
But such understanding carried with it painful implications for the prejudiced reader, and he therefore sought ways to escape it. The mechanisms employed in this escape, while superficially very different, all had one thing in common: in all of them the readers singled out certain flaws in Mr. Biggott's person or character and magnified them to such an extent that identification was no longer possible. Thus one of the "*disidentification* mechanisms," as we called them, involved caricaturing Mr. Biggott's physical appearance; another made him intellectually inferior; through another his snobbish pretensions were closely examined and he was unmasked as being socially inferior; and in still another he was transformed into a foreigner or a Jew.

Once this step of disidentification had been completed, it became safe for the prejudiced readers to acknowledge the cartoon message. Once they had destroyed the bonds of sympathy between Mr. Biggott and themselves, it was possible for them to admit that Mr. Biggott's prejudices were ridiculous. In other words, they could have understood the message, but limited its applicability.

They did not understand, however, because in the process of their disidentification the momentary comprehension with which they started became confused and lacking in focus. They were so absorbed in building up barriers of difference between Mr. Biggott and themselves that their understanding was sidetracked. This final step in the process we called the "*derailment*" of understanding.

Diagram I summarizes this theory as to the process by which so many of the prejudiced readers arrived at their misunderstanding of the cartoon message.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> An analysis of the interview with one prejudiced reader, which illustrates this process in more concrete detail, appears in Appendix I, p. 322, below.

*Diagram I***THE DEVIANT CASES**

Although the predictive scheme in the present study was fairly complicated, being based on several factors, it still failed to account for the behavior of a considerable group of readers. In the remainder of this paper, therefore, we shall analyze these deviant cases. In doing so we have two purposes. We hope, first of all, to show how deviant case analysis refined the theoretical structure of this study in particular. And secondly, we hope to show how such analysis can be applied to communications research in general.

There were two groups of deviant cases in the present study:

Group A: the 21 readers who were prejudiced and unaware, yet understood.

Group B: the 3 readers who were unprejudiced and aware, yet misunderstood.

We shall consider each of these groups in turn.

#### GROUP A. TWENTY-ONE READERS WHO WERE PREJUDICED AND UNAWARE—YET UNDERSTOOD

In analyzing these deviant cases we noted, first of all, that the respondents did not show the resistance expected of them, but rather accepted the cartoon message fully. One anti-Semite, for example, when asked what the artist was trying to do in the cartoons answered:

*He's an understanding person, trying to make people who think like Mr. Biggott think they are not right. (Latent prejudice, grade school, Lutheran)*

Now according to the process of *misunderstanding* which we outlined in preceding paragraphs, the message was derailed as the subjects sought to disentangle themselves from their identification with Mr. Biggott. The fact that these respondents *did* understand, therefore, suggests that either (a) they felt no need to disidentify themselves from Mr. Biggott, or if they did, that (b) their disidentification was of such a kind that derailment did not occur.

We shall examine these alternatives separately.

#### *No need to disidentify*

Individuals sought to disidentify themselves from Mr. Biggott only if, by allowing their identification to remain, they experienced a criticism. If, however, they had no guilt feelings about their prejudices—if they felt secure in having them—then the message implied no threat to their egos. They did not need to differentiate themselves from Mr. Biggott (or, at least, from his prejudiced side) because their identification was a harmless experience. They did not need to resist understanding the message because such understanding did not increase their anxieties; it did not chastize them for something which they disliked admitting.

While we had no direct measure of security in having prejudices, we did note that our respondents behaved in very different ways when

their attitudes and prejudices were probed. And these different behaviors we took as indirect measures of security. Some respondents were completely at ease in the interview situation. They stated their attitudes without qualification, showed no resentment of the questions asked them, and made their comments with a definiteness and assurance which was obvious even in written interview records. Other respondents, however, showed a very different reaction to the interview. They blushed or started when their attitudes were probed; they retracted statements which they had previously made; and they were shocked or startled by questions concerning minority groups. A third group showed a vacillating pattern. At some moments they seemed secure and volunteered comments before the interviewer asked them any questions; at other moments, however, they appeared to be ill at ease. The difference between these three patterns was so clearcut that it was possible to use it as a basis for classifying the whole sample. Those who showed the first pattern were labelled as "secure"; those who showed the second pattern were called "insecure"; and the final group was classified as "vacillating."

Our data indicated that *this factor of security lessened the need for disidentification*. While exactly one-third of the deviant cases were secure in the interview situation, this was true of only 18 per cent of the 68 prejudiced-unaware respondents whose understanding was derailed.

Security in one's attitudes, then, is a further variable which should be incorporated in our original predictive scheme, for it defines one of the conditions under which prejudices will lead to misunderstanding. Technically speaking, the analysis of these deviant cases is completed once this additional factor has been found. However, in order to illustrate how this security operated in the present instance and what the roots of this sureness were, we shall present abbreviated analyses of some of our interviews.

There seem to be at least three reasons why the respondents whom we consider here felt no need to disidentify themselves from Mr. Biggott.

*Conviction of superiority.* Some respondents appeared to be completely *convinced of their superiority* to the groups toward whom they were prejudiced. For them such negative attitudes had a "factual"

basis and were therefore justified. To say that a Jew or a Negro is inferior was, in their mind, virtually the same as saying that a moron has a low intelligence. It was true by definition. And just as one feels no guilt in "criticizing" the intellectual level of a moron, so these respondents felt no shame in expressing negative attitudes toward Jews and Negroes. For example:

*There's two kinds of people in the world—the quality and the equality. Now these people [pointing to men in union hall] are the equality, you get what I mean, don't you? I go among them, they like me, they think I'm the greatest fellow in the world. I kid 'em along. But I'd never recognize them socially. I don't want to have anything to do with them. Now you see that fellow there [points to a Negro]—now do you think if I were looking for engineers I'd hire him? He might be very well qualified and all that, but if there were a white man, which do you think I'd take? [Well, if there were no unemployed engineers and a well-qualified Negro came in, would you hire him?] No! (Open prejudice, education not known, Catholic)*

As a member of the "quality," then, he had a right to be prejudiced, and he felt completely secure in expressing his attitudes. This made it unnecessary for him to resist understanding the message and, correlatively, to disidentify himself from Mr. Biggott. Thus, in looking at the Indian cartoon he said:

*Only one word that should be changed there—"100%." Employ Americans first—that's what they do in California. Employ the foreigners after every native American goes to work.*

Mr. Biggott was accepted as is, prejudices and all. And because there was no need for or process of disidentification, this respondent understood that the message of the cartoons was addressed to bigots:

*My grandpappy was born in the United States—my grandmother too—maybe I'm a bigot.*

*Passing the buck.* A second source of security derived from *blaming one's prejudices on someone else*. If one could say, "Yes, I don't like the Jews [or the Negroes] but it's not my fault," then there was no need to attach guilt feelings to the expression of prejudices. And because one was not responsible for his prejudices, identification with Mr. Biggott held no threat.



The simplest thing, of course, was to attribute one's prejudices to family background:

I wouldn't want to live next door to a Negro. Of course, there's good and bad of every kind. But I wouldn't want to move my wife next door to Negroes. . . . *But I guess it was just the way I was brought up.* For instance, there are Negroes that go to the Veterans' Conventions for the Legion. They got their own organizations—and that's fine. I wouldn't want to sleep in the same room with a Negro if there was a shortage either. He might be morally just as good as me—but that's just my background. (Open prejudice, some high school, Catholic)

Disidentification from Mr. Biggott was not necessary for this respondent who did not regard his prejudice as a personal defect. There was nothing wrong with him; it was just his background that was to blame. And since he was not personally responsible for his anti-Negro feelings, he was secure in his attitudes. There was no danger that the message of the cartoons would attack him personally, and therefore he could allow himself to understand it:

[What is the artist trying to do in the cartoons?] *He's trying to eliminate bigotry.*

*Safety in numbers.* Finally, respondents gained a sense of security from the *belief that everyone was prejudiced*, that it was natural to have anti-minority feelings.

[Do you think a Jew or a Negro should be hired?] A Negro? Well, it all depends on his qualifications and conditions and extraneous circumstances. The Negro might not be happy in his job . . . I'd hire a Jew for a selling position because he is so aggressive. There are some high class Jews. [If there weren't enough jobs to go around, like after the last war, do you think Negroes and Jews should be hired while whites were out of work?]<sup>18</sup> Well—*naturally* I'd favor my own kind. *We all do.* (Open prejudice, high school, Baptist)

This sort of attitude also eliminated the need to disidentify oneself from Mr. Biggott. Guilt feelings were precluded by the belief that prejudices were widespread, that they were, in fact, part of "human

<sup>18</sup> The use of such "loaded" questions was at times made necessary by the resistance of subjects toward expressing prejudices.

nature," and not an idiosyncratic defect. There was thus no danger in identifying with Mr. Biggott, since he too was just "human" in having prejudices. No particular resistance to understanding the message appeared, since the prejudiced respondent did not believe that he was being singled out for criticism by the cartoons. Rather, they were addressed to everyone, and there was no stigma attached to understanding what they meant:

[What do you think about cartoons like this in general?] I think they serve a good purpose. An idea is much better expressed as a picture than as a written article. *We all* need to see cartoons like this. *We* need to be reminded. I know I'm apt to forget and say "Those dirty kikes"—*we all do*.

These deviant cases, then, simultaneously confirmed and refined our basic hypothesis. We found that these respondents' understanding was facilitated by certain of their attitudes. Our original expectation was that prejudiced individuals who identified with Mr. Biggott would feel that they were being criticized for their prejudices. We assumed, furthermore, that as a result of their feeling of "peril" in identifying with Mr. Biggott, they would attempt in all sorts of ways to escape that identification, and that during the course of differentiating themselves their understanding would be derailed. But, as we have seen, this whole process was set in motion only when respondents felt some shame in having prejudices, and accordingly felt criticized when their prejudices were pointed out to them. If, however, an individual felt, for any of a variety of reasons, secure in having prejudices, then the identification with Mr. Biggott held no threats, no process of disidentification occurred, and, accordingly, there was no derailment of understanding.

### *Ease of disidentification*

But even if the process of disidentification was set in motion, misunderstanding did not inevitably occur. Such deviation resulted when the subject did not become absorbed in the disidentification process and therefore did not lose sight of the message. When his disidentification required no effort, when it was completed almost automatically, then the respondent did not have time to have his understanding sidetracked. This commonly occurred when a subject who had been

identifying with Mr. Biggott suddenly found himself being attacked by his identification object.

One respondent of Irish descent, for example, at first identified with Mr. Biggott, wholly accepting Mr. Biggott's definition of Americanism:

[What kind of blood does Mr. Biggott want?] He wants pure American blood—the blood of people who've been here a long time . . .

[What is your idea of a 100 per cent American?] One who's been over here lots of years . . . It takes a couple of generations to make a good American. (Open prejudice, some grade school, Catholic)

But the need to differentiate himself from Mr. Biggott asserted itself early, and even as he was shown the first cartoon, he began to disidentify by transforming Mr. Biggott into a foreigner. When he was shown the "Honor Roll" cartoon in which Mr. Biggott attacks the minority group to which the subject belonged, the disidentification was suddenly and dramatically completed.

[He carefully reads the names on the honor roll. After seeing the name "Kelly" . . .] *Son of a bitch!* [What names does he find disgraceful?] All the foreigners. He seems to hate everybody no matter how hard they fought the Japs. *The Irish have done most of the fighting in this war—a man named Kelly was our first big hero.*

This disidentification was so effortless that the respondent's understanding never had a chance to be sidetracked. Despite his open anti-Semitism,<sup>19</sup> he grasped the message correctly. Asked what he thought of cartoons like the Biggott series, he replied:

They're a pretty good idea. [For what purpose?] To show that kind of people up.

And, at the conclusion of his interview, when asked "What is the artist trying to do?" he replied:

He is trying to show what it is all about—*trying to show up bigotry.*

The type of deviant case represented by this respondent thus helped to refine our theory of misunderstanding. From such cases we

<sup>19</sup> "Jews have big noses. Also they have a lot of money and they don't work. They're tight with their money."

learned that when disidentification occurred not as a drawn-out process in which the respondent became submerged, but rather as a sudden shock, then understanding was not derailed.

### *Competing frames of reference*

There are still a few "residual" cases. Among the prejudiced-unaware men who nevertheless understood the cartoons, there still remain a few cases where comprehension did not seem explicable in terms of either of the processes thus far outlined. Analysis of these deviant cases reveals that they never identified with Mr. Biggott at all, and thus their understanding cannot be related to the process of disidentification.

These respondents were young boys for whom age seems to have played a crucial role. Older prejudiced respondents were offered only the possibility of identifying with Mr. Biggott, thereby exposing themselves to criticism. For them, *misunderstanding* was a tool by which they maintained their self-respect. Younger respondents were given an additional alternative and one which seems to have had positive gratifications. *They could liken Mr. Biggott to their fathers, and therefore use their understanding of the cartoons as a weapon for fighting the old-fashioned ideas and for rejecting the authority of the parental generation.* The existence of a competing frame of reference made it possible for them to avoid identifying with Mr. Biggott, and their understanding therefore carried with it no threatening implications.

The process by which this weapon was developed can be seen in the comments of one such youth as he progressed through the interview. Early in the interview this respondent said of Mr. Biggott:

This guy has his *old ideas from the last war*. He hasn't come into the groove yet. He ought to brush up on his stuff—what's American and all that . . . [Would you like to see someone talk back to this man?] Yes. Maybe someone of his own beliefs who used to be like him, but *who woke up to how wrong he was* and can convince him that *he is a crackpot—no, not that—but that he is behind the times.* (Latent prejudice, more than high school, Lutheran)

Two aspects of this comment are particularly to be noted. In the first place, the respondent very deliberately characterizes prejudices as old-fashioned. While most subjects emphasize the *ridiculous* fea-

tures of prejudice, calling bigots "lame-brained" or "silly," this boy stops himself in mid-sentence to say that anti-minority attitudes are not "crackpot" but "behind the times."

Secondly, and equally importantly, the boy recommends that Mr. Biggott be answered by "someone who used to think as he did but who woke up to how wrong he was," i.e., by someone who had old-fashioned ideas at one time, but who now has become more modern.

This comment suggested to us that comprehension of the Mr. Biggott cartoons on the part of our young male respondents was a weapon in a battle between generations. Psychological studies have revealed that adolescents characteristically experience a strong tendency to rebel against the authority of the older generation in general and against parental authority in particular. Such tendencies typically manifest themselves in the rejection of "outmoded ideas," in the championing of "modernity" against parental "conservatism" and "anachronism." An idea held by one's parents is regarded as *ipso facto* old-fashioned, and thus to be opposed. Such rebellion is the more severe if the youth finds that he has been seduced by his parents into accepting ideas which are not acceptable to the larger community.

We thus came to suspect that many of the boys in our sample were considering the fight against Mr. Biggott's prejudices as a weapon in the perennial conflict against the authority of their parents. We glimpsed for the first time the possibility that these subjects were fighting not so much *for* an ideology, as rather *against* the background in which they had been raised. They had been led by their parents to believe that Jews and Negroes were inferior beings, but these prejudices they were now sloughing off along with many other ideas imposed by parental authority.

Despite their eagerness to rebel, however, adolescents are restrained by fear of the authority which their parents still wield over them. An inner taboo develops against expressing the conflict openly. But in the course of the interviews, this taboo apparently broke down. Our young respondents lost their fear of challenging their parents openly. The interview seems to have itself provided the release. For as the boys were forced by the interviewer to describe Mr. Biggott, they began to speak of his weakness and his powerlessness. Because the cartoon figure was at best a weak adversary, the young boys apparently

attributed that weakness to the older generation. As the interview progressed, *Mr. Biggott became the explicit symbol of the old-fashioned (and weak) father.* Thus, the respondent whose early comment suggested the entire rebellion hypothesis later said, when asked if Mr. Biggott is married:

Aw [scornful] no, I don't think so. Who's going to marry *him*? [Is he successful?] If by that you mean that he has got enough money to retire on—well, yes, he's a success. [But you don't necessarily consider that the measure of success?] No, I don't. He's not successful.

And later in the interview:

[Are there more or less people like that in the United States now?] I think there are less. [Why?] Well, I think, well—*maybe this guy is married. He might have a son. His son will get back and straighten him out a bit.* I'll change that—he is married . . . [How did you vote?] I haven't voted. *My father is a Republican.* [Points to Mr. Biggott] *I think he'd be a Republican too.* [How do you think you will vote?] *I wouldn't vote a straight Republican or Democratic ticket.* I'd size up the man, get opinions from the newspapers as to what he will do and so on, and decide that way.

The protest against his father thus reached a conscious and articulate level. Mr. Biggott, like his father, needed to be “straightened out a bit” by his son; Mr. Biggott, like his father, would just vote Republican rather than waiting to “size up” the candidates of both parties in a truly intelligent way.

But in addition to becoming able to express the conflict explicitly, *the boy seizes upon the message of the cartoons to fight the ideas of his father:*

[Would you like to show these cartoons to anyone?] *Well, I would like to show them to my mother and father.* [Why?] *To try to make them think about people in this country who believe the way Mr. Biggott does. For benefit—to make them know that “Maybe I'm a Mr. Biggott myself.”* That this war should have changed beliefs, and that *we should get rid of this.*<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> It is difficult to believe that an individual who talked of the cartoons in these terms could show traces of even latent prejudice. Nonetheless in earlier sections of his interview this youth, who thinks we “should get rid of ideas like Mr. Biggott's,” had made the following comments:

Understanding the cartoons thus served a twofold function for these young boys. In the first place, it suggested to them that the parental generation was not, after all, as strong as they might have believed; Mr. Biggott was weak and ridiculous, and therefore one's father probably was to some extent also. The rebellion against authority thus lost some of its fearsome prospects. Secondly, the cartoons provided ammunition for the rebellion. They showed up the father's weaknesses and indicated his vulnerable spots. Far from interpreting the message of the cartoons as a personal criticism, then, these prejudiced boys regarded the message of the cartoons as a possible weapon against the father. And thus they experienced none of the resistance to understanding which we observed among the older prejudiced respondents.

These interpretations account for the understanding of eighteen of the original twenty-one deviant cases in the prejudiced-unaware group. As so frequently happens in deviant case analysis, our information on the remaining three was inadequate to explain their deviant behavior. Further interviews with these respondents might have revealed that one or more of the factors outlined above was operative, that they were cases of "borderline" prejudice, or the like.

#### GROUP B. THREE READERS WHO WERE UNPREJUDICED AND AWARE—YET MISUNDERSTOOD

Having considered the respondents who were prejudiced and unaware but nevertheless understood, we now turn to the other side of the deviant case picture. Three respondents were unprejudiced and aware, but nevertheless misunderstood the message.

Two of these deviant cases contributed little to our analysis. One, a Spanish-born seaman, had had very little education and, according to the interviewer, spoke English only with great difficulty. In his

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[Can you tell a Jew?] You can tell by their *noses*. And sometimes if you hear them *yapping away*—wait, I'll look for one. Ah, [laughs] there's one over there. See, his shoulders are *hunched*; he's leaning over that other man and his glasses are way down on his nose . . . [Do you think most people whose families have been in this country for a long time have ideas like his?] Yes, I think so. A good many of the westerners—they believe they are true Americans, they look down on easterners. *I would*. In the west you don't see many Jews or Negroes or anything like that.

case misunderstanding seems to have been the result of genuine intellectual inability to comprehend the meaning of the cartoons.

The second case showed signs of a similar intellectual inability to understand. He recognized Mr. Biggott's prejudices in each of the individual cartoons, but never saw the satire. Furthermore, he did not understand that he was being shown three in a *series* of cartoons; he discussed each one separately as though it were wholly unrelated to the others. He found entirely meaningless all questions about the purpose of "the cartoons."

The final interview will be analyzed in some detail, however, since it represents the only deviant case in the present study which results from a mis-classification arising out of the crudeness of our indices.

The respondent in question, an adult, not only exhibited no evidence of anti-Semitic prejudices, but constantly assured the interviewer of his *pro*-Semitism. In various parts of his interview he said, for instance:

A lot of those Jewish boys and girls are *handsomer* . . . I want to tell you—possibly you don't know, possibly you do—about the finest Jew I've met in my life, and *I've met plenty of fine ones* . . . Along about 1900, 1903, 1907 there was a few old-time Jewish people around here too. And we used to like to listen to their history of the lives they lead and all that. Some of them were *very interesting* . . . Take *Abe Meyer—we were kids playing together more than fifty years ago.* (No evidence of prejudice, some grade school, Catholic)

In the course of the interview the respondent furthermore asserted on several occasions and in various different ways that there should be no discrimination against creed or color, and that the problem of prejudice was extremely important.

Theoretically, then, this respondent had no prejudices which might interfere with his willingness to understand the message of the cartoons. But when asked who he thought would put out such cartoons, the respondent replied:

. . . some crackpot, because I can't see where anybody in his right mind would sketch a cartoon and send out bad descriptions of different races. Some of those people imagine that there's nobody right but them.



The question therefore arose as to why this theoretically unprejudiced respondent should so misunderstand the cartoons.

It is of course possible that, as a genuine pro-Semite, he was "shocked" into misunderstanding. His condemnation of prejudices may have stemmed not so much from an abstract concern with the problem as rather from a personalized identification with and sympathy for Jews. He may have been so personally sensitized to the problem of anti-Semitism that his initial shock prevented him from reading, or from thinking, far enough to see that Mr. Biggott was ridiculed rather than held up as a model of exemplary behavior.

There is, however, another and different theory which may account for this theoretically unprejudiced man's misunderstanding the cartoons. The theory is suggestive rather than conclusive, but will be presented at some length because of its methodological implications.

Because all persons who protest too much are suspect, we began to suspect this man who continually told us how much he loved the Jews. We began to feel that his ardent pro-Semitism might be spurious, that it might be a disguise of latent anti-Semitism.

Careful re-examination of the interview record indicated that, while only through a highly subjective interpretation could this respondent have been classified as latently anti-Semitic, there nevertheless were suggestive slips. Although he never made a definitely negative statement, there were some cracks in his armor of repression. In describing the "finest Jew" he ever met, for example, he said:

He's Dr. — of 1136 Fifth Avenue—*he's a white man.*

And again,

Sometimes I've seen boys and girls and was told after that they were Jewish boys and girls and I *couldn't believe it.* You take *wealthy* people—along Park Avenue, Madison or Fifth Avenue . . .

In the present study there was only one such mis-classification. In other studies it may develop that many more of the deviant cases will be explainable in these terms. If it had been possible to state definitely that this respondent, however highly repressed his prejudices, was actually an anti-Semite, then he would no longer have been a deviant case.



### III. SUMMARY

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THE analysis of these two groups of deviant cases has suggested certain refinements for our basic scheme of understanding. These can best be summarized in terms of the two basic functions of deviant case analysis: (1) to discover additional relevant factors, and (2) to refine the measurement of factors already considered.

#### DISCOVERY OF ADDITIONAL FACTORS

Careful examination of the two groups of deviant cases indicated that their deviations could be partially accounted for by introducing further variables into our basic scheme of understanding.

We found, first of all, that prejudiced respondents who felt *secure* about their attitudes did not experience a need to disidentify themselves from Mr. Biggott. They were impervious to the propagandist's criticism, and therefore did not seek ways to exclude themselves from it. Had we had a good measure of *security*, then, we could have introduced it as a further variable and thus reduced the number of deviant cases among the prejudiced-unaware subjects.

We found, further, certain unanticipated *uses of understanding*. Young boys, even when prejudiced, were seen to use their understanding as a weapon against the authority of their parents. If it were possible to find other type situations in which understanding had positive value, then, by noting the existence of such situations we might be able to predict more accurately whether or not any respondent would understand.

### REFINING BASIC VARIABLES

By examining the subtleties of variables for which we had only crude indices we discovered that some subjects, whose behavior was apparently discrepant, actually conformed to, rather than deviated from, the basic theory.

We found, for example, that prejudices existed on psychological levels beyond the reach of our relatively crude indices. An individual who seemed unprejudiced according to our relatively gross, but more easily ascertainable, indices of prejudice, appeared after deeper psychological probing, to be very possibly a prejudiced person who was attempting to repress his real negative attitudes.

# PATTERNS OF INFLUENCE: A Study of Interpersonal Influence and of Communications Behavior in a Local Community

By Robert K. Merton



## I. INTRODUCTION

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THIS is an exploratory study focused upon the place of mass communications in patterns of interpersonal influence. Based primarily upon interviews with eighty-six men and women drawn from diverse social and economic strata in "Rovere," a town of 11,000 on the Eastern seaboard, it is essentially a case study rather than a statistical analysis<sup>1</sup> of influence patterns. The initial substantive aim of this pilot study was fourfold: (1) to identify types of people regarded as variously "influential" by their fellows; (2) to relate patterns of communications behavior to their roles as influential persons; (3) to gain clues to the chief avenues through which they came to acquire influence; and (4) to set out hypotheses for more systematic study of the workings of interpersonal influence in the local community.

The body of this report is devoted to an analysis of basically different types of influential persons: types which we shall call the "local" and the "cosmopolitan." But before turning to these substantive materials, there may be some interest in glancing briefly at two procedural and methodological detours encountered on the way. The first detour was taken when an applied research in sociology, originally devoted to a delimited practical problem, gave rise to theoretic con-

<sup>1</sup> Although figures summarizing our case-study materials are cited from time to time, these are merely heuristic, not demonstrative, in character. They serve only to indicate the sources of interpretive hypotheses which await detailed, systematic inquiry.

structs which unexpectedly emerged in the process of investigation. Although the pilot study was in the beginning undertaken to learn the functions served by a national newsmagazine for various types of readers—a problem in the sociology of mass communications—it was soon reoriented as a result of initial impressions and findings. For it appeared that the magazine was utilized in markedly different ways by people who exercised varying degrees of interpersonal influence in their community. In rapidly retracing our steps over the second detour, we shall meet the obstacle which required us to devise alternative schemes for analyzing the same qualitative data. The plain fact is that our initial analysis was quite unproductive. With the emergence of the concepts of local and cosmopolitan influentials, however, the “same” qualitative data led to productive results which have since lent themselves to elaboration. After this brief procedural review of these two phases of our qualitative analysis, we shall be better prepared to assess the substantive account of local and cosmopolitan influentials.



## II. CONVERSION OF AN APPLIED INTO A THEORETIC RESEARCH

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THE practical problem which gave rise to this inquiry was clear enough.<sup>2</sup> The research department of a national newsmagazine sought to learn how one could locate the areas of personal influence in a community. Further, what were the characteristics, including magazine readership, of these influential persons? Was this magazine reaching the "key" persons in networks of personal relations? And however this might be, what patterns of use of this magazine were made by influential people in comparison with rank-and-file readers?

As the practical problem was formulated, it at once led to a focus on evolving *methods of identifying* persons with varying degrees of interpersonal influence. Obviously, one could not determine whether readers of this newsmagazine were or were not disproportionately comprised of "influentials," unless procedures for locating and identifying influentials were at hand. Furthermore, the very fact that a research was initiated to deal with this problem indicated that some plausible indices of influence were considered inadequate by the client. Such seeming indices of influence as occupation, income, prop-

<sup>2</sup> It is tempting to pursue the digression which this suggests. The clients were presumably concerned with learning more about patterns of interpersonal influence largely, if not wholly, because the "influentiality theme" might aid them in selling advertisements. (Frank Stewart lists 43 national magazines which use as "copy themes some variation of the idea that their readers are persons possessing influence.") This practical objective fused with the existence of a research department to suggest the need for research in this field. And, as we shall see, once the research was initiated, its objectives became diversified, spreading into subproblems only remotely related to the original objectives. The functions of applied research for pertinent theory need to be systematically explored; some beginnings are set forth in my paper, "The Bearing of Empirical Research upon the Development of Social Theory," presented to the American Sociological Society, at Cleveland, March 2, 1946. This is being further developed in a monograph now in preparation on "The Expert and Applied Social Science."

erty-ownership, and organizational affiliations of readers were available in the files of the newsmagazine or were readily obtainable through a canvass of readers. A research directed toward evolving more effective indices of influence was thus premised on the hypothesis that although people of high "social status" may exert relatively great interpersonal influence, social status is not an adequate index. Some individuals of high status apparently wield little interpersonal influence, and some of low-status have considerable interpersonal influence. New qualitative investigation was needed to evolve more direct indices of interpersonal influence.

But, as is not infrequently the case, it was assumed that the problem had been adequately stated at the outset. Do the readers of this magazine disproportionately comprise people of influence and, in any case, do influentials put the magazine to different uses than do rank-and-file readers? Actually, this was a *premature specification* of the problem, as we realized only after the pilot study had been under way for some time. For, as we discovered, it is not so much a matter of identifying *influentials* (and the use they make of newsmagazines) but of detecting *types of influentials* (and the associated differences in their orientation toward newsmagazines as agencies of information concerning the larger society rather than their own local community).

The major shift in this study, as we shall see, occurred with the recognition that the *practical problem had been overspecified* in its initial formulation. This overspecification for a time diverted our attention from salient alternatives of investigation. Only when the initial problem had been reformulated, only when the search for means of identifying influentials was converted into a search for types of influentials likely to differ in their communications behavior, did the research prove productive both in its applied and in its theoretic dimensions. Only then did data, not previously assimilable by our interpretive scheme, "fall into place." Only then were we able to account for diverse and previously unconnected observational data through a limited number of concepts and propositions.

As we shall see in the central part of this report, it was only after the restatement of the problem that we were in a position to advance toward both the applied and the theoretic objectives of the inquiry.



### III. TWO PHASES OF A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF INFLUENTIALS

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FOLLOWING upon the reformulation of the problem, we were concerned with devising procedures, however crude, for enabling informants to single out people (apart from their immediate family) who exerted significant "influence" upon them in the course of social interaction.<sup>3</sup> We were not concerned with influence exercised indirectly through political, market, and other administrative decisions which affect large numbers of people.<sup>4</sup> In prolonged interviews, informants were led to mention people to whom they turned for help or advice regarding various types of personal decisions (decisions ranging from choice of a job or educational plans for self and children to selections of books, plays or furniture). Informants were invited, further, to indicate those persons who, so far as they knew, were generally sought out for advice in these several spheres. Such tentative identifications of individuals exercising interpersonal influence were of course linked with reasons advanced by informants for singling out these individuals rather than others.

In the course of these interviews, our eighty-six informants came to mention a total of 379 people who, in one respect or another, were said to have exerted influence upon them in a concrete situation involving decisions. Some people turned up repeatedly in this can-

<sup>3</sup> Nothing will be said in this paper of the procedures developed in preliminary fashion for the identification of people exerting various degrees of interpersonal influence. For a report of these procedures as adapted in a subsequent research, see Frank A. Stewart, "A Sociometric Study of Influence in Southtown," *Sociometry*, X (1947), 11-31. The requisite methodology is being notably developed in a research on influence in a Midwestern community currently conducted by the Bureau of Applied Social Research, under a research grant from MacFadden Publications.

<sup>4</sup> For a brief discussion of the concept of interpersonal influence as provisionally employed in this exploratory study, see section VII. "Addenda Remarks," p. 215 below.



vass. (There were 1043 "mentions" referring to 379 persons, some of whom were referred to on thirty or more occasions.) Of the 379, fifty-seven, or 15 per cent, were mentioned four or more times and this was provisionally taken as our working criterion of "influentiality." As we shall presently see, this wholly tentative and arbitrary criterion enabled us to identify cases in which we could examine the operation of interpersonal influence. Thirty of these influential people were subsequently interviewed with regard to their own evaluation and image of their influence, evaluations of the influence exercised by others upon them, situations in which they exerted influence, their communications behavior, and the like. All this comprised the data for analysis.

This is not the place to report in detail the first, rather unproductive, phase of our analysis of the communications behavior of influentials. But by briefly considering how and why this gave rise to an alternative kind of analysis, something may be gained toward a *codification* of methods of qualitative analysis.<sup>5</sup> Just enough will be said to indicate how the data exerted pressure upon the research worker for successively so modifying his concepts that, with the recasting of the data in terms of the new concepts, there emerged a set of suggestive uniformities in place of the previously untidy aggregation of facts.

In what we now know to be the relatively sterile Phase 1 of our analysis, we not only distinguished the influentials from the rank-and-file, but went on to distinguish influentials according to their dynamic position in the local influence-structure. Thus, distinctions were drawn between the currently influential (occupying a supposedly stable position), the potentially influential (the rising star—

<sup>5</sup> This part of our report, then, is a bid to the sociological fraternity for the practice of incorporating in publications a detailed account of the ways in which qualitative analyses *actually* developed. Only when a considerable body of such reports are available will it be possible to *codify* methods of qualitative analysis with something of the clarity with which quantitative methods have been articulated. The present report suffers from the deletion of concrete materials illustrating the successive shifts in the categories of analysis; the few details reported here are drawn from a more extensive monograph on file in the Bureau of Applied Social Research. However, this may be sufficient to emphasize the need for increasingly detailed accounts of qualitative analyses in sociology which report not only the *final product* but also the sequential steps taken to obtain this product. In the view of the Bureau, this codification is devoutly to be desired both for the *collection* and the *analysis* of qualitative sociological data.

still upward mobile), the waning influential (passed the zenith—now downward mobile), and the dormant influential (possessing the *objective* attributes of the influential but not exploiting these for the exercise of influence). The non-influentials were in turn divided into the rank-and-file (with a limited range of social contacts in which they are typically the recipients rather than the dispensers of advice) and the isolates (largely shut off from social contacts).

This classification proved to be logically impeccable, empirically applicable, and virtually sterile. To be sure, our data could readily be arranged in these categories. But this resulted in few clear-cut uniformities of communications behavior or other patterns of behavior. In short, the distinctions were valid but relatively fruitless for our purposes. But since, as L. J. Henderson once remarked, "almost any classification is better than none," this did lead to some scattered clues concerning the functions of newsmagazines and other communications for those occupying various positions in the influence-structure. Thus, we found that some influentials characteristically use the newsmagazine not so much for self-clarification as for the clarification of others who look to them for guidance and orientation. It also seemed clear that the functions of the newsmagazine differ greatly for the rank-and-file and the influential reader. For the one, it serves a private, personal function; for the other, a public function. For the rank-and-file reader, the information found in the newsmagazine is a *commodity for personal consumption*, extending his *own* conception of the world of public events; whereas for the influential, it is a *commodity for exchange*, to be traded for further increments of prestige, by enabling him to act as an interpreter of national and international affairs. It aids him in being an opinion-leader.

But at best, this first classification resulted in a welter of discrete impressions not closely related one to the others. It did not enable us to account for the diverse behaviors of influentials. Somewhat more than half of the influentials read newsmagazines, for example, but our classification gave no systematic clue as to why the others did not. The sterility of Phase I of our analysis *motivated the search* for new working concepts, but it was a series of observations incidentally turned up in the course of this analysis which directed attention to the *actual concepts* with which we came to operate.

Above all else, one strategic *fact* shaped Phase II of the analysis. The interviews with influentials had been centered on their relations *within* the town. Yet, in response to the same set of queries, some influentials spoke wholly in terms of the local situation in Rovere, whereas others managed to incorporate frequent references to matters far beyond the reaches of Rovere. A question concerning the impact of the war upon the Rovere economy would elicit in the one instance a response dealing exclusively with problems within the town and in the other, to remarks about the national economy or international trade. It was this characteristic patterning of response within a peculiarly local or a more extended frame of reference—a patterning which could, perhaps, have been anticipated but which was not—that led to the conception of two major types of influentials: the “local” and the “cosmopolitan.”

Whereas the first classification had dealt with phases in the cycle of personal influence, the second was in terms of influentials’ *orientation*<sup>6</sup> toward local and larger social structures. The one centered on position within the influence-structure; the other on the grounds for influence and the ways in which this influence was exercised.

With the emergence of the concepts of local and cosmopolitan influentials, a number of new uniformities at once came to light. The “same” materials took on quite new implications as they were re-examined and re-analyzed in terms of these concepts. Fact which found no pertinent place in the first analysis became not only relevant but critical in the second. Thus the varying types of career-patterns of influentials—whether these developed largely within Rovere or were furthered in Rovere after having been initiated elsewhere—came to be an integral part of the second analysis whereas they had been “interesting” but unincorporated data in the first. Such seemingly diverse matters as geographic mobility, participation in networks of personal relations and in voluntary organizations, the translation of influence-potentials into influence-operations, patterns of communications be-

<sup>6</sup> A word of explanation is needed for this concept of “orientation.” The social orientation differs from the social role. Role refers to the manner in which the rights and duties inherent in a social position are put into practice; orientation, as here conceived, refers to the theme underlying the complex of social roles performed by an individual. It is the (tacit or explicit) theme which finds expression in each of the complex of social roles in which the individual is implicated.

havior—all these were found to be expressions of these major orientations toward the local community: orientations ranging from virtually exclusive concern with the local area to a central concern with the great world outside.

In this prelude to the main body of the report, then, we have noted two matters of procedural and methodological interest. We have seen first, that an applied social research, originally focused upon a severely limited objective, gave rise to a more extended inquiry bearing upon a sociological theory of patterns of interpersonal influence. And, second, we have briefly reviewed the circumstances pressing for a modification of qualitative concepts, with the consequent rearrangement of discrete facts into coherent patterns and uniformities. With this brief introduction, we are prepared for the substantive account of two basically different types of influentials and their respective patterns of communications behavior.



#### IV. TYPES OF INFLUENTIALS: THE LOCAL AND THE COSMOPOLITAN

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THE terms "local" and "cosmopolitan"<sup>7</sup> do not refer, of course, to the regions in which interpersonal influence is exercised. Both types of influentials are effective almost exclusively within the local community. Rovere has few residents who command a following outside that community.

The chief criterion for distinguishing the two is found in their *orientation* toward Rovere. The localite largely confines his interests to this community. Rovere is essentially his world. Devoting little thought or energy to the Great Society, he is preoccupied with local problems, to the virtual exclusion of the national and international scene. He is, strictly speaking, parochial.

Contrariwise with the cosmopolitan type. He has some interest in Rovere and must of course maintain a minimum of relations within the community since he, too, exerts influence there. But he is also oriented significantly to the world outside Rovere, and regards him-

<sup>7</sup> Upon identification of the two types of influentials, these terms were adopted from Carle C. Zimmerman, who uses them as translations of Toennies' well-known distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (localistic) and *Gesellschaft* (cosmopolitan). The sociologically informed reader will recognize essentially the same distinction, though with different terminologies, in the writings of Simmel, Cooley, Weber, Durkheim, among many others. Although these terms have commonly been used to refer to types of social organization and of social relationships, they are here applied to empirical materials on types of influential persons. Cf. Ferdinand Toennies, *Fundamental Concepts of Sociology* (New York, 1940), a translation by C. P. Loomis of his classic book, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, and more importantly, a later article bearing the same title. See also Carle C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community*, (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1938), especially pp. 80 ff. For a compact summary of similar concepts in the sociological literature, see Leopold von Wiese and Howard Becker, *Systematic Sociology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1932), especially pp. 223-226n.

self as an integral part of that world. He resides in Rovere but lives in the Great Society. If the local type is parochial, the cosmopolitan is ecumenical.

Of the thirty influentials interviewed at length, fourteen were independently assessed by three analysts<sup>8</sup> as "cosmopolitan" on the basis of case-materials exhibiting their orientation toward the Rovere community, and sixteen, as "local."

These orientations found characteristic expression in a variety of contexts. For example, influentials were launched upon a statement of their outlook by the quasi-projective question: "Do you worry much about the news?" (This was the autumn of 1943, when "the news" was, for most, equivalent to news about the war.) The responses, typically quite lengthy, readily lent themselves to classification in terms of the chief foci of interest of the influentials. One set of comments was focused on problems of a national and international order. They expressed concern with the difficulties which would attend the emergence of a stable postwar world; they talked at length about the problems of building an international organization to secure the peace; and the like. The second set of comments referred to the war news almost wholly in terms of what it implied for interviewees personally or for their associates in Rovere. They seized upon a question about "the news" as an occasion for reviewing the immediate flow of problems which the war had introduced into the town.

Classifying influentials into these two categories, we find that twelve of the fourteen<sup>9</sup> cosmopolitans typically replied within the framework of international and national problems, whereas only four of the sixteen locals spoke in this vein. Each type of influential singled out distinctively different elements from the flow of events. A vaguely

<sup>8</sup> This complete coincidence of assessments is scarcely to be expected in a larger sample. But the cosmopolitan and local syndromes were so clearly defined for this handful of cases, that there was little doubt concerning the "diagnoses." A full-fledged investigation would evolve more formal criteria, along the lines implied in the following discussion, and would, accordingly, evolve an intermediate type which approaches neither the local nor the cosmopolitan pole.

<sup>9</sup> It should be repeated that the figures cited at this point, as throughout the study, should not be taken as representative of a parent population. They are cited only to illustrate the heuristic purpose they served in suggesting clues to the operation of diverse patterns of interpersonal influence. As is so often the fact with quantitative summaries of case-studies, these figures do not confirm interpretations, but merely suggest interpretations. The tentative interpretations in turn provide a point of departure for designing quantitative studies based upon adequate samples.

formulated question enabled each to project their basic orientations into their replies.

All other differences between the local and cosmopolitan influentials seem to stem from their difference in basic orientation.<sup>10</sup> A synopsis of certain contrasts between the two types is presented in the following chart. From the group-profiles we see graphically the tendency of local influentials to be devoted to localism: they are more likely to have lived in Rovere for a long period, are profoundly interested in meeting many townspeople, do not wish to move from the town, are more likely to be interested in local politics, *etc.* Such items, which suggest great disparity between the two types of influentials, are our main concern in the following sections. There we will find that the difference in basic orientation is bound up with a variety of other differences: (1) in the structures of social relations in which each type is implicated; (2) in the roads they have traveled to their present positions in the influence-structure; (3) in the utilization of their present status for the exercise of interpersonal influence; and (4) in their communications behavior.

## STRUCTURES OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

### *Roots in Rovere*

Local and cosmopolitan influentials differ rather markedly in their attachment to Rovere. The local influentials are great local patriots and the thought of leaving Rovere seems seldom to come to mind. As one of them gropingly expressed it:

Rovere is the greatest town in the world. It has something that is nowhere else in the world, though I can't quite say what it is.

When asked directly if they had "ever thought of leaving Rovere," thirteen of the sixteen local influentials replied emphatically that they would never consider it, and the other three expressed a strong preference to remain, although they believed they would leave under certain conditions. None felt that they would be equally satisfied with life in any other community. Not so with the cosmopolitans.

<sup>10</sup> Nothing is said here of the objective *determinants* of these differences in orientation. To ascertain these determinants is an additional and distinctly important task, not essayed in the present study.

Only three of these claim to be wedded to Rovere for life. Four express their present willingness to live elsewhere, and the remaining seven would be willing to leave under certain conditions. Cosmopolitans' responses such as these do not turn up at all among the locals:

I've been on the verge of leaving for other jobs several times.

I am only waiting for my son to take over my practice, before I go out to California.

These basic differences in attitude toward Rovere are linked with the different runs of experience of local and cosmopolitan influentials. The cosmopolitans have been more mobile. The locals were typically born in Rovere or in its immediate vicinity. Whereas 14 of the locals have lived in Rovere for over twenty-five years, this is true for fewer than half of the cosmopolitans. The cosmopolitans are typically recent arrivals who have lived in a succession of communities in different parts of the country.

Nor does this appear to be a result of differences in the age-composition of the local and cosmopolitan groups. The cosmopolitans are more likely to be younger than the local influentials. But for those over forty-five, the cosmopolitans seem to be comparative newcomers and the locals Rovere-born-and-bred.

From the case-materials, we can infer the bases of the marked attachment to Rovere characteristic of the local influentials. In the process of making their mark, these influentials have become thoroughly *adapted to the community* and dubious of the possibility of doing as well elsewhere. From the vantage point of his seventy years, a local judge reports his sense of full incorporation in the community:

I wouldn't think of leaving Rovere. The people here are very good, very responsive. They like me and I'm grateful to God for the feeling that the people in Rovere trust me and look up to me as their guide and leader.

Thus, the strong sense of identification with Rovere among local influentials is linked with their typically local origins and career patterns in this community. Economically and sentimentally, they are deeply rooted in Rovere.

So far as attachment to Rovere is concerned, the cosmopolitans



differ from the locals in virtually every respect. Not only are they relative newcomers; they do not feel themselves rooted in the town. Having characteristically lived elsewhere, they feel that Rovere, "a pleasant enough town," is only one of many. They are also aware, through actual experience, that they can advance their careers in other communities. They do not, consequently, look upon Rovere as comprising the outermost limits of a secure and satisfactory existence. Their wider range of experience has modified their orientation toward their present community.

### *Sociability: networks of personal relations*

In the course of the interview, influentials were given an occasion to voice their attitudes toward "knowing many people" in the community. Attitudes differed sharply between the two types. Thirteen of the sixteen local influentials in contrast to four of the fourteen cosmopolitans expressed marked interest in establishing frequent contacts with many people.

This difference becomes more instructive when examined in qualitative terms. The local influential is typically concerned with knowing *as many* people as possible. He is a "quantitativist" in the sphere of social contacts. Numbers count. In the words of an influential police officer (who thus echoes the sentiments of another "local," the Mayor):

I have lots of friends in Rovere, if I do say so myself. I like to know everybody. If I stand on a corner, I can speak to 500 people in two hours. Knowing people helps when a promotion comes up, for instance. Everybody mentions you for the job. Influential people who know you talk to other people. Jack Flye [the Mayor] said to me one day, "Bill," he said, "you have more friends in town than I do. I wish I had all the friends you have that you don't even know of." It made me feel good . . .

This typical attitude fits into what we know of the local type of influential. What is more, it suggests that the career-function of personal contacts and personal relations is recognized by the local influentials themselves. Nor is this concern with personal contact merely a consequence of the occupations of local influentials. Businessmen, professionals, and local government officials among them all join in the

same paeans on the desirability of many and varied contacts. A bank president recapitulates the same story in terms of his experience and outlook:

I have always been glad to meet people . . . It really started when I became a teller. The teller is the most important position in a bank as far as meeting people goes. As teller, you must meet everyone. You learn to know everybody by his first name. You don't have the same opportunity again to meet people. Right now we have a teller who is very capable but two or three people have come to me complaining about him. He is unfriendly with them. I told him, you've got to have a kind word for everyone. It's a personal and a business matter.

This keynote brings out the decisive interest of local influentials in all manner of personal contacts which enable them to establish themselves when they need political, business, or other support. Influentials in this group act on the explicit assumption that they can be locally prominent and influential by lining up enough people who know them and are hence willing to help them as well as be helped by them.

The cosmopolitan influentials, on the other hand, have notably little interest in meeting *as many* people as possible.<sup>11</sup> They are more selective in their choice of friends and acquaintances. They typically stress the importance of confining themselves to friends with whom "they can really talk," with whom they can "exchange ideas." If the local influentials are quantitativists, the cosmopolitans are "qualitativists" in this regard. It is not *how many* people they know but the *kind of people* they know that counts.<sup>12</sup>

The contrast with the prevailing attitudes of local influentials is brought out in these remarks by cosmopolitan influentials:

I don't care to know people unless there is something to the person.

I am not interested in quantity. I like to know about other people;

<sup>11</sup> This was interestingly confirmed in the following fashion. Our informants were confronted with a random list of names of Rovere residents and were asked to identify each. Local influentials recognized more names than any other group of informants, and cosmopolitans, in turn, knew more persons than the non-influential informants.

<sup>12</sup> In this pilot study, we have confined ourselves to the expression of attitudes toward personal contacts and relations. A detailed inquiry would examine the quantum and quality of *actual* personal relations characteristic of the local and cosmopolitan influentials.

it broadens your own education. I enjoy meeting people with knowledge and standing. Masses of humanity I don't go into. I like to meet people of equal mentality, learning and experience.

Just as with the local influentials, so here the basic attitude cuts across occupational and educational lines. Professional men among the cosmopolitans, for example, do not emphasize the importance of a wide and extensive acquaintanceship, if one is to build up a practice. In contrast to a "local" attorney who speaks of the "advantage to me to know as many people as possible," a "cosmopolitan" attorney waxes poetic and exclusive all in one, saying:

I have never gone out and sought people. I have no pleasure in just going around and calling. As Polonius advised Laertes,  
 "Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,  
 But do not dull the palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd unfledged comrade . . ."

In a later section of this study, we shall see that these diverse orientations of locals and cosmopolitans toward personal relations can be interpreted as a function of their distinctive modes of achieving influence. At the moment, it is sufficient to note that locals seek to enter into manifold networks of personal relations, whereas the cosmopolitans, *on the same status level*, explicitly limit the range of these relations.

### *Participation in voluntary organizations*

In considering the "sociability" of locals and cosmopolitans, we examined their attitudes toward informal, personal relationships. But what of their roles in the more formal agencies for social contact: the voluntary organizations?

As might be anticipated, both types of influentials are affiliated with more organizations than rank-and-file members of the population. Cosmopolitan influentials belong to an average of eight organizations per individual, and the local influentials, to an average of six. There is the possibility that cosmopolitans make greater use of organizational channels to influence than of personal contacts, whereas locals, on the whole, operate contrariwise.

But as with sociability, so with organizations: the more instructive facts are qualitative rather than quantitative. It is not so much that the cosmopolitans belong to *more* organizations than the locals. Should a rigorous inquiry bear out this impression, it would still not locate the strategic organizational differences between the two. It is, rather, that they belong to different types of organizations. And once again, these differences reinforce what we have learned about the two kinds of influentials.

The local influentials evidently crowd into those organizations which are largely designed for "making contacts," for establishing personal ties. Thus, they are found largely in the secret societies (Masons), fraternal organizations (Elks), and local service clubs—the Rotary, Lions, and the Kiwanis, the most powerful organization of this type in Rovere. Their participation appears to be less a matter of furthering the nominal objectives of these organizations than of using them as *contact centers*. In the forthright words of one local influential, a businessman:

I get to know people through the service clubs; Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions. I now belong only to the Kiwanis. Kiwanis is different from any other service club. You have to be asked to join. They pick you out first, check you first. Quite a few influential people are there and I get to meet them at lunch every week.

The cosmopolitans, on the other hand, tend to belong to those organizations in which they can exercise their special skills and knowledge. They are found in professional societies and in hobby groups. At the time of the inquiry, in 1943, they were more often involved in Civilian Defense organizations where again they were presumably more concerned with furthering the objectives of the organization than with establishing personal ties.

Much the same contrast appears in the array of public offices held by the two types of influentials. Seven of each type hold some public office, although the locals have an average somewhat under one office per official. The primary difference is in the *type* of office held. The locals tend to hold political posts—street commissioner, mayor, township board, etc.—ordinarily obtained through political and personal relationships. The cosmopolitans, on the other hand, more often ap-

pear in public positions which involve not merely political operations but the utilization of special skills and knowledge (e.g., Board of Health, Housing Committee, Board of Education).

From all this we can set out the hypothesis that participation in voluntary associations has somewhat different functions for cosmopolitan and local influentials. Cosmopolitans are concerned with associations primarily because of the activities of these organizations. They are means for extending or exhibiting their skills and knowledge. Locals are interested in associations not for their activities, but because these provide a means for extending personal relationships. The basic orientations of locals and cosmopolitan influentials are thus diversely expressed in organizational behavior as in other respects.

### AVENUES TO INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE

The foregoing differences in attachment to Rovere, sociability, and organizational behavior help direct us to the different avenues to influence traveled by the locals and the cosmopolitans. And in mapping these avenues we shall fill in the background needed to interpret the differences in communications behavior characteristic of the two types of influentials.

The locals have largely grown up in and with the town. For the most part, they have gone to school there, leaving only temporarily for their college and professional studies. They held their first jobs in Rovere and earned their first dollars from Rovere people. When they came to work out their career-pattern, Rovere was obviously the place in which to do so. It was the only town with which they were thoroughly familiar, in which they knew the ins and outs of politics, business, and social life. It was the only community which they knew and, equally important, which knew them. Here they had developed numerous personal relationships.

And this leads to the decisive attribute of the local influentials' path to success: far more than with the cosmopolitans, *their influence rests on an elaborate network of personal relationships*. In a formula which at once simplifies and highlights the essential fact, we can say: *the influence of local influentials rests not so much on what they know but on whom they know.*

Thus, the concern of the local influential with personal relations is in part the product and in part the instrument of his particular type of influence. The "local boy who makes good," it seems, is likely to make it through good personal relations. Since he is involved in personal relations long before he has entered seriously upon his career, it is the path of less resistance for him to continue to rely upon these relations as far as possible in his later career.

With the cosmopolitan influential, all this changes. Typically a newcomer to the community, he does not and cannot utilize personal ties as his chief claim to attention. He usually comes into the town fully equipped with the prestige and skills associated with his business or profession and his "worldly" experience. He begins his climb in the prestige-structure at a relatively high level. It is the prestige of his previous achievements and previously acquired skills which make him eligible for a place in the local influence-structure. Personal relations are much more the product than the instrumentality of his influence.

These differences in the location of career-patterns have some interesting consequences for the problems confronting the two types of influentials. First of all, there is some evidence, though far from conclusive, that the rise of the locals to influentiaity is slow compared with that of the cosmopolitans. Dr. A, a minister, cosmopolitan, and reader of newsmagazines, remarked upon the ease with which he had made his mark locally:

The advantage of being a minister is that *you don't have to prove yourself*. You are immediately accepted and received in all homes, including the best ones. [italics inserted]

However sanguine this observation may be, it reflects the essential point that the newcomer who has "arrived" in the outside world, sooner takes his place among those with some measure of influence in the local community. In contrast, the local influentials *do* "have to prove" themselves. Thus, the local bank president who required some forty years to rise from his job as messenger boy, speaks feelingly of the slow, long road on which "I worked my way up."

The age-composition of the local and cosmopolitan influentials is also a straw in the wind with regard to the rate of rise to influence. All but two of the sixteen locals are over forty-five years of age,

whereas fewer than two-thirds of the cosmopolitans are in this older age group.

Not only may the rate of ascent to influence be slower for the local than for the cosmopolitan, but the ascent involves some special difficulties centered about the local's personal relations. It appears that these relations may hinder as well as help the local boy to "make good." He must overcome the obstacle of being intimately known to the community when he was "just a kid." He must somehow enable others to recognize his consistent change in status. Most importantly, people to whom he was once subordinate must be brought to the point of now recognizing him as, in some sense, superordinate. Recognition of this problem is not new. Kipling follows Matthew 13 in observing that "prophets have honour all over the Earth, except in the village where they were born." The problem of ascent in the influence-structure for the home-town individual may be precisely located in sociological terms: change of status within a group, particularly if it is fairly rapid, calls for the revamping of attitudes toward and the re-making of relations with the mobile individual. The pre-existent structure of personal relations for a time thus restrains the ascent of the local influential. Only when he has broken through these established conceptions of him, will others accept the reversal of roles entailed in the rise of the local man to influence. A Rovere attorney, numbered among the local influentials, describes the pattern concisely:

When I first opened up, people knew me so well in town that they treated me as if I still were a kid. It was hard to overcome. But after I took interest in various public and civic affairs, and became chairman of the Democratic organization and ran for the State legislature—knowing full well I wouldn't be elected—they started to take me seriously.

The cosmopolitan does not face the necessity for breaking down local preconceptions of himself before it is possible to have his status as an influential "taken seriously." As we have seen, his credentials are found in the prestige and authority of his attainments elsewhere. He thus manifests less interest in a wide range of personal contacts for two reasons. First, his influence stems from prestige rather than from reciprocities with others in the community. Secondly, the prob-

lem of disengaging himself from obsolete images of him as "a boy" does not exist for him, and consequently does not focus his attention upon personal relations as it does for the local influential.

The separate roads to influence traveled by the locals and cosmopolitans thus help account for their diverging orientations toward the local community, with all that these orientations entail.

### SOCIAL STATUS IN ACTION: INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE

At this point, it may occur to the reader that the distinction between the local and cosmopolitan influentials is merely a reflection of differences in education or occupation. This does not appear to be the case.

It is true that the cosmopolitans among our interviewees have received more formal education than the locals. All but one of the cosmopolitans as compared with half of the locals are at least graduates of high school. It is also true that half of the locals are in "big business," as gauged by Rovere standards, whereas only two of the fourteen cosmopolitans fall in this group; and furthermore, that half of the cosmopolitan influentials are professional people as compared with fewer than a third of the locals.

But these differences in occupational or educational status do not appear to determine the diverse types of influentials. When we compare the behavior and orientations of professionals among the locals and cosmopolitans, their characteristic differences persist, even though they have the same types of occupation and have received the same type of education. Educational and occupational differences may *contribute* to the differences between the two types of influentials but they are not the *source* of these differences. Even as a professional, the local influential is more of a businessman and politician in his behavior and outlook than is the cosmopolitan. He utilizes personal relationships as an avenue to influence conspicuously more than does his cosmopolitan counterpart. In short, *it is the pattern of utilizing social status and not the formal contours of the status itself which is decisive.*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The importance of actively seeking influence is evident from an analysis of "the upward mobile type," set forth in the monograph upon which this report is based. See also Granville Hicks, *Small Town* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946),



While occupational status may be a major support for the cosmopolitan's rise to influence, it is merely an adjunct for the local. Whereas all five of the local professionals actively pursue local politics, the cosmopolitan professionals practically ignore organized political activity in Rovere. (Their offices tend to be honorary appointments.) Far from occupation serving to explain the differences between them, it appears that the same occupation has a different role in interpersonal influence according to whether it is pursued by a local or a cosmopolitan. This bears out our earlier impression that "objective attributes" (education, occupation, etc.) do not suffice as indices of people exercising interpersonal influence.

The influential businessman, who among our small number of interviewees is found almost exclusively among the locals, typically utilizes his personal relations to enhance his influence. It is altogether likely that a larger sample would include businessmen who are cosmopolitan influentials and whose behavior differs significantly in this respect. Thus, Mr. H., regarded as exerting great influence in Rovere, illustrates the cosmopolitan big-business type. He arrived in Rovere as a top executive in a local manufacturing plant. He has established few personal ties. But he is sought out for advice precisely because he has "been around" and has the aura of a man familiar with the outside world of affairs. His influence rests upon an imputed expertness rather than upon sympathetic understanding of others.

This adds another dimension to the distinction between the two types of influential. It appears that the cosmopolitan influential has a following because *he knows*; the local influential, because *he understands*. The one is sought out for his specialized skills and experience; the other, for his intimate appreciation of intangible but affectively significant details. The two patterns are reflected in prevalent conceptions of the difference between "the extremely competent but impersonal medical specialist" and the "old family doctor." Or again, it is not unlike the difference between the "impersonal social welfare worker" and the "friendly precinct captain." It is not merely that the local political captain provides food-baskets and jobs, legal and extra-

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p. 154, who describes a local influential in these terms: "He is a typical politician, a born manipulator, a man who worships influence, *works hard to acquire it*, and does his best to convince other people that he has it." (Italics supplied)

legal advice, that he sets to rights minor scrapes with the law, helps the bright poor boy to a political scholarship in a local college, looks after the bereaved—that he helps in a whole series of crises when a fellow needs a friend, and, above all, a friend who “knows the score” and can do something about it. It is not merely that he provides aid which gives him interpersonal influence. It is *the manner in which the aid is provided*. After all, specialized agencies do exist for dispensing this assistance. Welfare agencies, settlement houses, legal aid clinics, hospital clinics, public relief departments—these and many other organizations are available. But in contrast to the professional techniques of the welfare worker which often represent in the mind of the recipient the cold, bureaucratic dispensation of limited aid following upon detailed investigation are the unprofessional techniques of the precinct captain who asks no questions, exacts no compliance with legal rules of eligibility and does not “snoop” into private affairs. The precinct captain is a prototype of the “local” influential.

Interpersonal influence stemming from specialized expertness typically involves some social distance between the advice-giver and the advice-seeker, whereas influence stemming from sympathetic understanding typically entails close personal relations. The first is the pattern of the cosmopolitan influential; the second, of the local influential. Thus, the operation of these patterns of influence gives a clue to the distinctive orientations of the two types of influential.

Against this background of analysis it is now possible to consider more fully the utilization of mass communications by the local and the cosmopolitan influential.



## V. THE COMMUNICATIONS BEHAVIOR OF INFLUENTIALS

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IT APPEARS that communications behavior is part and parcel of the routines of life and basic orientations characteristic of the two types of influentials. Their selections of magazines, newspapers, and radio programs at once reflect and reinforce the basic orientations. Although the *motives* for their selection of materials from the vast flow of mass communications may vary widely, the psychological and social *functions* fulfilled by the selection are fairly limited. Since the local and cosmopolitan make distinctly different demands of their social environment, they utilize mass communications for distinctly different results.

### PATTERNS AND FUNCTIONS OF MAGAZINE READING

Cosmopolitan influentials apparently read more magazines—subscribing to four and five—than the locals, with their subscriptions to two or three. This is to be anticipated from what we know of their respective routines of life and orientations. The cosmopolitan, with their extra-local interests, devote themselves more fully to the kind of vicarious experience set forth in journals, whereas the locals are more immediately concerned with direct interpersonal relations. The one tends to read about the great world outside, the other, to act in the little world inside. Their reading practices reflect their ways of life.

It is the variations in the *types* of magazines read by the locals and cosmopolitans, however, which more directly indicate the functions of these reading patterns. As can be seen from the chart of group

profiles, for example, the influential reader of the newsmagazine is prevalently of the cosmopolitan rather than the local type. This is entirely expectable, in the light of the functions fulfilled by a magazine such as *Time*.

The newsmagazine provides news and views on a broad front. Promising to give its version of the news behind the news, it deals with current developments in national and international politics, industry and business, education, science, the arts. These constitute the very spheres in which the influence of the cosmopolitans is to be found: for, as we have seen, they are considered the expert arbiters of "good taste," or "culture," and of trends in the Great Society. By the same token, the national newsmagazine had little to say to the local influentials. It does not, after all, devote much space to Rovere and its environs. The reading of *Time* will contribute neither to the locals' understanding of Rovere life nor to their influence in the town. It is an entirely dispensable luxury.

For the cosmopolitan, however, the newsmagazine serves several functions. It provides a transmission-belt for the diffusion of "culture" from the outside world to the "cultural leaders" of Rovere. (This is particularly true for the women among the cosmopolitans.) Among the little coteries and clubs of like-minded cosmopolitans, it provides the stuff of conversation. It enables the cultural elite of Rovere's middle class to remain well in advance of those who seek them out for advice in matters of taste or for opinions concerning the trend of international developments. *Time* not only builds a bridge across the gulf between the cosmopolitan influential and the influenced; it helps maintain the gulf separating the knower from the uninformed. It thus supplies diverse gratifications for the cosmopolitans of Rovere. It enables them to retain a kind of contact with the world outside and reduces their sense of cultural isolation. It gives some a sense of "self-improvement," as they "keep up with things." It enables them to buttress their own position in the community, by enabling them to flourish their credentials of knowledgeability when the occasion demands.

But since these are not the grounds of influence for the local influentials, since their social roles do not entail judgments about "culture" and the world at large, journals such as *Time* are superfluous.

Gratifications derived from mass communications, therefore, are not merely psychological in nature; they are also a product of the distinctive social roles of those who make use of these communications. It is not that the newsmagazine is *one man's meat and another man's poison*. It is, rather, that the newsmagazine is meat for one *social type* and poison for another *social type*. The analysis of the functions of mass communications requires prior analysis of the social roles which determine the uses to which these communications can and will be put. Had the social contexts of interpersonal influence not been explored, we could not have anticipated the selection of *Time* by one type of influential and its rejection by another.

Much the same can be said of the further magazine-reading of Rovere influentials. It so happens that for our handful of cases, the reading of *Time* most clearly differentiates the locals and the cosmopolitans. But the same patterns of selection operate with other magazines. *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *National Geographic*—the so-called "class" magazines which devote much of their content to foreign and national affairs and to the arts are read by twice as many cosmopolitans as locals. For virtually all other magazines, there seems to be no difference between the two. *Reader's Digest* and *Life* appear with equal frequency. A large-scale study could readily check the impression that *upon the same educational level*, local and cosmopolitan influentials have different patterns of magazine reading and that these can be explained in terms of the magazines satisfying distinctly different functions for the two groups.

#### PATTERNS AND FUNCTIONS OF NEWSPAPER READING

Reading national newsmagazines is an act above and beyond the call of dutiful newspaper reading. It implies an interest in being "in on things," in "developing responsible opinions," in having a "distinctive point of view." Interestingly enough, it appears that the patterns of newspaper reading also reflect the different orientations of the local and the cosmopolitan influential.

Locals read more newspapers, but this is wholly accounted for by their greater proclivity for Rovere and other local newspapers (in a nearby city). The picture is quite different for metropolitan news-

papers. Every one of the cosmopolitans reads the *New York Times* or the *New York Herald Tribune*, or both, while the locals less often turn to these papers with their wide and analytical coverage of world news. The contrast extends to details. Almost half of the locals read New York tabloids, with their capsule treatments of world affairs and their emphasis on "human interest" news—murder, divorce, and daring crimes appear to be major foci of contemporary "human interest"—but only one cosmopolitan includes a tabloid in his newspaper diet. However these statistical distributions might turn out in a detailed study, the consistency of these exploratory facts suggests that the basic orientations of influentials are also expressed in their patterns of newspaper reading.

#### PATTERNS OF LISTENING TO RADIO NEWS COMMENTATORS

There is some evidence that the predilection of cosmopolitans for an impersonal, analytical understanding of world events is reflected in their routines of listening to radio news commentators. On the basis of an earlier study by the Bureau of Applied Social Research, commentators were classified according to the degree to which they "analyzed" rather than "reported" news, particularly world news. The cosmopolitans prefer the more analytical commentators (Swing, Hughes) while the locals are more interested in those who forego analysis and are virtually newscasters (Thomas, Goddard, etc.).

Even in the realm of "extra-local news," the locals manage to import a localistic criterion. They distinctly prefer those commentators who typically convert news and public issues into *personalized* anecdotes. Gabriel Heatter with his infusions of sentiment into political and economic affairs is a favorite of the locals but not of the cosmopolitans. So, too, with Walter Winchell, who reports the Broadway version of intimate gossip across the backfence and personalizes national and international issues. The local influentials seek out the personal ingredients in the impersonal array of world news.

Communications behavior thus appears to reflect the basic orientations of local and cosmopolitan influentials. Further inquiry should provide a sound statistical check and make more rigorous tests of these impressions. Do locals and influentials who read "the *same*" magazines,

for example, actually select the same contents in these magazines? Or do the locals characteristically focus upon the "personalized and localistic" components in the editorial material, whereas the cosmopolitans seek out the more impersonal and "informative" components? To what uses do these different types of readers put the materials which they have read? In other words, how do the contents of mass communications enter into the flow of interpersonal influence?<sup>14</sup> Studies in the sociology of mass communications must supplement analyses in terms of "personal attributes" of readers and listeners with analyses of their "social roles" and their implication in networks of interpersonal relations.

<sup>14</sup> Questions of this general order are being studied in the previously mentioned research on influence patterns in a Midwestern city currently conducted by the Bureau of Applied Social Research.



## VI. PATTERNS OF RECIPROCAL EVALUATIONS: WHO REGARDS WHOM AS INFLUENTIAL?

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TO THIS point, we have been examining the influentials: their diverse modes of exerting interpersonal influence, their avenues to positions of influence, their communications behavior. But, after all, we consider these persons as "influential" only because they are so reported by our informants.<sup>15</sup> What can we learn about patterns of interpersonal influence by looking at patterns of reciprocal evaluations? What can we learn by looking at the relations between the mentionee and the mentioner, between those who emerge as variously influential and those whose judgments have defined them as influential?

### THE INFLUENTIAL AND THE INFLUENCED

Although one often speaks of "men of influence," it is clear that this phrase is an elliptical way of saying: "men who exert influence upon a certain number of other people in certain situations." As noted in Addenda Remarks, p. 215, interpersonal influence implies an asymmetrical *relation* between people. Influence is not an abstract attribute of a person, it is a process implicating two or more people. Accordingly, in an analysis of these patterns, we must not *only* look at the man who is influential, but also at the people who are influenced

<sup>15</sup> It should be repeated that interpersonal influence is here regarded as not simply a matter of evaluation, but as a matter of fact. Whether the *judgments* of informants and *objective observation* would lead to the same results must remain an open question. This exploratory study has utilized informants' reports in order to locate certain types of problems with respect to interpersonal influence; a full-fledged inquiry would utilize observation as well as interviews to ascertain the actual degree of interpersonal influence and the spheres in which this is exercised.



by him. Otherwise put, we have much to learn by exploring the question: who is influential for whom?

This general question at once divides into a series of more specific questions. Who are influential for people variously located in the influence-structure? Are people more often subject to influence by those above them in the influence-structure or by people in their own stratum of influence?

When the Rovere informants are divided into "top influentials" (those mentioned by 15 per cent or more of our informants), the "middle influentials" (mentioned by 5 to 14 per cent), and the "rank-and-file" (mentioned by fewer than 5 per cent), and when we relate these to their identifications of people who exert influence upon them, several clear impressions emerge. First, there is an impressive agreement on every level of the influence-structure concerning the people who belong at the top of the structure. Very largely, it is the *same* people who are reported as influential, irrespective of the position in the influence-structure of those who are doing the judging. From two-thirds to three-quarters of mentions by the three strata are concentrated on the top 15 per cent of influentials.

However, differences among the several strata in the influence structure do occur. Informants in each influence-stratum report a larger proportion of people in their own stratum as influential for them than do informants in the other strata. More concretely: the top influentials are more likely to mention others among the top influentials than are middle influentials or rank-and-file informants; the middle influentials are more likely to mention other middle influentials than are either the top influentials or the rank-and-file; and the rank-and-file more often mention people in this stratum than do the other informants. One thus gains the impression that although relatively few people—the top influentials—exert influence upon people on all levels of the influence-structure, there occurs a secondary tendency for people to be otherwise most influenced by their peers in that structure. If this proves to be generally true, it is a most important fact concerning the operation of interpersonal influence.

The striking concentration of interpersonal influence may divert our attention from the entire distribution of influence. This could easily lead to mistaken inferences. Despite this concentration, it ap-

appears likely that a greater number of personal decisions in a community may be the result of advice by the many people ranking low in the influence-structure than by the few ranked at the top. For although the top influentials individually have a large measure of interpersonal influence, they are likely to be so few in number that they collectively have a minor share of the total amount of interpersonal influence in the community. And correlatively, although each person among the middle-influentials and the rank-and-file has relatively little influence, they may collectively account for the greater share of interpersonal influence, since these strata include the great bulk of people in the community.<sup>16</sup> To take the Southtown data as indicative, the top 4 per cent of the influentials were cited in about 40 per cent of all instances of influence, but the fact remains that the residual 60 per cent referred to people ranking lower in the local influence-structure. Much the same was found in the present pilot study. Our Rovere inquiry is sufficient to formulate, though not, of course, to confirm the central point: a few individuals at the top may have a large individual quantum of influence, but the total amount of influence of this comparatively small group may be less than that exercised by the large numbers of people found toward the lower ranges of the influence-structure.

Our pilot study has thus far yielded two major impressions concerning the structure of influence which await further inquiry: (1) people in each influence stratum are more likely to be influenced by their peers in this structure than are people in the other strata and (2) despite the great concentration of interpersonal influence among a relatively few individuals, the bulk of such influence is widely dispersed among the large number of people in the lower reaches of that structure.

A third impression deserving further inquiry is suggestive of the pattern through which interpersonal influence percolates down

<sup>16</sup> The empirical force of this consideration is like that found in studies of the social distribution of "genius" or "talent" (or, for that matter, of the distribution of purchasing power). It has been repeatedly found that the upper social and educational strata have a relatively higher proportion of "geniuses" or "talents." But since the numbers in these strata are small, the great bulk of geniuses or talents actually come from lower social strata. From the standpoint of the society, of course, it is the absolute number and not the proportion coming from any given social stratum which matters.

through the influence-structure. From the Rovere data, it appears that this structure involves a "chain of influence," with the links in the chain constituted by persons in adjacent strata of influence. People in each influence-stratum are more likely to regard as influential people who are in the stratum *immediately above* their own than are informants in other strata, either above or further below. Thus rank-and-file informants looking upward toward their adjacent stratum (the middle influentials) more often mention these people as influential than do the top influentials, and middle influentials, in turn, more often mention the top influentials than do the rank-and-file. This suggests that some opinions and advice originated (or derived from mass communications) by the top influentials may be passed on progressively down the line. Other opinions, originating at lower levels in the structure, may be successively transmitted through adjacent successively lower strata. Our limited materials provide only a straw in the wind. In a full-scale inquiry dealing with several strata of influentials, this impression of a pattern of the percolation of interpersonal influence could be put to a decisive test.

We have thus far considered these patterns solely in terms of the position of the influenced and the influencer in the local influence-structure. Manifestly, it would be rewarding to examine the same patterns from the standpoint of the location of people in other social systems. The generic problem can be stated briefly enough: to what extent and in which situations does interpersonal influence operate largely *within* one's own social group or stratum or category (age, sex, class, power-stratum, prestige-stratum, etc.) and when does it operate largely *between* groups, strata, or social categories? Since the outlines of this problem were set forth in the introductory sections and since the problem is, *mutatis mutandis*, much the same as the foregoing, only a few symptomatic questions need be raised here.

Do men and women generally turn to others of their own age, their own sex, their own social class or religious group for advice and guidance? How, for example, does age enter into the pattern? How general is the tendency, detectible in both the Rovere and the South-town materials, for people to be influenced by those somewhat older than themselves? How does this differ among various types of communities and among the various subcultures in our society? When

does a youngster turn to a more seasoned veteran for advice and when does he talk it out with another youngster.<sup>17</sup> So, too, much remains to be learned about the canalizing of influence along sex lines. The Rovere and Southtown studies both found a distinct tendency for men to report the influence of other men, whereas women reported male and female influentials in almost equal numbers. Further inquiry would undoubtedly detect spheres of influence virtually monopolized by men, others by women, and still others shared in more or less equal measure.

Similarly, although the major flow of interpersonal influence appears to be from the upper "social strata" downward, there is a discernible stream in the opposite direction. What needs to be learned is the type of situation in which people are primarily influenced by others on the same status level, and by those on a higher or lower level. It is needful to search out particularly the deviate cases where people ranking high in some status-hierarchy (power, class, prestige) are influenced by others of lower standing. Thus, in a handful of cases, upper-status people in Rovere report having been influenced by people generally regarded as lacking in substantial influence. Indeed, our case materials suggest that people at the top, presumably with a large share of self-assurance and security of status, are more likely than middle-status individuals, possibly less secure in their position, to turn for occasional advice to people toward the bottom of the hierarchy. Although these cases are in general probably few in number, they may yield great insight into the workings of interpersonal influence. As in the case with the concentration of influence, there is the danger here that the research worker may confine himself to the major patterns, thus losing sight of the instructive subsidiary patternings of influence.

Questions of this order, growing out of our initial inquiry, can be readily multiplied. But these may perhaps suffice as prototypes. Clearly, all of these questions must be raised anew for each distinct sphere of influence, since it is altogether likely that the patterns will differ according to the sphere of activity and attitude in which in-

<sup>17</sup> Here, as for all other questions raised in this section, it is understood that observed patterns will differ for different *spheres of influence*. This need not therefore be repeated anew for each battery of questions. The general problem of spheres of influence will be briefly discussed in the following section.

fluence is exercised. Though this has been presupposed throughout our account, the special problem of spheres of influence requires distinct, though brief, examination.

### SPHERES OF INFLUENCE: MONOMORPHIC AND POLYMORPHIC

In Rovere, influentials differ widely with respect to the *number of spheres* of activity in which they exert interpersonal influence. Some influentials, and these may be termed *monomorphic*, are repeatedly cited as exerting influence, but only in one rather narrowly defined area—e.g. the area of politics, or of canons of good taste, or of fashion. The monomorphic influentials are the “experts” in a limited field, and their influence does not diffuse into other spheres of decision. Others, and this includes a good number of the top influentials, are *polymorphic*, exerting interpersonal influence in a variety of (sometimes seemingly unrelated) spheres. Although the types were readily identifiable in the Rovere study, much remains to be learned about them. Above all, the dynamics of these types needs to be established. Under which conditions does the influential remain monomorphic? Is this a stable type—or, is it rather a *stage* in the development of influence, such that the monomorphic in due course tends to become polymorphic through the operation of the transfer of prestige from one sphere to others (the “halo effect”)? Perhaps monomorphic influence occurs only in certain spheres involving high specialization of skill and little public recognition. Under such conditions, a monomorphic influential—the biophysicist, for example—may be asked for advice only on matters touching upon his special sphere of competence—“what should we do about a National Science Foundation?”—and his influence may be such that monomorphic influence soon gives way to the polymorphic exercise of interpersonal influence in diverse respects: “authority” may be generalized and transferred.

We may go on to inquire into the comparative number of spheres in which the local and the cosmopolitan influentials are effective. One gains the impression from the Rovere materials that locals and cosmopolitans not only exert influence in different spheres, but also that the locals are the more likely to be polymorphic and the cosmopolitans,

monomorphic. Apparently, the influence of the locals, based largely on their personal "connections," ramifies into many and diverse spheres; influence of the cosmopolitans, more often stemming from certain types of seeming expertness, tends to be more narrowly circumscribed.

So, too, it will be instructive to learn whether the *same* individuals exert monomorphic influence upon some persons and polymorphic influences upon others. It may turn out, for example, that influentials advising people of their own social stratum characteristically do so in a variety of fields whereas they are influential for a more limited range of decisions for followers of a lower social stratum. However this may be, it should not be assumed that *individuals* "are" monomorphic or polymorphic, but rather that they *operate* as the one type or the other, according to the structure of the situation.

All this highlights the need to clarify such terms as "men of influence" or "opinion-leaders." An individual may be regarded as influential when he has a large following in one sphere of activity just as another may be so regarded because he has several small followings in diverse spheres. Further inquiry into interpersonal influence must seek to identify the monomorphic and polymorphic influentials, locate these within the local social structure and establish the dynamics of change from one type to the other.

A final suggestion is needed for future studies into the interpersonal influence-structure of a community. This preliminary inquiry strongly suggests (and this is borne out by the Southtown study) that formal criteria such as education, income, participation in voluntary organizations, number of references in the local newspaper and the like,<sup>18</sup> do not provide adequate indicators of those individuals who exert a significant measure of interpersonal influence. Systematic interviewing supplemented by direct observation are required. Otherwise put, location within various social hierarchies of wealth, power, and "class" does not predetermine location within a local structure of interpersonal influence.

<sup>18</sup> Influence through mass media is patently not the same as interpersonal influence. It is suggestive, for example, that neither in Rovere nor in Frank Stewart's Southtown was the editor of the local newspaper included among those exerting appreciable interpersonal influence.



## VII. THE PROVISIONAL CONCEPT OF INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE (ADDENDA REMARKS)

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CONFINED to the subject of "interpersonal influence," this study does not deal with social influence in general. "Interpersonal influence" refers to the direct interaction of persons insofar as this affects the *future* behavior or attitude of participants (such that this differs from what it would have been in the absence of interaction).<sup>19</sup>

Problems of interpersonal influence have been less often singled out for systematic attention by sociologists than they have been touched upon in discussions of "social stratification." The reasons for this are clear enough. Interpersonal influence implies an *asymmetrical social relation*: there is the influencer and the influenced, with respect to any given behavior or attitude. Of course, reciprocal influence often occurs. But even in such instances, the "degree of influence" in both directions is seldom equal and is seldom exerted upon the same behavior. It is this asymmetrical character of interpersonal influence which accounts for its being bound up with discussions of social stratification generally. For however much the various analyses of stratification differ, they of course agree that stratification implies asymmetrical social positions (i.e., ranks). (If positions were completely symmetrical, if all were in fact *equal* in rank, the concept of stratification would be superfluous.)

<sup>19</sup> This is adapted from the formulation by Herbert Goldhamer and Edward A. Shils. "Types of Power and Status," *American Journal of Sociology* XLV, (1939), 171-182. The reasons for modifying their formulation will become progressively clear. My emphasis upon *future* behavior or attitude can be readily understood. If "influence" referred to any and all alterations of behavior it would be virtually identical with "social interaction," since all interaction has an effect, however slight, upon behavior in the immediate situation. One does not act precisely the same in the presence of others as in isolation.

As a result of being caught up in general discussions of stratification rather than being the immediate focus of inquiry, the concept of interpersonal influence has become confusingly merged with related concepts. To clarify our provisional concept of interpersonal influence, therefore, it is necessary to locate it within the framework of stratification analyses.

Numerous recent discussions of stratification have given rise to a vast array of related concepts and terms. Among these, we find

*terms for generic social position:* status, rank, situs, socio-economic status, locus, stratum, station, standing;

*terms for specific social position:* upper-, middle-, lower-class, parvenu, arrivés, declassés, aristocracy, etc.;

*terms for stratification structures:* open-class system, Ständesystem, caste, prestige-hierarchy, economic-, political-, social-hierarchy, etc.;

*terms for attributes of position* (sources, symbols, criteria, determinants): wealth, power prestige, achievement, ascription, style of life, status honor, authority, etc.;

*terms referring to the operation of the position:* the exercising of power, control, influence, exclusion, domination, subordination, discrimination, coercion, manipulation, etc.

This selected array of terms suggests that terminologies may have been multiplied beyond strict necessity and that there is a large number of problems attending the interrelations of these concepts. It suggests, further, that populations may be socially stratified in different hierarchies. In ways not too clearly understood, these several hierarchies of stratification are inter-related. But we cannot assume that they are identical. The sociological problem here is manifestly to explore the interrelations between the several hierarchies, and not to blur the problem by assuming that they can be merged into a composite system of ranking.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The locus classicus for this formulation is Max Weber's analysis of class, status, and power, now available in an English translation by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 180 ff. and in a translation by A. R. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (London: Wm. Hodge, 1947), pp. 390-395. More recent discussions have in some measure, though not always with net gain in conceptual clarity, built upon the foundation laid down by Weber. Among the numerous accounts, see Talcott Parsons, "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," *American Journal of Sociology*, XL (1940), 2, 841-862; Kingsley Davis, "A Conceptual Analysis of Stratification," *American Socio-*



In the present study, therefore, we assume that *position in a local structure of interpersonal influence may be related to position in other hierarchies but is not identical with it*. This assumption has both empirical and conceptual basis. Empirical support is provided by a recent study of political behavior<sup>21</sup> which found that "the opinion-leaders are not identical with the socially prominent people in the community or the richest people or the civic leaders." By briefly exploring types of relations between several systems of stratification, we find further grounds for this assumption.

Although they may be variously correlated, interpersonal influence, social class, prestige and power do *not* coincide. Ranked in terms of the size and source of income and accumulated wealth, some members of "the upper middle class" may be found to exert less direct influence upon the decisions of a few associates than some members of "the lower class" exert upon *their* many associates. People ranking high in a certain kind of prestige-hierarchy—based, say, on genealogical criteria—may have little interpersonal influence upon all those who are not concerned with their particular spheres of activity and opinion (e.g., the arts, fashion, "good taste"). Even the closely related concepts of power and interpersonal influence are not identical. Men with power to affect the economic life-chances of a large group may exert little interpersonal influence in other spheres: the power to withhold jobs from people may not result in directly influencing their political or associational or religious behavior.

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*logical Review*, VII (1942), 11, 309-321; Emile Benoit-Smullyan, "Status, Status Types and Status Interrelations," *American Sociological Review*, IX (1944), 151-161.

For recent empirical efforts to clarify these problems, see W. L. Warner and P. S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941); Harold F. Kaufman, *Prestige Classes in a New York Rural Community* (Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Memoir 260, March 1944) and the same author's *Defining Prestige in a Rural Community*, Sociometry Monographs, No. 10 (Beacon, N. Y.: Beacon House, 1946); A. B. Hollingshead, "Selected Characteristics of Classes in a Middle Western Community," *American Sociological Review*, XII (1947), 385-395; C. Wright Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities," *American Sociological Review*, XI (1946), 520-529.

The largest accumulation of recent data bearing upon this problem is to be found in the Warner-Lunt volume, but the analysis suffers from the absence of the type of conceptual distinctions supplied by Weber. For a critical review of these deficiencies from this standpoint, see C. W. Mills, *American Sociological Review*, VII (1942), 263-271.

<sup>21</sup> Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice*. (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944), p. 50 and chapter XVI.

So, too, with the other interrelations. People high in a prestige-hierarchy may not have the power to enforce decisions on others in many types of specified situations. (The "power" to exclude certain people from membership in an "exclusive" club should be distinguished from the "power" to exclude them from gaining a livelihood in their current occupation.) People high in a power-hierarchy may have little prestige (the political boss and the successful racketeer being only the more stereotyped instances).

*In short, positions in the class, power, and prestige hierarchies contribute to the potential for interpersonal influence, but do not determine the extent to which influence actually occurs.*

Just as the *bases* of interpersonal influence vary, so do its *forms*. Influence may thus take such forms as:

*coercion* (force, violence);

*domination* (commands, without threat of force);

*manipulation* (when the influencer's objectives are not made explicit);<sup>22</sup>

*clarification* (in which the setting forth of alternative lines of action affects subsequent behavior);

*prototypes for imitation* (in which the person exerting influence is not aware that interaction has resulted in modification of the others' subsequent behavior or attitude);

*advice* (consisting of opinions and recommendations, but not commands); and

*exchange* (in which each person openly modifies the situation so as to lead the other to given forms of behavior).

In the present inquiry, we are primarily concerned with influence in the form of clarification, advice, and as a prototype for imitation. We are *not* here concerned with the indirect exercise of power through market, political, and other administrative behavior, with its effects upon large numbers of people. It is the people who emerge as having an appreciable measure of *interpersonal* influence, manifested

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Goldhamer and Shils, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-172. Since these authors confine themselves to a discussion of power, they deal only with force, domination, and manipulation. See also K. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 319, who adds "exchange" to the forms of influence but who, in our view, errs in reducing all modes of influence to just two types: exchange and coercion.

directly in their relations with others, who are the objects of inquiry. Further explorations are needed to establish the types of relations between these, the types of influence, and the additional types not under examination here.



### III. MASS MEDIA ABROAD



# DOMESTIC BROADCASTING IN THE U.S.S.R.<sup>1</sup>

*Alex Inkeles*



## 1. THE ADMINISTRATION OF RADIO BROADCASTERS

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### EARLY DEVELOPMENT

MANY Russian authorities have held that Alexander Stepanovich Popov preceded Marconi in the development of wireless, and Soviet officials have persistently pressed his claim. The fiftieth anniversary of his successful experiment, May 7, 1945, was celebrated in the Soviet Union with impressive commemorative services, the publication of several memorial volumes, the establishment of a medal in honor of Popov, and the addition of a new title to the Soviet galaxy of popular heroes—"Honored Radiotelegrapher." Russia has been held to be the birthplace of radiobroadcasting as well.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Material for this article is drawn primarily from Soviet publications, and in particular from the Russian equivalent of American radio "trade" journals. In addition, the writer has drawn upon his own familiarity with the content of Soviet domestic broadcasts and upon the experience of several persons who have had more direct contact with and have made a careful study of the Soviet radio. Particular mention must be made in this connection of Professor Sidney Harcave of the Associated Colleges of New York who has suggested several useful lines of approach for this investigation.

During most of the period required for the research and the writing of this report, the author was a Demobilization Fellow of the Social Science Research Council, whose generous aid is gratefully acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup> A. D. Fortushenko, Vice-Minister of Communications of the U.S.S.R., has declared that a message directed by wireless to the revolutionary army and fleet by the newly established Soviet government on November 12, 1917, "in fact began radiobroadcasting for the first time in the world," since it did not, despite the use of Morse code, vary in principle from radiobroadcasting by special telephonic means. A. D. Fortushenko, *50 Let Radio* (50 Years of Radio) (Moscow: Svyazizdat, 1945), pp. 43-44.

The first major broadcast in the Soviet Union was sent out on September 17, 1922, by a 12 kilowatt station credited with being the most powerful in the world at the time. Thus the Soviet Union claims to have entered the race during the very first lap, about two months ahead of England and three months ahead of France, according to the estimates of the Vice-Minister of Communications.<sup>3</sup>

In October 1924 the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) established "A Joint Stock Company for Radio-Broadcasting," known as *Radioperedacha* (Radio Transmissions), whose stock was held by the trade unions and public education authorities. During the same month, on October 12, 1924, the Sokolnicheskaya radio station, operated by the cultural section of the Moscow Trade Union Council, went on the air, and this marked the beginning of systematic radio-broadcasting in the Soviet Union. The first radio diffusion exchange went into operation at Moscow in 1925 with a net of 50 wired speakers.<sup>4</sup>

In July 1928 *Radioperedacha* was dissolved and the control of radiobroadcasting transferred to the Commissariat of Post and Telegraph already in charge of radio communications.<sup>5</sup> The development of broadcasting and reception under these auspices was apparently not satisfactory, and with the aim of achieving centralized control of radio work the Sovnarkom, on January 31, 1933, decreed the establishment of an All-Union Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Radiofication under the Council of Peoples Commissars of the U.S.S.R. Nine months elapsed before the Sovnarkom, in a regulation (*polozhenie*) dated November 27, 1933,<sup>6</sup> defined the authority and powers of the Radio Committee, and charged it with "the organization, planning, and operational direction of all radiobroadcasting in

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Standard English footnote forms are not always applicable to Russian publications. For an explanation of the forms used in this article, see Appendix J, p. 325, below.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 68-69. The Vice-Minister omitted mention of the date on which American broadcasting began, although the *Malaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya* (Small Soviet Encyclopedia), (VII, 125) credits the U.S.A. with being first in the field.

<sup>4</sup> I. E. Goron, *Radioveshchanie* (Radiobroadcasting) (Moscow: Svyazizdat, 1944), p. 14. For a description of the relay diffusion system see below p. 227.

<sup>5</sup> A. Huth, *La Radiodiffusion, Puissance Mondiale* (Paris: Libraire Gallimard, 1937), p. 144.

<sup>6</sup> *Izvestia*, November 29, 1933.



the U.S.S.R., including radio diffusion by lower radiobroadcasting exchanges in *raion* [district] centers, Machine Tractor Stations, and so forth."

## THE ALL-UNION RADIO COMMITTEE

### *The central apparatus*

According to the original regulation the All-Union Radio Committee, designated by the letters VRK in Russian, was to have a chairman, vice-chairman, and members of the Committee. At the present time there are seven vice-chairmen, and two members of the Committee.

The law provides that the work of the Radio Committee shall be carried on by administrations (*upravlenie*), sectors (*sektor*), and other administrative units to be developed by the Committee. A detailed description of the current structure of the Radio Committee is unfortunately not available, the latest fairly complete table of organization being that for 1936.<sup>7</sup> Later references to particular parts of the organization, however, indicate that the structure of the Committee is today substantially the same. The All-Union Radio Committee appears to be divided into the following chief units:

*The Administration of Central Broadcasting* plans, organizes, and executes the programs broadcast by stations directly under the operational control of the Radio Committee. These programs, which issue primarily from Moscow, are designated as central or all-union broadcasts, that is, they are intended for nationwide consumption. The Administration is apparently also responsible for sending out programs beamed to certain outlying regions of the country, in particular the far north and the Soviet Far East, and for those programs intended primarily for consumption within the Russian Republic (R.S.F.S.R.).

The Administration appears to be functionally divided into sectors, also referred to as editorial offices, of which the following have been identified:<sup>8</sup> the Propaganda and Agitation Sector, the Late News Sector, the Editorial Office of Defense, the Sector of Literary-Drama-

<sup>7</sup> *Radiozhegodnik* (Radio Yearbook), 1936, (Moscow: State Publishing House for Problems of Radio), p. 43. See also Rose Ziglin, "Radio Broadcasting in the Soviet Union," *The Annals*, American Academy of Political and Social Science, CLXXVII (January, 1935), pp. 66-72.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, *Radio front* (Radio Front), No. 7-8. (1940), pp. 2-4.

tic Broadcasts, and the Sector of Children's Broadcasts. The activity of these sections is further spread among subordinate administrative units according to subject matter; the Literary-Dramatic Sector, for example, includes a Literary Department (*literaturny otdel*) which in turn includes divisions (*pazdely*) such as the Division of Soviet Literature.<sup>9</sup>

*The Administration of Musical Broadcasting* has been identified,<sup>10</sup> but relatively little information concerning its structure is available. In former years musical broadcasting was controlled by a sector, and its elevation to the status of an Administration reflects the continually growing importance of music in the composition of Soviet broadcasting.

*The Administration of Local Broadcasting* does not itself conduct any broadcasts but is limited to the supervision of broadcasting done by local radio committees and by the directors of diffusion exchanges. Its chief task is to secure the fulfillment by organizations operating on lower levels of the directives of the All-Union Committee. It also has been reported to train radio performers and assign them to local radio committees, and to organize the formation of all-union and zonal networks. The Administration is believed to be divided primarily on a territorial basis, and to include editorial offices for literature, music, education, and other subjects, which assist local committees with their programming. The editorial office of the monthly *Metodichesky Biulleten*, a periodical guide for local radio committees, was under the Administration.

*The International Bureau* appears to be the same as an office frequently referred to as the Foreign Broadcasting Sector, which is responsible for broadcasts directed outside the Soviet Union.

*The Administration of Radiofication* is primarily a technical agency and carries the responsibilities in this sphere with which the Radio Committee is charged by law. These responsibilities include consulting with the Ministry of Communications and other interested departments and advising them concerning plans for "mass radiofication," i.e., the construction of receiving networks, the construction of broadcasting stations and the assignment of wave

<sup>9</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Literary Gazette), December 16, 1944.

<sup>10</sup> *Sovetskaya Muzyka* (Soviet Music), No. 1 (January, 1946), pp. 97-98.

lengths, and the distribution of sending and receiving equipment. The Committee is also expected to co-operate with scientific and technical research organizations, and with the Ministry of Communications and other agencies to organize conferences, support international communications in the sphere of radiobroadcasting, and represent the U.S.S.R. on radiobroadcasting matters affecting other countries.

*The Planning, Financial and Accounting Sector.* The Committee is obliged, as are all Soviet organizations, to prepare detailed annual and quarterly plans for all of its operations. The All-Union Committee is also charged with arranging the financing of radiobroadcasting, and with collecting the fees which must be paid by subscribers to the services of diffusion exchanges and by owners of regular radio sets. These fees, part of which is turned over to the Ministry of Communications,<sup>11</sup> provide the Committee with a sizable budget. It is intended to have the Committee self-sustaining in time, with an excess in earnings which can be turned over to the government, but as late as 1941 the Committee was still receiving a considerable allotment from the State Budget; in that year the sum was 3,686,000 rubles.

In addition to these major units the Radio Committee has in the past included a State Publishing House for Affairs of Radio, a Recording Plant, and a Technical Supplies Section.

It may be noted, finally, that despite the rather sweeping terms of the first article of the regulation defining the Committee's scope, other sections provide for considerable participation by other interested departments and organizations. This has resulted in the initial self-defeat of the declared goal of centralized control of radio work. The division of authority has been a regular source of complaint by both the administrative and political directors of broadcasting, and by the authorities in charge of the technical aspects of radio.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Only the actual broadcasting studios are controlled by the Radio Committee; all sending equipment, including the long distance lines, is administered by the Ministry of Communications. The conditions under which the Radio Committee uses the stations, equipment, and lines, as well as the costs to be paid for such use, are settled by agreement between the Committee and the Ministry of Communications. See Goron, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> See for example, *Govorit SSSR* (U.S.S.R. Speaking), No. 5. (1936), p. 50; *Radio front*, No. 3 (February, 1939), pp. 1-3; *Elektro-Svyaz* (Electrical Communication), No. 5-6 (May-June, 1940), pp. 2-4.

### *Local committees*

The All-Union Radio Committee also serves as the Radio Committee for the Russian Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), which includes more than half of the population and an even larger proportion of the territory of the entire Soviet Union. Each of the remaining fifteen constituent union-republics (S.S.R.) has its own radio committee, as do the autonomous republics (A.S.S.R.), the territories (*krai*), most of the regions (*oblast*), and a number of the larger cities of the nation. In agreement with the All-Union Committee, the council of ministers of each union-republic appoints its own radio committee; these union-republic radio committees in turn confirm appointments made by the respective local administrative bodies to the radio committees for autonomous republics, krais, and oblasts. Thus a high degree of centralized control is assured. This control is fixed by law, since the local committees are defined as being the "local organs" of the All-Union Committee, and their chairmen, as "representatives" or "authorized agents" (*upolnomochennye*) of the VRK. At the present time the All-Union Committee has under its general direction 133 local radio committees in republics, krais, and oblasts, and up to 3,000 editorial boards (*redaktsii*) operating the more important diffusion exchanges in district (*raion*) centers, at major industrial installations, and elsewhere.<sup>13</sup>

The local radio committees have two chief responsibilities: rebroadcasting to their locality, on their own wave, programs emanating from the central apparatus, and planning and executing their own broadcasts. The organization of these local committees varies with their size, the importance of their broadcasting facilities, and the relative amount of their original broadcasting as against rebroadcasting. Characteristically, these committees include administrative subdivisions for social-political, artistic, children's, and adult education programs, as well as for local news and relayed broadcasts. The majority of these local committees exercise control over the work of the "lower" broadcasting net, i.e., the radio diffusion exchanges, and therefore usually include a department of lower broadcasting.

<sup>13</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

## *Personnel*

The All-Union Radio Committee is authorized to plan and organize the training (through regular courses and other educational means) of directors and rank and file personnel for service in the broadcasting field. Relatively little information is available, however, concerning the qualifications and training of personnel making up the various local radio committees and editorial boards. In the first years of the Radio Committee's operations the bulk of the workers in radiobroadcasting appear to have been new to the field, being drawn from the administrative ranks of the Party, the trade unions, and governmental organizations. It is known that in 1936 the Radio Committee maintained an "Institute for the Improvement of Qualifications" through which the responsible editors of all diffusion exchanges were expected to pass during the course of the year.<sup>14</sup> Early in 1937 the Committee also initiated a special series of radio programs, "Instructions for Radio Exchanges," whose task it was to aid workers in the radio diffusion exchanges with their daily problems.<sup>15</sup> In addition, before the war, the Committee published a special periodical, *Metodichesky Biulleten*, to guide local radio committees. It would appear from the available literature that considerable if not wholly satisfactory progress in building up a corps of trained radio workers was made by the beginning of the war, but it is probable that along with most other cadres this group suffered severe losses. A. Puzin, Chairman of the All-Union Committee, has cited the need to develop adequate cadres of trained radio workers as one of the more pressing postwar problems of the Committee.

One qualification and characteristic which workers in the field of Soviet radiobroadcasting appear to have in common to a high degree is Communist Party membership. Of the sixty delegates who attended the All-Union Conference on Problems of Political Broadcasting in December 1934, for example, 95 per cent were members of the Party or Komsomol (Young Communist League);<sup>16</sup> of the twenty-five members of the Radio Committee of the Donets *Oblast* in 1936 all but

<sup>14</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 5 (March, 1936), p. 44.

<sup>15</sup> *Radioprogrammy*, (Radioprograms), No. 5 (January, 1937).

<sup>16</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 13.

one were members of the Party or Komsomol.<sup>17</sup> The Party has in fact been especially insistent on precautions in the composition of the cadre of radio workers as a result of the reported use of the local radio by local nationalists, "anti-state" and even "counterrevolutionary" elements.<sup>18</sup> The microphone must, consequently, be placed only in "trustworthy Bolshevik hands,"<sup>19</sup> and every Party committee is obliged to see to it that cadres of radio workers consist "of people who are of the utmost reliability and unconditionally devoted to the affairs of communism."<sup>20</sup>

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE RADIO COMMITTEE

This review of the organization of the Radio Committee and of its legally defined authority cannot be considered adequate without some indication of the place occupied by the Committee in the more general political structure of the Soviet Union. The Radio Committee operates directly under the supervision of the Council of Ministers, which determines its general policy and to which it is accountable. The Committee does not enjoy the status of a Ministry and shares its form of organization with the Committee on Affairs of Art and similar administrative agencies created to meet problems of a special nature. Although no mention is made of the Communist Party in the regulation establishing the Radio Committee, it is probably of even greater importance to understand the Committee's relation to the Party than to the Council of Ministers. In practice, to some extent sanctioned by law, the Communist Party exercises supervision and control over all agencies of the Soviet government. This supervision is particularly close in the case of those agencies of the government which are in charge of the mass media, since the government does not include a ministry of propaganda and all of the functions which would be carried out appropriately by such a ministry fall to the Communist Party's Administration of Propaganda and Agitation.

<sup>17</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> See *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), pp. 13-14 and 23-24; No. 6 (March, 1935), pp. 33-35; No. 8 (April, 1935), p. 4; and *Pravda*, June 22, 1937.

<sup>19</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> *Pravda*, June 22, 1937.

The Party exercises its control over government agencies, including the Radio Committee, by three chief means:

First, the Party issues decisions criticizing their work and directing their future course of activity. It is not intended to review here the important Party instructions directed to the Radio Committee, except to indicate that they have been of a very fundamental nature, including detailed criticism of all phases of the work of the Committee and setting forth at great length the expectations of the Party in regard to the future work of the radio agency. The latest of these decisions was issued by the Central Committee of the Party early in 1947 and called upon the Radio Committee to improve the quality of its broadcasting, particularly in the sphere of political, musical, and literary-dramatic broadcasts.<sup>21</sup>

Secondly, the Party places trusted officials in positions of control and responsibility in government agencies. This principle has been highly honored in the case of the Radio Committee. Its first Chairman, Platon Mikhailovich Kerzhentsev, was an "old Bolshevik" with Party membership dating from 1904 and a history of over thirty years of service to the Party. This record included participation in the Revolution of 1905, exile, underground and émigré work before the 1917 Revolution, and a host of Party and government positions following it, among them several ambassadorships, the editorship of the main state publishing house, and a vice-presidency in the Communist Academy. He was the author of several books on Leninism and the editor of numerous journals.<sup>22</sup> The present Chairman, A. Puzin, was formerly Director of the Department of Agitation in the Communist Party's Administration of Propaganda and Agitation, and his predecessor, D. A. Polikarpov, was one of the vice-directors of the Administration.

The Party, thirdly, maintains a high percentage of Party membership among the rank and file employees of the organization. Some indication has already been given of the concentration of Party membership among the workers in the field of radiobroadcasting. These

<sup>21</sup> See comment in *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>22</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 1, presents a complete record of the impressive career of Kerzhentsev up to that point; this appears to be the only complete description of the career of a Radio Committee chairman which is available.

Party members are bound by Party discipline to see that the agencies in which they are employed carry out the directives of the Party and government, and they are expected to report to their Party cells any deviation from the Party line. Thus the supervision and control by the Communist Party of the operation of the Radio Committee are virtually absolute.

Just as the All-Union Radio Committee is controlled by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and its Administration of Propaganda and Agitation, so the local radio committees are supervised by the local Party organizations. In radio diffusion exchanges which are located at industrial establishments the editors of the exchanges are also supervised in their work by the local trade union committees. Lest this control appear too omnipresent, it should be noted that both the Party's Central Committee and the Trade Union Council have on many occasions noted that their local units give inadequate attention to both the work and needs of radio authorities,<sup>23</sup> and that in some areas radio is not properly "valued" by local authorities and its operation inadequately controlled or even ignored.<sup>24</sup>

Mention should be made of one other government organization which exercises some degree of control over the work of the Radio Committee: The Chief Administration of Literary and Publishing Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the Russian Republic (R.S.F.S.R.). That Administration, known as *Glavlit*, is the chief censorship agency in the Soviet Union, and its authority includes the censorship of radiobroadcasting.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Trud*, May 7, 1946; July 14, 1943.

<sup>24</sup> *Pravda*, June 22, 1937.

<sup>25</sup> The authority of *Glavlit* was set forth in a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of June 6, 1931, which can be found in *Osnovnye Direktivy I Zakondatelstvo O Pechati* (Basic Directives and Laws on the Press) (Moscow: State Publishing House on Soviet Law, 1934), pp. 124-125. Control over artistic broadcasting, i.e., musical, literary, and dramatic, was transferred from *Glavlit* to the Committee on Art Affairs in 1939 [*Sobranie Postanovlenii . . . SSSR* (Collection of Regulations . . . of the U.S.S.R.), 1939, No. 53 (October 19, 1938), article 158], but was restored in 1940 [*ibid.*, No. 32 (December 21, 1940), article 811.]





## II. THE BROADCASTING NETWORK

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### TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

THE present boundaries of the U.S.S.R. encompass about 8.5 million square miles, or more than one-sixth of the earth's total land surface. To service adequately this area with broadcast radio programs is no small task. The problem is rendered much more difficult by the great diversity of language groups inhabiting the Soviet Union, where more than eighty major languages and up to 140 different language groups are recognized. Frequently three, six, or more languages will be in common use in a relatively small area in the Caucasus or Soviet Central Asia. Although a related problem is faced by broadcasters in certain metropolitan centers of the United States, the difficulty is largely alleviated by the overwhelming predominance of English. In the U.S.S.R. the nationality policy of the government encourages the use and development of local tongues, and although Russian is more or less the universal language in the Soviet Union, it is the native tongue of no more than 60 per cent of the population.

Soviet industry despite its rapid development in certain other fields has not found itself fully capable of coping with the demands and difficulties of the "radiofication" of the U.S.S.R. In the United States the flowering of radio stations during the late twenties and early thirties was aided by a great flow of capital in a period when radio appeared as one of the few expanding opportunities for investment.<sup>26</sup> The productive capacity and technical skill of American industry found itself fully master of all the demands for equipment and operating skill which the radio industry created. Soviet radio authorities

<sup>26</sup> See Llewellyn White, *The American Radio* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 26-67, and Robert J. Landry, *This Fascinating Radio Business* (New York and Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1946), Chapters 2 and 3.

were not able to draw upon adequate resources in any of these respects. The construction of radio stations had to compete with demands for capital investment in heavy industry, in relation to which radio broadcasting received only a relatively low priority. Apparently a chief reason for the slow development of broadcasting stations was the concentration on building wireless telegraphy transmitters rendered urgent by the combination of a rapidly expanding economy and the political necessity of rapid communication across the great spaces of the U.S.S.R.

By 1938 the U.S.S.R. was first in the world in absolute number of radio telegrams transmitted, and by 1941 first in Europe in the sum total of the power of its stations.<sup>27</sup> The transmitting apparatus of the Soviet radiobroadcasting system, however, has consistently lagged behind the demands made upon it. Thus, Rose Ziglin, Director of the International Bureau of the Radio Committee, observed in 1935,<sup>28</sup> that the existing "transmission base is by far insufficient to accommodate the receiving network." A decade later A. Puzin, the President of the Committee, commented as follows:

The further development of Soviet radiobroadcasting and the improvement of its quality is closely tied in with the broadening and strengthening of its material-technical base. The material-technical base of the radio sending and receiving nets significantly lag behind the expansion of radio broadcasting requirements.<sup>29</sup>

In this connection it may be noted that the difficulty of establishing an adequate network of broadcasting stations has been one of the chief factors which have contributed to the extensive development of wired diffusion of programs in the Soviet Union rather than the use of individual aerial receivers, i.e., regular radio sets.

### EXPANSION OF THE NETWORK

Soviet broadcasting began in 1922 with one station of 12 kilowatts in Moscow. In the six years intervening before the beginning of the First Five Year Plan in 1928 development was rather slow, and at

<sup>27</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>28</sup> Rose Ziglin, "Radio Broadcasting in the Soviet Union," *loc. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> *Pravda*, December 16, 1944.

the beginning of the Plan there were about 20 stations in operation.<sup>30</sup> In December 1932, on the eve of the Second Plan, there were 57 stations in operation,<sup>31</sup> and this number was increased to 80 by the end of the Plan in 1937.<sup>32</sup> In the early part of 1940,<sup>33</sup> two years after the beginning of the Third Plan, it was announced that there were 90 broadcasting stations in operation.<sup>34</sup>

The impact of the war on the Soviet transmitting apparatus was very severe, however, and the Germans are reported by K. Sergeichuk, former Minister of Communications, to have destroyed 29 powerful stations with a combined strength of 2,200 kilowatts, and a large number of smaller stations.<sup>35</sup> This would indicate that the Germans destroyed close to half of the transmitting stations in operation at the beginning of the war. Reconstruction in the wake of the German retreat was very rapid, however, spurred on by the recognition of the great importance of the radio network in re-establishing Soviet political control over the liberated areas. Thus, at the beginning of the Fourth Five Year Plan in 1946 the number and power of radio stations in operation was reported to exceed the prewar level, and new stations were under construction in Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, Lvov, Minsk, and several other cities.<sup>36</sup>

At the present time there are more than 100 stations in operation in the U.S.S.R.,<sup>37</sup> and of these about seventy appear to be long and medium wave stations. Three of the stations are located at Moscow, which is the core of the entire radio network of the U.S.S.R. Of the remaining stations, some serve only to rebroadcast central programs, and the remainder serve as local stations as well. This combined net-

<sup>30</sup> *Sotsialisticheskoe Stroitelstvo SSSR* (Socialist Construction in the U.S.S.R.) (Moscow: Gosplanizdat, 1936), p. 505, gives the figure of 23 stations for the end of 1928.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *SSSR I Kapitalisticheskye Strany* (The U.S.S.R. and Capitalist Countries) (Moscow: Gosplanizdat, 1939), p. 318.

<sup>33</sup> *Izvestiya*, February 8, 1940.

<sup>34</sup> The rate of growth and the capabilities of the sending network should not be judged by the number of stations alone. Thus, between 1930 and 1935 the number of stations increased by only four, but their total power rose from 395 to 1,503 kilowatts, including the 500 kilowatt station Komintern in Moscow. The U.S.S.R. rates high in the scale of nations according to *power* of stations, especially in relation to the total number of its stations.

<sup>35</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

work is on the air for a total of 1,750 hours daily, sending out programs in 70 Soviet languages and 30 foreign languages. The present Five Year Plan calls for the construction of 28 new radiobroadcasting stations by 1950,<sup>38</sup> which will bring the Soviet transmitting net to the vicinity of 125 stations.

### THE THREE "LEVELS" OF RADIOBROADCASTING

#### *Central broadcasting*

Although there may be a greater degree of concentration, the role of the cluster of Moscow stations in the Soviet broadcasting system is similar to that of London in the BBC or the major New York stations in the American networks. The operations of these stations constitute the first functional level of Soviet broadcasting and are designated as central broadcasting. The central stations account for 90 hours of the 1,750 hours daily total of Soviet broadcasting,<sup>39</sup> and it has been estimated that Moscow alone puts more than half a million words on the air each day.<sup>40</sup> Radio programs emanate from Moscow during all but two of the twenty-four hours each day. Moscow offers two major programs, in part overlapping, which are directed toward the entire Soviet listening public in all the various geographic and national subdivisions either directly or by means of network hookups. Such programs are referred to as all-union programs. In addition the central broadcasting apparatus sends out a variety of special broadcasts for outlying areas, for the local press, and for other selected audiences.

#### *Local broadcasting*

Beyond the central apparatus there is a network of stations which is said to provide every republic and *oblast*<sup>41</sup> with its own broadcasting facilities.<sup>42</sup> The work of these stations constitutes the second functional level of Soviet broadcasting, and is designated as local broad-

<sup>38</sup> "Law on the Five Year Plan . . . Adopted March 18, 1946," published by *Soviet News*, London, (no date).

<sup>39</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946. Before the war central broadcasting accounted for only 64 hours of the daily total.

<sup>40</sup> *Pravda*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>41</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>42</sup> Sparsely populated and economically unimportant *oblasts* frequently share a radio station with other *oblasts*.

casting. Some of these local stations are gathered into zonal networks, but every local station is also part of the national network, receiving programs from the central apparatus either by aerial wave or over the intercity telephone lines for rebroadcast on its own wave length.

The larger *oblast* stations, such as that at Leningrad, and the major stations in the national republics, such as Kiev and Kharkov in the Ukraine, Minsk in Belorussia, and those in Georgia, Azerbaidzhan, and the Central Asian Republics have extensive and varied programs of local origin, in addition to those relayed from the central apparatus. The current distribution of broadcast time on these stations is not known, but in the period 1931-1934 programs relayed from Moscow or larger regional stations made up as a national average about 20 per cent of their total broadcast time.<sup>43</sup> In the case of any single station this percentage is largely determined by the language composition of the area, since central broadcasts are predominantly in Russian. The Ukrainain Committee, for example, has generally done about 80 per cent of its broadcasting in Ukrainian, the remainder in Russian, Yiddish, and other languages.

### *Lower broadcasting*

The third operational level of the Soviet radio is described as lower broadcasting, and the term refers to the activities of the network of radio diffusion exchanges. Although the chief function of these exchanges is to transmit over a system of wires leading to the subscribers' speakers the programs sent out by central and local stations, they are authorized to originate a small number of programs of their own. In 1944 more than 2,000 exchanges in county centers and an unspecified number of urban diffusion exchanges had their own programs, which total from a half to two hours each day.<sup>44</sup> These programs are not strictly speaking *radio* broadcasts, as we shall see, since they never go on the air but move entirely over wired nets.

<sup>43</sup> *Radiozhegodnik*, 1936, p. 119. (See Footnote 6, p 224, above.)

<sup>44</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.



### III. RADIO RECEPTION IN THE U.S.S.R.

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WE HAVE been using the term radiobroadcasting to describe the operation of the radio apparatus in the Soviet Union. Insofar as that term represents the "transmission and reception of radio signals by means of electric waves without the use of a connecting wire,"<sup>45</sup> it does not accurately describe radio as it functions in the U.S.S.R. In regard to *transmission*, the Soviet radio system fits the definition so far as central and local broadcasting is concerned. The third or lower level of broadcasting, however, is not a system of aerial broadcasting; it is a system of wired diffusion of radio programs. Viewed from the other side of the coin, or more appropriately, from the other end of the wire, the use of wired nets for the diffusion of radio programs means the use of wires for their reception. In regard to reception, therefore, the Soviet radio on the whole does not fit the above definition.

The radio listener in the Soviet Union may hear programs on the ordinary *radio set* capable of directly receiving aerial waves and transforming those impulses into sound through the medium of tube and speaker. Only a relatively minor role is played by such direct reception of radio programs, however, and early in 1947 only 18 per cent of all radio receiving equipment in the U.S.S.R. consisted of regular radio sets.<sup>46</sup> The vast majority of radio listeners hear their programs over *wired speakers* located in their homes, in communal dwellings and dormitories, and in public gathering places such as clubrooms, reading rooms, recreation halls, and so forth. Finally, the listener may hear programs over the *public address system*, generally tied into the same wire net as the other speakers, which reaches him in his factory shop, meeting room, or lunchroom.

<sup>45</sup> Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, fifth edition.

<sup>46</sup> Pravda, May 8, 1947.

## THE RADIO DIFFUSION EXCHANGE

There were in May 1947 more than 6 million wired radio speakers (exclusive of public address loudspeakers) in the Soviet Union. They are gathered into nets, each of which is called a radio diffusion (relay) exchange (*radio-translyatsionny uzel*). These nets of wired speakers constitute the core of the Soviet radio receiving apparatus, and the Soviet radio authorities are committed to their development, extension, and improvement.<sup>47</sup> This method of wired reception is one of the characteristic features of Soviet broadcasting which distinguish it from other large systems,<sup>48</sup> and a full understanding of radiobroadcasting in the U.S.S.R. is not to be had without some grasp of the structure and operation of the radio diffusion exchange.

### *Structure of the exchange*

Collectively the various networks of wired speakers are referred to as the lower level of radiobroadcasting. The equivalent of the radio station in this system is the diffusion exchange. Incorporated in the exchange are (1) a powerful aerial radio receiver, usually located on the outer fringes of a populated area in order to avoid industrial interference; (2) an intensifier which strengthens the signal picked up by the receiver or brought in directly over the intercity telephone lines as in an ordinary hookup; (3) an output transformer which, like the intensifier, is located in the center of the area served; (4) a system of wires radiating in all directions from the intensifier and transformer and leading into the homes of private subscribers or to collective listening points (this function may also be served by existing telephone wires or in some cases by the same wires used to carry electrical current); and (5) the transformer and speaker of the subscriber.

The exchange's receiver, which is the core of the system, may range from complicated specially constructed multiple tube receiving sets capable of picking up short, medium, and long waves at considerable

<sup>47</sup> See editorial in *Elektro-Soyaz* (Electrical Communication) No. 5-6 (May-June, 1940); also A. Puzin in *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>48</sup> It is possible to transmit programs from Moscow to the homes of listeners several thousand miles distant without the program ever going on the air.

distances, to ordinary battery-type receivers such as are frequently used on farms. The intensifying equipment ranges from those with a power of only a few watts capable of serving only a handful of speakers, through the 50 watt intensifier for club and factory exchanges, the 100 watt intensifier which services several hundred subscribers, and the 500 watt unit which supplies current sufficient to operate several thousand speakers of the most common type, an electromagnetic unit known as the *Rekord*.<sup>49</sup> Besides this run of the mine equipment, special exchanges have been built in the larger cities of the U.S.S.R. generally consisting of a high-powered central station and a network of weaker substations. The most powerful such unit in the country, under construction in Kiev, will have a power of 50 kilowatts.<sup>50</sup> The largest wired net is that in Moscow, where there are more than one million wired speakers, 864,000 served by the main exchange and its substations, and 175,000 served by 188 unattached diffusion exchanges.<sup>51</sup> At the present time the more powerful substations in such exchanges serve up to 45,000 subscribers, and it is planned to construct some capable of serving up to 85,000.<sup>52</sup> Special equipment is also produced for rural areas lacking electrical current, the latest being the exchange type "VTU-25" with a wind-driven motor putting out current sufficient to serve 400 or 500 speakers of the *Rekord* type.

Before the war the number of these exchanges was generally described as in excess of 10,000, and in 1940 the president of VRK placed the number at 11,000.<sup>53</sup> Further expansion of the exchange network was severely curtailed by the advent of the war, and a "significant number" of exchanges and their nets of wired speakers were destroyed in the territories occupied by the Germans.<sup>54</sup> By the end of 1944, 1,500 exchanges had been rebuilt or restored and 7,000 exchanges were again in operation.<sup>55</sup> Reconstruction thereafter was rapid. Special attention was given to rural areas, and of the first 1,085

<sup>49</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

<sup>50</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1947, *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>51</sup> *Radio*, No. 1 (January, 1948), p. 14.

<sup>52</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>53</sup> *Izvestiya*, February 8, 1940.

<sup>54</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>55</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.



exchanges built up and reconstructed after the beginning of the Fourth Plan, 1,065 were in district centers.<sup>56</sup> At the beginning of the Fourth Five Year Plan the number of exchanges operating was reported to exceed the prewar total. During 1947, 2,250 new exchanges were to be constructed.<sup>57</sup>

### *Management of the exchange*

The radio diffusion exchange, as we have seen, is primarily a technical apparatus which enables a minimum of actual radio equipment (tubes, condensers, aerials, etc.) to serve a maximum number of radio listeners. The chief function of the exchange is essentially passive—it simply carries over its wired net to the subscribers' speakers programs broadcast by central and local stations which are picked up by the exchange's radio receiving apparatus or which come to it over the long distance lines. This fact largely determines the duties of the personnel, referred to as "editors," who manage the exchange's affairs. Their chief function is to select from the available central and local broadcasts the programs best suited to the composition of the exchange's audience of subscribers, to schedule these programs throughout the operating day, and to inform the subscribers of what the net will carry each day. Beyond this they are responsible for maintaining contact with their subscribers—assessing their needs, satisfying those which they are able or authorized to meet, and informing higher authorities of their findings. The officials of the exchange are apparently also charged with the collection of fees which subscribers to the net must pay, part of these fees being retained in the exchange and the remainder passed on to higher echelons.

The task of managing a radio diffusion exchange, one may conclude, is primarily technical and routine. Of the more than 10,000 exchanges operating only 3,000 have "editorial boards" analogous to the local radio committees in charge of republic and oblast broadcasting stations.<sup>58</sup> These boards are found primarily at exchanges authorized to originate their own broadcasts such as the major rural exchanges located in (district) county centers. These editorial boards, as well as the directors of all other exchanges, are subject to the

<sup>56</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>57</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>58</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

authority and follow the regulations of the All-Union Radio Committee in all matters of program policy. The Radio Committee, however, does not own the exchanges, and apparently does not undertake to manage or operate them.

The chief agency engaged in the business of operational management of radio diffusion exchanges is the Ministry of Communications (formerly Posts and Telegraph) of the U.S.S.R. In 1940 it was reported to be operating more than a third of all exchanges,<sup>59</sup> and in May 1947 it apparently accounted for an even larger percentage, since it then included 5,700 exchanges—1,700 more than its prewar net.<sup>60</sup> The exchanges of the Ministry service the great bulk of all wired speakers, probably in excess of 80 per cent of all such equipment. Its exchanges are located not only in large urban centers but also in smaller cities, district centers, and other rural localities.

A large number of exchanges is managed by the All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions; they are located at important factories and plants and in workers' settlements and function under the direction of local trade union committees. These exchanges service speakers in the homes of the plant's workers, in the worker's dormitories, reading rooms, and meeting places. They frequently also service the surrounding community and the public address system of the plant or enterprise. The Fifteenth Plenary Session of the AUCCTU called for an increase of one million receivers in the exchanges of the trade unions by the end of the Fourth Plan in 1950.<sup>61</sup>

Other important exchanges are run by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of State Farms, both serving the rural localities, in particular the collective and State Farms, and Machine Tractor Stations. Other nets are operated by local and municipal authorities and other local organizations of a public nature.

### *Virtues and defects of the wired exchange*

The use of networks of speakers connected by wires to a central receiving apparatus as the chief means of radio reception in the Soviet Union differs so markedly from the system of aerial radio receiving sets with which we are familiar in America and England that it is

<sup>59</sup> *Radio front*, No. 21-22 (November, 1940), p. 9.

<sup>60</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>61</sup> *Trud*, May 7, 1946.

difficult to describe analogous situations. We are, however, far from being totally without comparable experience. In a general way the radio diffusion exchange is very much like an automatic telephone exchange whose wires go out to the homes of subscribers and to public phone booths, except that radio programs substitute for phone messages, all subscribers receive the same message, and only one-way communication is possible. More directly in the field of radio, the Soviet system is actually applied on a smaller scale in some American hotels and hospitals where each room is equipped with a speaker connected by wires with central receiving apparatus. The occupant of the room has simply to switch on his speaker and the program picked up by the central receiver is piped into the room. This system, when magnified to serve a large number of speakers distributed over a larger area, is essentially what the Soviet radio diffusion exchange represents. The chief difference is that in most cases the wired speakers operating in the United States provide the listener with a choice of three or four stations, whereas the bulk of those in the U.S.S.R. are capable of carrying only one program. Our hotel occupant, therefore, has five choices (any one of four programs or not listening), but the average Soviet owner of a speaker has but two (one program or not listening).

The predominance of wired speakers for the reception of radio programs rather than aerial radio receiving sets is the product of a complex of technical, economic, and political considerations. Undoubtedly the chief determinant has been the shortage of broadcasting stations and regular radio sets. Soviet authorities have, however, set out in considerable detail their view of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two systems, and it is of some interest to examine the reasons they set forth for their choice of the wired speaker.

In a basic technical manual on radiobroadcasting used as a college text, I. E. Goron<sup>62</sup> has set forth the following disadvantages of the system of aerial radio receiving sets of the type which predominate in the United States and England: (1) each listener must have a complete receiving apparatus (aerial, tube, condensers, etc.), and (2) this apparatus becomes more complicated and hence more expensive as the distance of the receiver from the transmitter increases; (3) atmospheric and other interferences may make reception difficult and at

<sup>62</sup> Goron, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-13.

times impossible; and (4) there are severe limitations on the number of broadcasting stations which can operate because of the limited number of channels available.

The solution to these problems, according to the author, is to be found in basing the system of radio reception on the elements and principles of wire communications. Professor Goron offers an extensive list of the advantages of the system of radio diffusion exchanges which is very similar to the list of "unquestioned advantages" offered by Fortushenko,<sup>63</sup> Vice-Minister of Communications of the U.S.S.R. For purposes of presentation here the two lists have been combined and simplified; they break down into four items:

*Economy.* For any given number of listeners, including large numbers of subscribers, it is necessary to have only one central receiver capable of picking up aerial waves the cost of which, along with the cost of the intensifier and the wire net, is spread among all the listeners in the net. This economy is held to apply at every phase ranging from the initial cost of the apparatus, cost of installation, operation, repair, and maintenance, to the cost of replacement. Special emphasis is placed on the fact that the subscriber is saved the trouble of caring for a complicated piece of apparatus which may require special care and expensive servicing. Stress is also placed on the fact that the wired system requires a considerably smaller consumption of electric current and of special metals, both of which are in very short supply in the U.S.S.R. relative to the demands of the expanding economy. The following table presents some of the differences in cost between the ordinary radio set and a wired speaker for an average Soviet radio listener in 1939.<sup>64</sup>

*Improved reception.* Since a large number of wired speakers shares one central receiving apparatus, that instrument may be of considerably higher quality than could be individually afforded; this assures a higher quality of reception and facilities, overcoming the range limits of the small individual radio set. At the same time clearer reception is assured the subscriber of the net by virtue of the location of the exchange's central receiver at a point free from industrial and related interference.

<sup>63</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>64</sup> Adapted from Goron, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

*Local broadcasting.* The wire net of the radio diffusion exchange may carry programs which originate at the exchange, and this makes possible utilization of the radio for mass communication of a purely local nature. This ability to broadcast without actually going "on the air" proved itself invaluable during the war, since the local radio could continue to function and maintain contact between the authorities and the population without the risk of having enemy aviators make use of the signals to guide them to their objective. An outstanding example of such use of the wired net is to be found in the siege of Leningrad. During the siege the Leningrad wired net operated

TABLE I  
Cost in Rubles of

|   | <i>Regular Aerial Radio Receiving Set</i> |   | <i>Wired Speaker<br/>Installed<br/>in Home</i> |
|---|---|---|--|
|   | <i>Battery Set</i>                        | <i>Superheterodyne<br/>on Household Current</i> |  |
| Installation cost . . . . .                                 | 200                                       | 800   | 53   |
| Yearly operation cost, with<br>average use six hours daily. | 338                                       | 191 (type 6N1)<br>288 (type SVD)                | 33   |

around the clock. During hours when no programs were on and throughout the night the Leningraders kept their speakers tuned in. The slow beat of a metronome kept the wire alive. Whenever it was necessary to make an important announcement the beat of the metronome was rapidly increased. Thus, at all times the authorities were able to maintain constant contact with the population, to transmit orders, warn of danger, or make special announcements.<sup>65</sup>

*Propaganda Control.* Since the subscriber to the services of the exchange can tune in only the programs carried by his net, it is possible to control absolutely the listening of the radio audience, completely excluding the possibility of intrusion by enemy radio propaganda. This again proved itself of considerable advantage during the war, almost completely nullifying the effect of German propaganda broadcasts to the unoccupied parts of the U.S.S.R.

These advantages of the system of reception of broadcasts through

<sup>65</sup> Reported by Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

the wired net of the radio diffusion exchange cannot, of course, be taken as conclusively establishing the greater desirability of that system over one of aerial radio receiving sets. They are presented here simply to indicate the line of reasoning adopted by Soviet radio authorities to justify their methods, and must be understood in that context. If, for example, Soviet authorities were able to divert a larger portion of the nation's resources to the development of the radio industry it might be able to produce regular radio sets whose cost would be considerably less, relative to the wired speakers. Similarly, the problems of radio interference might be eliminated by technical improvements. The Soviet radio industry has, however, been consistently unable to meet the demands for a large output of high quality receivers, and in this sense the utilization of the wired nets has been as much a matter of graceful acceptance of the inevitable as it has been a matter of choice.

As for the ability to control listening, that clearly has less relevance in countries where listening to propaganda from abroad or from clandestine stations is not considered a problem or a threat. If enemy troops capture the net, furthermore, they are then able to prevent radio listening to the broadcasts of the home government. The advantages of being able to do local broadcasting to a special audience over the wired net are considerable, it is true, but this has been as much a political headache for Soviet radio authorities as it has been an instrument of positive value.<sup>66</sup>

Soviet radio authorities do not make so one-sided a case for the system of wired reception as to deny its chief deficiency. On the contrary, they are very conscious that the most "serious shortcoming" of the wired system lies in the fact that the listener is limited in his choice of radio program, and must in fact listen to the program which is coming over the net at the moment he tunes in. His position is contrasted with that of the listener who has a regular radio set and may choose his own program by tuning one station or another, limited only by the availability of nearby stations. This difficulty may be overcome to some extent by constructing radio diffusion wire nets capable of simultaneously carrying two or more programs on the same wire. Such is indeed the eventual goal of Soviet radio authorities, and as

<sup>66</sup> See section on Local Programming, p. 275, below.

early as 1936 Soviet engineers set their sights at five programs on city wires and at least two on the wires of rural exchanges.<sup>67</sup> This improvement, however, involves costs and technical difficulties of such magnitude that its universal introduction cannot be expected for some time. At present the effort to enrich the listening of wire net subscribers is largely limited to painstaking care concerning program quality, and a broadening of the base of broadcast programs from which the exchange can choose the material it relays to its subscribers. This is being accomplished by increasing the number of local broadcasting stations, and by placing the central broadcasting system on a three program basis.

### THE RECEIVING NETWORK: SIZE AND GROWTH

The term receiving network is used in the Soviet Union primarily to refer to the two chief types of radio listening equipment—the wired speakers in the nets of the radio diffusion exchanges and regular radio sets. It is also sometimes used to include the loudspeakers of factory and other public address systems which may be tied in with radio diffusion exchanges, but this type of radio listening need not concern us here.

The quantitative and qualitative development of the receiving network, no less than that of the transmitting apparatus, have not matched the expectations of the Soviet government and radio authorities or the demands of the listening public actual and potential. The reasons adduced for this failure are generally the same as in the case of the transmitting system: technical inadequacy, the pressure of demands for materials and skilled workers by higher priority segments of the national economy, and, from time to time, charges of bureaucratic deficiencies, lack of local initiative, and “sabotage.” An important factor not to be overlooked, however, was the diversion of a very large part of the production of radio equipment of all types to the Red Army to keep pace with its expansion and mechanization.

This section will present a description of the over-all situation and will then discuss wired speakers and regular radio sets separately. The word “receivers,” when reference is made to the U.S.S.R., is

<sup>67</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 5 (1936), p. 51.

used throughout to mean both wired speakers and radio sets collectively.

### *The over-all picture*

A comparison of the receiving network of the U.S.S.R. and of other countries is more revealing than data on the gross size of the Soviet apparatus. Soviet radio authorities have been very conscious indeed of the resulting contrast. Thus, a survey of Soviet and other radio systems as of January 1935 noted the great gap between the 2.3 million receivers (wired speakers and regular sets) in the U.S.S.R., the 25.5 million sets in the United States, and the 23.5 million sets in Western Europe, despite the greater population of the U.S.S.R. The same survey called attention to the fact that there were then only 13 to 14 receivers per 1,000 of population or one for every 75 persons in the U.S.S.R., as against 160 receivers per 1,000 of population or one for every six persons in the U.S.A.<sup>68</sup> Again in 1940 it was noted that the U.S.S.R. boasted only about 24 to 27 receivers per thousand of population, although "technically advanced capitalist countries" possessed from 120 to 200 receivers per 1,000 of population.<sup>69</sup> If the planned production quotas set by the Fourth Five Year Plan are achieved the U.S.S.R. will have in the vicinity of 15 million receivers by the end of the plan in 1950. Assuming a population of 200 million at that time, the Soviet Union would still have only about 75 receivers per 1,000 of population. It is clear that in regard to apparatus for radio reception the Soviet Union is a poor country.

An even less encouraging picture is presented by the radio receiving network in the rural areas and some of the nationality areas of the U.S.S.R. In 1935 there were 50 receivers per 1,000 of population in the urban areas, but only about four receivers per 1,000 population in the villages and on the farms, and by 1941 there were still only eight receivers per 1,000 population in the rural areas as against 67 in the urban districts.<sup>70</sup> Although the rural areas of the nation currently account for about 65 per cent of the population they contain only

<sup>68</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 46.

<sup>69</sup> *Elektro-Svyaz*, Nos. 5-6 (May-June, 1940), pp. 2-4.

<sup>70</sup> *Govorit SSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 5; *Radio front* No. 3 (February, 1941), pp. 1-2.



about 20 per cent of the nation's radio receiving equipment.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, even this figure does not present an adequate picture of radiofication in the rural areas, since the term "rural areas" includes the *raion* (district) centers (usually a large village or small town), which have a significant proportion of the non-urban radio receivers. Consequently, as late as May 1947 it was reported that the majority of collective farms do not have any receiving apparatus, thus depriving large numbers of collective farmers of the ability to listen to the radio in any form.<sup>72</sup>

Similarly in many border regions and national areas the receiving network has been consistently underdeveloped,<sup>73</sup> and as late as 1940 in five constituent union republics—the Azerbaidzhan, Turkmen, Georgian, Uzbek, and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republics including over 16 million people—the average number of receivers was a mere 3 per 1,000 of population.<sup>74</sup> At the present time the rural regions and the national areas have been given high priority in the radiofication plans of the Fourth Five Year Plan, but the rural areas and some of the nationality regions are apparently once again falling far behind the development in the urban areas of the Soviet Union. For example, the city of Leningrad had already reached its 1950 goal for the installation of radio equipment by the third quarter of 1947, and other cities like Moscow and Voronezh overfulfilled their plans for 1947. At the same time, however, the rural areas as a whole and many of the national republics, particularly those formerly occupied by the Germans like the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Moldavia, consistently failed to meet their planned quotas.<sup>75</sup>

### *The wired speakers*

The so-called radiopoint (*radiotochek*) or listening point on the net of the diffusion exchange consists primarily of a transformer, a loudspeaker, and a switch and volume control—the whole of which may or may not be in a radio cabinet. The loudspeaker, which is the

<sup>71</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 48.

<sup>74</sup> *Elektro-Svyaz*, No. 5-6 (May-June, 1940), pp. 2-4.

<sup>75</sup> *Radio* (Radio) No. 1 (January 1948), pp. 1-2; No. 3 (March, 1948), pp. 5-6; No. 4 (April, 1948), p. 1.

heart of the apparatus, is in most cases an electromagnetic type, but during the war piezoelectrical speakers were developed and are now coming into use.

The following table presents the increase in the number of wired speakers since the beginning of the Five Year Plans, and projects it forward to the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan in 1950.

TABLE 2  
*Expansion of the Soviet Radio Diffusion Network*

| Year *        | Number of Speakers in the Radio Diffusion Exchanges † |
|---------------|---|
| 1929          | 22,000 <sup>a</sup>                                   |
| 1933          | 1,360,000 <sup>a</sup>                                |
| 1937          | 2,946,000 <sup>b</sup>                                |
| 1940          | 4,934,000 <sup>b</sup>                                |
| June 1941     | 5,500,000 <sup>c</sup>                                |
| 1945          | 5,000,000 <sup>d</sup>                                |
| 1946          | 5,700,000 <sup>e</sup>                                |
| 1947          | 6,500,000 <sup>e</sup>                                |
| 1948          | 7,300,000 <sup>f</sup>                                |
| December 1950 | 10,000,000 <sup>g</sup>                               |

\* All data are for 1 January unless otherwise indicated.

† Sources:

<sup>a</sup> Adapted from data in *Sotsialisticheskoe Stroitel'stvo SSSR*, 1936.

<sup>b</sup> Goron, *op. cit.*, p. 14. The month is not specified by Goron, but other evidence indicates reference was to the first of the year.

<sup>c</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944, stated the number to be in excess of 5.5 million.

<sup>d</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>e</sup> An estimate based on statements in *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946 and May 7, 1947, and in *Pravda*, May 7 and 8, 1947.

<sup>f</sup> An estimate based on data given in *Radio*, No. 1 (January, 1948), pp. 1-2; No. 3 (March, 1948), p. 2; No. 6 (June, 1948), pp. 1-4.

<sup>g</sup> An estimate based on the plan to increase the net of wired speakers by 75% during the Fourth Plan.

Table 2 presents a picture of the slow and sometimes halting progress in the increase of the number of wired speakers. Nevertheless, these speakers in 1947 constituted more than 80 per cent of all equipment capable of bringing radio programs to the home, dormitory, reading room, or recreation hall of the Soviet worker or farmer.<sup>76</sup> They form the core of the entire receiving network, and as has been indicated, the Soviet government is committed to the extension and further development of the system.

On the eve of the war there were in excess of 5.5 million wired speakers. Production was sharply curtailed during the war, however,

<sup>76</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

and a "significant number" of speakers was destroyed in the German occupied areas of the U.S.S.R. A special decree of the Sovnarkom on August 19, 1944, took steps to secure the production of equipment necessary for the restoration of the exchanges, and called for the installation of one million speakers during the following year.<sup>77</sup> More than 700,000 were rebuilt or restored by the end of 1944,<sup>78</sup> and with the addition of new production the number of speakers in operation had been brought to about 5 million by January 1945.<sup>79</sup> During 1945 reconstruction and new construction accounted for approximately another 700,000 speakers,<sup>80</sup> and by the beginning of the Fourth Five Year Plan in 1946 the number of speakers was reported to exceed the prewar level.<sup>81</sup> With the advent of the Plan restoration was almost completed and the installation of speakers placed primarily on a new production basis, and in 1946 more than half a million speakers were added to the wires of exchanges operated by the Ministry of Communications alone.<sup>82</sup> This should have brought the total number of speakers in the country to considerably more than 6 million. It was planned to build 945,000 speakers during 1947. The over-all plan was not fulfilled, but the Ministry of Communications, the chief agency in the field responsible for over two-thirds of the installations, did over-fulfill its plan. It is likely, therefore, that there were well over 7 million wired speakers in the U.S.S.R. at the beginning of 1948. The plan for 1948 called for the installation of 900,000 new wired speakers.<sup>83</sup>

The problems faced by Soviet radio authorities in increasing the number of wired speakers are by no means minor, and besides the problems of producing speakers they are already faced with acute shortages of line and other equipment.<sup>84</sup> The Fourth Five Year Plan has set a goal of an increase of 75 per cent over the prewar level in number of speakers by the end of the Plan in 1950,<sup>85</sup> which is considerably less ambitious than the goal of an increase by 2.3 times set

<sup>77</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>78</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>79</sup> Fortushenko, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>80</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

<sup>81</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>82</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>83</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1948; *Radio* No. 1 (January, 1948), pp. 1-2; *Radio*, No. 3 (March, 1948), pp. 1-2; *Radio*, No. 6 (June, 1948), pp. 1-4.

<sup>84</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

by the Third Five Year Plan. This lesser goal may in part be due to the speedup in the production of regular radio sets. In any event, if the planned quotas are met the Soviet Union will have about 10 million wired speakers in 1950, about 8 million of them in the radio diffusion exchanges operated by the Ministry of Communications.<sup>86</sup>

It is not known what proportion of the new speakers will go to rural areas, although it has been announced that special importance will be attached to radiofication in district centers and rural localities.<sup>87</sup> Of more than 4 million wired receivers operating in 1939 about 750,000 were in rural areas in diffusion exchanges operated by the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of State Farms.<sup>88</sup> Of the 600,000 speakers which were to be added to the net operated by the Ministry of Communications in 1947, 150,000 were to be installed in rural localities. The bulk of these were placed in district centers, however, and the people on the farms relied primarily on exchanges to be installed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of State Farms. It should be noted, in this connection, that the plans for the installation of wired speakers by these agencies in 1947 were not met. The Ministry of Agriculture met its quota only to the extent of 19 per cent, and the Ministry of State Farms fulfilled only 21 per cent of its plan.<sup>89</sup>

The chief producers of the wired speakers will be the recently established Ministry of the Communications Equipment Industry and the Ministry of the Electrical Equipment Industry of the U.S.S.R., but some production will also be undertaken in plants of the Ministry of Communications, and the Ministry of Local Industry of the Russian Republic and other ministries of local industry.<sup>90</sup>

### *Regular Radio Sets*

Probably the least successful efforts of Soviet authorities to build up the receiving net has been in the sphere of ordinary radio receiving sets. On January 1, 1936, the whole of the U.S.S.R. boasted 650,-

<sup>86</sup> *Soviet News*, May 29, 1946.

<sup>87</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1946, and May 7, 1947.

<sup>88</sup> *Sotsialisticheskoe Selskogo Khozyaistvo Soyuzov SSR* (Socialist Agriculture of the U.S.S.R.), (Moscow: Gosplanizdat, 1939).

<sup>89</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1947; May 7, 1948.

<sup>90</sup> *Trud*, July 11, 1944.

000 such sets; of these 270,000 were crystal receivers, and about 200,000 were considered outmoded types in need of replacement.<sup>91</sup> According to plan 500,000 receivers were to be built and delivered in 1936, 125,000 for the collective farms,<sup>92</sup> but this plan was never fulfilled. So many sets were in fact idle for lack of current or repairs that at the end of the year a publication of the Radio Committee was able to claim only 50,000 sets as being "ready" to hear Stalin's address before the Supreme Soviet on November 25, 1936.<sup>93</sup>

The Third Five Year Plan, begun in 1938, was expected to bring the number of aerial receivers to a level where they would constitute 25 to 30 per cent of all receiving apparatus,<sup>94</sup> but this level was apparently not reached since late in 1940 there were reported to be only 760,000 regular receivers<sup>95</sup> against more than 5 million wired speakers.<sup>96</sup> Shortly after the war began all regular radio and television sets were called in by the government for the duration. Such a collection presented no great inspection difficulty since, as with the BBC, all sets must be registered and a fee paid for their possession and operation. Apparently some journalists and government officials whose work sanctioned possession of such equipment during wartime were allowed to retain their sets.<sup>97</sup> In any event, all sets apparently were returned to their owners at the end of hostilities.

Data on the number of regular radio sets now operating are very scanty. In May 1947 it was announced that such sets constituted 18 per cent of all receiving equipment,<sup>98</sup> which would put the number of regular radio sets at about 1,300,000. The building of radio sets has apparently been given special priority during the current Fourth Five Year Plan; a total of 3 million sets are to be built over the five year period with a progressive increase in output. The plan for 1946 was not met, however, and apparently the goal of 400,000 radio sets

<sup>91</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 46.

<sup>92</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 1 (January, 1936), pp. 2-3.

<sup>93</sup> *Radio front*, No. 23 (December, 1936), p. 2.

<sup>94</sup> *Elektro-Svyaz*, Nos. 5-6 (May-June, 1940).

<sup>95</sup> *Radio front*, No. 19 (1940), p. 2.

<sup>96</sup> *Izvestiya*, February 8, 1940.

<sup>97</sup> It should be noted, however, that before the war all foreigners, citizens, and organizations could use long or short wave receivers to listen to whatever programs they chose. This privilege is apparently once again available to Soviet citizens who have sets capable of foreign reception.

<sup>98</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

for 1947 was apparently also not reached. The plan for 1948 called for the production of 548,000 sets, but late reports indicated that production was behind schedule. In the light of these facts one may conclude that the 925,000 goal set for 1950 and the over-all goal of 3 million sets for the Fourth Five Year Plan are not likely to be reached.<sup>99</sup>

The responsibility for production of radio sets, like the control of radio in general in the U.S.S.R., is spread among a variety of authorities. Chief producer is the Ministry of the Communications Equipment Industry of the U.S.S.R., but the Ministry of Communications, various national ministries of local industry, co-ops, and amateurs in the schools and in the Radio Friends Society also engage in the production of receivers. By April 1946 Soviet radio plants had reached their prewar level of production, and during 1947 the Ministry of the Electrical Industry will be producing ten types of radio sets including an automobile set.<sup>100</sup>

The low output of the Soviet radio industry in the face of the overwhelming demand for sets has led increasingly to concentration on easily produced, simple, and cheap receivers.<sup>101</sup> Recently both Puzin,<sup>102</sup> Chairman of the Radio Committee, and Sergeichuk,<sup>103</sup> former Minister of Communications, reiterated the necessity for concentration on simple sets of two or three tubes with a low production cost, low selling price, and ease of operation and maintenance so as to make sets available to wider strata of the population.

In the villages and on collective farms, where electrical current for the operation of a wired net is generally not available, individual radio sets are especially important, particularly as group or collective listening points. At the present time a special receiver utilizing battery current and known as *Rodina* (Motherland) is put out for the village. In 1946 no more than 90,000 of these were produced, however, and only 116,000 (more than one-fourth of all radio set production) were planned for 1947.<sup>104</sup> That this is hopelessly inadequate in

<sup>99</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1947; *Radio*, No. 6 (June, 1948), pp. 1-4; No. 7 (July, 1948), pp. 14-15; No. 8 (August, 1948), pp. 3-4.

<sup>100</sup> *Trud*, May 7, 1946.

<sup>101</sup> *Elektro-Svyaz*, No. 5-6 (May-June, 1940), pp. 2-4.

<sup>102</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>103</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>104</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

relation to the need is well recognized by Soviet radio authorities, and has led to a most interesting development—the demand for large scale construction of the almost forgotten crystal receiving sets. This demand was simultaneously sounded by the Minister of Communications<sup>105</sup> and the Chairman of the Radio Committee. The latter, in an article written for *Pravda* on Radio Day, declared:<sup>106</sup>

The crystal set has undeservedly been completely forgotten. It is a seriously mistaken point of view to regard the crystal set, as many do, as outmoded, having only a significance in the early development of radio technique. To meet the needs of the rural population 20-25 million radio receivers are needed. To provide this number by means of radio diffusion exchanges or to build tube radio sets would not be a mere matter of a decade. It is clear that the village cannot wait upon such a tempo. Organizing the output of crystal receivers will enable us to reduce by several times the period required for the mass radiofication of the village.

Mr. Puzin went on to declare that contemporary techniques make possible the production of crystal sets of high quality. They are, he asserted, very simple and can be produced in large numbers at low cost. They are to be built not only in plants of the Ministry of the Electrical Industry but by local industry, producer's co-ops, radio amateurs, and students in their school shops. The Komsomol (Young Communist League) has been charged with responsibility in mobilizing local campaigns for building crystal sets. Thus, the provision of the rural areas of the country with radio receivers is to be placed in good part on the principle of self-help. This method of production with local resources which places a minimum strain on the higher priority projects is, of course, not unique to the field of radio but has widely applied in the U.S.S.R. during its period of forced economic development. It should be noted, finally, that since the output of crystal sets is apparently included in the computation of the output of aerial radio sets, the planned figure of 3 million new radio sets by 1950 appears as a much more modest goal.

<sup>105</sup> *Pravda*, May 7, 1947.

<sup>106</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.



## IV. PROGRAMMING AND PROGRAM POLICY

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### THE GOALS AND FUNCTIONS OF SOVIET RADIO- BROADCASTING

THE preceding sections of this article have indicated that one of the unique characteristics of radiobroadcasting in the Soviet Union is to be found in the structure and organization of its radio receiving network, involving the predominant use of wired speakers joined in radio diffusion exchanges, the widespread utilization of group or collective listening to radio broadcasts, and the direct tying in of public address systems with the radio network. These features, although they have important political and social ramifications, are to be regarded as primarily functional necessities which developed to meet certain technical problems such as the great distances to be covered in the Soviet Union, the limited number of broadcasting stations available, and the difficulties of producing a sufficient number of regular radio sets to meet the needs of the population. The Soviet radio is also distinct, however, in another respect which will be of greater interest to communications research workers, sociologists, and political scientists—namely in the *goals* set and the *functions* prescribed for the Soviet radio by the Party and government.

The following tasks are regularly set before the responsible directors of Soviet radiobroadcasting: (1) to disseminate political information and to increase the “political knowledge” and “political awareness” of the broad masses of the population; (2) to secure the cultural education of the masses, to increase their acquaintance with and understanding of the great works of music, literature, and drama; (3) to rally the population in support of the policies of the Party and government and to mobilize the working masses for the fulfillment of



the political and particularly the economic tasks faced by the nation; (4) to assist the educational authorities in raising the general educational level of the population, particularly in the realms of medicine and sanitation, basic science, and related areas of technique; (5) to provide the population with a positive and constructive means of relaxation. Although the relative importance of each of these functions is nowhere precisely defined in Soviet sources, the order in which they are presented above represents a rough approximation of their order of rank in the thinking of Soviet authorities as judged by discussions in the literature.

In their scope the goals set for the Soviet radio are clearly more sweeping than the regularly stated aims of the ordinary run of commercial broadcasting, although commercial broadcasting may in effect serve some of the same ends. The BBC, municipally operated stations such as WNYC, or quasi-commercial stations such as WHCU in Ithaca, New York, are more directly devoted to broadcasting based on some of these principles, but even here the profound differences in political orientation make comparison difficult. In both the theory and practice of programming on the Soviet radio these goals are so intimately intertwined that it is frequently impossible to state which goal is being served, except to note that in all respects the broadcast material serves to support the Soviet system and the current Party line. Insofar as possible the following discussion of programming on the Soviet radio will be oriented around these goals and functions of the Soviet broadcasting apparatus.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF CENTRAL TIME

Detailed breakdowns by subject of the 1,750 hours of daily broadcasts currently sent out by Soviet transmitters are unfortunately not available. The last complete reports are more than a decade old and therefore can be regarded as merely indicative of the general distribution of radio time. More detailed information is available, however, on the composition of the transmissions of the Moscow or central stations, which at present send out a total of more than 90 broadcast hours daily. In 1946 the central broadcasting apparatus in Moscow began to issue two major programs simultaneously, in an innovation

similar to that adopted by the BBC. A third program was added in 1947, but details on it are not yet available in this country. These three main programs form the core of central broadcasting, accounting for well over a third of the total of more than 90 hours of broadcasting done each day by the central apparatus. During 1947, before the addition of the third program, the two then issued were on the air for 30 hours and 30 minutes of broadcasting on week days, and for 37 hours on "rest days." This time was distributed as follows: music, 60 per cent; political broadcasts, 19.4 per cent; literary programs, 8.6 per cent; children's programs, 7.9 per cent; and others, 4.1 per cent.<sup>107</sup>

The first, or regular program, is broadcast from 6 A.M. until midnight, although during this period there may be a total of an hour or more when no broadcasts go out. It is intended for general consumption, and its time is distributed as follows: 7 hours of serious music and music appreciation; 3 hours of lighter music (folksongs, operettas, and popular music); 2½ hours of news and commentaries distributed over about eleven periods per day; 2½ hours of children's programs; 1½ hours of literary readings and dramatic materials; and about 1 hour of miscellaneous material.

The second program has an eight hour spread from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M., is directed to a more restricted audience, and might be regarded as high-brow. Six of the eight hours of broadcast time are devoted to serious music, the remainder to literary readings, newscasts, and other material. Opera from the Bolshoi Theater or from other major theaters is carried about three times a week by this program, and during the intermission short literary pieces are read, or there are lectures and commentaries on the life and work of composers and authors.

These two programs are accessible to all who have regular radio sets which are capable of picking up the wave. The programs are intended chiefly, however, for retransmission by local radio stations and for diffusion by the wired relay exchanges, which supplement the material they pick up from the central stations with their own broadcasts. In addition to the material made available by these two major programs, the individual listener and local stations and exchanges may select their material from the special broadcasts sent out from Moscow

<sup>107</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946; *Pravda*, May 7, 1948; *Kultura I Zhizn* (Culture and Life), January 31, 1947.

for peasants, youth, women, Red Army and Red Fleet men, and other groups, or the special broadcasts beamed to the Far East, Siberia, and Central Asia.

### CULTURAL BROADCASTS

Radio in the Soviet Union is viewed as "one of the most powerful weapons of the cultural revolution," and as "a great source of cultural growth"<sup>108</sup> whose "force, activeness, and capabilities . . . as a means of cultural education of the mass . . . it is difficult to overvalue."<sup>109</sup> From its earliest days the radio has been expected to make a major contribution to "the transformation of the Soviet Union into a country of complete literacy and high culture," and this has been held to be the basic aim behind all activities of the Radio Committee. In view of this responsibility all central broadcasts must be planned with a view to "lifting the cultural standard of the toiling masses to a higher level," and spreading knowledge of and interest in music, literature, art, and science.<sup>110</sup>

"Artistic" broadcasting, that is, musical, literary, and dramatic broadcasts, have indeed consistently occupied more than half of all radio time in the Soviet Union. This area of broadcasting is not, however, without its potential political implications, and these have hardly been ignored in Soviet broadcasting. This is, of course, in keeping with the general rejection in Soviet ideology of the principle of art for art's sake, and the belief that "a play, a picture, and a song are also propaganda and agitation, but expressed in artistic forms . . ."<sup>111</sup> The radio workers received clear instructions in this matter early in the career of the Radio Committee. Witness the opening words of Kerzhentsev, Committee Chairman, to the All-Union Conference on Political Radiobroadcasting in December 1934:

All of our work in radiobroadcasting must be politically purposeful. A great part of our broadcasting is occupied with music and literature, and we feel that even in these spheres there should be strong

<sup>108</sup> *Pravda*, leader, June 22, 1937.

<sup>109</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, leader, March 17, 1945.

<sup>110</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>111</sup> *Bolshevik*, No. 19-20 (October, 1944), p. 61.

support of the political line, that it is necessary there [as well] to exclude an un-Party-like . . . and simplistic view toward the elements of Marxism. . . .<sup>112</sup>

These remarks are by no means to be interpreted as indicating that the musical programs of the Soviet radio are largely limited to the "International," and its literary fare to readings from *Das Kapital*. The quality of Soviet musical and literary broadcasting is, as we shall see, consistently high, and the nature of its support of the Party line, while unmistakable in general, is in particular instances rather difficult to perceive.

### *Musical programs*

Music is the chief ingredient of Soviet artistic broadcasting, currently accounting for more than half of all broadcast time for all stations in the Soviet Union, thus continuing a practice which has been in force for over a decade.<sup>113</sup> The importance of musical broadcasts is reflected in the standing of the office in charge as an "Administration," the only broadcast subject to be thus recognized. A great deal of care and attention go into the compilation of Soviet musical broadcasts, and performances are generally of high quality.

To judge by the program content the musical directors of the Soviet Union take rather literally their instructions to raise the cultural level of the broad masses and "to familiarize the radio listener . . . with classical music and music of foreign composers."<sup>114</sup> Precise indices of the attitude of the Soviet audience to their musical fare are not available, but the Radio Committee seems to have set its goal at producing a nation of lovers of good music. As V. Stepanov, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, described the situation, musical broadcasts are "not merely a form of entertainment but are also of great artistic-educational significance."<sup>115</sup>

In any event, serious music predominates, and on the previous regular programs of central broadcasting it stood in the ratio of about four to one in relation to popular music, although this ratio was considerably lower on some local stations. Russian composers are presented

<sup>112</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 13.

<sup>113</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

<sup>114</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>115</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.

most frequently, and of these Tchaikovsky is probably the most popular along with Rimski-Korsakov and Moussorgsky. Although this is perhaps quite natural, it also has a political overtone since Soviet policy in the art realm stresses the creativeness of the native talent of the past as well as the present. During the war, of course, patriotic music was particularly featured.<sup>116</sup> Non-Russian composers are by no means excluded, however, and Beethoven makes a very strong showing, probably ranking next to Tchaikovsky. Several other German composers are frequently heard, as well as the musical giants of other countries. Relatively little eighteenth century music is played, although Mozart is regularly represented.

It should not be concluded from this sketch, however, that the strong medicine of fine music is indiscriminately poured into the ears of the Soviet listeners because it is "good for them." Account is taken of national tastes and the level of preparation of the audience. Symphonic music, which generally has a wider appeal, is much more common than chamber music which is a standard but not major item. In this category piano solos, say a Rachmaninoff program, or vocalists with piano accompaniment, are the chief element, trio and string quartets being infrequent. Modern music appears to be as difficult for Soviet audiences as it is elsewhere, but the Soviet composers such as Shostakovich, Khachaturyan, Prokofiev, and Bely are often played and the work of other moderns is sometimes heard.

Popular or light music, of which there is about four hours daily on the two chief central programs, does not refer to jazz, although it is played, or to the Russian equivalent. The chief ingredient in light music programs is choral singing, usually of folk songs or of contemporary songs such as those of the Red Army. The light music programs also include a significant number of selections from operettas and music of a similar genre. Ensembles of popular instruments, such as the balalaika and domra, are also a central element in the broadcasts of popular music. In the national republics and areas music of native origin predominates, but the central apparatus also regularly carries for nation-wide transmission programs of the music of particular national areas. Apart from its musical value this again serves quasi-

<sup>116</sup> *Pravda*, December 16, 1944.

political goals by stressing "native creativity" and the "friendly brotherhood of the peoples of the U.S.S.R."

The responsibilities of the Radio Committee in the sphere of music are only partially fulfilled by planning and putting on the air a steady flow of good music. The other half of its responsibility lies in the direct musical education of the population. For well over a decade the Soviet radio has presented cycles of musical programs on special themes to "present to the listener the opportunity of going through a complete course of musical education over the radio."<sup>117</sup> The central broadcasting apparatus organized its first cycle of directly educational musical programs in 1936 under the title "Musical-Cultural Minimum." As the title indicates, the cycle was designed to give listeners basic and elementary knowledge necessary for an understanding perception of musical works.<sup>118</sup> Under the general rubric of "propaganda of classical music" a variety of programs of this type is presented each year. During 1944 a "great cycle" on Tchaikovsky was presented, and in co-operation with the Bolshoi Theater an operatic cycle. In 1945 a series known as the Radio Musical University, designed to give listeners wider knowledge of musical art, presented a series of "conferences" (*besed*) on the "Russian Classics," "West European Music," "Contemporary Soviet Musical Artistry," "Popular Music," and other subjects, with appropriate musical illustrations.<sup>119</sup> Soviet composers are regularly brought to the microphone to discuss and play their latest works, and these programs are organized into cycles under such titles as "Composers at the Microphone," which appeared in 1944, and "Developments in Soviet Music," which ran in 1946.

The opera, important symphonic concerts, and other major live talent programs are generally carried during the evening hours, but fifteen and thirty minute musical broadcasts are carried throughout the day on a flexible schedule filling most of the time between other broadcasts. Whether they utilize live talent or records, musical programs are generally announced as "concerts," and the central apparatus carries more than thirty each day. The musical resources of the national capital are all available to the Radio Committee for its central

<sup>117</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>118</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), pp. 28-29.

<sup>119</sup> *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo* (Soviet Art), December 12, 1944.

broadcasts, as well as the best musical talent of other major cities and national republics. In addition to the major symphonic and operatic centers of Moscow, the Committee regularly draws on the Red Banner Ensemble of Songs and Dances, the State Chorus, the State Orchestra of Native Instruments (balalaika, domra, etc.) and the Wind Orchestra of the Commissariat of Defense. The Radio Committee has musical resources of its own as well, including a symphony orchestra, a choir, and an ensemble.

### *Literary-dramatic broadcasting*

In 1935 literary and dramatic programs were reported to rank second in total number of broadcasts.<sup>120</sup> Although detailed recent data are not available, an examination of Soviet broadcast schedules indicates that these programs still rank high. There are, however, no soap operas on the Soviet radio, nothing in fact which could in any sense be considered comparable. Like the musical broadcasts the dominant tone in Soviet literary-dramatic broadcasting is serious, based on the whole on the best in literature and the theater, and characterized by an education and "uplift" quality in keeping with the radio's task of raising the cultural level of the population.

*Literary readings.* From its earliest days a standard feature of Soviet radio broadcasting has been the literary program, that is, the reading of selections from, or in series an entire work, of prose or poetry from contemporary writing and the world's classics. Russian classics and contemporary literature predominate, of course, but a wide selection of writers from other countries is represented. For example, in reviewing his twenty years of radio reading recently, O. Abdulov made special mention of Mark Twain, de Maupassant, O. Henry, and Anatole France as good radio reading material; held Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* to be most successful of all, and reported that he had read from *The Good Soldier Schweik* more than 120 times over the twenty year period.<sup>121</sup> The choice of reading matter, of course, shifts with the political winds, and during the war the chief emphasis was on patriotic broadcasts, with *War and Peace* leading the field.<sup>122</sup>

These literary readings are not a haphazard phenomenon and are

<sup>120</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>121</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

not used primarily as fillers for dead space. Neither are they placed in the category of "quality" broadcasts toward which an occasional gesture is made. The reading sessions are a regular part of the broadcast day, and make up one of the standard ingredients of the programs directed to special audiences such as collective farmers, where the readings tend to be about rural life, or Red Army men, where the reading will be on military themes.

In the field of Russian literature alone there is a repertory of 300 standard reading programs, or an average of almost one a day, representing several tens of authors and several centuries. It is maintained, in fact, that there is no more or less well-known work of Soviet literature which has not been presented, at least in part, over the Soviet radio. In the first ten months of 1944 these programs included the works of 260 authors (115 poets and 145 prose writers), of whom about 100, including Alexei Tolstoi, Tikhonov, and Ilya Ehrenburg, appeared in person to read their own works.<sup>123</sup> These personal appearances, similar to those of composers, are arranged in co-operation with the Union of Writers and represent the continuation of an early tradition of the Soviet radio, since the most famous Soviet poet, Mayakovsky, frequently appeared on the radio to read his new poetry. There are, in addition, supplementary lectures on Russian and other writers, and similar educational measures.

Responsibility for originating these literary programs of the central apparatus lies with the Literary Division of the Literary-Dramatic Sector of the Radio Committee. The literary readings emanating from the central studios are supplemented by literary programs originating on the local level. In such broadcasts the stress is on the work of writers hailing from the area served by the local station and on works dealing with the locality. Criticism of the radio literary activity of local radio committees and local offices of the Union of Soviet writers is frequent and sharp. An editorial in the *Literary Gazette*, organ of the Writers Union and the Committee on Art Affairs, for example, complained that local committees gave insufficient attention to this work. It declared that writers submitted for radio presentation only those materials which newspaper and magazine editors had turned down, "and as a result the radio listeners frequently are forced to

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*



listen to absolute potboilers." The editorial also expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that on these local literary programs frequently no more than one fourth of the material read was local literature, the remainder duplicating the central broadcasts.<sup>124</sup>

Those whose familiarity with radio readings does not extend beyond the reading of Sunday comic strips on the air may be hard pressed to understand the persistence of radio readings as one of the major Soviet broadcast categories. Initially these readings may have been part of the effort to meet two difficult conditions facing the Party and government during the formative period of the Soviet radio. At that time almost half of the entire population of the Soviet Union was illiterate (in 1926 the figure stood at 49 per cent), while books for those who could read were exceedingly scarce in the face of a great and growing interest in literature. It was inevitable, accepting the radio's responsibility for cultural development, that the medium of radio should have been used to bridge the gap and to minimize the impact of both the high rate of illiteracy and the book shortage. There is every indication, furthermore, that far from reducing the demand for books, the tradition of radio readings has contributed in significant measure to the ever-growing demand for books in the Soviet Union.

Since the formative period of the Soviet radio, however, the literacy rate has risen rapidly, standing at 81 per cent by the time of the 1939 census, and the output of the Soviet publishing industry has increased markedly, yet radio readings continue to be a major element of Soviet broadcasting. This is not to be explained as simply a hold-over from earlier times. Well-executed radio renditions of fine literature have a quality of their own which requires no further justification, as those listeners will testify who have had the pleasure of hearing such broadcasts on the occasions when they have been carried by our networks. In our own social development we have perhaps moved too far and too fast to recall the pleasures of reading the great works of literature in the family circle. A well-executed radio reading provides similar satisfaction for a mass audience, and such group experiences are assiduously sought out and fostered in the Soviet Union. Nor is this procedure without its practical aim, despite the increase of literacy and the greater availability of books. In the first place the

<sup>124</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, leader, March 17, 1945.

majority of contemporary Soviet literary works have a more or less pointed political orientation, and their dissemination to the wide radio audience thus serves the political ends of the Party and government. In the second place there are many who would have little acquaintance with good literature if they were not to hear the classics over the radio. And it is perhaps too simple a question to ask whether the housewife would not derive equal pleasure, to leave benefit entirely out of the picture for the moment, from a daily chapter reading of Dickens' *Hard Times* as from the latest adventure in Daisy's Lost Romance.

*Dramatic broadcasts.* The bulk of the dramatic broadcasts on the Soviet radio are simply transmissions direct from the actual performances in the major theaters in the capital, supplemented by readings at the microphone of scenes from the classics and contemporary plays. The latter activity is carried on primarily by the same actors who perform in the theaters, and so far as is known the Soviet radio does not have a group of actors devoting their time primarily to radio performances as is the case in the United States. In the first ten months of 1944, for example, the central studios put about 150 "radio spectacles" on the air,<sup>125</sup> including scenes from 50 shows in the current repertory of Moscow theaters.<sup>126</sup> This particular type of performance must be regarded chiefly as a supplement to the theater rather than as a distinct form of radio drama of the type which has received wide development in America. This is reflected in Soviet comments on their radio drama, in the quote from a listener's letter that "it is better to hear and not see, than not to see *and* not to hear," and the editorial comment that "the work of the radio in popularizing the best presentations of the capital theaters is a great and basic affair."<sup>127</sup>

As a rather late development appearing only in recent years the Radio Committee has been giving increased attention to the development of radio drama as such, and this may be expected to change the balance in dramatic programming. Stress is being placed on the preparation of radio dramas, based generally on literary materials but specially written for radio and taking full account of the characteristic

<sup>125</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>126</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>127</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, December 16, 1944.

specifications and capabilities of radio presentation. It is reported that the radio directors are acquiring experience in this field and that they are encouraging the development of creative writing especially for radio.<sup>128</sup> This development is not without precedent in Soviet dramatic broadcasting, since the beginning of such broadcasting is said to date from 1929 with the presentation of a dramatization of a chapter from the well-known humorous work *The Golden Calf*, by Ilf and Petrov.<sup>129</sup>

### POLITICAL BROADCASTING

Soviet broadcasts of a mass propaganda nature are under the supervision of the Sector of Propaganda and Agitation of the Radio Committee. News programs are closely geared in with the general propaganda line, but are under control of a separate Sector on Latest News. These two program areas will be treated as a unit. Together they account for about 25 per cent of the total broadcast time of the Soviet radio apparatus.

*Political education:* The Soviet radio, as "a mass agitator and propagandist"<sup>130</sup> and "a powerful weapon of political propaganda and education,"<sup>131</sup> meets its responsibility for political education by familiarizing the population with important decisions of the Party and government, by transmitting the official explanations and "clarifications" of the policy of Party and government, and by bringing the people political information of a general nature on various aspects of the internal and foreign policy of the Soviet Union. All political broadcasts "must rally the broadest masses of workers and collective farmers under the banner of the Party."<sup>132</sup> The nature of this responsibility of the Soviet radio to secure the political education of the masses cannot fully be appreciated apart from the very phrasing of the instructions given radio workers. Two brief quotations on this subject, representing a span of over a decade, are therefore presented here:

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, March 17, 1945.

<sup>131</sup> *Pravda*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>132</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 15.

Possessing an audience of millions and penetrating to the most far-flung and "deaf" corners of our immense country, the Soviet radio must carry to the widest masses the teachings of Marx-Lenin-Stalin, must raise the cultural-political level of the workers, must daily inform the workers of the success of socialist construction, must spread the truth about the class struggle taking place throughout the world.<sup>133</sup>

The Soviet radio is not only a rapid and reliable means of communication, but also a powerful means of political development of the workers. It carries to the masses the inspired word of Bolshevik truth, aids the people in its struggle for the full victory of Communism in our country, summons them to heroic deeds in the name of the furthest strengthening of the power, of the economic and cultural prosperity of the U.S.S.R. Radio informs them of what goes on in our country and abroad.<sup>134</sup>

*Mobilizing the population.* In addition to its general political assignment of securing the Bolshevik education of the masses, the radio has a very specific role to play in mobilizing the population in the fulfillment of the political and particularly the economic tasks set it. Thus, in connection with the celebration of Radio Day in 1946 the Chairman of the Radio Committee stressed that since the country was entering upon a new Five Year Plan for the development of the national economy there stood "new responsible tasks before the workers in radio." The most important of these he described as the broad clarification of the significance of the new plan and the "mobilization of the workers in the fulfillment and overfulfillment of the tasks of the Stalin Five Year Plan."<sup>135</sup>

### *Characteristics of political broadcasts*

The general tenor of political broadcasting in the Soviet Union was more or less permanently set at the All-Union Conference on questions of Political Broadcasting in December 1934. In his opening remarks Kerzhentsev, then Chairman of the Committee, set forth five major inadequacies of Soviet political broadcasting as it existed

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>134</sup> *Trud*, leader, May 7, 1946.

<sup>135</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1946.

at that time,<sup>136</sup> and his comments were further elaborated by Tamarkin, then director of the Sector of Political Broadcasting.<sup>137</sup> Together these two addresses provide a clear picture of the qualities for which Soviet political broadcasting strives.

The great inadequacy of political broadcasting, according to President Kerzhentsev, was the absence of enough "pointed Bolshevik material." A great part of the political information given suffered from a lack of political sharpness, and from being too "objective" and "quiet." The radio, Comrade Tamarkin stressed, is "a powerful weapon in the hands of the Party" and must operate accordingly:

Political information . . . must mobilize the masses for the fulfillment of the tasks of socialist construction . . . In order . . . to become a genuine speaking trumpet of the Party to the millioned mass of workers, political information [on the radio] must be outstanding in Partyness (*partiinost*), Bolshevik principledness, and activity. We reject all indifferent, "objective" information . . .<sup>138</sup>

The second inadequacy found by the Committee President was a certain timidity in the use of the radio for the criticism of officials and citizens who were lax in their public duties, political and economic. Radio editors, he noted, refrained from naming the culprits by name, which he found "an extraordinarily polite form." Criticism, he insisted, must be pointed, taking its example from *Pravda*. "We reject all hallelujahs in our work," echoed Tamarkin, "and all complacency; political information must show up disorder and mobilize the masses to fight with inadequacies."<sup>139</sup>

The third cardinal sin which Mr. Kerzhentsev noted was the academic quality of much of the political broadcasting, which frequently resulted in ignoring the most important news. There is no point, seconded Tamarkin, in merely announcing that a particular collective farm brigade previously working poorly had as a result of socialist competition come to the front line with its production record unless you tell precisely *how* the improvement was obtained. Such information "has meaning only in the event that it can teach some

<sup>136</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), pp. 13-14.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-17.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

radio listener, if it can tell of concrete measures for securing success in work." In short, concluded Tamarkin, it is necessary to avoid dull, empty, and uninteresting material:

We stand for live and active information, for an original and full-blooded form of presentation of material. . . . But at the same time we renounce the broadcast of material whose only purpose is to divert (amuse) the radio listener quite apart from the significance of the content of the given fact. Such things we regard as unhealthy trickery.<sup>140</sup>

By way of example we are told of the Rostov radio station which seemed unable to find time to broadcast certain "grandiose revolutionary news" from Spain, but seemed to have no trouble in finding a spot for some "twaddle" about a man living somewhere in Africa who had reached the age of 146 years.

The other sins noted were narrow localism and provincialism. The Leningrad Committee, for example, broadcast only news of city life on its city program and only news of agricultural life on its collective farm program. This, it was declared, "is based on the incorrect anti-Party view that the worker is not interested in the collective farmer and vice versa. The Party cannot allow such separation of the city from the village."<sup>141</sup> Finally, attention was called to the "nationalist" errors made by some local committees, particularly in the Ukraine, Central Asia, and Belorussia, and to the frequent imposition on the listening audience of all varieties of personal potboilers and tediously long political addresses.

While the above-mentioned goals and deficiencies of political broadcasting apply to news programs as well as other political or propaganda-agitation broadcasts, a characteristic of Soviet newscasts which deserves special attention is the effort to tie in all news items, even "so-called trivia" with larger questions. For example, various minor notices about some interesting manifestation in the zoological gardens or about the opening of a new theater "must be tied in with the general problem of improvement of the life of the workers."<sup>142</sup>

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

The basic unit of political broadcasting by the central apparatus is referred to as an "article" and is generally a short talk about ten minutes in duration read from script. These articles may be written especially for radio but are equally likely to be adaptations or condensations of newspaper or journal articles. Their form is fairly constant, and even in content they represent a kind of annual cycle. Thus, for several days before the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. there will be articles on the virtues of Soviet democracy, and there are similar series before all important anniversaries and government campaigns. Standard items are the correctness of the policies and leadership of the Party, the success of the Soviet nationality policy, and the high standard of social insurance in the U.S.S.R. There are regular talks on foreign policy. Finally, the lead article or editorial from *Pravda*, and less frequently from *Izvestia*, is regularly read over the radio, as well as other items from the central press. The talks which form part of the programs for special audiences are usually of a less general nature, and call upon the group to fulfill some specific task. On a program for the Red Army it might be a message urging all men to be constantly alert against spies and saboteurs; in the case of a program for collective farmers it might stress the importance of an early harvesting of the crops. This type of exhortation is most important in the work of local and lower broadcasting units, which are able to concentrate on the specific economic tasks facing their audience.

On the whole, the tone of these political broadcasts, which account for the bulk of the spoken words which go out over the air in the U.S.S.R., is calm and unhurried. Great stress is placed on clear diction, slow presentation, and directness if not simplicity of language calculated to reach the average or even the least advanced segment of the radio audience. Sentences tend to be short and vocabulary limited and simple. The announcers who read the political "articles" and present the news items appear to be well trained, are competent and experienced, and generally have radio know-how. They frequently work in pairs as mixed teams, and the man and woman alternate in announcing, presenting news items or reading parts of long articles and announcements.

### *Relation to the press*

It is apparent that in its political broadcasts, the Soviet radio appears more as an adjunct to the press than as an independent medium. In part this has resulted from the use of wireless telegraphy as a means of mass dissemination of information and Party or government decisions in the early years of the Revolution. Lenin referred to radio as a newspaper without limits of space or time. Ever since, most Soviet discussions have tended to compare or link it to the press. The dependence of the radio on the press for political material is not merely accidental or traditional, however, but rather is the product of the political conditions under which the Soviet radio operates. Nothing may be broadcast, of course, which is not fully in keeping with the Party line and which does not have full approval of the Party's Administration of Propaganda and Agitation. For a variety of reasons which we cannot enter into here the Party has decided to place its chief propaganda emphasis on the written rather than the spoken word, perhaps taking cognizance of the Russian proverb that the spoken word is like a bird in a cage: once it's out of the mouth it is gone forever.

The Party puts the greatest part of its propaganda energies into material for the press, and apparently propaganda officials find no reason to duplicate that effort for the radio, since this would involve not only new demands in the preparation of material but the endless problems of censorship and checking on the political acceptability and "correctness" of the new material. Most radio propaganda material is, therefore, simply drawn from approved and correct sources, i.e., the newspapers and journals, and reworked in a form acceptable for radio presentation. Radio workers have on many occasions been vigorously reminded that they are after all in radio and are not running a newspaper, but under the circumstances their plight can be readily appreciated. Some radio devices such as bringing the microphone into the shop or office, as well as radio conferences and discussions provide some variety in the field of political broadcasting, but on the whole the radio editors are limited in applying their ingenuity to adapting for the radio material which is essentially intended for the printed page. It can no longer be charged, as the Soviet humor magazine



*Krokodil* did at one time, that it is only proper for Soviet citizens to see the news first in the morning paper and hear it next in the evening over the radio, since, as everyone knows, light reaches the eyes sooner than sound reaches the ears. But Soviet political broadcasting has by no means tested the full potentialities of the radio as an instrument for the indoctrination and mobilization of the population.

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Broadcasts for children, under the guidance of the Sector on Children's Broadcasts, are sent out by the Central apparatus to the extent of half a dozen or more each day. The tasks of these programs were recently defined by the Chairman of the Radio Committee as follows: "They assist the school and the family in raising the children, organizing their leisure, encouraging their interest in science, and developing their love of the motherland."<sup>143</sup> These have been substantially the goals of Soviet children's broadcasts from their early days. The radio does not seek to actually instruct children or carry out any of the school's pedagogic functions, but "to supplement in an artistic and interesting way the knowledge which children acquire in school or kindergarten." This end is sought through an effort "to develop their inventive interest, arouse their creative fancy, to give them, without strain, a certain amount of historic and literary knowledge, and to foster the appreciation of music."<sup>144</sup>

Children's programs are carefully graded according to age, and there are special programs for preschool and kindergarten children, the Octoberists of the first two years of school, the Pioneers from ten to fourteen, and so on. The programs are much like good children's programs everywhere, drawing heavily on folk tales and adventure stories, on the imagination and impressibility of youth, and on their desire for interesting information. There are no scare programs or hair-raisers for children, special attention is paid to purity of language, and the general tone is very positive and "proper." Although the Moscow Children's Theater is heavily relied upon, more truly original programming of the type especially adapted to radio seems to be done

<sup>143</sup> *Pravda*, May 8, 1947.

<sup>144</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

in the sphere of children's broadcasts than in any other area, probably because political encumbrances are at a minimum. Recent features which attracted some attention were the "Captain's Club" program and the "Radio Magazine." The Captain's Club was a once-a-month series designed to give children greater acquaintance with the geography of foreign lands. The Club's "members" were leading characters of popular children's books such as Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver, and at one stage Baron Munchausen appeared in an effort to crash the club. Each issue of the Radio Magazine was devoted to another phase of serious music, the main purpose of the program being to popularize and develop a taste for good music among the children.

### ADVERTISING

Although announcements of local events such as film showings, theater performances, lectures, and dances have always had a place in Soviet broadcasting, commercial advertisements as such were forbidden in 1935.<sup>145</sup> It must be recognized that despite the almost complete socialization of the means of production and distribution, many Soviet economic organizations have felt the need of some medium for bringing their products and services to the attention of the public. Organizations as large as the Ministry of the Food Industry and as small as the local shoe repair co-operative have advertised their old and new products or services in the newspapers as a means of increasing sales and thus improving their economic position. Advertisements for certain types of skilled labor have been most common.

In recognition of this need, and as an important means of gaining revenue, the Soviet radio began broadcasting commercial announcements at the end of May 1947.<sup>146</sup> These retain the shape of the earlier announcements of local events, and the program format is probably the least objectionable for the presentation of commercials. All of the commercials are grouped in a single program of eight or ten minutes duration, broadcast three times a day, and the announcements are read alternately by male and female announcers without interruption. There is no attempt at salesmanship, which would of course be super-

<sup>145</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 18 (1935), pp. 36-37.

<sup>146</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, June 2, 1947.

fluous in a country of commodity and service scarcity; the commercial programs represent a type of shoppers' service, or a form of radio "red book" in the absence of other advertising media resulting from the paper shortage.

### COMEDY AND RECREATION

In the early days of Soviet broadcasting an article in a Soviet encyclopedia noted rather noncommittally that "abroad radio broadcasting is regarded as an amusement and in part as education."<sup>147</sup> Although the article did not pass judgment on this view of radio as an amusement, there can be no doubt that it does not coincide with that of Soviet radio authorities. The word amusement is not applied to the radio by Soviet authorities, the furthest that they will go in that direction being to refer to it as "a form of entertainment,"<sup>148</sup> and this is very quickly followed by reservations to indicate that it is really much more. The Soviet radio, it appears is much too important a medium of mass communication, too central a link between Party and populace, too viable an instrument of education to be classed with circuses, humorous magazines, and the comic theater as amusements.<sup>149</sup> The Soviet radio may carry programs which amuse, in the form of readings of humorous prose or verse, but the Soviet radio does not have comic programs or radio comics in anything like the sense of American comic programs. The Soviet radio does not seek to amuse. Its task in this regard has been carefully defined: it provides the workers of the nation with "a pleasant, sensible recreation,"<sup>150</sup> above all, "providing them with cultural relaxation."<sup>151</sup>

### PROGRAMMING ON THE DIFFUSION EXCHANGE

The program activities of the local radio stations are largely a replica of those of the central apparatus, and in the case of local stations

<sup>147</sup> "Radioveshchanie" (Radiobroadcasting), *Malaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, VII (1930), p. 125.

<sup>148</sup> *Izvestiya*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>149</sup> In the Soviet Union these amusements, of course, also have political purposes to fulfill.

<sup>150</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>151</sup> *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, March 17, 1945.

which use the Russian language the bulk of their broadcasts are actually relays of central material. The programming of the diffusion exchange, however, merits more extended treatment.

Due to its unique physical structure the diffusion exchange is peculiarly adapted to a vigorous and experimental program policy which can be completely adjusted to local needs. For the same structural reasons, however, namely that they are numerous and that their programs do not go on the air, the exchanges present a difficult monitoring problem. Along with their experimental possibilities, therefore, they run the risk of consistently putting out inferior programs and, what is even more serious an offense in the Soviet Union, they may be used for private, i.e., non-State-sanctioned political purposes. Precisely such a conflict between experiment and local initiative, on the one hand, and central control, on the other, arose in the case of exchange broadcasting in the Soviet Union. As was to be expected, the conflict was resolved in favor of control.

Throughout the early thirties, when their supervision was relatively decentralized and weak, the exchange editors had a relatively high degree of freedom in developing their own broadcasts. Finding what it considered a serious subversion of the purposes of the diffusion exchange, the All-Union Radio Committee, within two years of its establishment, issued a special decision on February 3, 1935, completely reconstructing the system of control of exchange broadcasting.<sup>152</sup> The Committee noted that some exchanges had completely ceased to retransmit central and local broadcasts and instead diffused only their own broadcasts. Many of these programs, the Committee held, were of the primitive potboiler variety. Others were experiments which for one reason or another (the reasons were not given in any detail) were unacceptable, such as radio "traveling shows," radio circuses, the walking radio, and the radio newspapers. Finally, some were regarded as politically illiterate or even "harmful," with cases cited of nationalist diversions and of anti-State speeches made under the guise of scientific lectures. It was noted with horror, if not a little suspicion, that one exchange while carrying Molotov's address to the Seventh

<sup>152</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 6 (March, 1935), pp. 33-35. This order was followed by another on August 16 [*Govorit SSSR*, No. 18 (September, 1935), pp. 36-37]; and still another on January 15, 1936 [*Govorit SSSR*, No. 5 (March, 1936), pp. 43-44] designed to tighten the control over exchange broadcasting.

Congress of Soviets had its own recorded music in the background and even made an announcement in the midst of the speech.

Consequently, the right of exchanges to present their own broadcasts was limited to a specified number of major exchanges certified for the purpose by the local radio committees; all other exchanges were forbidden to originate broadcasts and were restricted to the diffusion of programs sent out by the central and local stations. Authorized exchanges were granted the right to send out their own programs for a total of as little as one half hour or at most two hours during the broadcast day. In originating programs they were instructed to restrict themselves to three areas: (1) political information and a review of the local press, (2) production problems, which meant primarily practical talks by administrators and leading workers on improving production or agricultural yield, and (3) musical programs, which, however were not to be put on by professionals hired by the exchange but were to represent the work of local musical clubs and amateurs. Permission was also given to present announcements, to answer listeners' questions, and to broadcast the more important local meetings and gatherings. All other forms of exchange broadcasting were forbidden, with the exception of a few of the major exchanges, and here special control measures were taken.

The regulations then adopted by the All-Union Committee are still largely in effect. Only certain authorized exchanges may originate their own programs (it appears that at least a third of all exchanges are so authorized),<sup>153</sup> and their maximum allotment for such material is two hours daily. Their chief task is rigorously defined as the high quality diffusion of the central and local broadcasts, some of which, such as the setting-up exercises and news roundups, they are obliged to carry at specified times. In the case of programs which the exchange originates, they must strive to assist the local Party and the trade union organizations in the economic tasks facing the plant or locality. In a plant of the Trekhgornaya Manufactura Combine, for example, the exchange broadcasts include news about the "production advance" of the plant as a whole, and the progress of particular shops, brigades, and Stakhanovite workers; reports on the meetings of Party, Komsomol, and trade union committees; agronomy talks to aid the local

<sup>153</sup> *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1946.

gardeners; announcements of new books, films, and dances; a "technical library" on the air; talks by leading workers about their methods, and similar material of an educational and "agit-prop" nature.<sup>154</sup> At the group listening points in the plant or on the collective farm the local agitators are expected to be on the premises at the time of these "home" programs (and during the transmission of the central news and political broadcasts) to answer questions, to organize summaries of the material transmitted, and to stress the immediate tasks and responsibilities of the group in the production or political campaign discussed on the broadcasts.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>154</sup> *Trud*, June 13, 1943. For other reports see *Trud*, July 14, 1943, and May 7, 1946.

<sup>155</sup> See *Rabota Agitatora S. Gazetoi* (The Agitator's Use of the Newspaper) (Moscow: OgiZ, 1943), especially pp. 43-45.



## V. THE RADIO AUDIENCE IN THE U.S.S.R.

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THE discussion of the radio listening audience, the most important element in any broadcasting system, has been postponed until this point because what is said about the audience cannot be grasped except against the structural background of the Soviet radio and its program policy.

### ITS SIZE

The size of the audience reached by the radio sets and wired receivers of the U.S.S.R. is not precisely known. Even with an accurate index of the average number of listeners reached by each receiving point, which unfortunately is not available, it would be necessary to exercise considerable caution in making an estimate from the mere size of the receiving net. Due to lack of repairs and replacement parts a considerable number of receivers are regularly inoperative. In one exchange in 1943, for example, more than 500 of a total of 940 receivers were inactive throughout the year.<sup>156</sup> Although this undoubtedly reflected wartime conditions, less severe but striking deficiencies are apparently not unusual in less troubled times.<sup>157</sup> Account must be taken, furthermore, of more general inactivity of the system as a whole. It was reported in 1940, for example, that on the average the nation's diffusion exchanges were silent during 3.7 per cent of the time that they were scheduled to be operating, due to lack of current or mechanical failures.<sup>158</sup>

There are, however, some indices on which an estimate may be

<sup>156</sup> *Trud*, July 14, 1943.

<sup>157</sup> See editorial, *Radio front*, No. 19 (1940).

<sup>158</sup> *Elektro-Svyaz*, No. 5-6 (May-June, 1940), p. 3.

ventured. At the end of 1934, with 64 stations broadcasting and 2.5 million units in the receiving network, a Soviet official estimated the number of listeners as over 10 million.<sup>159</sup> Another official placed the total at 13 to 15 million.<sup>160</sup> This audience was made possible by the extensive use of collective listening resulting from the installation of sets in clubs, reading rooms, and other public places. Early in 1936 it was reported that in the city of Gorkov with 1,200 receivers, 100 of them in the house of culture, dormitories, and stores, there were not less than four to five thousand radio listeners.<sup>161</sup> Since 1936, however, collective listening has been constantly stressed by the radio authorities, and every major exchange has been expected to establish a large collective listening point known as a "radio auditorium"; by 1940 there were 6,000 such auditoriums.<sup>162</sup> Under the circumstances, a ratio of five listeners per receiver (all types) might be taken as reasonable, and with approximately 10 million receivers in existence at present (January, 1949) we might anticipate that under ordinary conditions the average audience would be about 50 million. At the time of important announcements and addresses by important government officials, of course, the audience might be expected to be significantly larger, both because greater interest might attract listeners to group-listening points and because of the ability of local propaganda officials to mobilize the local population for radio listening.

### GEOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Adequate data on the geographical distribution and social composition of the radio audience are lacking, but the main outlines of this distribution may be derived from available material.

The majority of collective farms, as has been noted, have no radio apparatus of any kind, neither regular sets nor wired speakers. It must be remembered, furthermore, that the term "farm" does not mean one family; on the average, collective farms include about 75 to 100 peasant households. Thus, a large part of the rural population is outside the realm of radio in the Soviet Union, except for the

<sup>159</sup> Ziglin, *loc. cit.*

<sup>160</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), pp. 2-3.

<sup>161</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 8.

<sup>162</sup> *Izvestiya*, February 8, 1940.



peasants' visits to district centers which are better equipped. Similarly, in the nationality areas of the country the number of radio receivers is very low.

The radio audience is largely restricted, therefore, to those living in district centers in the rural regions, in the better developed nationality areas, and particularly to the urban population.

Even within these limits the radio is not uniformly available to all elements of the population. The possession of a regular radio set is limited by the scarcity of such sets, by the availability of electric current to operate them, and by the costs of these sets, which in the past have been high enough to put them beyond the reach of many workers. It is probable, therefore, that such sets are largely in the hands of officials, members of the intelligentsia, and more skilled workers, some of whom may have acquired them as rewards for their high production records. The remainder are used as collective or group listening points in dormitories, clubrooms, etc., and on collective farms where wired receivers are not available. The costs of the crystal sets, when they reach mass production, will be low enough to put them within the reach of anyone who can obtain one. In the case of the wired speakers the costs are much less a factor, and accessibility to radio diffusion exchanges is the chief determinant. The major urban centers are well provided with such equipment, and at most large industrial plants the trade unions have established exchanges which serve the workers' dormitories and the surrounding workers' settlements or apartment houses. Those people who live in parts of the city which have exchanges, or who work at major industrial establishments, have an opportunity to have wired receivers installed. The rest must wait upon the future development of the radio receiving network.

### THE LISTENING PATTERN OF THE SOVIET AUDIENCE

In discussing the Soviet audience, it is not possible to produce anything like the beautiful array of charts, tables, and graphs which is available on the listening habits of the American radio audience. The Soviet pattern must be derived from the structure of the radio apparatus and from other secondary sources.

In the early part of 1949 there were about 10 million wired speakers and regular radio sets in the Soviet Union. It is likely that not more than 8.5 million are located in private homes, and as a result an outstanding feature of radio listening in the U.S.S.R. is group listening, or as it is called in Soviet terminology, collective listening. Those who have sets at home, or those who live in workers' dormitories which have radio equipment, may hear the radio at their place of residence. Those not so fortunate who want to hear the radio have to go out—to the home of a friend who has a set or to some gathering place such as the reading room of a plant, housing community, or collective farm, the recreation hall of the trade union, or to one of the 6,000 collective listening auditoriums maintained by the diffusion exchanges. They may also hear radio programs at their place of work, piped in over the public address system, and in some cases carried out to farm brigades by portable sets.

The nature of the Soviet receiving apparatus has an effect not only on the time and place of radio listening, but on the choice of program as well. When you visit your neighbor courtesy requires that you listen to his choice of program. When listening is done in public places the choice of program becomes a joint decision, or is the responsibility of the director of the reading hut or recreation hall. This applies, furthermore, only to regular radio sets. Most radio listening is based on wired receivers, and except for the limited number of exchanges which can carry more than one program, the listeners are restricted to the program which the editor of the exchange chooses to put on the wire at the time. In that case there are only two choices: to listen to the program on the wire or not to listen at all. In the case of the public address system there is, of course, only the one choice.

### THE SOVIET AUDIENCE AND PROGRAM POLICY

The structure of the audience and the predominance of group listening have also had their effects on the program policies of Soviet radio directors. Soviet broadcast policy has been consistently dominated by the principle of orienting and directing programs to carefully defined segments of the population, and apparently no really serious competition has been offered by the opposed principle of the

maximum audience at any given time. This is one of the few luxuries that can be afforded by noncommercial radio which is free of the advertiser's need for maximum audience coverage for any given unit of cost.<sup>163</sup>

As early as 1930 it was asserted that "Soviet radiobroadcasting is oriented toward specific elements of the audience of toilers . . . taking into consideration their interests and stage of development."<sup>164</sup> The chief groups toward which programs are directed are industrial workers, collective farmers and agricultural workers, employees, women, youth (in particular members of the Young Communist League), children, Red Army men, members of the Red Fleet, and various nationality groups. Women, it might be noted, are treated as just another group, albeit important, among many other groups in the radio audience. They do not enjoy the overwhelming importance granted them by American program directors by virtue of their position as the chief force in setting the family consumption pattern.

The dominance of the principle of group-oriented programs is not merely a device in keeping with the pattern of radio listening. It is closely related to the functions which the Soviet radio is expected to serve. From the point of view of the audience the radio is supposed to satisfy certain predefined "needs" for political information, for cultural education, for relaxation; from the point of view of the Party and government it is expected to secure political support of the regime, to mobilize the population for the fulfillment of its economic tasks, and so on. But the needs of the listeners and the expectations of the Party and government vary from social group to social group. They are not the same for the workers, the peasants, the intelligentsia, the housewives, or the Red Army. Under the circumstances, the Soviet radio must of necessity be based on the principle of group-oriented programs if it is efficiently to serve the purposes for which it was built and is operated.

The technical base of Soviet radio broadcasting both facilitates and hampers the operation of this principle of group-oriented and directed programming. Insofar as the radio relay exchanges that are the foun-

<sup>163</sup> Soviet radio authorities, like all mortal radio men, do not escape the problem of the evening hours when the entire family gathers around the one radio set. See Goron, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>164</sup> "Radioveshchanie," *Malaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, VII (1930), p. 125.

dation of the receiving network have a homogeneous audience of subscribers, as in the exchanges which serve collective farms or industrial enterprises, the wired speaker system lends itself admirably to this type of programming. The directors of the exchange may then choose for transmission to its net of subscribers those programs which are best suited to the needs of its audience. And since the subscriber is able to tune in only the programs which the exchange is sending over the net, he will hear, if he listens at all, a program designed to reach him rather than a program designed for another audience and therefore presumably less effective.

A system of wired radio diffusion is not so well suited to group programming, however, in the case of exchanges which serve a heterogeneous audience, such as those in urban centers and in some rural localities where industrial plants and local farms may be served by the same net. In such cases, the fact that the majority of the exchanges are capable of transmitting but one program at a time makes it difficult to carry programs for one part of their audience without cutting off another part with different needs and interests. The solution here lies in constructing new exchanges and reconstructing old ones, so that the exchange is capable of simultaneously transmitting more than one program over its wires, thus giving the subscriber an opportunity to choose his program according to his needs and interests. This system, apart from presenting its own technical difficulties, is also dependent upon an increase in the number of transmitters simultaneously sending out programs in any given area, a requirement not to be met easily by Soviet industry at this time.

#### AUDIENCE RESPONSE AND TESTING

Very little is known concerning the response of the Soviet radio audience to the fare offered to it by the Radio Committee and local stations. So far as is known there does not exist in the Soviet Union any large scientific system of opinion testing such as has been developed in the United States. The difficulties of opinion testing of that type under the political conditions which exist in the Soviet Union are obvious. The testing of audience reaction to radio programs, however, particularly in areas which are not politically touchy, would not

involve such serious obstacles. The general absence of such testing may be attributed to several influences. Chief amongst these is the conception of the radio's function not primarily as a source of entertainment but as an instrument of government policy and as a means for the general cultural and political education of the population. Under the circumstances it is not too surprising that greater efforts are not made to test audience response; the Party and radio authorities assume that as specialists they are better equipped than the listening audience to judge what types of programs will achieve these ends. It should be noted, furthermore, that extensive audience testing is a complicated and expensive operation, which the radio officials, if they were so inclined, would have difficulty in justifying to the Soviet budgetary authorities.

It would be unduly glib to assert that after all the Soviet population has no choice but to listen to the radio programs offered it, and that therefore the radio authorities need show no concern for or interest in the reactions of their listeners. There is evidence that they do. Respect for the radio listener is reflected in the generally high quality, the scope, and the content of Soviet radio programs. Furthermore, the radio authorities have always stressed the responsibilities of the radio workers to the radio audience. Even in the sphere of political broadcasting, where one might expect the least compromise, the director of political broadcasting complained in 1934 of excessively long and dry speeches and declared that many "stuffed with figures and indigestible material only clutter up the air."<sup>165</sup>

The radio authorities are not unaware that the vast majority of listeners are served by relay exchanges and thus cannot choose their own programs. There are standing instructions that special attention be given to the work of the exchanges, in particular to their programming policy, and their contact with the subscribers.<sup>166</sup> The general tenor of the instructions given to radio officials by the Party in regard to the audience's needs is fairly well reflected in this statement from a *Pravda* editorial written on the twentieth anniversary of Soviet radiobroadcasting:

<sup>165</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1935), p. 17. This should not be taken to exclude the fact that the speaker may have had in mind the diminishing effectiveness of long political speeches.

<sup>166</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 6 (March, 1935), pp. 33-35.

Our radio serves the widest mass of the toilers and therefore it is faced with especially high demands. The workers in radiobroadcasting are responsible before the tens of millions of listeners. Complacency in this important sphere of our mass political-educational work would be full of the most serious consequences. Workers in radiobroadcasting of the central and local stations must work like demons, sparing no pains, to carry out honorably the work entrusted to them. They must unceasingly show concern about their listeners, improve the quality of radiobroadcasting, diversify the programs broadcast, secure the high ideo-direction of all that they put out. . . .<sup>167</sup>

Although the actual extent of the efforts to test audience response is limited and does not appear to include careful sampling and polling techniques, the amount of this activity in the sphere of radio appears to be greater than that in the field of press and the films. This is most likely due to the fact that the bulk of radio time is devoted to non-political work, that is, music and literary-dramatic broadcasts, and a greater leeway for audience choice is therefore feasible.

The chief means of judging the response of the radio audience is, as in the case of the newspaper readers, the encouragement of extensive letter writing by radio listeners. As early as 1934 it was reported that a single central station received from 25,000 to 30,000 letters each month.<sup>168</sup> In 1937 it was asserted that the Radio Committee received "hundreds" of letters each day.<sup>169</sup> During the war, undoubtedly encouraged by the frequent reading on the air of letters from and to the front, the Committee was apparently receiving almost 50,000 letters each month.<sup>170</sup> It would appear that these letters, or a representative sample of them, are carefully read and studied. It has been stated that "these letters and the conferences of radio listeners serve as the material from which the All-Union Radio Committee and the local commissions derive the information necessary for the improvement, the correction, and the direction of broadcasting in a manner which will more fully satisfy the interests and requirements of the broad mass of listeners."<sup>171</sup>

<sup>167</sup> *Pravda*, December 16, 1944.

<sup>168</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>169</sup> *Radioprogrammy*, October 30, 1937.

<sup>170</sup> *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*, December 12, 1944.

<sup>171</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

The conference of radio listeners referred to above is a special feature of the radio exchange system of transmission. The radio relay exchange does indeed offer unique opportunities for close contact between those in charge of broadcasting and the listening public. The name and location of each subscriber is known to the exchange directors, and frequently the exchange is sufficiently small to permit real personal contact and exchange of views between radio worker and listener. These conferences of radio listeners are usually held in the group listening room of the exchange, in the trade union hall, or in a similar public place, and are supposed to provide the listeners with an opportunity for complaint or praise, and the exchange workers with an opportunity to learn the listeners' views and to defend their operation of the exchange.<sup>172</sup> Other practices used from time to time to test audience response at the local level are visits to the homes of subscribers by employees of the exchange, and the use of "brigades" of radio workers who visit clubs, collective farms, and other points of collective listening to question radio listeners on their tastes and their reactions to the quality of local broadcasting. Such information as is gathered appears primarily to concern the reaction of subscribers to the choice of programs by the editors of the local exchange from among the central and local station offerings, rather than the response to the content of individual programs. The latter type of information is apparently also gathered, however, and then is supposed to be passed up the administrative hierarchy by the directors of the exchange to the point at which the program actually originates.

The testing of audience response as we know it in the United States is not developed in the Soviet Union. There have been only occasional references to the use of questionnaires by Soviet radio officials. The directors of youth programs sent schedules of future broadcasts to listeners for their comments;<sup>173</sup> in one exchange a listener's conference was followed up by the distribution of 1,000 questionnaires which sought to find out which programs listeners wished the exchange to carry,<sup>174</sup> and another exchange distributed 100 question-

<sup>172</sup> See *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 11; *Radioprogrammy*, January 24, 1937; *Trud*, July 14, 1943.

<sup>173</sup> Ziglin, *op. cit.*

<sup>174</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 2 (January, 1936), p. 11.

naires for a similar purpose.<sup>175</sup> Copies of such questionnaires are not available, and in general the procedure does not seem to have been encouraged.<sup>176</sup> Greater stress is placed on conferences and meetings of listeners, and on the development of "listeners councils" or panels for constant contact between the audience and the exchange workers.<sup>177</sup>

Little is known about the extent and type of program pretesting used by the Soviet radio authorities. The only references to such activity deal with youth and children's programs. It was recently reported that children's programs are presented before a sample audience of children, who are then questioned on the merits of each scene, and, we are told, their suggestions are often followed.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>175</sup> *Govorit SSSR*, No. 6 (March, 1936), p. 34.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Time*, July 13, 1942.





## VI. THE SOVIET RADIO AND THE SOVIET SYSTEM: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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AT THE present time virtually all phases of Soviet life are objects of special attention, and certainly the propaganda apparatus does not stand last in this regard. The interest of the Soviet radio is not limited, however, to the fact that it is "Soviet," or that it differs from the dominant radio pattern in the West. This survey of domestic radio-broadcasting in the U.S.S.R. has sought to point up the close relationship between the structure and functioning of the Soviet radio apparatus and the complex of social, political, and economic conditions in which it operates. The concentration on the psychological aspects of propaganda has, unfortunately, often led to a neglect of this phase of communications research. In summary, therefore, it might be well to review some of the respects in which the interrelationship of the Soviet radio and the Soviet system is manifested.

### PARTY POLICY AND PROGRAM POLICY

It is essential to an understanding of the program policy of the Soviet radio that it be seen against the background of the Communist Party's conception of its relationship to the masses and to the media of communications. It was Lenin's dictum that the Party was the teacher, guide, and leader of the masses. Stalin, in elaborating the conception of the relation between the Bolsheviks and the proletariat, placed special emphasis on the element of leadership.<sup>179</sup> The Party is not a true party, he asserted, if it limits its activity to "a mere

<sup>179</sup> See especially the two essays "Foundations of Leninism," and "Problems of Leninism" which may be found in English in J. Stalin, *Leninism* (London: London, Allen & Unwin, 1932), I, translated by Eden and Cedar Paul.

registration of the sufferings and thoughts of the proletarian masses, if it is content to be dragged along in the wake of the 'spontaneous movement' of the masses . . ."<sup>180</sup> The "thinking" elements could not let the movement go its own way, there was to be no *khvostism*, or holding on to the tail of the masses. The Party was to march at the head of the class, was to be a "general staff" which saw farther than the proletariat, rose superior to its transient interests, imbued it with class consciousness, and in time raised the masses to the level of the vanguard.<sup>181</sup>

The Party's attitude toward the media of communications derives directly from this conception of its position as the leader of the masses. Stalin spoke of the press as a "driving belt" between the Party and the masses, and the radio and films are commonly described as a "tool," "instrument," or "weapon" in the Party's hands.

In the light of this self-conception we are able to place the chief characteristics of Soviet program policy in a more general ideological framework. Serious music and literature predominate to a much greater extent than might be expected if program policy were decided by popular choice. This emphasis is determined by the Party, and is viewed as the fulfillment of its assumed responsibility for the cultural education of the population. The high proportion of "agit-prop" material and its pervasiveness are regarded as necessary and proper concomitants of the Party's self-defined role as directing vanguard and general staff. It follows, finally, that in this relationship between the Party and the masses the function of public opinion testing is sharply circumscribed.

The Party not only determines the goals of broadcasting, but is assumed to be best qualified to select the means of attaining these goals. The Party cannot be indifferent to public opinion, however, not because it seeks to follow that opinion but primarily to check and regulate its own pace. Stalin has warned, in this connection, that the Party must not move so slowly as to lag behind and become "isolated from the masses," nor so rapidly as "to rush ahead . . . to lose contact with the masses."<sup>182</sup> But this is a highly political rather than a statisti-

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.* Also see pp. 40-41, 45-46, 95-96, 161-162.

<sup>182</sup> Stalin, "Dizzy with Success," in Eden and Cedar Paul, *op. cit.*, II, 285-286.

cal conception of public opinion, and its determination is arrived at by means other than the public opinion poll.

### FUNCTION AND DYSFUNCTION

The interrelation of the Soviet system and the Soviet radio is no less marked in respect to the physical structure of Soviet broadcasting. Unable to provide enough radio stations to cover its vast domain, and sufficient regular radio sets for its great population, the Soviet government turned to the use of wired diffusion and to group listening. This choice was not simply accidental; the alternative chosen geared in with the political and social pattern of Soviet life. From the point of view of the Party and government it was functional in the extreme. First, group listening means group contact and group experience, which has been generally fostered by the Soviet regime in its efforts to reshape the *Geist* of the population. Second, group listening lends itself admirably to agitation work. It brings the agitator's audience to him of its own volition, and it gives him the unique opportunity of combining his personal appeal with the authority of the impersonal radio. In addition, wired diffusion eliminates the possibility that his audience may have been subjected to radio counterpropaganda. Third, the diffusion system facilitates the task of the agitator (and the educator) by making known to him the precise composition of the audience with which he is working. Fourth, by making possible direct contact between the local radio official and the listening audience, the diffusion network provides a well-defined channel for popular criticism and thus aids the Party and government with the ever-present problem of controlling the administrative bureaucracy. At the same time, by channeling public dissatisfaction toward immediate targets at the local level (i.e., diffusion exchange officials) the Party and government are able to siphon off in a relatively harmless form criticism which might otherwise be aimed at higher and more important targets.

It is clear that the radio apparatus is fairly well designed to meet the needs of the Party and government. This does not mean, of course, that in its structure and functioning the Soviet radio does not generate some stress and strain which may in the last analysis prove dysfunctional from the point of view of the ruling power. This is probably

the case in at least three respects which may be regarded as potential generators of tension throughout all areas of Soviet life—the scarcity of consumer's goods, the pervasiveness of agitation and propaganda activities, and the extensiveness of political controls.

It is not unlikely that despite the possible satisfaction of group listening, large numbers of the population feel the impact of being so frequently obliged to listen in public rather than in the comfort or seclusion of their homes. In addition, the fact they are limited to the choice of a single program can hardly escape the notice of those who have wired speakers rather than radio sets. Thus the situation in radio contributes to the general impact of the scarcity of consumers goods and the deficiencies of those which are available. It may be assumed, furthermore, that the public's attitude toward the radio as a means of relaxation is probably affected both by the high propaganda content of a considerable part of the broadcasting and by the frequent linkage of group listening and group agitation, and that consequently some avoidance of the radio might result. A related ambivalence toward the radio has, of course, been noted among some segments of the population in other countries subjected to intensive commercial exploitation of the air waves. Finally, it may be noted, that while the ability of the diffusion exchange's subscribers directly to criticize the officials of the exchange may effect some change in the choice of program diffused, it can create only very limited change in the *content* of programs. The local directors are rigidly bound by regulations from above, and those at the top, as we have seen, are bound by political principle rather than by an interest in presenting primarily that type of program which the audience might want. Thus, the freedom to criticize the diffusion exchange directors may in the last analysis have a boomerang effect, thereby increasing frustration and resentment against the total system.

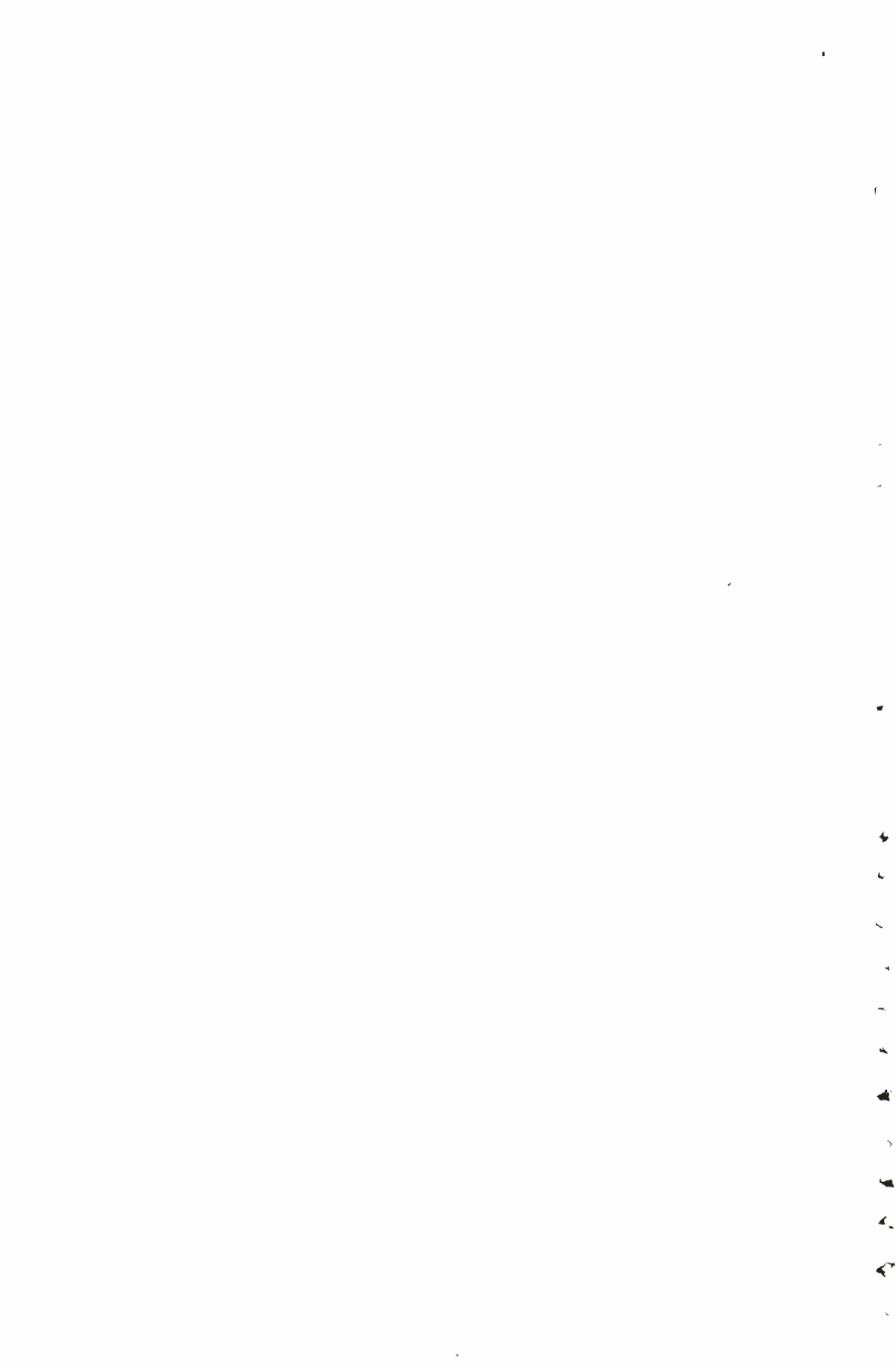
In the absence of adequate data, however, this enumeration of possible areas of dysfunction in the operation of the Soviet radio must be regarded simply as suggesting a line of investigation rather than as presenting established conclusions. In evaluating them it must be remembered that the Soviet radio functions in a milieu in which scarcity, extensive propaganda activities, and rigid controls and decision from above form the dominant and apparently widely accepted

pattern in most spheres of social and political life. It should also be kept in mind that radio listeners in the United States and elsewhere are regularly subjected to intensive commercial advertising which many of them might choose not to hear, yet most of them continue to listen to the radio. Furthermore, many of them may well have the feeling that they are powerless to affect significantly the choice of program content, yet this has not resulted, up to this point, in serious economic or political consequences for the radio industry as a whole, or for the total social-economic system in which it operates.

### FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

If we keep this background in mind we are not entirely without some basis for making a prediction as to the future development of the Soviet radio. It has already been indicated that in the immediate future the physical expansion of radio facilities will continue slowly. Several five year plans will be required before the density of radio receiving equipment approaches that currently existing in the United States and the more advanced areas of Western Europe. We may expect a significant redressing of the disproportion in the distribution of radio equipment between city and country and a noticeable shift in favor of the proportion of regular radio sets as against wired receivers, although wired receivers will continue to predominate. Considerable progress may also be anticipated in placing the wired net on a multiple-program basis. Despite an increase in the availability of receivers, however, it is likely that group listening will continue to be encouraged because of its adaptability to agitation work.

Insofar as program policy is concerned, it appears certain that so long as the forced pace of Soviet economic development continues, and particularly so long as international relations remain unsettled, the basic relationship of the ruling Party to the population will remain the same. Consequently, we may anticipate that for the foreseeable future the basic pattern of Soviet radio program policy will remain substantially in its present form.



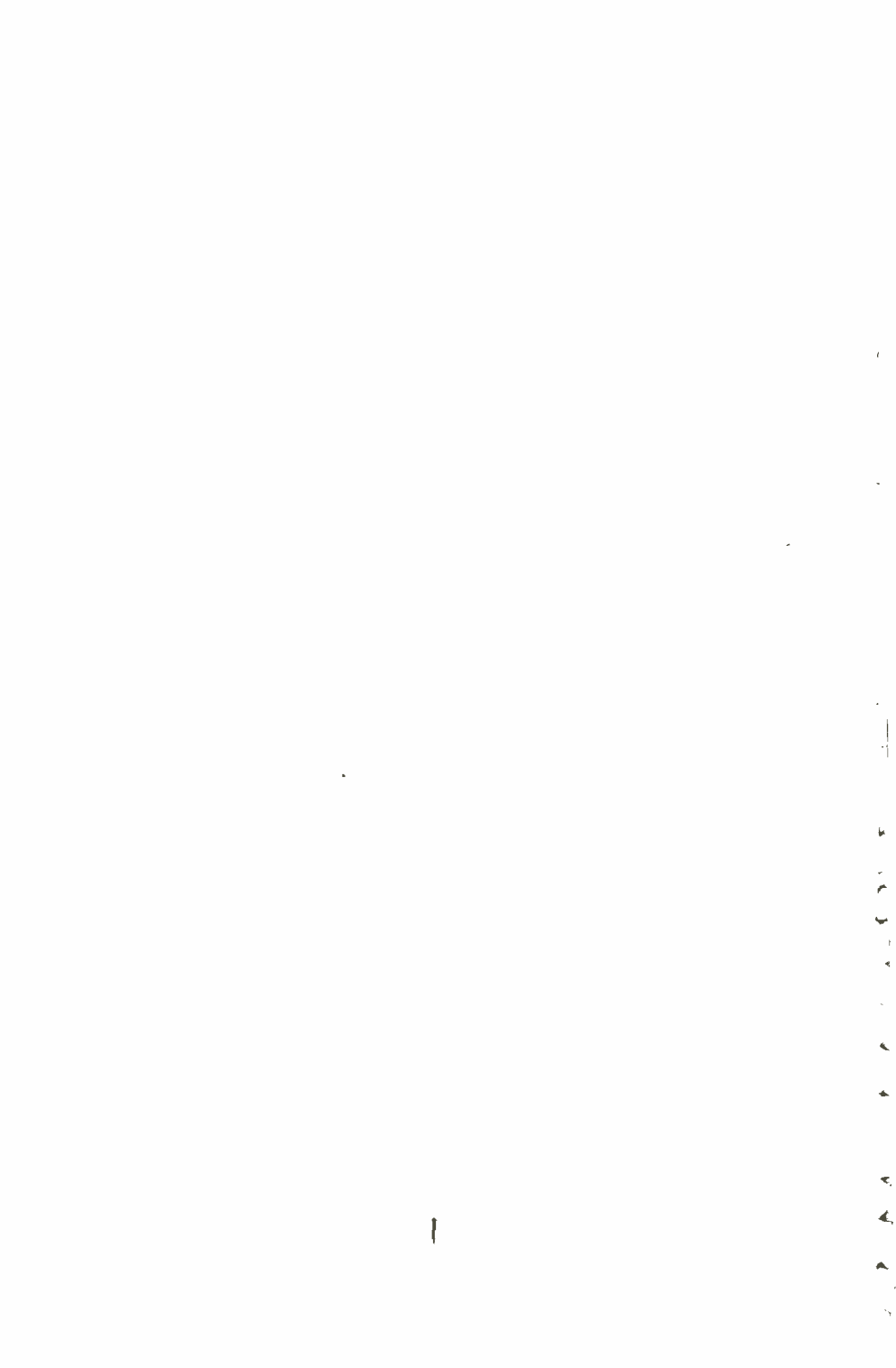
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## APPENDIX A



### THE CHILDREN TALK ABOUT COMICS, by Katherine M. Wolf and Marjorie Fiske

---

#### CLASSIFICATION OF CHILDREN ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF ADJUSTMENT

Children were observed in regard to the following areas of appearance and behavior:

1. *Appearance of child* (extremely untidy dress or hair, evidence of exaggerated concern with appearance, fingernails bitten to the quick, immaculately manicured nails, etc.).
2. *General behavior of child during interview* (fidgeting, blushing, excessive perspiration, apathy, stiffness, stammering, etc.).
3. *Reaction to interview situation* (completely inarticulate, words dragged out painfully, overco-operative, suspicious, noncommittal, or cautious).
4. *Attitude toward other people as revealed by interview* (comments about parents, friends, and siblings, either indicating resentment, contempt, hatred, jealousy, or excessive admiration and humility).
5. *Attitude toward self revealed in the interview* (showing off, "tough," "smart," "funny," or embarrassed because not adequate to the task).

Children were classified in one of four groups, as follows:

(A) *As well adjusted* (Group A), if there were no indices of nervousness or anxiety in appearance and behavior; if reaction to interview situation was characterized by a relaxed attitude, spontaneity and normally expected friendliness; if attitudes toward other people were on the whole friendly and accepting, and appraisal of other people good-natured; if focus of interest was outside of himself and feelings about himself were

characterized by a sense of proportion, humor, and general satisfaction with his lot.

(B) As a *problem child* (Group B), if he showed definite signs of maladjustment in not more than two of the five areas listed above, and if the problems in these areas were limited to one aspect of daily living, e.g., difficulty in schools, difficulty in sports, etc.

(C) As *neurotic* (Group C), if indices of maladjustment appeared in three or more of the five areas, and if the maladjustments so revealed affected the whole personality of the child, e.g., if the child had insufficient self-confidence to be self-reliant in any situation.

(D) As *psychotic* (Group D), if more than one symptom of abnormality appeared in each of the five areas, and if these symptoms indicated that the child had stopped trying to cope with reality and with his social environment.

Two judges agreed on the classification of 85 per cent of the cases. The remaining cases were brought before a trained child psychologist, who, as umpire, always agreed with one of the coders.

## APPENDIX B



### THE CHILDREN TALK ABOUT COMICS, by Katherine M. Wolf and Marjorie Fiske

#### ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE 1  
*Former Reading Habits and Age Groups*

|                                    | <i>10 or Less</i><br>% | <i>11 or 12</i><br>% | <i>13 and Over</i><br>% |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Used to read more comics . . . . . | 43                     | 50                   | 72                      |
| Used to read less comics . . . . . | 43                     | 24                   | 14                      |
| Used to read same amount . . . . . | 14                     | 26                   | 14                      |
| Total per cent . . . . .           | 100                    | 100                  | 100                     |
| No. of cases . . . . .             | 14                     | 50                   | 14                      |

TABLE 2  
*Age and Advance Knowledge of How Story Will Turn Out*

|                                     | <i>10 or Less</i><br>% | <i>11 or 12</i><br>% | <i>13 and Over</i><br>% |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Know how comics will turn out . . . | 54                     | 52                   | 74                      |
| Do not know . . . . .               | 33                     | 31                   | 5                       |
| Sometimes know . . . . .            | 13                     | 17                   | 21                      |
| Total per cent . . . . .            | 100                    | 100                  | 100                     |
| No. of cases . . . . .              | 24                     | 52                   | 19                      |

TABLE 3

*Comic Books as a Reflection of Reality*

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Are things in real life like comics?</i> | %   |
| Yes.....                                    | 20  |
| No.....                                     | 58  |
| Sometimes.....                              | 22  |
| Total per cent.....                         | 100 |
| No. of cases.....                           | 54  |

TABLE 4

*Reactions to Interruptions*

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <i>When Interviewer crossed room</i>         | %   |
| Response.....                                | 20  |
| No response.....                             | 80  |
| Total per cent.....                          | 100 |
| No. of cases.....                            | 45  |
| <i>When Interviewer looked over shoulder</i> |     |
| Response (indifferent).....                  | 15  |
| Response (annoyed).....                      | 17  |
| No response.....                             | 68  |
| Total per cent.....                          | 100 |
| No. of cases.....                            | 40  |

TABLE 5

*Number of Units Mentioned in Retelling of the Story*

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
|                     | %   |
| 2 or 3 units.....   | 22  |
| 4 or 5.....         | 34  |
| 6 or 7.....         | 27  |
| 8, 9, or 10.....    | 17  |
| Total per cent..... | 100 |
| No. of cases.....   | 55  |

TABLE 6

*Degree of Coherence in Telling Superman Story*

|                                   | %   |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Very well told.....               | 5   |
| Quite well told.....              | 32  |
| Poorly told.....                  | 38  |
| Completely incoherently told..... | 25  |
| Total per cent.....               | 100 |
| No. of cases.....                 | 55  |

TABLE 7

*Degree of Interest in Comics Among only Children and Others, and According as Parents Read or Do not Read Comics*

| <i>Degree of Interest</i>            | <i>Children with Siblings</i> |                        | <i>Only Children</i>     |                        |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
|                                      | <i>Parents Read</i><br>%      | <i>Don't Read</i><br>% | <i>Parents Read</i><br>% | <i>Don't Read</i><br>% |
| Fans.....                            | 58                            | 37                     | 50                       | ...                    |
| Moderate.....                        | 37                            | 53                     | 50                       | 50                     |
| Indifferent and hostile.             | 5                             | 10                     | ...                      | 50                     |
| Total per cent.....                  | 100                           | 100                    | 100                      | 100                    |
| No. of cases.....<br>(33 No Answers) | 19                            | 38                     | 2                        | 12                     |

TABLE 8

*Degree of Interest in Comics and Profession of Parents*

| <i>Degree of Interest</i> | <i>Professional Parents</i><br>% | <i>All Others</i><br>% |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Fans.....                 | 8                                | 54                     |
| Moderate Readers....      | 67                               | 37                     |
| All others.....           | 25                               | 9                      |
| Total per cent.....       | 100                              | 100                    |
| No. of cases.....         | 39                               | 65                     |

TABLE 9

*Function of Comics and Parents' Profession and Age*

| <i>Function of Comics</i> | <i>Professional</i>   |                       |                         | <i>All Others</i>     |                       |                         |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
|                           | <i>Up to</i>          | <i>11 or</i>          | <i>13 or</i>            | <i>Up to</i>          | <i>11 or</i>          | <i>13 or</i>            |
|                           | <i>10</i><br><i>%</i> | <i>12</i><br><i>%</i> | <i>More</i><br><i>%</i> | <i>10</i><br><i>%</i> | <i>12</i><br><i>%</i> | <i>More</i><br><i>%</i> |
| Alice-in-Wonderland..     | 45                    | ...                   | ...                     | 23                    | ...                   | ...                     |
| Invincible Hero.....      | 45                    | 41                    | 12                      | 69                    | 77                    | 72                      |
| Reader's Digest.....      | 10                    | 59                    | 88                      | 8                     | 23                    | 28                      |
| Total per cent.....       | 100                   | 100                   | 100                     | 100                   | 100                   | 100                     |
| No. of cases.....         | 9                     | 22                    | 8                       | 13                    | 31                    | 7                       |



## APPENDIX C



THE CHILDREN TALK ABOUT COMICS, by Katherine Wolfe and Marjorie Fiske

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### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

#### *1. Experimenting with New Types of Comics*

Although comics are more beneficial and far less harmful than is generally supposed, no comics exist today which (a) wholly satisfy the child who has outgrown the Superman stage, and no comics exist which (b) satisfy the maladjusted child's need for hero worship without accentuating his neurotic pattern.

(a) Data collected by interviews in this study suggest that the first of these needs could be filled by a comic in which a child, or several children, grew to stages of successive physical and mental maturity, and accordingly became an increasingly more socially responsible person. Such stories already exist in noncomic form (e.g., Kaestner's *Emil and the Detectives*, Molnar's *The Boys of Paul Street*), and these might be published as comics, or original works might be created for the purpose.

(b) Data of this study suggest that the second need might be filled by a comic in which the invincible hero attained triumph through psychological or intellectual insight rather than through physical superiority. Numerous detectives now appearing in popular fiction (e.g., *The Thin Man*, *Nero Wolf*) function in just such a manner.

Inquiry and experimentation in such pedagogical and therapeutic use of comics would necessarily involve thorough analysis of comic content, controlled experimental use of various types of new comics, and careful determination of the effects of such comics upon their readers.

## ***2. Inquiry into the Relation of Comic Reading to Other Aspects of Childhood Behavior***

The relation of comic reading to other aspects of children's behavior might prove a valuable field of inquiry. Properly designed experiments might result in useful information concerning the relation of comic reading to movie-going, to social participation of various types, etc. Carefully planned administration of personality tests at specified intervals might well provide information regarding the effect of comic reading upon the development of such personality traits as aggressiveness, social co-operativeness, and the like. Extended case studies and matched-pair techniques would be essential aspects of such investigations.

## ***3. Inquiry into Adult Comic Reading***

Next to nothing is known about the motives and gratifications experienced by the great number of adults who read comic books. Almost any investigation in this area would provide information highly useful to psychologists and students of communication.

## ***4. The Effectiveness of Comics as a Medium of Communication***

An inquiry into the effectiveness of comics as a medium of communication, as compared with the effectiveness of such other media as noncomic printed material, audible narration, and the like, would provide information invaluable to psychologists and students of communication.

## ***5. Content Analysis of Comics***

An exhaustive classification of all existent comics into characteristically distinctive groups would provide an invaluable, if not absolutely essential, tool for almost any study of the effects of comics upon their readers.

## APPENDIX D



THE CHILDREN TALK ABOUT COMICS, by Katherine Wolfe and Marjorie Fiske

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### ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL

The following additional documentary material bearing on this study is on file at Columbia University, Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y.

Detailed statistical descriptions of the sample.

Interview guide.

Instructions to interviewers.

Specimen interview records.

## APPENDIX E



RESEARCH FOR ACTION, by Paul F. Lazarsfeld and  
Helen Schneider

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### DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL

The following documentary material bearing on this study is on file at Columbia University, Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, N. Y.

Sampling problems of the study (a detailed statistical comparison of the sample and the population from which it was chosen; "mortality" suffered in reinterviewing).

Comparison of the regular sample and a sample of women who cannot listen to the radio in the morning because of being then employed.

Comparison of morning listening habits in an urban and a rural community.

Methods of determining daytime listening (a comparison of indices).

## APPENDIX F



### WHAT "MISSING THE NEWSPAPER" MEANS, by Bernard Berelson.

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#### QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you ordinarily read a New York City newspaper regularly?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) Which one, or which ones?

*Herald-Tribune* \_\_\_\_\_ *Post* \_\_\_\_\_

*Journal-American* \_\_\_\_\_ *Sun* \_\_\_\_\_

*Mirror* \_\_\_\_\_ *Times* \_\_\_\_\_

*News* \_\_\_\_\_ *World-Telegram* \_\_\_\_\_

*PM* \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

(If three or more) How do you happen to read so many papers?

2. Have you been unable to get your paper(s) recently?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

(If no, and other than *PM*) How have you been able to get it?  
(and then terminate interview)

3. (If yes) By and large, what did not having your newspaper(s) mean to you?

- 3a. How did you feel the *very first time* you weren't able to get your paper(s)?

(Interviewer: Reconstruct this first occasion as completely as possible, and in as much detail as possible.)

Did you continue to feel that way as time went on or did you change?

(If Changed) How did you change?

When was it that you first missed the newspaper? (Day and period of day)

What did you do then instead of reading the paper?

Did you do the same thing during the following days?

Are there any other times of the day when you ordinarily read a newspaper?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

When?

What did you do instead at these times?

(Interviewer: Get changes as week went on)

Now that you think of it, if you had your choice, which would you rather do during those times—read the newspaper or \_\_\_\_\_ (whatever respondent did)?

3b. Now that you aren't able to get your newspaper, do you do anything to try to keep up with the news?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

(If no) Why don't you try to keep up with the news?

(If yes) What is it that you do? (Follow up each)

(1) Read PM\_\_\_\_\_

(2) Read another paper (specify which)\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Listened to the news on the radio\_\_\_\_\_

(4) Talked to family members or friends\_\_\_\_\_

(5) Other activities (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

(If read PM) How did you like it?

What parts of it did you like and which did you dislike?

Do you think that you will continue to read it even after you can get your regular paper?

Had you ever read PM before this last week?

About how often?

(If read another paper) How did you happen to get it?

(Specify which)

(If secured from the newspaper) Did you go there specifically for it or did you just happen to be in the neighborhood?

(If effort made to secure paper) What was it in the newspaper that you particularly wanted to read?

(If news on radio) Do you listen to the radio more than usual?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) Do you listen to straight news broadcasts or to news commentators?

(If commentators or both) Which commentators?

Do you find yourself listening more to other kinds of programs on the radio?

(If yes) Which ones?



|   | <i>Know</i> | <i>Don't know</i> | (If known, specify which) |              |                 |              |
|---|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
|   |             |                   | <i>Newspaper</i>          | <i>Radio</i> | <i>Personal</i> | <i>Other</i> |
| (5) Appointment of Byrnes                                   | _____       | _____             | _____                     | _____        | _____           | _____        |
| (6) Liberation of Okinawa                                   | _____       | _____             | _____                     | _____        | _____           | _____        |
| (7) Truman's presentation of the S.F. Charter to the Senate | _____       | _____             | _____                     | _____        | _____           | _____        |

3e. Now that you don't read your regular newspaper, do you feel you know what's going on in the world?

(Interviewer: Follow up)

3f. Do you feel uneasy about what might be happening in the world, or do you feel confident that you're not missing anything really important?

(Interviewer: Follow up)

3g. Do you think it's very important that people read the papers, or not? Why do you think so?

3h. Are there any reasons why you were relieved at not having a newspaper? What are they?

(End of Question 3)

4. Which part of your favorite paper do you usually read first? Second? What other parts of the paper do you read regularly?

|   | <i>First</i> | <i>Second</i> | <i>Regularly</i> |
|---|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| Front page .....                          | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Other news pages .....                    | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Sports .....                              | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Comics .....                              | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Women's, Fashion, Household .....         | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Store Advertising .....                   | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Classified ads .....                      | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Editorials .....                          | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Columnists .....                          | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Financial pages .....                     | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Radio programs .....                      | _____        | _____         | _____            |
| Casualty lists, troop movements, etc. . . | _____        | _____         | _____            |

(If columnists read): Who is your favorite columnist?



5. Before this last week, did you listen regularly to the news on the radio?  
 Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- (If yes) Did you listen to straight news broadcasts or to news commentators?  
 Straight news\_\_\_\_\_ Commentators\_\_\_\_\_ Both\_\_\_\_\_
- About how many straight news broadcasts did you listen to on the average day?  
 One or two\_\_\_\_\_ Three to five\_\_\_\_\_ More than five\_\_\_\_\_  
 DK\_\_\_\_\_
- What commentators did you listen to usually?  
 Who is your favorite commentator?
- 6a. Which magazines do you read more or less regularly?  
 6b. Do you find that you are reading magazines or books more since you haven't had a paper or not?
7. About how often do you go to the movies, ordinarily?  
 More than once a week \_\_\_\_\_  
 Once a week \_\_\_\_\_  
 Two or three times a month \_\_\_\_\_  
 Once a month \_\_\_\_\_  
 Less than once a month \_\_\_\_\_  
 Not at all \_\_\_\_\_
- Did you take a greater interest in the newsreel in a regular motion picture theater because you weren't able to get your regular newspaper?  
 Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- (If yes) Why?
8. On the whole, from which of these sources did you prefer to get your news before the stoppage?  
 Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_  
 Radio \_\_\_\_\_  
 Magazines \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newsreels \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other people \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you changed your preference since you haven't been able to get a newspaper?  
 Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ DK\_\_\_\_\_
- (If yes) How have you changed?

9. On the whole, would you say you were greatly interested in each of these, moderately interested, or not much interested?

|                             | Greatly | Moderately | Little or none | Don't know |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------|----------------|------------|
| The war news                | _____   | _____      | _____          | _____      |
| News about the home front   | _____   | _____      | _____          | _____      |
| International developments  | _____   | _____      | _____          | _____      |
| Personal problems of people | _____   | _____      | _____          | _____      |
| Crime news                  | _____   | _____      | _____          | _____      |

10. Since you haven't been able to get your regular paper, have you changed your opinion about the value of the radio?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) In what way have you changed?

During that time, have you changed your opinion about the value of the newspaper?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) In what way have you changed?

11. On the whole, which do you think is more trustworthy in giving you the news—the newspaper or the radio?

Newspaper\_\_\_\_\_ Radio\_\_\_\_\_ Equal trustworthy\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(Comment, if any):

12. Since you haven't been able to get your newspaper, do you talk with your family or friends about the news more often than before, or less often?

More often\_\_\_\_\_ Less often\_\_\_\_\_ About the same\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(If more or less often) Why did you talk more (less) often?

13. Have you heard from other people about any events or happenings which you haven't heard over the radio or read about?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) What was it?

Did you try to check it somewhere? Where? With what success?

14. What *parts* of the paper do you *miss* the most?

|              |       |             |       |
|--------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| News stories | _____ | Comics      | _____ |
| Editorials   | _____ | Store       | _____ |
| Columnists   | _____ | Advertising | _____ |

|                       |       |                |       |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Financial             |       | Sports         | _____ |
| Pages                 | _____ | Pictures       | _____ |
| Local events          | _____ | Radio program  |       |
| Casualty lists, troop |       | lists          | _____ |
| movements, etc.       | _____ | Movie and      |       |
| Women's, etc.         | _____ | theater bills  | _____ |
|                       |       | Classified ads | _____ |

Why did you miss them?

Did you miss any other parts of the paper? Which?

Why did you miss them?

15. Since you haven't been able to get your regular newspaper(s), have you found some things that you can't do as well without it (them)?  
Why?  
(If not mentioned) How about the movie ads?  
" " the store and shopping ads?  
" " the classified ads?  
" " fashion hints?
16. Summing up your feelings about not getting *the news* from a newspaper these last days, which of these statements best describes your over-all feeling?  
I was simply "lost" without the news from my newspaper(s); there is no satisfactory substitute for it for me. \_\_\_\_\_  
I missed the news in the paper(s) a good deal. I managed all right without it but I am anxious to have it back. \_\_\_\_\_  
I missed the news from the paper only a little. I find that I can get along without it. \_\_\_\_\_  
I don't miss the news in the paper at all. The newspaper isn't very important to me for that. \_\_\_\_\_
17. What about your feelings about not having *the other parts* of the newspaper—such as the ads, the radio program, the comics, the financial pages, etc.?  
I read the newspaper primarily for them, so missed them very much. \_\_\_\_\_  
I read them occasionally in the paper but didn't miss them very much. \_\_\_\_\_  
I don't read them very much at all, and so I didn't miss them very much. \_\_\_\_\_  
I don't read them at all, and so I didn't miss them at all. \_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you know why you are not getting your newspaper? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_  
 (If yes) Can you tell me who is striking?  
 Can you tell me why they went on strike?  
 Who do you think is right?  
 Why do you think so?  
 Have you changed your opinion toward labor unions or strikes  
 because of this?  
     Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Don't know\_\_\_  
 In what way?

*Personal Characteristics:*

Sex: M\_\_\_ Age: Up to 24\_\_\_ Economic level: A\_\_\_  
       F\_\_\_                   25-34\_\_\_                   B\_\_\_  
                               35-44\_\_\_                   C\_\_\_  
                               45-54\_\_\_                   D\_\_\_  
                               55-64\_\_\_  
                               65 and  
                               over\_\_\_

Education: None \_\_\_\_\_  
               Some grammar school \_\_\_\_\_  
               Grammar school graduate \_\_\_\_\_  
               Some high school \_\_\_\_\_  
               High school graduate \_\_\_\_\_  
               College \_\_\_\_\_  
               Other \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: (Specific job and industry)

Occupation of breadwinner: (Specific job and industry)

Do you, or a member of your family, belong to a union? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Do you have any relatives or close friends in the armed services?  
 Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

How long have you lived in New York City?

(If not always) Where did you come from? (Rural or size of town)

For whom did you vote in the last presidential election?

Roosevelt\_\_\_ Dewey\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_ DV\_\_\_ DK\_\_\_

## APPENDIX G



### OVERLAPPING MAGAZINE READING, by Babette Kass

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#### DETERMINATION OF CULTURAL LEVELS OF MAGAZINES BY STRATIFICATION OF AUDIENCE

Foster has proposed that magazines can be classified by evaluating certain characteristics of their readers. As part of the current study, therefore, an attempt was made to rank on the basis of the educational levels of their readers the fourteen magazines already ranked by the measurement of overlapping reading. The resultant list was also compared with the rankings obtained by impressionistic judgment.

To facilitate comparisons, the attempt was directed upon the fourteen magazines common to the Morgan and Leahy, the Kerr and Remmers, and the present study.

For each of the fourteen magazines, readers were classified into three educational level categories, viz.:

*Elementary*, i.e., those who had not gone beyond the eighth grade;

*High School*, i.e., those who had gone beyond the eighth grade, but not beyond high school;

*College*, i.e., those who had some formal education after graduating from high school.

For each magazine the percentage of "elementary" readers was subtracted from the percentage of college readers, to yield what might be called an audience-culture score. The fourteen magazines were then arranged in order of decreasing audience-culture scores, which arrangement constituted an educational ranking, based on educational stratification of readers.

Table 1 presents the fourteen magazines in educational rank order. The

audience-culture score, educational rank, and cultural level ranks, as determined by these studies, is stated for each of the magazines.

TABLE I

*Audience Culture Scores, Educational Rank, and Cultural Rank (by Overlapping Reading) of Fourteen Magazines*

| <i>Magazine</i>               | <i>(% College-Elementary)<br/>Audience-Culture<br/>Score</i> | <i>Educational<br/>Rank</i> | <i>(Overlapping<br/>Reading)<br/>Culture Level<br/>Rank</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Reader's Digest.....          | 22   | 1                           | 4   |
| Cosmopolitan.....             | 11   | 2                           | 11  |
| Good Housekeeping.....        | 7  | 3                           | 6   |
| American.....                 | 6  | 4.5                         | 9   |
| Saturday Evening Post.....    | 6  | 4.5                         | 3   |
| American Home.....            | 3  | 6                           | 1   |
| McCall's.....                 | 2  | 7                           | 7   |
| Better Homes and Gardens..... | 1  | 8.5                         | 2   |
| Redbook.....                  | 1  | 8.5                         | 13  |
| Ladies Home Journal.....      | 0  | 10.5                        | 5   |
| Collier's.....                | 0  | 10.5                        | 10  |
| Woman's Home Companion.....   | -1   | 12                          | 8   |
| Liberty.....                  | -11  | 13                          | 12  |
| True Story.....               | -30  | 14                          | 14  |

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for the two rankings is .44; for the educational ranking and the Morgan and Leahy ranking, .48; for the educational ranking and the Kerr and Remmers ranking, .66. A definite positive correlation thus exists between the educational ranking and the various other rankings, but in comparison to the correlations between the various other rankings themselves is not very high.<sup>1</sup>

As a method of determining the cultural levels of magazines, educational stratification of readers thus appears to be inferior to both impressionistic judgment and measurement of overlapping reading.

The instances of major discrepancy between educational rank and cultural rank as determined by measurement of overlapping reading may be partially explained in terms of the ages of their readers.

<sup>1</sup> The coefficients would probably be higher, however, were the methods compared for a larger number of magazines and for a group not in such close general proximity. With an *n* of only 14 and with relatively small differences in  $\phi$  values and in audience-culture scores, a slight variation, which might not be very significant per se, nevertheless exerts an extreme effect upon the coefficient.

By the same token, however, the very high coefficients for the rankings determined by  $\phi$  values and by impressionistic judgment are the more significant.

As a result of the very recent vast expansion of educational opportunities for women, today's younger women, as a group, have had a better formal education than older women, as a group. Thus a magazine which for some non-cultural reason appeals primarily to older women will obtain a relatively spurious low educational rank. This apparently accounts, at least in part, for the low educational rank, as compared to the high cultural rank, of the four magazines cited in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
*Proportion of Readers Over 35 Years of Age*

|                                    | %  |
|------------------------------------|----|
| American Home . . . . .            | 61 |
| Better Homes and Gardens . . . . . | 68 |
| Ladies Home Journal . . . . .      | 60 |
| Woman's Home Companion . . . . .   | 62 |

Furthermore, women with high education are likely to be in comparatively high socio-economic status. They are likely to employ servants, and direct home management is not as likely to be their main occupation as it is for women of lesser socio-economic status. Accordingly, they may be less interested in magazines dealing primarily or largely with the home, which magazines may, however, and in fact very likely would, be read relatively often by cultured, but less wealthy and less educated, housewives.

The disparity between the low cultural ranking and the high educational ranking of *Cosmopolitan* cannot be explained in terms of the age of its readers, who divide almost equally at 35 (52 per cent under 35, 48 per cent over 35). It was discovered, however, that the readers of *Cosmopolitan*, as a group, read more other magazines than do the readers of any one other magazine. Since better educated women read a great deal, it would appear therefore that *Cosmopolitan*, despite its being on a relatively low cultural level, is in fact one of the many magazines they frequently read.

## APPENDIX H



### OVERLAPPING MAGAZINE READING, by Babette Kass

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#### CONFIRMATORY FINDINGS WITH A SAMPLE OF ILLINOIS WOMEN

In order to test whether the method of overlapping reading would apply to a sample of women resident somewhere other than Iowa, Dora Fisher applied the technique to 15 magazines for each of which readership had been alleged by 66 or more members of a group of 882 women residents of "Central City," Illinois.<sup>1</sup> Magazine readership habits of these women had been ascertained in 1945 by the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University in connection with an Opinion Leadership Survey.<sup>2</sup> The 882 women constituted a cross-sectional sample of the city's female residents.

Mrs. Fisher's findings corroborated the findings of the Iowa study in several particulars, of which the following are perhaps the most significant:

1. Eleven magazines common to both the Illinois and Iowa studies were placed in cultural rank order on the basis of overlapping reading among Illinois respondents. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for this ranking and the Iowa study ranking of the same eleven magazines was found to be .95.

2. Fourteen magazines common to the Illinois study, the Morgan and Leahy study, and the Kerr and Remmers study were also placed in cultural rank order on the basis of overlapping reading among Illinois respondents. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for this ranking

<sup>1</sup> Dora Fisher, "The Method of Overlapping Reading as Used to Determine the Cultural Level of Magazines," unpublished paper, 1946; available at the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, New York.

<sup>2</sup> This study is now in process of analysis at the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, New York.



and the Morgan and Leahy ranking was found to be .92; for this ranking and the Kerr and Remmers ranking, .84. The discrepancy can be accounted for by the fact that the Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient for the two impressionistic judgment rankings of these 14 magazines is only .80.

3. Overlapping reading in excess of that warranted by cultural similarity was found to occur among the Illinois respondents in regard to highly similar magazines and to magazines published by the same house (i.e., highly susceptible of joint subscription).

## APPENDIX I



### THE ANALYSIS OF DEVIANT CASES IN COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH, by Patricia L. Kendall and Katherine M. Wolf

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#### ANALYSIS OF AN INTERVIEW WITH A PREJUDICED SUBJECT

In order to illustrate the various steps in the process of misunderstanding,<sup>1</sup> we will here analyze in some detail an interview with a prejudiced subject.

The respondent in question was a violent anti-Semite. Early in the interview he identified strongly with Mr. Biggott. Asked if Mr. Biggott were married, he replied:

*Identification*

I imagine he's a sour old bachelor—  
[laughs] I'm an old bachelor myself.  
(Open prejudice, more than high school, Protestant)

But the respondent soon began to recognize the disturbing implications of this identification. Looking at the Transfusion cartoon, he first remarked:

Sixth generation American blood! He don't want anything but sixth generation American blood! Ha! That's pretty good.

Up to this point, the respondent had seemed aware of Mr. Biggott's prejudices. He was one of the few for whom the phrase "sixth generation American blood" had any meaning. But at this point he began to assert his superiority over Mr. Biggott, and his concern for disidentifying immediately began to blur this understanding.

<sup>1</sup> See diagram on page 165, above.

*Disidentification*

*Well, you know, I'm eighth generation myself, of English descent on both sides. My family settled up in Connecticut . . . in 1631. A sixth generation American—he's a man of six generations himself.*

*Derailment begins*

*Maybe less than that . . . (What is the doctor thinking?) He's astonished, I guess. He thinks this man has an awful nerve. He looks like a crabby old man. He may not be the best blood either.*

The respondent apparently considered that the doctor was astonished because Mr. Biggott was an upstart who had "an awful nerve" to request anything, not because Mr. Biggott was prejudiced against foreigners, Negroes, or Jews.

As the disidentification process continued, Mr. Biggott became, for this respondent, more and more a "lower class" symbol and thus less and less entitled to his snobbish pretensions:

*Derailment continues*

In the course of disidentification the issue of prejudice had been completely sidetracked. The only person the subject could think of who reminded him of his erstwhile identification object was a rather crude acquaintance in Connecticut. Mr. Biggott's social inferiority had obliterated his prejudices. For this respondent, the focus of the cartoons was lost:

*Derailment completed*

*(What do you think is the purpose of these cartoons?) To get the viewpoint of anyone. From the viewpoint you can form some opinion of that person. You get different answers—some agree and some say something else. You can compare them and draw some conclusions . . .*

*(What is the artist trying to do?) To get the viewpoint of people to see if they coincide with the artist's idea of character and all. Some would, others would differ.*

It is to be emphasized that it was not out of self-defense that our prejudiced "eighth generation American" misunderstood the purpose of the cartoons so completely. He could have easily said that the cartoons criticized the pretensions of a man who did not have any right to his prejudices, thus understanding the message but excluding himself from criticism because of the "justifiability" of his own anti-minority attitudes. But the respondent became so *involved in his attempt to establish his social superiority over Mr. Biggott* that his understanding was derailed.

## APPENDIX J



### DOMESTIC BROADCASTING IN THE U.S.S.R., by Alex Inkeles

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#### FORM OF FOOTNOTES

Standard English footnote forms cannot conveniently be applied to many Russian publications. Accordingly, the following techniques have been arbitrarily adopted for use in this article:

1. Books are cited in standard English footnote form, except that a translation of the title appears in parentheses in the first citation. The first letter of each word in both the Russian title and the translation is capitalized, although Russian book titles sometimes capitalize only the first letter of the title.
2. Magazine and journal titles are parenthetically translated in the first citation. Such Russian publications do not ordinarily carry volume numbers, but are designated both by number and by month and year of publication.

Because of their extreme length, the titles of magazine and journal articles and the authors' names have been deleted, the citation including only the name of the magazine or journal, its number, and the date and year of publication.

3. Newspaper titles may be identified by the inclusion of day of month in the cited date.



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