

# RADIO RESEARCH

1942-1943

EDITED BY

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COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM

ESSENTIAL BOOKS

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## INTRODUCTION

THE war made it technically very difficult to continue the Radio Research series which was begun in 1941. At the same time, it was responsible for expanding greatly the area in which communication research has become important. The work of small private research units of two years ago has led to the extensive activities of large government offices. One of the important divisions of the *Office of War Information* is its Radio Bureau, which is devoted to the task of bringing the war to the American people. In this book we are publishing a summary of the Radio Bureau's early efforts. This is paralleled by an article reporting the research of the *British Broadcasting Corporation* during wartime. While we do not know the activities of the enemy countries in detail, the *German domestic broadcasts* are monitored in England and can be subjected to interpretative analysis. Examples of such interpretation are included in our section devoted to "*Radio and the War.*"

Contrary to some fears expressed at the outset of the war, the present emergency has not arrested research. Rather, it has high-lighted its importance and strengthened demands for its continued development. Three of these trends are stressed in the present volume.

One development is the tendency toward an integration of a variety of approaches to the same problem. In the section on "Daytime Serials" the reader will find a careful analysis of the *content* of these programs and a systematic review of all that is known about their *listeners*. In the study of listeners comparative *statistical methods* have been employed as well as

detailed *case studies* of individual listeners. The three articles in this section present for the first time an overall picture of one type of program which has a special importance because it has been the subject of discussion by many critics and defenders and is listened to by millions of women.

The second development in radio research is not one of integration but of innovation. At the outset of radio broadcasting there was so much to be learned about the medium and its listeners that concern with types of programs and general listening habits provided ample opportunity for useful and significant studies. Now, however, we want to know more about the effects of specific programs on specific groups of listeners. Listening to a program is a highly complex and often fleeting experience. In an effort to capture and explore this experience, the editors of this volume developed the *Program Analyzer*, an instrument which records the listener's second-by-second reactions to a program. Over the last few years many experiments have been made with this device. In this volume we are publishing the first survey of observations and results obtained. Such analysis of a specific piece of communication does not need to be restricted to radio programs. Pamphlets, magazines, moving pictures can be tested the same way. It is very likely that in the future an ever larger share of communications research will deal with efforts toward such specific analysis.

The third trend of development which this volume tries to continue is the study of technical problems as they appear in the daily business of listener research. Face-to-face interviewers are used in all types of studies. Do *interviewers bias* the answers of their respondents? A common complaint is that not enough people listen to serious programs. Is there a method for studying non-listening? Considerable attention is given to the popularity of specific songs. Can we improve the indices by which

such popularity is measured? The section "Progress in Listener Research" is a running account of some new techniques which have been developed in the course of regular research activities.

A word should be added about the role of Columbia University's Office of Radio Research in today's picture of the field. The Office was created in 1937 by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation "to study what radio means in the lives of the listeners." By collecting work done in the industry and in universities the Office has, in a series of publications, created a body of techniques and of data about the radio audience which has since been channeled into a variety of areas. This volume testifies to the spread of the work of the Office. The Program Analyzer is now being used on a large scale by two other commercial agencies. The study of popular music, started with a number of previous Office publications, is now being carried on at the City College of New York. Detailed case studies applied at the Office for the analysis of specific radio programs are now used by students of advertising. The panel method, based on repeated interviews with the same people and developed by the Office to test the effectiveness of radio propaganda, is now widely used for commercial purposes. The reader will find representative examples of all these techniques in the last three sections of the present text. Some areas such as the content analysis of enemy broadcasts carried through by the Research Project on Totalitarian Communication, have developed independently but now join their efforts with ours in this publication.

As time goes on, it becomes increasingly evident that the field of radio research will ultimately merge with the study of magazines, newspapers, films, and television into one broader discipline of communications research. In testimony to the desirability of this development we have included in this volume

one article on the use of the Program Analyzer in the study of educational movies and one on biographies in popular magazines: both have grown out of the background of the Office of Radio Research.

The collaboration of research students not, or no longer, on the staff of the Office made a great amount of editing necessary to weld the different contributions into one unit. This whole work of editorial co-ordination has been done by Dr. Herta Herzog in untiring understanding and conscientiousness. The increased responsibilities of the two editors of the series during wartime were such that without Dr. Herzog's work this volume could not have appeared.

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## *I. DAYTIME SERIALS*





## WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT DAY-TIME SERIAL LISTENERS?

by Herta Herzog

*Toni Jo Henry, a 26-year-old murderess . . . told the interviewer about the thoughts of a condemned person. "I'm worried a little about 'Abie's Irish Rose,' a radio serial," she stated. "Every day I used to listen to it. But they discontinued the serial till September. I won't be here in September." The producers . . . are forwarding to Miss Henry a short synopsis of the story which will be broadcast in installments from September until June.*

THE LYONS DEN, *New York Post*, Aug. 6, 1942

### *The Problem*

THIS is the day of mass audiences. And commanding one of the largest of these is the radio daytime serial. At least twenty million women in this country keep a regular rendezvous with these serials. Small wonder, then, that this type of program has been the occasion for heated, though not always illuminating, discussion. If only because such a large sector of our population is devoted to the daytime serial, it receives and requires detailed study.

From the standpoint of social research, we should like to know the effects of these serials upon the women who have for years listened to them regularly. And yet, we should not expect a simple conclusive result. Unlike a single concerted campaign, with effects which can be measured by modern devices of social research, the putative influences of the serial have developed through slow accretions. Consequently, they are difficult to

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determine. Only by piecing together a variety of materials through a process of continued observation and careful interpretation can we trace these effects.

Three sources of information must be examined before we can consider the effects of daytime serials. We must first obtain systematic knowledge of their content. This cannot be learned through incidental listening. Indeed, not even the writing or production of these serials necessarily equips one to discern the peculiar character and structure of these programs. This cannot, so to speak, be perceived by the naked eye. A content analysis, such as that reported by Rudolf Arnheim in this volume, is an initial step toward better perception. Even more exacting studies of variations in type are required.

A second approach is the comparative study of listeners and non-listeners: a type of analysis which is often heir to fallacies. Consider, for example, the studies which demonstrate that delinquent children go to the movies more frequently than non-delinquents. Which is cause and which effect? Yet such comparisons are indispensable for a fuller understanding of the problem.

And thirdly, a close study of listeners themselves brings us nearer to our goal. What satisfactions do listeners say they derive from daytime serials? As psychologists, what is our judgment on these assertions? Do their remarks, interpreted in terms of general psychological knowledge, enable us to explain their devotion to the serials?

In addition to content analyses, then, we wish to examine the structure of the audience and the gratifications derived from daytime serials. This article is devoted to a survey of current knowledge about these listeners. (For a definition of "listeners" in terms of research, see Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2.)

*Some Probable Characteristics*

As a guide for our analyses, we advance the following speculations on likely differences between listeners and non-listeners to daytime serials.

(1) It might well be that women who are somewhat isolated from their community spend more time listening to daytime serials. For one reason or another, they might have difficulties in establishing and maintaining relations with other people. Or, possibly, they may not be acceptable to various social groups. In either case, they might turn more frequently to the enjoyment of serial dramas.

(2) It is also possible that the intellectual range of listeners is not as broad as that of non-listeners. By reason of their upbringing and limited experience, listeners might be unfamiliar with or have fewer opportunities for alternative ways of spending their time. Their interests might be less varied. Thus, having perceived little scope for enjoyment in their immediate environment, they may find in the daytime serials vicarious experiences and interests which they cannot provide for themselves.

(3) Since most serials deal with the experiences of "people like yourselves," they might be especially attractive to those whose interest is mainly directed toward personal problems. Presumably, then, listeners should manifest less awareness of and interest in such public affairs as current events and politics than non-listeners.

(4) Listeners might also be women beset with anxieties and frustrations. The serial might provide solace and compensation for women whose wishes and expectations outran their achievements.

(5) Finally, the listeners and non-listeners might be dis-

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tinguished by their preference for listening to the radio in general. Perhaps listening to daytime serials is merely a special case of general habituation to a source of so many forms of entertainment.

Other lines of speculation could be developed. But the foregoing can be tested, at least to some extent. Moreover, these five hypothetical factors are obviously not independent. Personality characteristics can account for differences in social participation. Variations in intellectual range can lead to preferences for particular media of communication. Furthermore, several of these factors might simultaneously play a role.

If speculation is to give way to controlled inquiry, if fancy is to defer to fact, we must turn to the available evidence in this field. Our main source material consists of four studies. A nation-wide study, conducted among non-farm women, and study of a cross-section of the Iowa population, furnish precise information on the extent to which women listen to daytime serials. These surveys include data bearing on some of the five hypotheses we have developed. We are fortunate in being able to draw upon a third study conducted among a cross-section of Erie County, Ohio, even though it was directed toward quite different problems. Among the questions asked of respondents in this study were their radio program preferences; consequently, we can discriminate between women who included daytime serials among their favorite programs and those who did not. This enables us to utilize for our present purposes a considerable amount of other information concerning the "listeners" and "non-listeners" in this sample. The fourth study, based on interviews with women in Syracuse, Memphis and Minneapolis, is entirely devoted to material pertinent to our immediate problem. However, the sample in this three-city investigation is so small that only very large differences

in attributes of listeners and non-listeners can be considered reliable.

The interweaving of data from these four studies<sup>1</sup> extends our knowledge of daytime serial listeners considerably beyond any previous level and provides a secure basis for further research in this field.

### *Social Participation*

The data at hand do not support the prevalent opinion that daytime serial listeners are more isolated socially than non-listeners. This is evident, for example, from the answers of the 5,325 women in the Iowa study to the following questions:

How many times (during last two weeks) have you attended church or gone to church affairs?

How many times (during last two weeks) have you attended other meetings or social gatherings?

A summary of their answers is recorded in Table 1 which also includes data on the frequency of motion picture attendance.

TABLE 1.—MEDIAN NUMBER OF PARTICIPATIONS REPORTED BY LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS IN IOWA

|   | <i>Median number<br/>of attendances</i> |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
|   | <i>Listeners<sup>a</sup></i>            | <i>Non-listeners</i> |
| Church affairs (during last 2 weeks) . . . . .          | 1.54                                    | 1.62                 |
| Other social gatherings (during last 2 weeks) . . . . . | 0.58                                    | 0.74                 |
| Movies (during last 4 weeks) . . . . .                  | 0.58                                    | 0.51                 |
| Total number of cases . . . . .                         | 2,545                                   | 2,780                |

<sup>a</sup> In this and the following tables "listeners" refers to women who listen to daytime serials; "non-listeners" refers to women who do not listen to daytime serials.

<sup>1</sup> The nation-wide study was undertaken under the direction of the Office of Radio Research; the figures are quoted with the permission of Blackett-Sample-Hummert. The Iowa survey was conducted by the Office of Radio Research in co-operation with Prof. F. L. Whan of the University of Wichita, Kansas. The Erie County data are taken from a larger study conducted jointly by the Office of Radio Research and Elmo Roper, Inc. The three-city study was undertaken

These data do not yield significant differences in the frequency of social participation of listeners and non-listeners. This result is corroborated by information on the membership of 300<sup>2</sup> of the Ohio county women in clubs, lodges or other such organizations. Forty-six per cent of the listeners and 47 per cent of the non-listeners belonged to organizations of this type. Only a small fraction of the total sample participated in discussion- and reading-groups; listeners and non-listeners were represented among these in equal proportions.

The extent of social participation becomes especially significant in time of war. Consequently, a question on their civilian defense activities was asked of women in the three-city study. A third of the women reported participation in such activities and again the percentage was similar for listeners and non-listeners.

Of course, it is possible that social relations have a different psychological significance for listeners than for non-listeners. Or perhaps they participate differently: the listeners may, for example, be less disposed toward leadership in various associations. But questions of this order are more directly related to other aspects of our analysis. So far as *extent* of social participation is concerned, we can conclude, with some assurance, that there is no vacuum in the lives of listeners for which they compensate by turning to daytime serial dramas.

#### *Range of Intellectual Interests*

There is more justification for our conjecture on the scope of listeners' intellectual interests. Several indices suggest that the daytime serial listener is somewhat less equipped than the non-listener to provide a wide range of intellectual experiences.

by the Columbia Broadcasting System and the data are quoted with their permission.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote to Table 4.

To begin with, there is a definite difference in the extent of formal education. Tables, in Appendix A, show that the proportion of listeners among women who continued their education beyond high school is only about two-thirds of that among women who have not advanced beyond elementary school. Moreover, all four surveys indicate that it is formal education which is pertinent in this regard and not low income (associated with little education) or a relatively younger age-distribution (associated with more formal education). This can be seen from Appendix A, Tables 4-7.

A glimpse into the same psychological context of limited intellectual interests of listeners is provided by comparing the size of communities in which listeners and non-listeners live. There are about one and a half as many listeners among farm women as among women living in metropolitan areas, with smaller cities intermediate (see Appendix A, Table 3). The larger cities provide a greater variety of entertainment and their populations are, by and large, more aware of a wider range of entertainment and hobbies.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, listeners and non-listeners do not differ materially in the amount of their reading. Three of our studies which included questions on the number of books, magazines and newspapers read are in complete agreement on that score. Moreover, a specific inquiry in the Ohio county study revealed that listeners and non-listeners utilized the public library to the same extent.

However, there are differences in the type of reading charac-

<sup>3</sup> If we compare women on the same economic level who own and who do not own telephones, we find that there is somewhat more reference to serial listening in non-telephone homes. It is probably justified to take telephone ownership as a further index of sophistication. The result, incidentally, is also useful for better evaluation of program ratings. If there is more serial listening in non-telephone homes, most current ratings would underestimate the size of audiences of this type of program.

teristic of listeners and non-listeners. Only the three-city study includes information on the types of books preferred by the two categories of women. One statistically significant difference emerges from this information: listeners more frequently prefer mystery novels and do not prefer historical novels as often as non-listeners.

The 5,325 women interviewed in Iowa provide instructive details on magazine preferences. Most of the magazines read by a very high proportion of the total sample of women are as often read by listeners as by non-listeners. This is true, for example, of *McCall's* or the *Ladies' Home Journal* or the *Woman's Home Companion*, all of which were read by more than 1,000 of the approximately 5,000 women in the sample. It holds also for magazines with a somewhat smaller number of readers in the sample (500-1,000), such as *Good Housekeeping*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Collier's*, *Life* or *Look*.<sup>4</sup>

However, some interesting differences between listeners and non-listeners are apparent in the case of several magazines with more restricted circulation among the total Iowa sample. Table 2 lists magazines, the readers of which listen to daytime serials well above or below the average of all Iowa women.

This table permits us to draw several conclusions. If a magazine is especially preferred by daytime serial listeners, it is one of two types: either its content is notably similar to that of the serial (the "true story") or it centers about home life.

The magazines whose readers listen to daytime serials far less frequently than the average, are all of a more sophisticated

<sup>4</sup> Of the most popular magazines in the sample, only the *Reader's Digest* appears to be somewhat of an exception. Among its better-educated readers the proportion of serial story listeners is below the average (39 per cent against an average of 46 per cent listeners among women with a high school education or more). For the altogether fewer, poorly educated readers of the *Digest*, the proportion of serial listeners corresponds to the average among less-educated women.



TABLE 2.—MAGAZINES WITH THE HIGHEST AND THE LOWEST PROPORTION OF DAYTIME SERIAL LISTENERS AMONG THEIR IOWA READERS

|                                    | Proportion listening<br>to daytime serials<br>% | Total no.<br>of cases |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Total sample . . . . .             | 48  | 5,325                 |
| <i>True Confessions</i> . . . . .  | 67  | 82                    |
| <i>True Story</i> . . . . .        | 66  | 201                   |
| <i>Household</i> . . . . .         | 57  | 416                   |
| <i>Parents' Magazine</i> . . . . . | 55  | 118                   |
| <i>Time</i> . . . . .              | 33  | 177                   |
| <i>Vogue</i> . . . . .             | 31  | 32                    |
| <i>Harper's Magazine</i> . . . . . | 29  | 52                    |
| <i>Mademoiselle</i> . . . . .      | 28  | 74                    |
| <i>New Yorker</i> . . . . .        | 25  | 20                    |

or cosmopolitan type, as can be seen from the lower part of Table 2.<sup>5</sup>

However, the data reported in Table 2 must be viewed in their proper context. None of the magazines listed in this table is widely read by the women in the Iowa sample; consequently, these differences do not in fact bulk large in the entire pattern of reading habits of listeners and non-listeners.

Why are women with little formal education more disposed to listen to daytime serials? Partly, we think, because these serials provide the more naive individual with a much-desired, though vicarious, contact with human affairs which the more

<sup>5</sup> The results of Table 2 have been tested to see whether education introduces a spurious element. The appeal of the magazines mentioned is likely to vary for women on different educational levels. The readers of *Household*, for instance, or of *True Story* are likely to be less educated than those of *Harper's*, or the *New Yorker*. Thus it is possible that the high proportion of serial listeners in the first, and the low proportion in the second group of magazines of Table 2 is due merely to the greater proportion of serial listeners among less-educated women and does not reflect a different appeal for serial and non-serial listeners of comparable education. Appendix A, Table 8 shows that the proportion of serial listeners in the first group of magazines is above the average for both better- and less-educated women. In the second group of sophisticated magazines, the proportion of less-educated readers is negligible to start with. But even if we study only the better-educated we find that the proportion of serial listeners among the readers of these magazines is below the average proportion of serial listeners among the better-educated women in the total sample.

sophisticated person obtains at first hand through her wider range of experience. Moreover, the serials which abound in arrays of stereotyped characters and situations are less likely to satisfy those who have more discriminating perspectives. Whether the radio serials will serve as a type of psychological mass-education or as stultifying tales of chance, love and illogic depends on their future content. They are undoubtedly a major form of entertainment for the less-educated segment of American women.

### *Concern with Public Affairs*

We can now anticipate to some extent the comparative interest of listeners and non-listeners in current events and politics. Since concern with public affairs is in part a matter of general intellectual interests, we should expect to find that listeners are somewhat laggard in this respect. Yet this tendency should not be marked, for listeners and non-listeners do not differ in the extent of social participation and this too is an aspect of concern with public affairs. In point of fact, our data support these inferences.

Our first index of concern with public affairs is the degree of interest in news programs. Several studies include data on favorite radio programs and from these we can establish the comparative frequency with which listeners and non-listeners

TABLE 3.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS WHO MENTION NEWS PROGRAMS AMONG THEIR FAVORITE RADIO PROGRAMS

| <i>Source</i>                       | <i>Total number of women interviewed</i> | <i>Proportion mentioning news programs among favorites</i> |                        |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|
|                                     |  | <i>Listeners %</i>   | <i>Non-listeners %</i> |
| Nationwide non-farm . . . . .       | 4,991                                    | 31.7   | 36.4                   |
| Ohio county cross-section . . . . . | 1,500                                    | 56.1   | 54.0                   |
| Iowa State cross-section . . . . .  | 5,325                                    | 79.1   | 81.0                   |

include news programs in this preferred category. Table 3 summarizes our findings in three studies.

Listeners and non-listeners do not differ materially or consistently so far as interest in news programs is concerned.<sup>6</sup> This finding is supported by the use of another standard index of interest in current events: the reading of out-of-town newspapers.<sup>7</sup> In the Ohio county study, listeners and non-listeners report the same proportion of out-of-town papers in their total newspaper inventory.

The Ohio county material was collected during the presidential campaign of 1940 with the specific purpose of gauging current attitudes toward that political event. Consequently, it provides a substantial basis for the study of listeners' interest in public affairs. Voting in a national election has always been considered a sign of civic consciousness. Table 4 shows the proportion of women who, at different phases of the presidential campaign, did not expect to vote and the proportion who actually did not vote.

Let us first center the discussion on the women's vote-intention in May, six months before the election and in October, just a few weeks before it. We see that the differences between the two groups of respondents is small and statistically quite insignificant. So far as general interest in the election is concerned, the daytime serial listeners do not lag much behind their non-

<sup>6</sup> Differences in the proportions of news-program listeners in the three surveys are largely a result of differences in interviewing techniques. In the Iowa study, respondents were asked to check *five* types of favorite programs, thus making the frequency of any one type higher than in the other surveys (where respondents were free to check as many as they wished). In the Ohio county study, respondents mentioned an average of three favorite types of program. In the nation-wide survey, the average was only two programs and consequently the frequency with which any one type was mentioned is least. For present purposes, these variations are irrelevant; we are solely concerned with the comparison of figures for listeners and non-listeners *in each survey*.

<sup>7</sup> See P. F. Lazarsfeld, "The Daily Newspaper and Its Competitors," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January 1942, p. 32.

## 14 WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT DAYTIME SERIAL LISTENERS

TABLE 4.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS IN AN OHIO COUNTY WHO WERE PROSPECTIVE AND ACTUAL NON-VOTERS AT THREE DIFFERENT INTERVIEW PERIODS

| <i>Date of interview</i> | <i>Total number of women interviewed<sup>a</sup></i> | <i>Proportion of "non-voters" among:</i> |                           |
|--------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
|                          |  | <i>Listeners</i><br>%                    | <i>Non-listeners</i><br>% |
| May 1940 .....           | 1,500  | 20.5                                     | 18.6                      |
| October 1940 .....       | 600  | 25.6                                     | 20.1                      |
| Election Day .....       | 300  | 31.7                                     | 18.2                      |

<sup>a</sup> A word of explanation is necessary to account for the fact that different numbers of women are quoted in the text for the Ohio cross-section. The original total of 1,500 women in this sample was carefully divided into five well-matched subgroups of 300 each. Most of these women were re-interviewed at least once during the study, some of them several times. According to the general plan of the study, the number of interviews was different at different phases. The careful matching of the subgroups, however, makes even the smaller groups an unusually good cross-section of the total population in this Ohio county.

listener counterparts. Further evidence, of a more introspective nature, bears on this point. Respondents were asked to gauge their own interest in the election. Again, the proportion of non-listeners who claimed "a great deal of interest" is not significantly larger than that of listeners to daytime serials.<sup>8</sup>

When it comes to actual voting, however, we find a larger and statistically significant difference: considerably fewer serial listeners go to the polls (see third line, Table 4). It is not unlikely that psychological factors play more of a role in this connection than a lack of concern with public affairs. Consider certain apposite data. In examining the magazine reading-practices of listeners, we noted that they evidenced more interest in journals dealing with home life. This may reflect a concern with their own personal problems. Much the same preoccupa-

<sup>8</sup> The table on interest corresponding to Table 4 on voting above, reads as follows:

| <i>Date of interview</i> | <i>Total number of women interviewed</i> | <i>Proportion of women expressing "a great deal" of interest in the election</i> |                           |
|--------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
|                          |  | <i>Listeners</i><br>%  | <i>Non-listeners</i><br>% |
| May 1940 .....           | 1,500                                    | 20.1   | 25.5                      |
| October 1940 .....       | 600                                      | 29.2   | 34.2                      |

tion with private affairs is found among Ohio county listeners. Though they evidence as much general interest as non-listeners in public affairs, they are less active in *pursuing* these interests. An inventory of activities of the Ohio sample during the presidential campaign indicates that daytime serial listeners less often participated actively in political campaigns to help elect their own candidates. The interpretation of the marked difference in actual voting of listeners and non-listeners should therefore be left pending until we know something more of the personality characteristics of listeners. Before turning to this subject, a general remark is in order.

This study of civic and political activities of women respondents has significant implications, in view of the concern with which political scientists have viewed the comparative indifference to voting exhibited by women in this country. Since women who have for years listened regularly to daytime serials do not show a better voting record—indeed, it may be somewhat worse—than non-listeners of similar formal education, it is evident that these programs have neglected a great public service. By emphasizing, during the pre-election period, the obligation of every American woman to go to the polls, the daytime serials could undoubtedly make a valuable public contribution.<sup>9</sup>

### *Personality Characteristics*

We should preface with a caveat our analysis of two sets of data bearing on characteristic personality traits of listeners. The quantitative measurement of personality traits is still very much in its infancy. All material in this area of research must be viewed with considerable caution.

In the Ohio county study, a group of women were repeatedly

<sup>9</sup> In another paper in this volume Rudolf Arnheim shows that the serials are inclined to picture government problems in a rather bad light.

interviewed by the same persons. After they came to know the interviewees fairly well, the interviewers rated them in terms of a five-point rating scale of personality traits.

An example will serve to clarify the procedure. The rating scale on "assurance" identified the highest level in the following terms: "Extremely sure of self; positive; emphatic; determined; convinced she is absolutely right." The midpoint was described as "Average; moderate conviction but not too positive;" and the lowest level as "Very hesitant, unassured, manner seems to lack conviction; little confidence in own ideas."

The ratings by interviewers were classified separately for listeners and non-listeners, yielding the results reported in Table 5.

TABLE 5.—DISTRIBUTION OF LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ALONG A FIVE-POINT SCALE RATING THE DEGREE OF THEIR ASSURANCE

| <i>Degree of assurance</i>    | <i>Listeners</i> | <i>Non-listeners</i> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
|                               | <i>%</i>         | <i>%</i>             |
| 1. (Highest degree) . . . . . | 6.5              | 4.6                  |
| 2. . . . .                    | 5.6              | 18.3                 |
| 3. (Average) . . . . .        | 44.0             | 45.0                 |
| 4. . . . .                    | 32.7             | 24.5                 |
| 5. (Lowest degree) . . . . .  | 11.2             | 7.6                  |
| Total per cent . . . . .      | 100.0            | 100.0                |
| Total number of cases . . . . | 107              | 131                  |

It is evident that there are relatively more non-listeners in the high-assurance sector of the scale. The conventional statistical basis for measuring such a relationship is termed a bi-serial correlation ( $r$ ), which is similar to a correlation coefficient. If  $r$  were equal to zero, it would indicate no relationship between listening and self-assurance. If it were plus 1, it would express the highest degree of positive relationship, indicating that all non-listeners are very sure of themselves and all listeners diffident.

The bi-serial  $r$  for our data is .16, which indicates a slight relationship between non-listening and self-assurance. In other words, our interviewers estimated that listeners were somewhat more diffident than non-listeners.<sup>10</sup>

Three other traits, rated in the same fashion, are of interest for our purposes. One of these, "energy," had a bi-serial correlation of .16 with listening to daytime dramas. "Talkativeness," another of these, was found with equal frequency among listeners and non-listeners, the bi-serial correlation being .04. In view of some observations to be made later in this article, it is interesting that the third trait, "emotionality," also showed no relationship with listening, at least on the basis of interviewers' estimates. The lowest degree of emotionality was characterized as "Keen, well-poised, self-controlled, cool-headed; reasoning type"; and the highest degree as "Very emotional, excitable, hot-blooded, high-strung, impatient, volatile; expresses feelings very freely." The bi-serial correlation between emotionality and listening was .02.

These data, then, indicate little difference, if any, between listeners and non-listeners with respect to psychological traits estimated by interviewers who knew the respondents well. The two groups of women do not differ in outward signs of emotionality, but the daytime serial listeners appear to be very slightly less energetic and self-assured.<sup>11</sup>

This largely negative result is corroborated at one point by the way the women feel about themselves. A question which had proved quite revealing in previous studies was used in the

<sup>10</sup> It should be remembered that the interviewers had no interest in and hardly any recollection of the respondents' program preferences. The entire study centered around political subject matter, and the rating scales were filled in about three months after the women had been asked for their program preferences.

<sup>11</sup> The correlations for these two traits are just twice their standard errors.

Iowa survey.<sup>12</sup> Each of the 5,325 women was asked: "Do you think that you worry more, less or the same as compared with other women?" The results are summarized in the following table:

TABLE 6.—EXTENT OF "WORRYING" AMONG LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS

|                                 | <i>Listeners</i><br>% | <i>Non-listeners</i><br>% |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Worries more . . . . .          | 15.1                  | 13.8                      |
| Worries the same . . . . .      | 49.6                  | 44.5                      |
| Worries less . . . . .          | 21.3                  | 21.8                      |
| Don't know . . . . .            | 12.4                  | 15.2                      |
| Refused to answer . . . . .     | 1.6                   | 4.7                       |
| Total per cent . . . . .        | 100.0                 | 100.0                     |
| Total number of cases . . . . . | 2,545                 | 2,780                     |

We see that listeners and non-listeners do not differ significantly in their appraisal of the extent to which they worry.<sup>13</sup> The limited data of the three-city study yielded the same result. The question is probably of greater diagnostic value than its apparent simplicity would suggest. And the results which it affords, though they manifestly require further confirmation, are clear-cut. Listeners to daytime serials are apparently no more beset by anxieties than are women who do not listen to these programs. More detailed investigation of the personality characteristics of listeners and non-listeners is clearly one of the most important lines for future research in this field. It may prove useful to set forth suggestions for such research.

The range and types of outlets and mean of relaxation prevalent among listeners and non-listeners should be clarified.<sup>14</sup> Inquiries concerning the frequency of church attendance, par-

<sup>12</sup> See for instance, Cantril, Gaudet and Herzog, *The Invasion from Mars*, Princeton University Press, 1939.

<sup>13</sup> For interesting differences in the answers to this question among women in various age and income groups see Appendix A, Table 9.

<sup>14</sup> For suggestions on the types of characteristics to be studied among daytime serial listeners, the writer is indebted to Dr. Rosalind Gould.



ticipation in social gatherings and movie attendance are obviously only the crudest beginnings of research on personal interests and social participation. For one thing, they all refer to conventional social activities of a rather passive nature. Quite different findings might result from inquiries into hobbies, friendships, interests, etc. Moreover, it is not simply a matter of present activities but also of aspirations. How would the respondent prefer to spend her leisure time? Questions of the following type might be fruitful in this regard: "If you had more time, what would you like to do with it? Would you do the things you are doing now but in a more leisurely and effective way; or is there something else you would prefer to do?"

The emotional structure of daytime serial listeners, with particular respect to the extent and major areas of frustration, requires further investigation. Had the Iowa survey followed the question on anxiety by another on the types of problems with which respondents are preoccupied, it is altogether possible that definite differences between listeners and non-listeners would have been discovered. Further aspects of anxiety should be examined in this connection. What types of anxiety are exhibited? Do respondents worry in a relatively subdued, controlled fashion or do they surrender to acute neurotic anxieties? Information on the scope of goals and the disparity between goals and accomplishments is also needed. This could be elicited by questions of the following type: "What three things are you most proud of? What three things would you most like to have?" The specific areas of frustration could be ascertained by questions of this kind: "Do you feel that for the most part other people have been kind, indifferent or unfriendly to you? Do you feel that your family has been advancing, stagnating or declining? In what ways, if any, would you like your hus-

band or children to be different from what they are?" These questions are deliberately undefined in some respects, to provide scope for personal projections by the respondent. The degree and type of anxieties could be more elaborately measured by such psychological tests as the psycho-neurotic inventory or the so-called projection tests. In addition to determination of respondents' problems it will be necessary to discover as well the means which they have for coping with them. Are they resigned to their situation, or do they suppose that "problems will settle themselves," or do they actively seek definite solutions? How do they go about it? What are their main sources of guidance and advice?

Obviously, materials of this type can be interpreted only after the primary characteristics of respondents have been controlled. In this connection, we should note a peculiar role played by formal education. In some of our data, it appeared that differences between listeners and non-listeners are somewhat more marked among well-educated than among less-educated women. If a woman listens extensively to daytime serials although her education gives her access to a wider range of alternative experiences, then she exhibits the "typical" characteristics of the serial listener in a more pronounced fashion than the listener with relatively little education. This indicates that comparisons of the personality characteristics of listeners and non-listeners might fruitfully begin with better-educated women.

#### *Media of Communication: Preferences and Practices*

The most conspicuous difference between listeners and non-listeners appears in their general attitude toward radio. On this point the evidence is ample. Of course, daytime serial

addicts listen to the radio considerably more during the day than non-listeners to daytime serials. However, the same pattern of amount of listening is also true for the evening. After the serial devotee has listened to numerous stories during the day, she continues to listen 2.43 hours during an average weekday evening whereas the woman who does not listen to daytime serials spends only 2.15 hours during the evening with the radio. Serial devotees indicate that they can be found listening to the radio at 10:00 P.M. an average of four evenings a week; non-listeners report only half as many late evenings at the radio.

Even more marked are differences of the two groups with respect to general preferences for various media of communication. In the Ohio county study, women were asked: "Where do you think you will get most of your information about issues and candidates in the coming presidential election?" The following table compares the answers of listeners and non-listeners interviewed in October 1940.

TABLE 7.—SOURCE OF POLITICAL INFORMATION FOR LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS

| <i>Source of information on election</i> | <i>Listeners<br/>%</i> | <i>Non-listeners<br/>%</i> |
|--|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Radio . . . . .                          | 40.2                   | 33.3                       |
| Newspapers and magazines . . . . .       | 32.4                   | 41.7                       |
| Friends and relatives . . . . .          | 25.4                   | 22.0                       |
| Public speakers and newsreels . . . . .  | 2.0                    | 3.0                        |
| Total per cent . . . . .                 | 100.0                  | 100.0                      |
| Total number of cases . . . . .          | 299                    | 363                        |

For the listeners, the radio is more important than newspapers, the contrary being true for non-listeners.

At this point we should examine the possibility that our analysis is misleading. It is well known from other studies that women with little education are more likely to turn to the radio

than to the newspaper for information and entertainment.<sup>15</sup> As we have seen that less-educated women are also more likely to listen to daytime serials, the preceding table might simply record the spurious effect of education which could account both for serial listening and for media preference. A more detailed analysis, however, shows that this is not the case. The preference for radio as a source of information is greater for daytime serial listeners on all levels of education.

This finding is further corroborated by the three-city study. Not only do serial listeners prefer the radio to newspapers as a source of news, but they are also less critical of radio in many other respects than are women who do not listen to serials. The most conspicuous result along these lines is so marked that it becomes statistically significant, although this part of the study deals with only 212 women. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: "Too many commercials are in bad taste, speak of stomach disorders, decaying teeth and other distasteful subjects." Sixty-eight per cent of the non-listeners endorsed this statement in contrast to only 37 per cent of the serial listeners.

This general radio-mindedness of daytime serial listeners reconciles two final items of information which might otherwise have seemed contradictory. There are two university radio stations in Iowa which broadcast rather "highbrow" programs. The difference in intellectual range of listeners and non-listeners would lead us to expect the former to be considerably less interested in these educational stations. In fact, the difference is negligible (31 per cent of serial listeners and 34 per cent of non-listeners tune in these stations). Apparently if it is the radio which presents somewhat alien subject matter, the day-

<sup>15</sup> See P. F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1941, Chapters I and IV.

time serial listeners are willing to accept it. On the other hand, when asked to indicate the parts of the newspaper which they read, serial listeners express less interest in editorial and current news items, even though, as we have seen, they are as interested as non-listeners in such news when it comes to them over the radio. In any appraisal of serial listeners, then, their radio-mindedness must be considered a major factor.

There is a tendency among those concerned with the production of radio programs, and even among those engaged in research, to be primarily interested in studies of audience size and composition<sup>16</sup> or in studies of effects. This is a reasonable attitude once we operate in a well-known field. But preliminary evidence suggests that the gratifications which women derive from daytime serials are so complex and so often unanticipated that we have no guide to fruitful observations unless we study in detail the actual experiences of women listening to these programs.

We turn therefore to a summary of such studies which are concerned not with listener characteristics but with listeners' own reports of their listening experiences.

### *Listening Gratifications*

A preliminary study based on 100 intensive interviews<sup>17</sup> suggests three major types of gratification experienced by listeners to daytime serials.

<sup>16</sup> To complete the list of characteristics discussed in the preceding text, two audience breakdowns might be mentioned on which no conclusive evidence is available so far. Our tabulations of the age of the respondents have led to no conclusive results. It would also be interesting to know whether a married woman is more or less likely to listen as compared with an unmarried woman of the same age and the same educational level. However, in spite of the relatively large number of cases covered by our studies, it was not possible to determine the effect of marital status in a satisfactory way. Most unmarried women are also in the younger age classes and likely to have an occupation, and are therefore less available as daytime listeners.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. H. Herzog, "On Borrowed Experience," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, February 1941.

Some listeners seem to enjoy the serials merely as a means of emotional release. They like "the chance to cry" which the serials provide; they enjoy "the surprises, happy or sad." The opportunity for expressing aggressiveness is also a source of satisfaction. Burdened with their own problems, listeners claim that it "made them feel better to know that other people have troubles, too."

On the one hand, the sorrows of the serial characters are enjoyed as compensation for the listener's own troubles.

Thus a woman who had a hard time bringing up her two children after her husband's death, mentions the heroine of *Hilltop House* as one of her favorites, feeling that she "ought not to get married ever in order to continue the wonderful work she is doing at the orphanage." This respondent compensates for her own resented fate by wishing a slightly worse one upon her favorite story character: preoccupied by her own husband's death she wants the heroine to have no husband at all and to sacrifice herself for orphan children, if she, the listener, must do so for her own.

On the other hand, in identifying themselves and their admittedly minor problems with the suffering heroes and heroines of the stories, the listeners find an opportunity to magnify their own woes. This is enjoyed if only because it expresses their "superiority" over others who have not had these profound emotional experiences.

A second and commonly recognized form of enjoyment concerns the opportunities for wishful thinking provided in listening. While certain people seem to go all out and "drown" their troubles in listening to the events portrayed in the serials, others use them mainly to fill in gaps of their own life, or to compensate for their own failures through the success pattern of the serials.

Thus a rather happily married woman whose husband happens to be chronically ill, listens to *Vic and Sade* mainly for the "funny episodes,"

pretending that they happen to herself and her husband. A woman whose daughter has run away from home to marry and whose husband "stays away five nights a week," lists *The Goldbergs* and *The O'Neills* as her favorites, each portraying a happy family life and a successful wife and mother.

A third and commonly unsuspected form of gratification concerns the advice obtained from listening to daytime serials. The stories are liked because they "explain things" to the inarticulate listener. Furthermore, they teach the listener appropriate patterns of behavior. "If you listen to these programs and something turns up in your own life, you would know what to do about it" is a typical comment, expressing the readiness of women to use these programs as sources of advice.

#### *Daytime Serials as Sources of Advice*

The observations in this preliminary case survey were so striking that it was decided to test the matter on a larger scale. Therefore, in the summer of 1942, the respondents in the Iowa survey who listen to daytime serials were asked the following question:

Do these programs help you to deal better with the problems in your own everyday life?

Yes— No— Never thought about it that way— Don't know—

Of some 2,500 listeners, 41 per cent claimed to have been helped and only 28 per cent not to have been helped. The remainder held that they had never thought about it that way or that they did not know, or refused to answer the question.

On the basis of numerous tabulations designed to identify the types of women who consider themselves "helped" by listening to radio serials, two conclusions can be drawn. The less formal education a woman has, the more is she likely to consider these programs helpful. This corroborates a previous

observation that less-educated women probably have fewer sources from which to learn "how to win friends and influence people" and are therefore more dependent upon daytime serials for this end.

We find also that on all educational levels those women who think they worry more than other people, more frequently find relief in listening to serials than women who say they worry less. Both results are summarized in Table 8. Each figure indicates, for the given class of listeners, the proportion of women claiming that the serials help them. It will be seen that the figures in the first line (worries more) are always higher than the corresponding figures in the second line (worries less), and that there is an increase from left to right, that is, with decreasing education of the respondents.

TABLE 8.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS WHO ARE BEING HELPED BY LISTENING TO THEM  
(CLASSIFIED BY EDUCATION AND RELATIVE EXTENT OF WORRYING)

| <i>Worries in relation<br/>to other women</i> | <i>Proportion of listeners being helped by serials</i> |                          |                             |
|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | <i>College<br/>%</i>                                   | <i>High school<br/>%</i> | <i>Grammar school<br/>%</i> |
| More . . . . .                                | 42   | 50                       | 52                          |
| Less . . . . .                                | 34   | 37                       | 44                          |

The proportion of those who feel helped also increases with the number of stories heard. Whereas among those who listen to one serial only, 32 per cent said they had been helped, 50 per cent of those who listen to six or more serials claim to have been helped. This is not surprising because we would expect those women who are more ardent listeners to impute beneficial effects to serial dramas.

But these overall figures do not yet give us a clear idea of what women mean when they talk about such "help." For the respondents in the Iowa survey, we have no additional information. We can, however, draw upon the results of some 150 case



studies of serial listeners in New York and Pittsburgh. Interviewers<sup>18</sup> were instructed to obtain complete examples of advice gleaned from daytime serials. They were cautioned to secure accounts of concrete experiences and not rest content with general assertions of aid derived from serials.

Judging from this information, the spheres of influence exerted by the serials are quite diversified. The listeners feel they have been helped by being told how to get along with other people, how to "handle" their husbands or their boy friends, how to "bring up" their children.

I think Papa David helped me to be more cheerful when Fred, my husband, comes home. I feel tired and instead of being grumpy, I keep on the cheerful side. *The Goldbergs* are another story like that. Mr. Goldberg comes home scolding and he never meant it. I sort of understand Fred better because of it. When he starts to shout, I call him Mr. Goldberg. He comes back and calls me Molly. Husbands do not really understand what a wife goes through. These stories have helped me to understand that husbands are like that. If women are tender, they are better off. I often feel that if my sister had had more tenderness she would not be divorced today. I saw a lot of good in that man.

Bess Johnson shows you how to handle children. She handles all ages. Most mothers slap their children. She deprives them of something. That is better. I use what she does with my children.

The listeners feel they have learned how to express themselves in a particular situation.

When Clifford's wife died in childbirth the advice Paul gave him I used for my nephew when his wife died.

They have learned how to accept old age or a son going off to the war.

I like Helen Trent. She is a woman over 35. You never hear of her dyeing her hair! She uses charm and manners to entice men and she

<sup>18</sup> For the interviews we are indebted to Mrs. Clare Marks Horowitz of the Pennsylvania College for Women and to Mrs. Jeannette K. Green of Columbia University's Office of Radio Research.

does. If she can do it, why can't I? I am fighting old age, and having a terrible time. Sometimes I am tempted to go out and fix my hair. These stories give me courage and help me realize I have to accept it.

In *Woman in White* the brother was going off to war. She reconciled herself, that he was doing something for his country. When I listened it made me feel reconciled about my son—that mine is not the only one. In the story the brother is very attached to the family—he tells them not to worry, that he would be all right and would come back.

They get advice on how to comfort themselves when they are worried.

It helps you to listen to these stories. When Helen Trent has serious trouble she takes it calmly. So you think you'd better be like her and not get upset.

They are in a position to advise others by referring them to the stories.

I always tell the woman upstairs who wants my advice, to listen to the people on the radio because they are smarter than I am. She is worried because she did not have any education and she figures that if her daughter grows up, she would be so much smarter than she was. I told her to listen to *Aunt Jenny* to learn good English. Also, you can learn refinement from *Our Gal Sunday*. I think if I told her to do something and something would happen, I would feel guilty. If it happens from the story, then it is nobody's fault.

The desire to learn from the programs is further confirmed by the fact that one-third of 100 listeners specified problems which they would like to have presented in a serial. A few quotations will serve to illustrate these choices:

When a man's disposition changes suddenly after being married for a long time. He starts gambling and to be unfaithful. What's the explanation?

I should like to know how much a daughter should give her mother from the money she makes, I give everything I earn to my mother. Do I have to?

Whether I should marry if I have to live with my mother-in-law.

A story which would teach people not to put things over.

About religious and racial differences.

Unquestionably then, many listeners turn to the stories for advice and feel they get it. Nonetheless, the matter is not quite so simple as it seems.

A question suggested by the quoted comments concerns the adequacy of the aid and comfort. The woman who has learned to deprive her children of something rather than "to slap them" seems to be substituting one procedure for the other without an understanding of the underlying pedagogical doctrine. It is doubtful whether the relationship between a wife and her husband is put on a sounder and more stable basis when she has learned to realize that "men do not understand what their wives have to go through." One might wonder how much the bereaved nephew appreciated, at his wife's death, the speech his aunt had borrowed from her favorite story.

A second question concerns the extent of the influence. Frequently the advice seems confined to good intentions without any substantial influence on basic attitudes. An example of this may be found in the following remarks of a woman who listens to serials because the people in them are so "wonderful":

They teach you how to be good. I have gone through a lot of suffering but I still can learn from them.

Yet, this same woman, when asked whether she disliked any program, answered:

I don't listen to *The Goldbergs*. Why waste electricity on the Jews? Obviously, the "goodness" she was "learning" had not reached the point of materially affecting her attitude towards a minority group. In the same context, we may note that the advice de-

rived from a serial is often doled out to other people, to sisters, or neighbors, thus providing the listener with the status of an adviser without its responsibilities.

Thirdly, the women who claim to have profited from the serials frequently think of quite unrealistic situations. Thus, one listener felt she had learned considerably from a story in which the heroine suddenly came into a great deal of money; the story character was concerned with keeping her children from profligate waste. Although the listener felt there was no prospect of ever having so much money herself, nonetheless she considered that this episode offered valuable advice:

It is a good idea to know and to be prepared for what I would do with so much money.

Very likely, the advice obtained from that story served as a substitute for the condition of its applicability. Similarly, the wishful thinking connected with such "potential" advice is brought out in the following account of a young housekeeper:

I learn a lot from these stories. I often figure if anything like that happened to me what I would do. Who knows if I met a crippled man, would I marry him? If he had money I would. In this story (*Life Can Be Beautiful*), he was a lawyer, so it was really quite nice. These stories teach you how things come out all right.

The overall formula for the help obtained from listening seems to be in terms of "how to take it." This is accomplished in various ways. The *first* of these is outright wishful thinking. The stories "teach" the Panglossian doctrine that "things come out all right." In a less extreme form, a claim on a favorable turn of events is established by the listener's taking a small preliminary step which accords with a pattern established in a serial. This may be illustrated by the following comment of a middle-aged listener:

In Helen Trent the girl Jean is in love with this playwright. She used to be fat and he did not pay any attention to her. . . . I am fat and I got to get thin. That story taught me that it is dangerous to reduce all by yourself. Helen Trent took that girl to a doctor. That's just what I did. I went to the doctor last night. I am going to start the diet next week.

This listener actually saw a doctor about her weight. She postponed starting her diet for "next week." By following the serial's "advice" to this extent, she seems to feel assured of having taken sufficient steps to guarantee herself a result as romantic as that in the serial. (By reducing, Jean, the story character, won the love of a man who had not cared for her before.)

A *second* way in which the listeners are helped to accept their fate is by learning to project blame upon others. Thus one of the previously quoted listeners obtains "adjustment" to her marital problems by finding out that husbands never understand their wives. *Thirdly*, the listeners learn to take things by obtaining a ready-made formula of behavior which simply requires application. References such as "Don't slap your children, but deprive them of something" characterize this type of learning. Listeners, worried about problems confronting them, learn to take things "calmly," not to get "excited" about them. As one person said:

I learned that if anything is the matter, do not dwell on it or you go crazy.

Calmness in the face of crises is certainly a useful attitude. However, it is not always sufficient for a solution of the problems.

These data point to the great social responsibility of those engaged in the writing of daytime serials. There can be no

doubt that a large proportion of the listeners take these programs seriously and seek to apply what they hear in them to their own personal lives. Much of this application seems somewhat dubious if measured by the yardstick of real mastery of personal problems. No mass communication can fully safeguard itself against abused application. On the other hand, the argument that the primary purpose of daytime serials is entertainment rather than education does not apply here. The writers of daytime serials must live up to the obligations to which the influence of their creations, however unintended, commits them. Both the obligation and the opportunity for its successful execution seem particularly great in these times of war.

The audience to daytime serials comprises a cross-section of almost half of all American women. Thus the radio industry and the Office of War Information seem quite justified in their effort to use these programs as a vehicle for war messages. We shall have to tell how personal losses should be borne and overcome by work and understanding of higher purposes instead of being submitted to passively as undeserved suffering. We shall have to combat prejudice and wishful thinking by information and the analysis of complex social situations. The future in which colored nations will play a much greater role can be anticipated by realistic handling of race problems. A world in which some form of central planning is likely to remain can be reflected in plots where the role of the individual in the community is constructively treated. The increasing importance of labor can be shown by the introduction of characteristic types. These are the needs and the obligations. Can they be carried through? We cannot know for certain. But there is evidence from other instances that times of emergency favor such change more than times of peace. We live in a world

where the ultimate criterion is no longer what we like to do, but what our duty is. If radio gets into the habit of telling this to large numbers of listeners now, it will acquire a tradition which will make it an even more important social instrument after the war.

# THE WORLD OF THE DAYTIME SERIAL

by Rudolf Arnheim

*"The kitchen is a kernel of reality in a world gone berserk."*

FROM A RADIO SERIAL

## INTRODUCTION

WITHIN a span of a dozen years, radio daytime serials, an American invention, have become an intimate feature of this country's daily life. What kind of mental food, healthy or noxious, do they offer? What makes them so appealing? What kind of a picture of private and social life do they represent? Which attitudes are condemned, which recommended?

The nickname "soap opera" indicates not only the symbiosis of drama and soap, but also its consequences for the cultural level of the programs. The effects of commercial control are well known from what motion picture producers and pulp writers offer to their customers. Any admissible means to exercise a strong appeal is welcome, and since generally the strongest and widest appeal can be secured by the crudest means, commercial art production tends towards lowering the cultural level.

The producers of radio serials take no chances in trying to meet the taste of their customers. Letters in which the listeners express approbation or protest are carefully studied. Telephone surveys determine the approximate size of the audience of each serial. On the basis of such data, and with a good deal of flair for what suits the purpose, the plots, the characters, the settings



of the serials are made to order. That is why a content analysis of the serials can be expected to yield not only something about the programs, but also something about the listeners. These stories are likely to offer a picture of the world such as a particular social group would wish it to be.

The "streamlined" methods of radio serial production also justify a statistical approach. An attempt to describe, let us say, the European novel of the 19th century by discovering how often a few easily definable features can be found in a sample of fifty novels written during the period, would be inadequate. Such features, even where they referred to essential characteristics of the single work, would be misleading by their isolation from the individual context. Radio serials, however, are produced by a small group of advertising agencies which have specialized in this field. What the programs have in common outweighs individual particularities to such an extent that wherever a serial author undertakes to accomplish his task in a personal way, the result stands out as an obvious exception to the rule.

In order to avoid misunderstandings it should be added that whenever in this study we speak about the "tendencies" of the serial authors or producers we do not mean to prejudge the question of to what extent these authors and producers consciously follow certain trends or realize their sociological and psychological implications. Undoubtedly a considerable number of "rules of thumb" is deliberately used. But on the whole, the content analyst is in a position somewhat similar to that of the psychoanalyst who by interpreting the dreams of a patient, reveals the mechanism and the meaning of strivings of whose existence the patient is unaware or which he even wishes to contest.

## THE DATA

In order to get data for a content analysis, either the actual broadcast, or records from the broadcasts, or the scripts could be used. Records and scripts together would provide an ideal basis for a thorough study. However, as the present study was designed mainly to gather some preliminary information and to work out suitable methods of interpretation, a more expedient procedure was applied. Forty-seven students, 39 female and 8 male, each listened to one radio serial for three weeks, in the period from March 17 to April 7, 1941. For each daily installment listened to, a report sheet was filled out.<sup>1</sup>

The serials were chosen at random among those available to New York radio listeners between 8 A.M. and 6 P.M. The choice had, to some extent, to be adapted to the timetable of the students. As a result, some of the better-known serials have not been covered, while duplicate reports were received on three others. The following 43 serials were covered by the survey:

- |                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Against the Storm       | 10. Guiding Light                |
| 2. Arnold Grimm's Daughter | 11. Helen Trent                  |
| 3. Backstage Wife          | 12. Hilltop House (Bess Johnson) |
| 4. Betty and Bob           | 13. Home of the Brave            |
| 5. David Harum             | 14. John's Other Wife            |
| 6. Edith Adams' Future     | 15. Joyce Jordan                 |
| 7. Ellen Randolph          | 16. Julia Blake, The Heart of    |
| 8. Girl Alone              | 17. Just Plain Bill              |
| 9. Government Girl         | 18. Kate Hopkins                 |

<sup>1</sup> The students' help was enlisted through the co-operation of Miss Miriam Tompkins, Assistant Professor of Library Service at the Columbia University School of Library Service. The analysis of the data was carried out at the Office of Radio Research of Columbia University, under the supervision of Professor Paul F. Lazarsfeld. For the working out of the report sheet, we were able to rely on the assistance of Mr. Milton Gordon, and on an unpublished study carried through by Mr. W. M. Spackman in collaboration with Mr. Gordon.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 19. Kitty Keane                             | 32. Right to Happiness                 |
| 20. Life Can Be Beautiful (three listeners) | 33. Road of Life                       |
| 21. Lone Journey                            | 34. Scattergood Baines (two listeners) |
| 22. Lorenzo Jones                           | 35. Stella Dallas                      |
| 23. Ma Perkins                              | 36. Valiant Lady                       |
| 24. Mary Marlin                             | 37. Vic and Sade                       |
| 25. Midstream                               | 38. We Are Always Young                |
| 26. Mother O'Mine                           | 39. We, the Abbotts                    |
| 27. Myrt and Marge                          | 40. When a Girl Marries                |
| 28. O'Neills (two listeners)                | 41. Woman in White                     |
| 29. Our Gal Sunday                          | 42. Young Widder Brown                 |
| 30. Pepper Young's Family                   | 43. Young Dr. Malone <sup>2</sup>      |
| 31. Portia Faces Life                       |  |

Normally, radio serials go on the air for fifteen minutes at a time every weekday, with the exception of Saturday. Within our test period, 16 installments of each serial could have been listened to. For various reasons, however, this aim was reached only approximately. On the average, 12.7 installments were listened to (average deviation: 2.7). The total number of installments covered was 596.

Most of the reports which we obtained proved to be quite sufficient for the analysis intended. It was possible then to extract from them (1) all passages referring to the single conflicts or "problems" that form the plots of the serials; (2) all references to actions and reactions of the single characters and all evaluations of the characters given or implied during the program; (3) all references to specific topics, such as politics, learning, newspapers, the function of women, etc.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In addition, we got reports on three Italian radio serials and on the British serial *Frontline Family*, broadcast over shortwave to the United States. Cf. pages 61 and 83.

<sup>3</sup> In the report sheet, the more important questions were worded in such a way that the listener had to give a free description or a quotation. We did not want the data to pass through a sieve of preconceived categories, but preferred to work on something which came as near as possible to the "raw material," offered by the broadcast. Besides, the fact that the report sheet was designed for the one

## THE SOCIAL MILIEU

*Locale*

Do radio serials choose the large centers of modern life as settings for the adventures of their characters, or do they prefer small towns or the village? Do they have their heroes escaping from civil community to solitude and the wilderness? A rough classification of the settings is given in Table I. As two types of settings appeared in 5 of our samples, we present the results in terms of the number of serials and of settings.

TABLE I.—LOCALE OF THE SERIALS

| <i>Locale</i>                              | <i>Number of<br/>serials</i> | <i>Number of<br/>settings</i> |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Large cities .....                         | 8                            | 13                            |
| Middle or small towns .....                | 16                           | 20                            |
| Rural communities .....                    | 4                            | 5                             |
| Combinations .....                         | 5                            | ..                            |
| Doubtful (either large or middle town) ... | 5                            | 5                             |
| Other cases .....                          | 5                            | 5                             |
| Total .....                                | 43                           | 48                            |

Middle or small towns predominate over large cities, such as New York or Chicago. In only 10 per cent of all cases is the serial laid in a rural community. The preference for middle towns may reflect an intention of catering to listeners who belong to just that social setting. In this case, we would have to note that these listeners are believed to prefer plays which, at least outwardly, reproduce the framework of their own life rather than permitting access to the higher sphere of metropolitan life.

But whether a large or a small place is chosen as a setting, purpose of transmitting as faithfully and as vividly as possible the experience of listening to the programs, will enable us to describe and discuss plots and characteristic detail wherever it will appear worthwhile to do so.

there is certainly no tendency toward fleeing regular life in a community. Even the five "other" cases mentioned in Table 1 refer to fragments of this normal life rather than to exotic or fantastic backgrounds. These took place in the "most expensive sanitarium of the country," at a country college, in two cases on the estates of wealthy people, and on a pleasure cruise near Havana. With the exception of the latter, the episodes were all set in the United States. This again indicates that listeners are believed to enjoy a familiar environment rather than one which permits or demands that they imagine what may happen elsewhere.

### *Social Status of Main Characters*

What are the social backgrounds of the people presented in the radio serials? Are they rich or poor? Are they individuals distinguished by social prestige and influence or are they representatives of the common folk? Table 2 shows the occupation

TABLE 2.—OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF MAIN CHARACTERS  
(PROPORTION OF 48 SETTINGS IN WHICH THE DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONS  
APPEAR)

| <i>Occupational status</i> | <i>Number of settings</i> | <i>Per cent of all settings</i> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Society people . . . . .   | 9                         | 19                              |
| High officials . . . . .   | 10                        | 21                              |
| Big business . . . . .     | 16                        | 33                              |
| Professionals . . . . .    | 35                        | 73                              |
| Housewives . . . . .       | 31                        | 65                              |
| Small business . . . . .   | 15                        | 31                              |
| Wage earners . . . . .     | 9                         | 19                              |
| Destitute people . . . . . | 3                         | 6                               |

of the central, plot-sustaining group of characters. Most of the categories in this table are self-explanatory. "Society people" comprise those characters whose status was described exclusively by their belonging to "society" (society matrons, the son of a millionaire, etc.).

If we accept the order of the categories as a rough social scale we find that the status of the main characters clusters at about the middle of the scale with professionals and housewives being most frequent.<sup>4</sup> The frequent appearance of housewives can be explained by their predominance in the audience. The preference for the professionals seems less easy to explain. The physicians, lawyers, college teachers, artists, etc., who comprise this group are probably on a higher social level than the average listener, but they are not the highest class available for wish-dreams. Society people, high officials, and big businessmen do not appear more frequently than small business people and employees whose status can be supposed to correspond most closely to the average listener's. One might speculate that physicians and lawyers are indispensable in the troubles which are characteristic of the plots. In fact, the serials afford sufficient opportunity to lawyers for keeping busy. But there is not enough illness in serials to explain the large number of physicians. And quite often the lawyers and doctors appear mainly as husbands, friends, etc., rather than in the exercise of their professions. Can this result be explained by the attitude of lower middle class people towards other social classes? Do they consider the class of learned or artistically gifted men, who give help and advice or produce enjoyment and who live on a higher economic level, the object of admiration and aspiration; and does resentment dominate their attitude towards still higher social groups?

The complete absence of the working class proper is striking. The characters of serials include small shopkeepers, business employees, a taxi driver, even one garage mechanic, and

<sup>4</sup> A breakdown according to size of community shows that the middle or small town setting follows this distribution closely, while in the large city setting the drop in the high occupational groups, and in the rural setting the drop in the low groups, is less pronounced.

then there is a jump to a small group of destitute outcasts: an ex-convict, a family of unemployed migrant workers, a senator reduced to vagabondage by amnesia. *There is no case of a factory worker, a miner, a skilled or unskilled laborer, playing an important role in any of the 43 serial samples.* Here again, social attitudes of the listeners, and possibly the policy of advertisers, might give an explanation.

Apart from the occupational scale, we examined how often people appeared who were equipped with the *splendor of wealth*: people who possess large houses and servants, who visit nightclubs, charter private planes, send orchids by wire, etc. This happened in 24 out of 48 settings; i.e., in 50 per cent, and specifically in 85 per cent of the large town settings; 30 per cent of the middle and small town settings; and 20 per cent of the rural settings. The occupational groups who contributed to this feature were the "society people," businessmen, and, among the high officials, mainly senators, but also some of the doctors, lawyers, and artists.

About the relations between high-class and low-class people it can be said that while popular fiction of the European tradition often introduces the reader into the company of rich noblemen, the radio serials, an American product, present their heroes as illuminated by the upper sphere, but not necessarily identified with it. On the contrary, in many of the cases in which wealthy and socially highly situated people appear, they are shown paying courtship to the attractiveness or efficiency, or both, of the middle-class people. This may be an attempt to compensate the listener for her lack of social prestige and power in real life. Personal qualities, which are independent of the distribution of benefits in the community and therefore equally accessible to all are chosen to counteract social inequality.

The fiction of mutual intercourse on an equal level is stressed, e.g., in the case of a famous Broadway actor who consumes his time and nervous energy in helping the humble middle-class family next door. Marriage with a member of the upper-class conveys honor on the just plain people. There is the spectacular career of the "orphan girl who was reared by two miners and who in young womanhood married England's wealthiest, most handsome lord." Ma Perkins, an elderly housewife and lumberyard owner in the country, has her daughter married to a brilliant young congressman in Washington. Mrs. Stella Dallas, who is a lower middle-class woman and wants to remain one, was married to a diplomatic attaché in the Capital, and her daughter "went out of her mother's life" by marrying a man who is prominent in Washington society. At the same time, proud self-assertion and a certain resentment against people who draw high prestige from wealth or a professional position is often clearly expressed. A rich businessman's marriage proposal is rejected. A bankrupt real estate agent protests against his daughter's desire to marry an attractive young millionaire. The elegant and rich physician courting a simple "government girl" is a "heel" who well deserves to be murdered by an equally rich "glamour girl." A taxicab driver wrote a symphony worth \$25,000 and receives but scarcely appreciates the attentions of an unscrupulous wealthy wangler and his elegant wife.

### *Leaders*

Great importance is attributed to the quality of "leadership." *In 30 out of 48 settings, i.e., in 62.5 per cent, such "leaders" were found among the central characters.*

Table 3 shows the number of leaders in communities of different sizes, the "leaders" being broken down into those who excel by their professional position and those who do so by their personal qualities, such as intelligence, helpfulness, initiative. These "personal leaders" are further divided according to leadership in the whole community or in their private group (family, friends, etc.).

Leadership is due to personal qualities about as often as it is to a professional position. The leaders by personal merit



TABLE 3.—LEADERS IN COMMUNITIES OF DIFFERENT SIZE

| <i>Type of leadership</i>  | <i>Locale</i>       |                              |                          |               | <i>Total number</i> |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
|                            | <i>Large cities</i> | <i>Middle or small towns</i> | <i>Rural communities</i> | <i>Others</i> |                     |
| Professional . . . . .     | 6                   | 9                            | 1                        | 3             | 19                  |
| Personal . . . . .         | 1                   | 5                            | 6                        | 6             | 18                  |
| In community . . . . .     | ..                  | 1                            | 5                        | ..            | 6                   |
| In private group . . . . . | 1                   | 4                            | 1                        | 6             | 12                  |
| Total . . . . .            | 7                   | 14                           | 7                        | 9             | 37 <sup>a</sup>     |

<sup>a</sup> 37 cases are given instead of the 30 indicated above because in seven settings two of the three leader categories were present.

exert their influence within their private group twice as often as in the whole community. In the large cities the professional leaders prevail. Most of them are people of a nationwide reputation, e.g., a president of the United States, senators, famous actors, a number 1 debutante. In the middle or small towns this group of leaders is still predominant: a superintendent of schools, a city manager, a parson, an influential journalist of the local paper, etc. In the rural setting, personal efficiency and helpfulness enable individuals to become leaders in their community, although they are a barber, a garage mechanic, a small store owner, etc.

An examination of the plots shows that often individuals of relatively low social standing, but great personal merits, are described as being more efficient leaders than those on whom society has conferred the prestige of official leadership.

David Harum, who is the owner of a small store, but first of all a "country philosopher," appears absorbed in a community garden project. Garage mechanic Lorenzo Jones is organizing a charity dance. The "leave-it-to-me" man, storekeeper Scattergood Baines, convicts the respected president of the local school of a grave professional error. Ma Perkins, the country woman, provides a senatorial committee with the decisive clues for the disclosure of a large scandal, and the owner of a small second-hand book store at the lower East Side of New York, an old Jew, gives philosophical advice to a famous physician, to his son, and

to last year's number 1 debutante, who, excited by their troubles, rather foolishly buzz among the book shelves.

## THE PROBLEMS

### *The Role of the Problems*

The narrative content of our samples consists almost entirely of problems created and solved by the characters. These problems stem from disturbances of static life situations, rather than from obstacles to the accomplishment of goals. One could imagine plays in which the characters were bent on achieving certain positive aims such as educating children, fighting for a social reform, solving a scientific problem. Then the "problems" would consist in conquering the forces opposed to the realization of the aim. The typical radio serial situation, instead, cannot be compared to a stream hampered by a dam, but rather to a stagnant lake which is troubled by a stone thrown into it. The attitude of the serial characters is essentially passive and conservative, possibly a reflection of the role which the average serial listener plays in the community.

Human existence is pictured as being continuously threatened by catastrophe. There is not just one problem which has to be faced by a character or a group of characters, but an uninterrupted chain of more or less severe nuisances. A total number of 142 problems was traced in 596 installments.<sup>5</sup> *The average number of problems per serial was 3.3 (average deviation: 1.6) for the test period, which comprised an average of only 12.7 fifteen-minute installments.* Roughly speaking, there was one problem for every four installments.

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes during the analysis, one problem situation turned out to be a combination of several problems, which had to be treated separately.

Literature may seem to offer something similar in the great epics such as the *Odyssey* or in the Bible story of Job. But in these epics the succession of the episodes is as rigidly regular as the recurring design of a frieze. The stylized composition and the unrealistic content of the stories are the reasons why the succession of disastrous episodes appears not as a true-to-life picture, but as a symbol for a high degree of suffering, intensity being expressed through repetition. Radio serials, instead, do their best to create the impression that they present "real life." They interlace the episodes in an irregular, more "lifelike" manner. In the realm of such "realism," the wave-after-wave attacks of evil cannot but have an unintended humorous effect on the more discriminating listener. An unsophisticated serial listener who accepts these programs as convincing and true must carry away the impression that human life is a series of attacks to be warded off by the victims and their helpers.

Due to the briefness of the test period, no distinction was possible between problems of major or minor weight. In order to get an idea of the general structure of the serials, one would have to examine them over a longer period. Roughly, two types of serial "composition" were distinguishable. In one, a leader, generally by personal qualities, guides the other characters through their personal troubles. The "conflict-carriers" as well as the type of conflict involved may vary from episode to episode. In other cases, there is a group of people, generally a family, to whom disaster after disaster occurs. If the family is large enough and has a fringe of fiancés and friends, the victims of new troubles are never lacking. In some cases also a constant setting helps to maintain the unity of the serial.

*The Content of the Problems*

What kinds of problems trouble the serial characters? An examination of the data suggested the nine content categories listed in Table 4. The table shows in how many of the total 43 serials each type of problem occurred. It also shows how the total number of problems which were traced during the test period is distributed among the nine categories.

TABLE 4.—DISTRIBUTION OF KINDS OF PROBLEMS  
(PROPORTION OF SERIALS IN WHICH EACH TYPE OCCURRED AND PER CENT  
DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES OF PROBLEM)

| <i>Kind of problem</i>              | <i>Per cent of 43 serials<sup>a</sup></i> | <i>Per cent of all 159 problems<sup>b</sup></i> |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Personal relations . . . . .        | 91  | 47  |
| Courtship . . . . .                 | 49  | 16  |
| Marriage . . . . .                  | 44  | 18  |
| Family . . . . .                    | 33  | 10  |
| Friends . . . . .                   | 12  | 3   |
| Economic and professional . . . . . | 47  | 22  |
| Crime . . . . .                     | 30  | 9   |
| Illness, accidents . . . . .        | 29  | 9   |
| Public affairs . . . . .            | 26  | 10  |
| Others . . . . .                    | 9   | 3   |

<sup>a</sup> In 91 per cent of all 43 serials studied, a problem pertaining to personal relationships occurred. However, as one serial might contain different types of problems of personal relationships, the proportions for the subgroup "personal relations" adds up to more than 91 per cent. Percentages in the second column of the table add up to 100 because here the base is not the total number of serials, but the total number of problems.

<sup>b</sup> The increase from 142 problems (page 44) to 159 is explained by the fact that some problems had to be brought under more than one category.

Problems in the realm of "personal relations," i.e., problems occurring between lovers, marriage partners, in the family or among friends, account for 47 per cent of all problems. One or more of them occurred in 91 per cent of all 43 serials studied for a three weeks' period. Most of the cases listed as economic, professional, crime, or illness problems, and even some of the public affairs problems could be classified under another master category, namely as "problems endangering the individual."

This is obvious in the case of illness and accidents, but economic threats and crime might concern the community as a whole, and in the realm of public affairs one would certainly expect it to be so. Instead, the economic and professional problems deal mostly with the job or money difficulties of individuals, crimes are committed against individuals, and even the corrupt officials who dominate the public affairs group are shown mainly as damaging single persons—ambitious district attorneys trying to convict innocents, or a senator wanting to expose a colleague. This second master category of problems, related to the economic or professional standing, the physical integrity, and the reputation of the individual, is almost as large as the group devoted to “personal relations.” Both of these categories together account for nearly all the problems traced during the test period. The world of the serials is thus quite clearly a “private” world in which the interests of the community fade into insignificance.<sup>6</sup>

### *What Causes the Problems?*

Do people create trouble for themselves or are other people to blame? What role is played by non-personal forces such as natural powers or economic and political conditions? The distribution of the different kinds of causes is shown in Table 5.

Trouble is somewhat more often created by the very people who have to suffer from it (“sufferers”) than by other persons.<sup>7</sup> In only 24 cases out of 159 (15 per cent), non-personal

<sup>6</sup> One might object that it is in the nature of dramatic representation to deal with the problems of individuals. But then it is significant in itself that the most popular form of narrative radio programs uses the dramatic form. And secondly, another type of drama is conceivable in which individuals appear as the representatives of a general cause (e.g., the inquisitors in G. B. Shaw's *Saint Joan*).

<sup>7</sup> If a husband creates trouble for his wife or a daughter for her father or a friend for a friend, the case is classified among the “sufferers” wherever the problem is described as disturbing the harmony of the group of which both

TABLE 5.—CAUSES OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF PROBLEMS

| <i>Kind of problem</i>                   | <i>Caused by</i>         |               |                            |                 | <i>Total number</i> |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|  | <i>People themselves</i> | <i>Others</i> | <i>Non-personal forces</i> | <i>Doubtful</i> |                     |
| Personal relations . . . .               | 52                       | 19            | 1                          | 3               | 75                  |
| Courtship . . . . .                      | 19                       | 5             | 1                          | 1               | 26                  |
| Marriage . . . . .                       | 24                       | 3             | ..                         | 1               | 28                  |
| Family . . . . .                         | 8                        | 7             | ..                         | 1               | 16                  |
| Friends . . . . .                        | 1                        | 4             | ..                         | ..              | 5                   |
| Economic and profes-<br>sional . . . . . | 8                        | 16            | 7                          | 4               | 35                  |
| Crime . . . . .                          | 2                        | 10            | ..                         | 3               | 15                  |
| Illness, accidents . . . .               | 1                        | ..            | 13                         | ..              | 14                  |
| Public affairs . . . . .                 | 2                        | 11            | 2                          | 1               | 16                  |
| Others . . . . .                         | 2                        | 1             | 1                          | ..              | 4                   |
| Total . . . . .                          | 67                       | 57            | 24                         | 11              | 159                 |

forces rather than individuals are described as creators of trouble.

Disturbances of a "personal relationship" are created by members of the group concerned almost three times as often as by other people outside the group, while the situation is reversed where the individual is endangered by crime, a professional problem, or a public affair. Non-personal forces are decisive in the illness and accident cases, but for the rest, have some importance only in the economic category.

The problems of life are presented largely as caused by individuals, by their shortcomings or corruption, rather than by any general social, economical, or political conditions.

An examination of the plots shows that more than half of the "getting a job"-problems, for instance, dealt with being offered a job which the person did not care to accept rather than with the difficulties of finding work. Sons did not want to enter their fathers' business. A college professor refused a position in New York because country life suited him better. Intriguing women also caused difficulties in getting a job. As far as "losing a job" was concerned, two people wanted to get rid persons are members. The disturbance of such a relation clearly affects both people.

of their present occupation. Personal shortcomings, jealousy, professional rivalry, and political blackmailing furnished threats to people's employment. There were some instances of dishonest professional behavior. There was a profiteering landowner. A crooked businessman tried to profit by the sale of a symphony at the expense of the poor composer. A man was swindled into buying a manganese mine. And a dishonest renting agent intrigued against the appointment of an administrator who would reveal his frauds. In only two cases economic reasons for job problems were given: a man needed a job because he needed the money, and another one did not get a promised job because "business was bad." Other "non-personal forces" to interfere with business were an inundation, illness, an accident, etc.

Troubles in public administration were likewise attributed to the shortcomings of individuals. Senators tried to sell the government bad land for an army camp. District attorneys worked for their personal careers rather than for justice. High municipal officials were involved in intrigue, blackmailing and fraud. And the president of a community garden was tempted to cheat. National Defense was used as a pretext to present private problems very loosely connected with public issues; a private, through carelessness, provoked an accident which a woman-friend of his was accused of; another private, on leave, visited a girl who fell ill with measles, and was prevented by quarantine from being back at the camp in time.

Crimes were rarely committed and by very bad people only. In 12 out of 15 total crime cases, innocent and virtuous people were accused of having committed murder or adultery; having embezzled the property of a bus company; having taken somebody's car, etc. This feature may be designed pleasantly to nourish the listener's feeling that she is often the victim of accusations which she does not deserve.

## MORAL EVALUATION

### *Three Types of Characters*

A significant relationship seems to exist between the kind of "problem" presented and the moral evaluation of the characters involved.

There is little difficulty in finding out for many of the leading characters whether they are meant to be good or bad people. The announcer, whose comments are to be considered as authoritative, often attributes to them precise traits which imply equally precise ethical evaluations. He will talk about "the kindly man walking down the stairs" or refer to "that half-gangster" who is trying to obtain the heroine's favor. Just as outspoken about their fellow-characters are the characters themselves. Especially the "reliable" people (present in almost every serial as a moral framework from which to judge the happenings) express the opinion of the authors. Besides, the actors generally do their best to distinguish, by the inflexions of their voices, the tough scoundrel or the suave intriguer from the considerate friend or the nervously lamenting victim of passion, fate, or villainy.

In addition to the "bad" and the "good" people we find a third group of characters, almost as neatly defined as those of the two other groups. They excel in unpleasant qualities such as jealousy, vindictiveness, lack of balance, deceitfulness, selfishness, but it is clearly stated that these defects do not spring from an evil nature, but are weaknesses resulting from bad experiences or lack of control. It is suggested that they may eventually be brought back to their better selves. For the sake of brevity we shall call this third type the "weak" people.

One might have expected a clear-cut black-and-white method of moral evaluation in radio serials. Instead, as is shown in Table 6, the "weak" people are most frequent among the creators of trouble. A further remarkable result is given by the large proportion of "good" people among the trouble makers.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Good people create trouble, e.g., by deceiving others for their own good: a wife "gives hope" to a blind husband by making him believe she is expecting a child; an actor plays the role of a blind girl's brother to save her from knowing



TABLE 6.—MORAL EVALUATION OF CHARACTERS WHO CREATE TROUBLES

| <i>Troubles<br/>created for:</i> | <i>Moral evaluation of characters</i> |            |             |                       | <i>Total<br/>number</i> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
|                                  | <i>Good</i>                           | <i>Bad</i> | <i>Weak</i> | <i>Doubt-<br/>ful</i> |                         |
| Themselves .....                 | 18                                    | 8          | 34          | 2                     | 62                      |
| Others .....                     | 5                                     | 30         | 12          | 6                     | 53                      |
| Total .....                      | 23                                    | 38         | 46          | 8                     | 115 <sup>a</sup>        |

<sup>a</sup> To the 115 total problems caused by persons, 20 have to be added which were caused by non-personal forces and 9 in which the cause was undecidable. This leads to a total of 144 problems. The increase from 142 (cf. p. 44) to 144 problems is explained by the fact that in two cases good as well as weak creators of trouble were traced.

There is a clear difference between the moral evaluation of those who create trouble to themselves or to their private group and those who do it to others. Weak characters prevail in the former group and good ones too are frequent. Those who create problems for others are mainly bad, sometimes weak, and good only in a few cases.

As far as the "sufferers" are concerned, Table 6 gives information only about those who create trouble to themselves. If *all* the sufferers are considered—those who create trouble to themselves as well as those who have to suffer from others—

TABLE 7.—MORAL EVALUATION OF ALL SUFFERERS

| <i>Moral<br/>evaluation</i> | <i>Number of<br/>sufferers</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Good .....                  | 103                            |
| Bad .....                   | 8                              |
| Weak .....                  | 46                             |
| Doubtful .....              | 9                              |
| Total .....                 | 166 <sup>a</sup>               |

<sup>a</sup> The increase of 142 to 166 sufferers is again explained by the number of cases which had to be classified under more than one category.

that the brother is in prison under a murder charge; another actor offers his services to make a neglecting husband jealous. A "good" man may fall in love with somebody else's wife or, being married himself, to another woman, but such a love relation is never "consummated," and generally the third person's faultiness tends to justify the slip. Good people also accuse themselves of crimes in order to shield others. An exemplary woman was allowed to try keeping an adopted child from the real mother by dubious tricks, these being apparently excused by virtue of motherly affection.

the good people are shown as doing most of the suffering (Table 7). Bad people are hardly ever the victims of trouble. To the 166 cases of Table 7, six are to be added in which the community is described as the sufferer—which low number shows again the privacy of the world of daytime serials.

### *The Characterization of Men and Women*

As the serials cater mainly to a female audience it seemed worth while to look for differences in the presentation of men and women.

TABLE 8.—MORAL EVALUATION OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO CREATE TROUBLES

| <i>Moral<br/>evaluation</i> | <i>Troubles created for</i> |          |               |          | <i>Total number<sup>a</sup></i> |          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|---------------|----------|---------------------------------|----------|
|                             | <i>Themselves</i>           |          | <i>Others</i> |          |                                 |          |
|                             | <i>M</i>                    | <i>W</i> | <i>M</i>      | <i>W</i> | <i>M</i>                        | <i>W</i> |
| Good .....                  | 11                          | 9        | 4             | 3        | 15                              | 12       |
| Bad .....                   | 4                           | 4        | 23            | 8        | 27                              | 12       |
| Weak .....                  | 20                          | 17       | 9             | 3        | 29                              | 20       |
| Doubtful .....              | 1                           | 2        | 3             | 3        | 4                               | 5        |
| Total .....                 | 36                          | 32       | 39            | 17       | 75                              | 49       |

<sup>a</sup> The increase from a total of 115 in Table 6 to 124 (75 men and 49 women) in Table 8 is explained by the fact that, e.g., the bad troublemaker in a problem-situation may actually be more than one person, sometimes a man and a woman. The same condition holds good for the sufferers in Table 9.

Table 8 shows that men appear considerably more often as troublemakers than women do. This refers particularly to the cases in which trouble is created for others. (A breakdown according to the kinds of trouble listed in Table 4 shows that men surpass women in doing harm to other people especially in the realm of public affairs, crime and economic problems.) The male troublemakers are almost as often bad as they are weak and are considerably less often good. Among the women, the weak characters are almost twice as frequent as the good or the bad ones. Thus the difference in the sex distribution is most striking for the bad people: bad troublemakers are more than twice as often men as women.

The distribution and moral evaluation of men and women among *all* the sufferers is shown in Table 9. It can be seen that men and women are about equally often the victim of trouble-situations. Among the weak sufferers, men predominate.

TABLE 9.—MORAL EVALUATION OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN WHO SUFFER FROM PROBLEMS

| <i>Moral<br/>evaluation</i> | <i>Men</i> | <i>Women</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Good .....                  | 59         | 65           |
| Bad .....                   | 5          | 4            |
| Weak .....                  | 33         | 19           |
| Doubtful .....              | 3          | 6            |
| Total <sup>a</sup> .....    | 100        | 94           |

<sup>a</sup> See footnote to Table 8.

Moral evaluation goes in favor of the women. Men create trouble more often than women, especially to other people. They are mostly weak and bad, the latter considerably more often than women. Among the people who have to suffer men excel clearly in the group of the weak.

A few examples of marriage problems may show how this tendency comes out in the plots. Marriage disturbances through unfaithfulness are presented rarely and handled with care. The presentation goes in favor of the wife. In no case does a wife fall in love with another man. In three cases, husbands had a girl friend: two of these husbands were described as "selfish, suspicious, jealous" and "unstable, unbalanced"; the third succumbed to a "petty, selfish, quarrelsome, jealous" woman. Where the marriage was imperiled by the shortcomings of one of the partners, there was usually something wrong with the husband. He was a tyrant or neglected his wife, or disgusted her by his laziness, or his being involved in political intrigues, etc. There were only two cases of thoroughly bad wives—one who defamed a colleague of her husband out of professional rivalry, and another whose husband, a plastic surgeon, refused after an accident to restore her "wickedly beautiful face through which she did every bad thing in her life." This latter was the only case of a man who wanted to get rid of an unsympathetic wife, and it seemed significant that her guilt was stated as springing from what is a woman's most desired asset—beauty.

*The Solutions of the Problems*

It has often been observed that in popular narrative art (novels, plays, movies) trouble-situations are solved according to conventional ethical standards. The stories are governed by perfect justice, thus providing the audience with reassurance and pleasant compensation. That the same holds good for radio serials is quantitatively demonstrated in Appendix B.

Plans apt to create trouble to other people or to the trouble-makers themselves are permitted to develop, but hardly ever to be consummated. In a sample of 73 solutions, only about 12 per cent of the trouble-creating plans were carried through; all others were thwarted. The relatively largest measure of success was granted to the "good" troublemakers.

It seems interesting that while all the motives ascribed to good people were considered excusable or even praiseworthy, there was still a distinction—presumably also based on moral evaluation—as to whether the plans were allowed to succeed; they were *not* in cases in which they interfered with an institution like marriage, family, or the administration of justice. "Good" people were allowed: to leave a woman for the time being because of faithfulness to an insane wife; to refuse a better job because of preference for country life; to choose neither of two suitors; and to help a blind husband over a crisis by making him believe he would have a son. But they were prevented from such things as withholding an adopted child from her real mother, making love to an honest girl while married to a disagreeable wife, or seducing an honest wife neglected by her husband; or accepting punishment for a murder committed by somebody else.

Earlier in this chapter it was stated that good people prevail among the sufferers and that the bad are hardly ever the victims of trouble. While this is characteristic for the initial set-up of the problems, the solutions show that perfect justice is provided. No definitive harm is done to the victims; many of them are agreeably indemnified for what they had to suffer.

No good troublemakers are punished, their motives being virtuous. But all the bad ones are. And as the weak troublemakers did wrong but are eligible for reform, about one half of them is punished, the rest not.

It may be added that the perfect justice which rules the serials is of a curious type. There is a reason for its existence, but it has no sufficient cause. Whether a person is punished or rewarded is explained by the sort of ethical evaluation of his or her deeds which may be expected from the average listener. But there is no indication in the serials of a principle which brings justice about. Virtuous and efficient persons are shown to help innocent sufferers and to fight malefactors. But who provides these helpers, who assists them in succeeding, who makes the honest invalids recover, who sends a paralytic stroke to the villain? God might be this principle, but he is hardly ever mentioned. There is no causal explanation for the high correlation between what people deserve and what they get. Radio serials procure the satisfaction created by a rule of ideal justice, but do not bother about explaining to whom we are indebted for such a perfect state of affairs.

## A PSYCHOLOGICAL FORMULA OF SOAP OPERA

### *The Object of Identification*

The listener's evaluation of the plot and the characters involved will largely depend on whom she identifies herself with. If she is presented, for instance, with the story of a woman who cheats her best friend, everything depends on whether the center of attention is the malefactor, the circumstances which led the woman to do what she should not have done and perhaps did not wish to do, her struggles of con-

science, her repentance, and so on; or whether the plot is given the perspective of the victim. In the first case, the play reminds one of human imperfection. By eliciting identification with the sinner it warns that all people are sinners. It creates an attitude of melancholy humility, but at the same time enlightens by clarifying the mechanism that pushes people into guilt. In the second case it appeals to the Pharisee in man. It shows that decent people are treated badly even by those whom they have every reason to trust. It evokes the satisfaction of being good oneself while others, unfortunately, are bad. Instead of opening the road towards humble self-knowledge it nourishes the cheap pleasure of self-complacency.

Identification is invited in the radio serials by various means, most of which belong to the common technique of narrative art—novel, drama, film. The central position of a character invites the listener to perceive and to evaluate the plot situation from the point of view of this person.<sup>9</sup> Identification is furthered by the sheer quantity of time devoted to a character and by the amount of insight given into what the person thinks and feels. Physical, intellectual and ethical perfection, social power and prestige must also promote identification very strongly. Furthermore, there is the factor of resemblance: a middle-aged housewife will identify herself more readily with a middle-aged housewife, etc.

On the basis of these criteria, the objects of identification were sought. The crude and oversimplifying technique of char-

<sup>9</sup> This holds good for the heroine, or the hero, who, as we explained, are not necessarily identical with the protagonists of the current episodes but are constant leading characters, generally mentioned in the daily theme announcement, as e.g., "Kate Hopkins—the story of a beautiful and courageous woman who lives to serve others." Even if such a character is not one of those directly involved in the conflict he or she may become the object of identification. He or she may lead and advise the people involved; the whole conflict may be shown in the way it appears to him or her.

acterization used by the average radio serial author made this task much more easy and reliable in practice than it might seem in theory. *For 118 out of 121 cases on whom there was sufficient detail, there was no doubt about the object of identification intended.* Twenty-one cases had to be omitted because of poor reports.

Identification tends towards a surprisingly uniform type. Moral perfection is the most constant feature of the group of symptoms which was used for establishing the "object of identification." With no exception these characters are spotlessly virtuous, good-hearted, helpful. They are intelligent, often physically attractive. They are the "leaders by personal qualities," whose frequent appearance was discussed above (see p. 42). *In 101 out of 118 cases, the object of identification was a woman.* As to her main function in the plot, the "ideal woman" was presented as

|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| An eligible woman .....    | in 23 cases |
| A wife .....               | 21          |
| A mother .....             | 16          |
| A professional woman ..... | 14          |
| A friend .....             | 13          |
| A daughter .....           | 2           |
| Unspecified .....          | <u>12</u>   |
|                            | 101         |

*The Psychological Structure of Radio Serials*

We are now equipped to suggest a psychological formula which seems to underlie the outwardly varied plots of radio serials and which expresses itself in many of the previously discussed features characteristic of the serials. Three types of characters with significantly different roles sustain this psychological structure. They are suggested by and roughly correlated with the three types of moral evaluation which we were able to distinguish.

| <i>Moral evaluation</i> | <i>Role in plot</i>  | <i>Listener's attitude</i>   |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Weak . . . . .          | Helpless troublemaker,<br>guilty sufferer,<br>reformable                             | Resonance to<br>portrait     |
| Good . . . . .          | Helpful leader,<br>innocent sufferer   | Identification<br>with ideal |
| Bad . . . . .           | Outside-cause of<br>trouble, personifi-<br>cation of hostile<br>forces, unreformable | Hatred towards<br>enemy      |

The function of these three types can be described in the following way.

I. The “*weak*” characters have a large share of guilt in the uninterrupted series of catastrophes which—according to radio serials—form human life. But they are not bad by nature. The trouble they create though often directed against others makes them suffer themselves because they disturb the harmony of the private group to which they belong. They are selfish, jealous, vindictive, deceitful and need other people’s help to get out of the conflict situations which they create. It is this type which may be expected to furnish an unvarnished *portrait of the average listener* herself. *Resonance* is the probable reaction provoked by the weak character, who faithfully mirrors the listener’s own feelings and experiences. It is the presence of this type which we may expect to attract the listener to the radio serials as something which concerns herself.

II. However, the portrait offered by the “*weak*” characters is an unpleasant one. So if the listener is to enjoy the resonance which it provokes in her, she must be given the means of detaching herself from it. The second type, represented by the *good* people, fulfills this function. It keeps identification away from the weak type. It provides a safe platform from which to look down on the weak character’s unfortunate adventures in an attitude of aloofness and complacency. It adds the em-



bodiment of an *ideal* to the representation of the true-to-life portrait.<sup>10</sup> It allows the listener to *identify* herself with a woman who is always good and right, recommended by her virtue, energy, helpfulness, leader qualities and by the outstanding position which is granted to her in the structure of the play and by her fellow-characters. She appears mostly as an "eligible" woman desired by desirable suitors, or as a wife, but quite often also as a mother, a friend, a professional woman. The weak character is the object of her helpful activity. The object of identification provides reparation for the essentially passive and subordinate role which in real life the listener plays as a housewife and as a member of the underprivileged classes.<sup>11</sup> She assumes government in a world of individuals in which the power and the function of the community are eliminated. An examination of the plots shows that she steers the destinies of afflicted people more often than she is herself involved in conflict. But if she is involved, then she appears prevalently as the innocently suffering victim of other people's failure, thus offering to the listener the opportunity to pity herself. If she creates trouble herself she does so as a praiseworthy person for praiseworthy reasons.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> A mixture of goodness and badness has, ever since Aristotle, been considered, somewhat vaguely, a main characteristic of the dramatic character in literature. Thus, the high number of "weak" characters traced in our sample may lead to optimistic opinions about the literary qualities of the radio serials. By stressing the "mixed" character, the serials are, it is true, somewhat nearer to real life than the black-and-white characterization often found in other types of popular narrative art. But whereas the genuine dramatic character is always intended as the object of identification and produces in himself the forces which bring about the solution of the conflict, the "weak" character in the serials lacks the artistic and educational values offered by a truly dramatic spectacle.

<sup>11</sup> Passivity as a personality trait plays an important part in the psychology of radio listening in general. Cf. Rudolf Arnheim, *Radio*, Faber and Faber, London, 1936, pp. 260-273.

<sup>12</sup> Remarkably enough, the objects of identification sometimes, in a difficult personal situation, forget their part and show a "weak" behavior which is quite in contrast with the masculine energy they display while helping others. They take fright at decisions, they burst into tears, they wail around in a hysterical

III. The third type is formed by the thoroughly *bad* people. They come from outside to threaten the security of the characters to whom the listener is linked by resonance and identification. Whereas for the good woman the weak character is an object of help, the bad one is the *enemy* against whom she has to defend others and herself. And it must be remembered that the bad people are mostly men. In a world of individuals, the villains represent not only personal adversaries like a girl rival but also the anonymous forces of politics and economics which in real life constantly afflict the listener's existence. No community is admitted between the bad people and the listener, no understanding for their motives exists or is desired. They are evil per se: they provoke nothing but resentment and fear. They attack the innocent victim—as symbolized in so many court trial episodes of the serials. By lending human shape to the outside forces of disturbance and by painting these disturbers in solid black, radio serials provide a confirmation of the listener's attitude towards what she considers her enemies. Only in the case of physical illness or accidents are impersonal forces recognized and allowed to join the ranks of the enemy.

Our *psychological formula* could then be stated in about the following terms. Radio serials attract the listener by offering her a portrait of her own shortcomings, which lead to constant trouble, and of her inability to help herself. In spite of the unpleasantness of this picture, resonance can be enjoyed because identification is drawn away from it and transferred to an ideal type of the perfect, efficient woman who possesses power and prestige and who has to suffer not by her own fault and pitiful way, they take refuge in the unwavering strength of male friends or follow obediently.

but by the fault of others.<sup>13</sup> This enables the listener to view (and to criticize) her own personal shortcomings, which lead to trouble, as occurring in "other," less perfect creatures. Still, these shortcomings, being her own after all, are presented as springing from mere weakness of character; reform is possible and often achieved. No such tolerance is needed for the outside-causes of the listener's suffering. Her resentment against them is confirmed and nourished by the introduction of the villain-type, who also personifies and assumes responsibility for any detrimental effects of non-personal forces (in whose immunity the listener is interested), such as the institutions of society.

The psychological scheme presented here is a hypothesis based on the evidence of our content analysis. It would be desirable to test it by investigating the reactions of listeners.

### SOME SPECIFIC FEATURES

The following paragraphs are designed to illustrate in a more detailed way some of the features which were brought to light by our foregoing analysis.

<sup>13</sup> One might speculate whether the ideal type of a helpful woman does not act partly as a substitute for religion. God and the church were found to play a surprisingly small role in the serials. A check-up on radio serials in the Italian language carried by United States local stations seemed to indicate that the "leader-woman" gains ground in the same measure as the originally very strong religious background of the Catholic immigrant is pushed aside in the programs. Of three serials sampled, one featured an efficient widow on the pattern of the serials in English. It did not have recourse to religion at all. The two others, much more adapted to the European and Catholic background of the immigrant, offered no dominant object of identification but showed religion as the protector against evil and as a just problem-solver. An innocent was saved from the electric chair "by a miracle" when the guilty man, though practically killed by a car accident, reached Sing Sing in time to make his confession. And the "ragged man with the yellow eyes" was prevented more than once from strangling people because the medallion of the Madonna della Carmine which the victims wore on their breasts scared him away—just as traditionally the devil is scared by the cross.

*Women*

The importance of the woman as a leader in the family, in the circle of her friends, and even in the large community of the nation is constantly emphasized. Not even the president of the United States can do his job without the help of his mother. In *Mary Marlin*, the mother of Rufus Kain, president of the USA, is severely ill. In a delirious vision, her dead husband appears to her and tells her that she cannot join him yet because "her work with Rufus is not finished." The serial world presents the picture of a matriarchy which, in a more or less hidden way, underlies a society nominally dominated by the man. There is a preference for situations in which the wife gets an opportunity to seize the reins. As a consequence of a financial setback, Mr. Sam Young, head of a large family, suffers from a nervous collapse. Mrs. Young discusses business affairs with his partner, and when Sam wants to go to the office she says he must stay in bed. Character traits normally considered typical for men, such as courage, are shifted over to the women, e.g., in the case of Mrs. Emily Abbott. When her husband dreads to fetch his books from his former office because he will have to face the gangster-politician who drove him out of his job, Mrs. Abbott does it for him. And Mrs. Stella Dallas saves an airplane and its inmates from being blown up when there is "one chance in a hundred of their landing without being killed." While Private David saves himself by jumping with a parachute and the pilot is hurt badly so that he cannot reach the ignition to turn it off, Stella heroically steps into the breach, turns off the ignition, and faints from the exertion of her great effort to do so.

The reform of a "weak" husband is expected to be brought about by the wife. A striking example of this was offered by the announcer of *Valiant Lady* who addressed Mrs. Tubby Scott in the following way: "Your change in Tubby is not deep enough—you have to start over again!"

Husbands are fully conscious of their wives' importance. Tubby turns in despair to thoughts of Joan, who can help him in everything: "Everything begins and ends with Joan." The women are equally aware of the situation. "You men are all alike," says "Granny" in *John's Other Wife*, "I don't know what you'd do without us women." In *Stella Dallas*, when a farmer is removed to a hospital with a broken leg, the doctor has to call the man's wife to tell her that Gus can't sleep because he is lonesome, he really needs her. The doctor suggests that Minnie come to Boston. Translated into humor, the motif produces, for in-

stance, an elderly storekeeper who is very unwillingly nagged into buying "a smart stylish suit" by a female friend, although he protests he can do all right by himself (*The O'Neills*). On the other hand, lawyer Portia Blake, when a man offers his help, in a facetious tone remarks that she is not a maiden in distress and can take care of herself.

Constant efforts are made by the serial authors to prove that a middle-aged woman still has her full share in life. So important is this subject that it is sometimes used as the leitmotif of the daily introduction to the serial. Helen Trent, for example, is presented as "the woman who proves, what so many women want to prove, that romance can come to middle life and even beyond." Or, on another day: "When life seemed finished she can recapture romance even at thirty-five and beyond." Or: "The romance of Helen Trent who, when life mocks her, dashes her against the rocks of despair, fights back bravely, successfully to prove that romance can begin at thirty-five." The serial *Midstream* owes its name to a poetical image designed to demonstrate the comforting thesis that only maturity experiences the full intensity of life: "The wonderful story of a man and a woman who have reached the halfway mark between the distant shores of birth and death, where the currents of life are swiftest, where the problems of life are greatest."

There is a preference for mother and daughter appearing as comrades or competitors, almost as members of a twin couple with equal chances and equal experiences (e.g., *Myrt and Marge*). In *Right to Happiness*, a man is badly punished by a young rival, by divorce, and malaria for having courted the mother, but married the daughter. When Ma Perkins' daughter marries, everybody comes with invitations and pies. Ma says she will not be considered an invalid and doesn't like all this help. She says: "If anyone tells me I am not as young as I used to be I shall scream." In a conversation with a friend, she admits that she is annoyed because people act as though she were ready to be put on the shelf because Fay was married. The friend says he feels old when he looks into the future. All that's exciting has already happened. He says: "I ain't got no family and I am afraid I might live longer than my friends." Ma says she doesn't feel old—she has wonderful memories and a lot to look forward to in the future of her children. And two days later, talking about "the contentment of old age," she adds, it's the one thing her children cannot realize or understand. Events do not fail to confirm the heroine's views.

*Experts*

There is a general tendency to show that plain, intelligent people are able to do almost anything better than trained specialists who enjoy the prestige of being experts in their field. The serials indemnify the "little fellow" (of both sexes) for living in a society which, for every branch of life, makes him the passive object of somebody who is supposed to know better because he has had an opportunity to specialize on that job. A doctor says that Just Plain Bill can "help cure human hearts better than any doctor." This does not sound very professional, but in *We, the Abbotts*, Hilda, a middle-aged maid, overtakes Dr. Fisher to suggest a physician in New York who cures by a "foreign protein reaction." Dr. Fisher becomes angry about having this suggestion made, but when he again goes up to see the patient he comes rushing down the stairs to tell Hilda to send for the New York doctor.

That private individuals are better detectives than the police is a well-established tradition of crime literature. Mother Morrison (who once saved a man from a death sentence) somehow finds the clue to the villain's whereabouts and induces the neighbor to drive her to a secluded river bank on the outskirts of the town. Here she discovers the villain threatening to drown Sam Benson. Later on, in an antechamber to the courtroom, Mother Morrison explains to her daughter's lawyer how unhappy she was because she did not consult him "about the briefcase." The lawyer assures her, "it would not have made the slightest difference." Even in the field of love, the "little fellow" does better than the expert. After Lorenzo Jones neglected his wife and a famous movie-star, Turner, tried to cure him by making him jealous, Lorenzo asks his wife if Turner had ever kissed her or held her hand. He says he would bet Turner wasn't very good at making love and he, Lorenzo, could do better—whereupon he asks Belle to sit by him on the couch, and he tries to prove it to her. Belle says she is very happy. As a tidbit for the psychologist, we quote a final example from *Right to Happiness* where the classical doctor-patient situation of psychoanalytic therapy is reversed by the doctor's offering resistance to what the patient insists must be done in order to make the cure successful. When the doctor comes he is delighted with Louise's improvement. She says she has been a coward running away and refusing to face reality. The doctor says she has been a very sick girl and the best thing to do is to forget the past and plan for the future. But Louise says she must face the past.

### *Learning*

If the average serial listener lacks higher education and if, for this reason, she feels inferior socially, she will welcome any devaluation of learning. So learning is presented quite often as a whimsical hobby-horse—as something in contrast to what makes the real qualities of a man or a woman. When, in *Scattergood Baines*, fun is made of the school president who accused the wrong boy of cheating and afterwards has to stand up before the whole school to exonerate him, his use of learned words makes part of the comical effect: a man who says things like “impugning my veracity” was wrong where storekeeper Scattergood was right! On the rural level, the hero or heroine proves outstanding human qualities in spite, or maybe because, of wrong English (Ma Perkins) or bad spelling (Lorenzo Jones). On the upper level, we have lawyer Portia Blake returning to her cottage to find Cathie, the reporter, in her living room glaring at a typewriter. Cathie is not sure how to spell “principal,” and Portia spells it out for her. The spelling problem in question is so simple, that many a listener is probably able to do better than Miss Cathie, the professional writer. In a similar way, the listener may feel superior when, in *Life Can Be Beautiful*, somebody inquires whether Romeo and Juliet “live in Long Island, too.”

Subordinate people are presented as showing off with bits of higher education in a humorous way. In *When a Girl Marries*, the maid made a deep impression on her friends, at a social meeting, by using two long words supplied by her employer, lawyer Harry, the evening before. And in *Lone Journey*, a young farm hand, Enor, is presented as hopelessly struggling with philosophy and difficult words while he shows warm insight and understanding as soon as he relies on his inborn simple wisdom. So it is not learning that counts, and when, in *Vic and Sade*, the heroine indignantly opposes a motion to the effect that members of the Sewing Club should study Portuguese, she can be sure of the support of the listener.

### *Neighbors*

A person or a family may have friendly relations to others, but this is then a relationship between individuals. There is little indication of a healthy attitude of the individual towards the community as a whole. Generally, the community does not enter into the picture at all: the walls of the heroine's house are the borders of the world. But when it does, it seems safe to say, that the community, and specifically the neigh-

borhood, is mostly described as an enemy, a hostile block of people who want to know, but should not know what is wrong in your private affairs. Where life is nothing but a sequence of private "problems," the community is identical with the threat of scandal. Scattergood Baines' wife meets a woman in the street who tells her that the whole town is talking about her, Mrs. Baines', absence from the Ladies' Club—obviously because there is some difficulty with her daughter Barbara's marriage plans. She is trying to pry out more information, but she fails. In *Mother O' Mine*, a little girl is found in tears because of the way her playmates have been treating her since the suspicion of murder has been cast upon her Aunt Judy.

### *Newspapers*

The fear of publicity determines the role attributed to newspapers in the serials. Quite often, reporters and newspapers are presented as a menace to social prestige. When a reporter rings the doorbell, the average serial character feels like a delinquent on whom the executioner calls. The resentment against the man who comes to find out for the "neighbors" about the shameful things going on in the heroine's or hero's house, is reflected in the unfriendly descriptions of the reporter's personality and ethical standard. In *Stella Dallas*, Mimie bursts in breathlessly, saying that Jerry Madison, the newspaper reporter, is there. This unnerves Stella, who has feared publicity. She cannot bear to think that he will learn of her present plight and publicize it in the Washington papers, where her beloved daughter Lolly and her socially prominent son-in-law, Richard Grosvenor, will see it. This would wreck the happiness of these two people, she feels. During her conversation with Jerry, in which she appeals to his decency and better nature, Sheila comes in, and from the latter's conversation with Stella, Jerry finds out about the present story. Immediately, he is like a hound on the trail. Nothing matters to that news hound but the story. And the only way out is for somebody to take a plane for Washington to bribe the editor of the paper not to print the story.

A hardly more pleasant picture results where the press is described as a powerful tool in politics. Mr. Abbott is told by an editor that he cannot write for the paper because he is playing ball with the wrong group of politicians. Lucas, a gangster of the worst kind, should be the man for John to play up to. In *Ma Perkins*, corrupt politicians use a newspaper to brand farmers as unpatriotic should they try to oppose



the construction of an army camp on the unsuitable land owned by the villains. In *David Harum*, the editor of the Homeville paper tries to bribe the president of a community garden project, to make the project fail. Occasional exceptions such as the pleasant (female!) reporter, in *Portia Faces Life*, who writes a series of articles on food in national defense, are neither frequent nor prominent enough to change the picture essentially. Where the newspaperman appears as a "good" person his function in the play is generally not determined by his profession but by his personal qualities as a friend or similarly.<sup>14</sup>

### *Politics*

References to domestic or foreign events of general importance were rare at the time of our test. When radio serials talk politics they generally mean individual corruption in Congress and municipal administration,<sup>15</sup> and the picture they exhibit on such occasions could hardly be more horrible. At a first glance, one might be inclined to evaluate these polemical descriptions as courageous political reform work. This may be true to some extent, but as political corruption is shown mostly as caused by individual villains or by the "collective villainy" of politicians in general, such procedure must be expected to nourish an already existing resentment against people and organized community-life rather than furthering insight into the political and economic mechanisms of society.<sup>16</sup>

It is hard to say which of the two prevalent types of soap opera politicians produces the more repugnant effect: the reckless gangster who fights for power and wealth by killing, stealing, lying, ruining other

<sup>14</sup> Radio broadcasting plays an unimportant, but agreeable role in the serials. "The frontiers of information," says Sydney in *Lone Journey*, "have been pushed back—clear out into the Pacific Ocean. The people in Montana's ranches are quite as well informed, by and large, as the people in New York. . . . There's a radio in every ranch home—think for a minute what that alone means in terms of people being informed." Radio is, generally, described neither as a gossiping eavesdropper nor as a political tool, but rather as a means of information and entertainment. Does this difference correspond to the real facts? Or to the opinions of the listeners? Or is it because radio cannot be expected to talk badly of radio whereas the newspaper is, to some extent, a competitor?

<sup>15</sup> This does not refer to the head of the State. When Senator Mary Marlin comes to see the President, the elevator man of the White House explains how great a man the President is and also how great were his predecessors.

<sup>16</sup> One might remember that the Nazis in Germany catered to the emotional reactions of the lower middle class, which constituted the bulk of their followers, by basing their campaign against the republic largely on the alleged corruption of the government and municipal administrations.

people's happiness, prestige, career, and position, or the basically honest, but weak type who, after he has slipped once, is forced by the villains to go on doing their dirty work. In *We, the Abbotts*, evil Mr. Lucas has obtained the position of a superintendent of schools, formerly held by John Abbott. Not satisfied with having Abbott chased out of his job, Lucas blackmails him by preventing him from getting a new job. Lucas wants evidence from John about another politician, Campbell, who is in his way. When John delivers a lecture on music, Lucas has several people booing and yelling him off the stage intimating that he is a grafter and scoundrel. The atmosphere of the serial is characterized by remarks of the following type: "In order to live these days it is necessary to get along with the political rats. You must eat humble political pie to keep a job." When Mrs. Abbott calls on Lucas, he threatens to punish her husband even more and says he will even go so far as to injure her children. In fact, he smears the children by accusing them of theft and "scandalous association" and sets fire to John's car. With ruthless methods, Lucas sets up a citizens' committee with two thousand members. The committee is meant to overthrow the mayor of the town, who "is connected with the gambling machine." In a conversation between John and his son, political fatalism and lack of insight are expressed very clearly. They are discussing why they should be unemployed while a grafter like Lucas is hoarding money. Jack is indignant, but his father consoles him by telling him: "Things happen and we don't know why—we can see only a small portion of the universe." He cites the example of a huge painting covered by curtains in such a way that only a small part is showing. "It would be impossible to conceive the whole composition." Episodes of this kind seem to confirm the thesis that radio serials are politically aggressive, but conservative.

In some cases it is difficult to decide whether the serial authors realize that they are giving a discouraging picture or whether they simply take unpleasant things for granted. In a breakfast-table conversation between a newly wedded congressman and his wife, in *Ma Perkins*, Fay says she feels a wife should take an interest, and asks whether her husband ever wants to vote differently from the way the party wishes him to vote. He says, not often—and if he did not follow the party he would be left to paddle his own canoe in the next election. Later on, the young wife asks an elderly, experienced congressman whether it is true that many important things are settled behind scenes. He says many people think ability and merit are the only prerequisites of success, but it is no longer true. However, he goes on, America is a rock rising above cruelty and snob-

bery, founded deeply on the proposition that all men are brothers. He feels that the Washington Monument, simple, straight, and tall, is a symbol of that integrity.

## FACING THE ISSUE

### *Are Problems Adequately Presented?*

If radio serials are to be of any cultural value their function cannot be fulfilled by providing thrilling entertainment through the stirring up of emotions and pleasant compensation for the inconveniences of life. Interviews with listeners have shown that many women go to the serials for advice as to suitable behavior or attitudes in difficult situations.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it seems necessary to examine whether the serials deal with problems adequately. A comparison between the serials and real life can hardly go beyond elementary social and psychological facts. But it seems even more important to find out whether the set-up and development of the problems is such as to allow valid insight.

A work of narrative art has the task of describing typical life situations through individual cases. The fact that not just "this case" but "such a case" is presented creates the basis for a possible general interest in the story. Generalization from experience is a common method for learning about the types of things and happenings that constitute the world. It follows that if a radio serial presents the marriage troubles of Henry and Edith Adams, the performance is received as a bit of information on marriage in general and that it is meant to be received in this way. Is the picture adequate? Are there attempts to expose

<sup>17</sup> Cf. H. Herzog, this volume, p. 25. The "sponsor" also, who wants the listener to follow his commercial suggestions, is interested in giving the program as a whole the aura of an authoritative source of practical advice on how to behave in life—as well as in the grocery store.

properly the problems involved and their possible solutions? If not, of what kind are the deviations and distortions? Do they spring from tendencies to present life situations in a certain way, to pass over certain aspects, to protect some things and to proscribe others? Which are these tendencies, and what means are used to serve them?

### *Atypical Causes*

Atypical causes of trouble are frequently used for business problems. Much more often than by economic conditions, business or professional troubles are caused by other people who want to damage the "sufferer" for personal reasons which have nothing to do with the business situation. Arline asks her father, a banker, to dismiss his female lawyer, Portia Blake, because her husband fell in love with the lawyer. A girl wants to prevent Bess Johnson from becoming Dean of a school, because the woman thwarted the girl's attempt to marry against her father's wishes. In both cases the connection between the business situation and the private situation is purely accidental. Gordon is unemployed—why? Are jobs scarce in his field? No, he is an artist who became blind and therefore had to give up his job. An individual case is chosen in which illness instead of the economic situation causes the trouble.

Generalization on the basis of such cases must lead to a wrong picture of the world. Why is such a tendency, consciously or unconsciously, active in the serial authors? Political conservatism would tend to detract attention from any drawbacks of the general economic situation and rather blame other factors. It is probable that such a presentation fits in perfectly with the outlook of the average serial listener. Personal causes like the jealousy of a woman and natural catastrophes such as

illness create a more immediate emotional response than an abstract economic mechanism.

Similarly, atypical causes are used to show up marriage problems, without casting a shadow on the institution itself. To admit that the marriage situation as such may lead to trouble is unwelcome to the listener. There is, e.g., the threat of infidelity. In order to avoid unpleasant insight, a specific type of case is constructed in which the triangle pattern is maintained but in which the "institutional" situation is suitably modified: affection to a missing, insane, or dead husband, wife, or fiancé prevents a new marriage. In these cases, the disturbing force, inherent in an exemplary person, does not tend any longer towards an adulterous relationship, but on the contrary, springs from loyalty to a marriage relation which was dissolved by fate and therefore ceased to be a moral obligation. And the disturbing affection does not threaten to break up an existing marriage but only to hamper the bringing about of a marriage which does not yet exist.

### *Ambiguous Motivation*

The combination of two conflicts prevents a clear insight into the relationship of cause and effect. Jonathan Hobson wants to get a full-time job, although he will have to give up his dreams of writing poetry. He thinks that working on the Defense Program is a duty and important. This noble struggle between helping the community and fulfilling a personal vocation is, however, blurred by the fact that Jonathan is part of a family of completely destitute migrant workers, his father having just been sent to the hospital severely ill. He needs the money, and thus it is not possible to state how the young man would have behaved if confronted with only one of the two problems. In another serial, Edith Adams, although engaged to a decent

lawyer, still feels herself bound to her vicious ex-husband. He falls dangerously ill, and she feels she should help him. Pity and helpfulness superimposed on affection confuse the issue.

*Villains as Substitutes for General Problems*

“Bad” people should not be introduced into a situation capable of provoking conflict by itself, because their personality is such as to cause trouble. This is, however, what the radio serial authors do by preference. They use a bad character in order to discharge certain types of situations of their trouble-provoking qualities by shifting the responsibility from the situation to the character. Furthermore, the bad type or villain is characterized as untouched by any interior conflict. He is nothing but the vehicle of a disturbing desire; the struggle is fought out not within him, but by exterior forces accidentally connected with the conflict-carriers.<sup>18</sup> The reaction to such a bad troublemaker is likely to depend on the listener’s attitude towards the category of people represented by the character. A “selfish, domineering” mother-in-law may appear as an exception which does not prove anything or which even leads to the conclusion—which does not follow from what was presented—that everything is all right; if only the mother-in-law is a good woman. If, in turn, the listener thinks unfavorably of the category of people in question, he may readily accept the individual bad

<sup>18</sup> A proper exposition of the problem is prevented also when the central character, in whose mind the struggle should take place, fails to understand the situation. Mr. Daniel Palmer is absorbed by his business to such an extent that his neglected wife has a nervous breakdown. Whether and how a balance between the opposing forces of occupation and home life can be reached is a general problem. But Mr. Palmer is no suitable vehicle for its demonstration. He wonders what is the matter with his wife. When they were first married and had nothing she was healthy enough, but now when he is able to give her everything—beautiful home—servants—everything—she gets sick! He decides to send two dozen roses to the sanitarium the next day. Mr. Palmer may be a true-to-life portrait, but for precisely that reason he is unsuitable to procure better insight into life itself.

person as typical of the lot. In this way, the idea of "collective villainy" is nurtured, according to which certain groups of people, mothers-in-law, husbands, lawyers, or whatever they may be, are bad. Corrupt politicians, conniving officials, ambitious district attorneys, are preferably presented in this way. No attempt is made to explain the situation which may lead to misdeeds and which is or may be open to reform. The problem comes down to the existence of a group of bad people who have to be endured or eliminated.<sup>19</sup>

Mr. Brill, a bad plantation owner, takes advantage of the shortage of housing caused by defense work to profiteer from some empty cottages he possesses. Mr. Carleton offers \$3,000 to a poor composer for a symphony which he hopes to resell for the fantastic sum of \$25,000. Any attempt to connect these cases with the problem of profit as such, is cut short by the fact that Mr. Carleton is described as a "villain" and that Mr. Brill is referred to as "a devil with the pitchfork." The personal villainy of these two people or the "collective villainy" of businessmen in general is made to account for the damage they inflict upon others. A senator tries to sell some bad land he possesses to the government for the construction of an army camp. There is a detailed description of how his connection with the terrain in question is hidden by means of several holding companies. The listener has the choice of considering the man either an exception among the honorable company of con-

<sup>19</sup> From a study by R. Wyant, "Voting Via the Senate Mailbag," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1941, it appears that "letter writers hold to the theory that their senators follow their personal convictions," rather than being determined in their attitude by a complex political mechanism. Flattering compliments and name-calling of an equally personal character are therefore typical reactions of the letter-writers. It seems, in fact, that the type of political criticism offered in radio serials corresponds to a widespread attitude. E.g., calling Hitler a villain and having the matter settled with that, means overlooking the historical and political causes of the phenomenon by considering it just a case of personal "badness."

gressmen or a representative of collective political villainy. Attempts to render the bad man harmless are described in detail, but there was no hint at the general question whether or not a combination of administrative position and business tended to provoke conflict. Similarly, newspaper reporters are described as people, who, out of personal savagery, enjoy exposing private affairs to the public. The general problem which may lie in making money out of sensational news is not touched.

Thirst for freedom in conflict with need of discipline could provide an excellent subject for a serial episode which takes place against the background of an orphanage. But again the opportunity is missed by choosing a type of headmistress who is not the person to make the best case for school discipline. Mrs. Seabrook is a "sour, dominating, fussy, petty, egoistic, rigid" woman. Her orders are severe, her punishments for little mistakes are exaggerated. She pays one of the children to spy on the others. Thus, when the children revolt, it is not against discipline, but against Mrs. Seabrook. The underlying problem remains untouched.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Extrinsic Solutions Through Accidental Power*

Bill Cameron's wife has fallen in love with Dwight Cramer, one of her husband's business partners. Cameron wants Cramer to be dismissed. There is no conflict in him as to whether he should sacrifice an efficient member of the firm to his own comfort. The issue is decided, through extrinsic power, by the head of the firm who refuses to dismiss Dwight, because he is a bright fellow and because Dwight's father is a valuable client.

<sup>20</sup> What is said about "bad" creators of trouble holds good for the "weak" too. Just as the bad people, the weak show personal deficiencies which determine the conflict and therefore do not allow the isolation of the effects of the conflict-situation as such. The fact that these characters are "reformable" renders adjustment-solutions possible, but such solutions clearly refer to the problem set by the deficient individual, not by the conflict situation.



In another case, a young student, Barbara Bartlett, tries to elope with a friend, against her father's will. Again there is no conflict in the girl: the solution does not come from her decision between her father's wishes and her own, but from the intervention of an outsider.

Often the plot is simply of a "fact-finding" character, especially in criminal investigations or court trials. Myrt and Marge, a mother and daughter, accuse themselves of murder in order to shield each other. Neither of them seems to care about whether it is admissible to lie in court for the purpose of saving a beloved person. The solution depends on the judge's being able to identify the guilty person. Where an innocent person is defended against a crime charge, the one character who should be in the center because the conflict should be fought out in his or her own bosom (the guilty person who lets an innocent one be accused), generally holds a secondary position.

### *Providing a Happy End*

As the solutions of the problems are controlled by "justice" rather than by inner necessity, care is taken to prevent unpleasant things happening to decent people. This means that the classical dramatic situation is avoided where incompatible forces throw excellent people into a catastrophe. There is no objection to the "happy end" if it develops logically from the given conflict situation. But often it is obtained by the trick of simply removing, accidentally, one of the factors which produced trouble. Caroline Benton, a spoiled problem child, does not want her widowed father to marry Ellen Brown. After much heated discussion, Mrs. Brown reveals that she does not really care for Mr. Benton, and leaves. In another case, a farmer is asked to yield his land to the government for the construction of an army camp. Mr. Martin wants the army to have camps,

he is a good American, but he needs his land. Here the conflict between the requirements of the community and those of the individual is neatly set up. Unfortunately, Mr. Martin's land turns out to be of no use to the government. In a third case, Elaine, in order to give her blind husband something to live for, has made him believe she is expecting a child. She will have to confess sometime, and she is afraid that he may lose faith also in her assertion that he is likely to get his eyesight back. But before the problem comes up, he sees flashes of light. His recovery will make it easier for him to cope with his wife's "merciful deception." An event, which is possible but which contradicts the requirements of the problem, allows an evasion and recommends the dangerously unintelligent behavior of a woman by pretending that it proved to be successful.

A conflict is easy to solve if it does not exist. Suspicion, misunderstanding, lies and intrigues make it possible to describe all the suffering provoked by a real conflict and still have everything settled after a while. Composer Gary believes that his sweetheart has a love affair with Dwight, a music critic, whereas honest Dawn visited the critic only to interest him in Gary's symphony. An intriguing woman makes her friend, Helen Trent, believe that lawyer Gil cultivates a morbid affection for his dead wife which will prevent him from ever loving another woman. In literature, the non-existent conflict is sometimes used to show the tragic consequences of human ignorance. Generally it happens only in comedy that the real situation is revealed in time. Radio serials use the comedy trick to avoid the sad consequences of a dramatic conflict.

#### *Surreptitious Causality*

A particularly significant artifice consists in using the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* to demonstrate that bad deeds do not pay.

The general tendency of the human mind to establish causal connections between happenings contiguous in time and space is used in the radio serials to give the appearance of a causal connection to cases of pure coincidence.

Bad Henry Adams who betrays his wife with a girl friend has a paralytic stroke. Bill Walker courted Mrs. Doris Cameron, then married her daughter. The marriage goes wrong for reasons independent of the previous happenings, but the listener is informed that Bill "got what he deserved." Christy Allen is worried about her husband's relations with his former wife. She was engaged to Mark Scott, but ran away with his best friend, Phil, and she feels that her marriage troubles are in some way the punishment for what they did to Mark. In this way it is suggested that the purely accidental punishments introduced into the plot for the triumph of justice, were caused by some unmentioned principle, in consequence of the bad deeds that preceded them.

## CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

### *Potential Effects of Daytime Serials*

This content analysis yields no information on the influence which radio serials actually exert on the listeners. But it suggests the directions in which these influences, if any, are likely to go.

Do radio serials invite *self-knowledge and self-criticism*? Our analysis suggests that they make the listener feel at home by offering her a world which outwardly resembles her own and in which people make themselves and others suffer by committing familiar mistakes and by displaying familiar shortcomings of character. Although this presents to the listener a

rather unvarnished portrait of herself, it cannot be expected to lead her to self-knowledge and self-criticism. Her identification is deflected to an ideal type of perfect, innocently suffering woman. She is encouraged to view failures as happening only to other people, and is confirmed in her belief that her suffering is caused not by herself, but by the imperfection and villainy of others.

There is little effort to make the listener aware of her *prejudices and resentments*; rather, she is carefully flattered. Men are shown to be inferior to women, the working class is ignored, learning is deprecated. The egocentric and individualistic concept of a world in which the community appears mainly as a threat from outside is supported—hyenas howling around the campfire, with the law of the jungle as the only resort. Only private problems exist. Events are shown to be caused not so much by people expending their energies on fulfilling their tasks in spite of all obstacles, but rather by their desperate defense of a status quo the value of which is not clearly demonstrated by the serials. Even the primitive strife for love and companionship is eclipsed by an essentially negative fight against forces which endanger established relationships. While this may mirror the fact that the listener fails to see values in her own life, it certainly does not encourage her to discover or create them. *Dissatisfaction* with her own achievements and with the state of affairs in the world around her, which could serve as a spur towards striving for improvement, is *drained off by substitute gratification*. Identification with the “ideal woman,” a fiction which cannot serve as a model which the listener could try to live up to, endows her with an efficiency she does not possess and assurance that the assistance which she ought to seek in her own energies will be forthcoming from the outside. Suitable adjustment to the problems of the climac-

teric may be hampered where wish-fulfillment dreams are presented as reality: the middle-aged woman appears as youthful, attractive, ardently courted by desirable suitors. A reign of perfect justice, without any hint of how it is obtained, offers a gratuitous solution for problems of social life. Similarly, daily removal to a daytime serial world of violent passion and suspense may well weaken the listener's sensitiveness to the less thrilling opportunities of real life to practice affection, faithfulness, pity; to render unselfish service, to find pleasure in modest tasks and unpretentious beauty.<sup>21</sup>

### *Service and Progress*

This survey indicates that radio serials maintain a firm grip on so many millions of American women because they satisfy their psychological needs the easy way, by devices which are known from the psychiatric analysis of wish-dreams. The sociologist would have to tell us whether changing conditions have led children and husbands to live their lives so much outside the home that it no longer offers the wife and mother enough scope for the expression of her capacities and affections—that it can no longer give her the feeling that she is needed, esteemed and loved. Is the woman left behind as little more than a passive object of supply for the mechanism of production—a consumer, deprived of the creative tasks to which her natural gifts and strivings entitle her, left alone with a talking box as the only source of satisfaction?

If this is so, radio programs by themselves do not have the power to bring about a change in the social situation of women

<sup>21</sup> An analysis of other types of popular entertainment, such as pulp literature, popular music, movies, will reveal essentially the same trends, although to some extent, different devices are used because of a partially different audience. For the movies, see, e.g., Rudolf Arnheim, *Film*, Faber and Faber, London, 1930, pp. 170-181.

confined to an unsatisfactory kind of home life. But they are able to contribute something by creating an appropriate psychological attitude. They hold almost a monopoly on the mental life of so many women. Thus they are to some extent responsible for whether the forces created by the needs of these women are diverted to a substitute-satisfaction or are instead directed towards understanding and improving reality.

Producers of radio serials take pride in asserting that they give their audience exactly what it wants to get. The commercial maxim of offering what the largest possible number of customers is likely to buy is interpreted as a practical application of democratic principles: self-government, control of community life by the people. But it seems evident that such government and control presupposes an ability to judge. In the field of medicine, for instance, hardly anybody would venture to assert that it would be democratic to promote the most popular remedies rather than those which are scientifically proved to be the best. It is democratic to strive for popular consent to progress. To what extent such an attitude of social responsibility can be obtained while radio serials are produced as a commercial vehicle, we will make no attempt to decide. But it seems that the wartime situation offers an opportunity for progress in this field. In times of war, the extraordinary effort to be made by the nation requires the physical and moral support of all individuals. Therefore the government takes steps to promote understanding, good will, collaboration. A series of radio programs, for instance, has been presented for the purpose of making the citizen realize that what the whole community does is done for him and cannot be done without him. This principle should hold good in times of peace as well. Still many a citizen is accustomed to consider the community a conglomeration of individuals, each of whom minds his own business, reluctantly

pays his taxes, and takes it for granted that there are clean, well-lit streets to walk, bridges to pass, and parks to relax in. Genuine team-spirit as it is needed for the war-effort cannot be obtained by propaganda limited to what the citizen is asked to do for the war. Such appeals must rely on a substructure of community-consciousness: unless the individual deeply realizes that, in times of peace or war, the natural and most profitable way of living consists in acting as a member of a whole in the interest of common aims, he cannot be expected to contribute wholeheartedly to his country's defense.

This is where radio serials ought to come in. They are particularly suited to show the mutual dependence of community and individual from the point of view of the home situation. In addition to creating a substructure for wartime morale, such enlightenment might well prove to be valuable for future times in which battle-fields, war-bonds, and night-shifts in munition factories will once again have become legendary, whereas the problems of political and economic organization will be even more alive than they were before.

### *How To Do Better*

But isn't unselfish assistance to others one of the features particularly stressed by radio serials? Isn't one of the main results of this content analysis that the listeners are invited to identify themselves with an ideal type of person who endeavors to help her friends get out of trouble? We do not think so. It seems to us that the type of social relationship promoted by the glorification of the "leader" is likely to strengthen an egotistic, asocial attitude. Instead of illustrating to the listener her function as a cog in the wheel, it nourishes the longing of her frustrated mind for absolute power over her fellow-man. Instead of discussing the question of how a well-built community offers

protection to its members, the serials show the individual taking the law into his own hands and getting away with it.

The war-situation offers convincing examples of how any citizen can do his share for the common cause; that the mechanism of production and defense can work only if every individual acts as a part of the whole, not out of a selfish striving for power and prestige. The conflicts which may arise between the interests of the individual and those of the community are genuine problems which could replace artificial trouble-situations in radio serials.

The same holds good for the more "private" problems. If it is true that the woman in the home has no satisfactory function to fulfill, why not present the problem bluntly, if possible, on the basis of factual material? Why not show its causes and developments, and indicate feasible ways out, instead of conjuring up day-dreams? If there are problems in growing old, why not interpret them: Show that clinging to the illusion of eternal youth is fruitless; that the solution lies in enjoying the new tasks and satisfactions brought about by maturity and old age?

Similarly, if public officials are corrupt, why not analyze the possible roots of this behavior in human nature and social institutions?

There is no reason to eliminate from such programs the strong spices of crime, passion, etc. We find them dominating in Homer and Shakespeare, in Dante and in Dostoievsky. But the desire for sensation and suspense should not lead to presenting the world as one huge, catastrophic mess. There is no point in describing the problems and tragedies of life unless such a description is based on a belief in its positive values. Discord and conflict must be evaluated against the background



of man doing his job constructively, peacefully, and cheerfully.<sup>22</sup>

Fortunately, there are a few examples of what can be done with radio serials on a different level. By courtesy of the British Broadcasting Corporation, New York City, we were able to examine some of the scripts of *Frontline Family*, a serial written and produced by Alan Melville in England for American consumption. The installments we read were broadcast to this country on shortwave in May 1941. The experiences of a London family during the aerial bombardments are not presented as a melodrama of highstrung passion, tears, crime and overdrawn suspense nor in the high-flown clichés of cheap patriotism. The plot is focused on the psychological, social, and economic effects of the blitzkrieg, and the dramatic impact of the facts comes out all the more strongly because these facts are dealt with in the almost casual, jolly, but grimly matter-of-fact way which is so characteristic of the British reaction to the terror of the luftwaffe. The following narration of an air-raid warden may serve as an example of this attitude.

“Well, what I was going to tell you was—we were giving a hand to see if we could get some of them out—just after it happened, you see. There was a bit of light from a fire near by, and I was climbing over a great pile of rubble and stones and stuff—d’you know what I saw all of a sudden, Mr. Robinson?—a hand—sticking out from in between two chunks of masonry. Gave me quite a turn, just for a moment. Well, I felt it—and it was stone cold. So I said to the chap who was with me: Don’t mind him, I said—he’s dead—come over here and look after this other fellow. And d’you know what happened?—Well, a voice from right at my feet—from underneath all the stones and muck—says—quite bright and cheery, mind you—Oh, no you don’t it, he says, I’m not dead—come on, get me out of this bloody mess!”

<sup>22</sup> Why not apply some lightheartedness? View with detached, smiling wisdom these problems now overburdened with pathetic seriousness? Why the masochistic insistence on the moaning of despair, the Wagnerian vibrations of the pipe organ which so aptly create the hot, stuffy atmosphere of sterile emotion?

An unexploded bomb in the garden makes a young hero rush out of the house and shout: "I'm coming—where are my pants?" to which his sister retorts: "Never mind your blasted pants—come on!" Certainly this is miles away from the aromatic scent of the soap flakes. A refreshing sea-breeze of strength and determination emanates from the story of simple people who, without any aspiration for distinguishing heroism, carry through their assignments and endure hardships, like everybody else and in collaboration with everybody else.

But in our sample of pre-war American radio serials also there were at least two productions of a definitely higher literary and educational level. *Against the Storm* and *Lone Journey*, written by Sandra and Peter Michael, attracted our attention by offering what in many respects, were disturbing exceptions to the otherwise clearcut pattern of soap opera. The "problems" of the plot were shown to affect the daily life of unpretentious people, whose positive values, aims, and pleasures clearly dominated the picture. Extensive descriptions not only rendered the mood of a mountain landscape, of a New York City square, they also offered in a lively, inspired way detailed information about farm life—the birth of a calf or the treatment of an injured sheep. The experiences of a refugee family in Nazi-occupied Europe as well as in this country introduced a strong topical element.

In other serials, occasional instances, though unable to influence the general level of the story, suggested that the authors know the particular artistic devices of the radio drama and like to use them. In quite a few cases, interesting devices such as the use of symbolic characters and the "montage" of voices were used. In *Right to Happiness*, Past was introduced as a voice of conscience, a warning companion, to convey the idea that one cannot escape the consequences of bygone mistakes.

Similarly, in *We, the Abbotts*, the voice of a Stranger conjured up the past. In *David Harum*, the struggle against temptation in a man's mind was represented by a stylized concert of antagonistic voices.

Any campaign for the improvement of radio serials is, of course, essentially a practical matter of inducing the responsible persons to give progress a chance, or to present non-commercial programs, or to use any other procedure which would seem feasible and promising. But such a campaign cannot be sustained effectively unless it is based on appropriate ideas about the meaning and function of entertainment, and in fact, of art in general. Current ideas about the ethics of art do not lend much help for the task to be performed in this field. As long as pleasure and satisfaction are considered the principal aims of art, there is no justification for reforming programs which undoubtedly please and satisfy more widely and strongly than any art produced on a higher cultural level. It is time to realize that art, education, and entertainment are not "purified" by being neatly separated from each other. None of these three things ever exists without the other two, nor can it fulfill its task as long as it neglects them. The consequence of such neglect is art that fails to entertain and that misleads instead of educating; education that bores and discourages because it is dry and lifeless; entertainment that detracts from the aims and real satisfactions of life. There is no entertainment which has nothing to do with art or education; but there is much entertainment which is poor art and bad education. Unsatisfactory entertainment can be defeated neither by hedonistic aesthetics nor by dogmatic pedagogics; but only if we believe that art, now largely reserved to the "happy few" can be restored in its full meaning to the many who created it wherever it has existed.

## *THE APPEAL OF SPECIFIC DAYTIME SERIALS*

by Helen J. Kaufman

### VARIATIONS IN THE AUDIENCE STRUCTURE OF DIFFERENT SERIALS

ALL sponsors of daytime serials know that their programs differ considerably in the total size of the audiences they command. The question has been raised whether the specific content of a serial accounts for these variations. It is not likely that an answer can be given. Network, competition and time of the broadcast play such a decisive role that only large scale experimentation could isolate the importance of content from the size of the audience.

The situation is different if we turn from the size to the structure of the audience, to the differences in listening between various groups of the population. For rich and poor, for old and young, the networks and their time schedules are objectively the same. Therefore, if listeners belonging to these different groups vary in the extent to which they listen to a story, we can be fairly sure that they react differently to the content of the script.

Evidence is available that certain serials have a somewhat stronger than average appeal for specific groups of listeners. In the following, four such examples will be discussed.

The audience figures quoted are based on results of personal interviews with 10,000 women in all walks of life. About half

of these interviews were obtained from urban women throughout the nation. We will call this group the nationwide survey. The other half of the interviews were obtained from urban and rural women living in the state of Iowa. These data will be referred to as the Iowa survey.<sup>1</sup> Only network serials were studied. We confined ourselves, furthermore, to programs with a relatively large proportion of total listeners among the women studied so as to permit further breakdowns of their audience composition. Within this group of popular serials those serials were selected which showed relatively marked deviations in their audience composition from the average structure of the daytime serial audience.

### *Appealing to the Young*

An examination of Table I shows that the serial, *Life Can Be Beautiful*, appeals to the younger women among the serial listeners in both surveys.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE I.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO "LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL" AMONG SERIAL LISTENERS IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

| Age <sup>a</sup> | Nationwide survey                               |                                  | Iowa survey                                     |   |
|------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
|                  | Proportion listening to Life Can Be Beautiful % | Total number of serial listeners | Proportion listening to Life Can Be Beautiful % | Total number of serial listeners <sup>b</sup> |
| Young . . . . .  | 27.5  | 520                              | 8.9   | 908   |
| Old . . . . .    | 21.8  | 1,423                            | 6.1   | 1,635   |

<sup>a</sup> "Young" in the nationwide survey includes women up to 30 years of age, and "old" refers to those over 30 years. In the Iowa survey "young" refers to women up to 35, and "old" to women over 35 years of age.

<sup>b</sup> Exclusive of 2 cases which did not specify age.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Herzog, this volume, p. 6 ff., where the general findings of these two surveys are reported. We call "daytime" serials those broadcast up to 6 P.M. locally.

<sup>2</sup> A comparison of the nationwide and the Iowa data shows that the proportion of listeners to *Life Can Be Beautiful* in both age groups is higher for the nationwide survey than in Iowa. This is true for other CBS serials in Iowa as well. The NBC network has a more powerful coverage in this state than CBS.

Can the greater appeal of this serial for younger women be related to particular features in its content? The principal setting of *Life Can Be Beautiful* is the "slightly read" bookshop on Manhattan's lower East Side.<sup>3</sup> Its owner, Papa David, is an even-tempered, wise and kind-hearted old Jew. He is the exponent of the title's message and has a grandfatherly function, not only for his foster child, Chi-Chi, and her fiancé, the crippled lawyer, Stephen, but also for all the famous, rich and important people who come to visit his store. The serial deals mainly, however, with the problems and experiences of young Chi-Chi Conrad. Chi-Chi is not the rigid stereotype of an ideal woman subjected to all kinds of hardships which can be found in other serials; she is a rather human, average girl whose main assets are a pleasant disposition and a good deal of shrewdness. The very title of the serial strikes a note of optimism. *Life Can Be Beautiful* does not dwell upon frustration and undeserved suffering. It is concerned with promising young love. Developments are described and progress is registered in the affairs of Chi-Chi and Stephen.

*Life Can Be Beautiful* conforms to the usual theme of daytime serials: no matter how bad or unjust things seem, everything will finally turn out happily for those who deserve it. But it differs from other serials in ways which make it especially adapted to a younger audience. In the first place, it concentrates on problems of young people. Secondly, the happy ending is oriented towards a future full of change and prog-

<sup>3</sup> The content description for this and the other serials mentioned in this paper is based on (a) report sheets covering a three weeks' listening period in March-April 1941, which Dr. Arnheim kindly made available to this writer. (Cf. R. Arnheim, this volume, p. 36); (b) the serials studied by Arnheim in 1941 were listened to again for one week by this writer in June 1942. Although the listening periods do not cover exactly the same periods at which the audience data were obtained, it seemed entirely justifiable to compare the two sets of data. The major characters of each serial and the type of plots in which they are involved are a permanent feature of each serial.

ress, whereas in many of the other serials optimism goes no further than to convince us that the heroine will always manage to keep the hostile world at bay.

### *Appealing to Older Women*

*The Romance of Helen Trent* is a serial which appeals to older women more strongly than to younger serial listeners. This can be seen from Table 2 which shows the audience figures obtained in the nationwide survey.<sup>4</sup>

TABLE 2.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO "HELEN TRENT" AMONG SERIAL LISTENERS IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

| Age <sup>a</sup> | Proportion<br>listening to<br>Helen Trent<br>% | Total number<br>of serial<br>listeners <sup>b</sup> |
|------------------|--|---|
| Young . . . . .  | 3.8  | 413   |
| Old . . . . .    | 6.2  | 1,214   |

<sup>a</sup> "Young" includes women up to 30 years of age, and "old" refers to those over 30 years.

<sup>b</sup> The total number of serial listeners is not the same in all the tables because for each program only the data from those areas were considered in which the individual program studied could be heard.

Helen Trent is a Hollywood<sup>5</sup> dress designer who, for years now, has been presented as a woman of 35. According to the announcer's daily introduction of this program, her story proves that romance can still exist at the age of 35 or even beyond that age. Aside from this frankly admitted and obviously successful appeal to the emotionally disappointed, middle-aged listener, there might be still another reason for the attractiveness of this program to older women. As the heroine of a serial, the well educated, capable and attractive Helen

<sup>4</sup> In the Iowa survey the proportion of total listeners to this program was too small to allow for an age breakdown of its audience.

<sup>5</sup> Probably due to its setting, this program seems to appeal particularly to women in the Pacific area. It was mentioned as listened to by 31 per cent of the serial listeners in this area as against, for instance, 12 per cent of the serial listeners in the East.

Trent must continue to have romances which never culminate in marriage. Great sections of the serial might even be headed "Frustrated romance." Helen Trent has previously been engaged to Drew Sinclair, a motion picture executive who, as a result of overwork and a tropical disease, has to be confined to an institution. It had taken Helen long to decide to marry Drew and the realization that it will now be impossible hits her hard. She does everything in her power to alleviate Drew's situation. On the other hand, Gil, a successful lawyer and long-time friend of Helen's, has loved her for many years. Helen has always appreciated him as a friend. When Gil asks her to marry him she cannot consent; she is still too close to Drew. But Gil does not give up easily and finally Helen becomes engaged to him. But that is still a far cry from marriage. There are doubts and obstacles to overcome: a jealous woman leads Helen to believe that Gil is constantly thinking of his first wife; a rumor is circulated to the effect that something is going on between Gil and Martha, his collaborator on a government project. Even though Helen looks forward to a home and the love and protection of the man she cares for, she hesitates and weighs matters and might again decide too late. *The Romance of Helen Trent* gives the aging listener the feeling that she too could have a romance. At the same time, however, Helen never reaches the final goal of romance, namely, marriage. The married among her older listeners are thus a step ahead of her and this might be a second reason for the appeal of this program to the older women.

#### *Appealing to Women in the Lower Socio-Economic Groups*

As can be seen from an examination of Table 3, *Stella Dallas* is a serial which appeals particularly to rural women, women of low income and of low education.



TABLE 3.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO "STELLA DALLAS" AMONG SERIAL LISTENERS IN DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL, INCOME, AND RESIDENTIAL GROUPS <sup>a</sup>

|                  | <i>Nationwide survey</i>                          |  | <i>Iowa survey</i>                                |   |
|------------------|---|--|---|---|
|                  | <i>Proportion listening to Stella Dallas</i><br>% | <i>Total number of serial listeners</i> <sup>b</sup> | <i>Proportion listening to Stella Dallas</i><br>% | <i>Total number of serial listeners</i> |
| <i>Education</i> |   |  |   |   |
| High . . . . .   | 10.7  | 619  | College . . . . .                                 | 17.6                                    |
| Low . . . . .    | 12.7  | 1,050  | High school . .                                   | 25.3                                    |
|                  |   |  | Grammar . . . .                                   | 32.7                                    |
|                  |   |  |   | 896                                     |
| <i>Income</i>    |   |  |   |   |
| High . . . . .   | 7.5   | 704  | High . . . . .                                    | 23.9                                    |
| Low . . . . .    | 14.0  | 965  | Medium . . . . .                                  | 24.4                                    |
|                  |   |  | Low . . . . .                                     | 35.1                                    |
|                  |   |  |   | 609                                     |
| <i>Residence</i> |   |  |   |   |
| Large cities .   | 10.5  | 766  | Urban . . . . .                                   | 21.7                                    |
| Small cities .   | 15.2  | 903  | Rural . . . . .                                   | 31.9                                    |
|                  |   |  |   | 1,146                                   |
|                  |   |  |   | 1,399                                   |

<sup>a</sup> In the nationwide survey high education refers to people who have completed high school or more; low education refers to people who did not complete high school. High income corresponds to the conventional groups, A, B and C, and low income comprises groups D and E. Large cities refers to communities with more than 100,000, small cities to communities with less than 100,000 inhabitants.

In the Iowa survey, high, medium and low income expresses the interviewer's rating of the socio-economic status of each respondent. "Urban" comprises cities and towns with a population of more than 2,500; "Rural" includes villages and farms.

<sup>b</sup> Total number of cases refers to those areas in which *Stella Dallas* could be heard.

Stella Dallas is a middle-aged, divorced woman from the ranks of the lower middle class. Unpretentious and without much formal education, she is living a hard life which is in the main devoted to the service of others. Stella is a New England woman who once was married to a Washington diplomat with whom she had one child, her daughter, Laurel. This girl has given her much pleasure but also caused her great sorrow when she married an important Washington man. Stella does not interfere with the marriage because she knows that, as a mother, she has to stand back for the sake of her daughter's happiness, but she does not approve of it. She generally con-

demns high society and rich people, knowing that these people are selfish, cruel and lacking in human qualities. She much prefers the poor and simple people who have less in quantity but infinitely more in quality. It is to them mainly that Stella extends her boundless help and comfort. She assists her neighbors in the country and later the men and women who work in the war plant where she is doing her patriotic duty. Frequently she causes the reform of evil-doers; sometimes she also helps a rich, important person to get back to the right way. In the main, however, she is the protector of the little people, helping them in their problems and shielding them against the upper class. In helping others, Stella takes the bull by the horns and never uses roundabout methods. Her undaunted efforts, her courageous stand, are those of an Amazon. This quality is also stressed by the auditory impression on the listener of Stella's deep, forceful voice.

The appeal of *Stella Dallas* for women of low socio-economic status and for rural women does not seem difficult to understand. Stella herself is a country woman of little education. However, she has remarkable personal qualities which she devotes unselfishly to the service of other people, particularly of her own class, in the continuous procession of disastrous events befalling them.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the serial never ceases to impress upon its listeners that wealth and high social status are not really desirable because the higher up people are in this world, the more incapable they seem of solving their own problems and the more lacking they are in true human values.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. R. Arnheim, this volume, p. 58, *Stella Dallas* is the type of serial which provides amply for identification with the courageous helper and for resonance with the troubled weak people of lowly status who are being helped by her.

*Appealing to Women in the Higher Socio-Economic Groups*

Only the Iowa survey yielded a sufficiently large number of listeners to *Against the Storm* to allow for a study of its audience structure. As an examination of Table 4 shows, it is a serial which appeals particularly to better-educated, higher income, younger women.

TABLE 4.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO “AGAINST THE STORM” AMONG SERIAL LISTENERS IN DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL, INCOME AND AGE GROUPS

| <i>Education</i>           | <i>Proportion<br/>listening to<br/>Against the Storm<br/>%</i> | <i>Total number<br/>of serial<br/>listeners</i> |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| College . . . . .          | 16.3   | 301   |
| High school . . . . .      | 15.4   | 1,348   |
| Grammar . . . . .          | 9.4  | 896   |
| <i>Income</i> <sup>a</sup> |  |   |
| High . . . . .             | 16.7   | 354   |
| Medium . . . . .           | 13.1   | 1,582   |
| Low . . . . .              | 12.1   | 609   |
| <i>Age</i> <sup>b</sup>    |  |   |
| Young . . . . .            | 15.3   | 908   |
| Old . . . . .              | 12.3   | 1,635   |

<sup>a</sup> High, medium and low income expresses the interviewer's rating of the socio-economic status of each respondent.

<sup>b</sup> “Young” refers to women up to 35, “old” to women over 35 years. Two cases which did not specify age are not included.

“Against the storm we try the metal of our souls” is the story's motto. The events in Europe of the past few years are truly trying to Kathy and her grandfather, Dr. Alfred Reimer. In Europe Kathy had met Manuel Sandeval, a young Spaniard, to whom she had become engaged. At the outbreak of the war, Manuel joins the fight against the Axis while Kathy returns to the United States. She stays with the Allens in Hawthorne, a typical college town where Professor Allen teaches and lives with his family. While there, Kathy receives a letter from Lisbon bringing her the news that Manuel has

died. Kathy's sorrow is great and the shock almost too much for her. It is decided that she should go to New York and stay with Dr. Reimer who would be able to alleviate the impact of her terrible experience. Later, it is discovered that Manuel did not die but is now in Mexico. His love for Kathy is as great as ever but he is mentally and physically broken by his experience and by his present inability to contribute anything to the struggle against the forces threatening destruction to everything valuable in the world. This and more he explains to Kathy while staying on the ranch where he is recuperating. Finally, Kathy manages to make him see things in a somewhat brighter light and they decide to get married and come to New York. There are by-plots concerning Kathy's brother, a member of the underground movement in Denmark, the Allens and Mark Scott, a friend of Kathy's and the Allens'. These plots are rather skillfully handled and do not overshadow the permanent theme of the story, i.e., that our individual struggles must not allow us to forget that there is a struggle going on in the world in comparison with which our own strife appears little and unimportant; it must be set aside so that we may serve as best we can in the greater cause.

The serial is clearly of a more serious type than the great number of programs which go under the same name. It has a moral just as other serials do but this moral pertains to the individual's role in society rather than to individual problems only. It does not promise a reward but demands responsibility. The problems confronting the serial characters are complex ones at which the characters fail or succeed, tackling them as best they can. The outcome is never certain, there are no abrupt happy endings. There is no perfect person in the story on whom the listener can depend to settle things. The serial is also very

well written. All of these features make its appeal to a more sophisticated audience quite plausible.

The examples discussed so far indicate that certain serials appeal more to particular groups of listeners than others; these specific appeals can be understood in terms of the content differences in these serials. However, analyzed for the "primary" characteristics of the listeners, the differences in the audience structure of various serials are not very marked ones. We shall, therefore, now turn to the question why marked differences may not be expected.

#### FACTORS MITIGATING MARKED DIFFERENCES IN THE AUDIENCE STRUCTURE OF DIFFERENT SERIALS

##### *The Listener's Attitude*

One of the reasons why the audiences of different serials do not vary very greatly in their composition as to age, education, income or type of residence may be seen in the attitude of serial listeners to the programs they hear. Detailed interviews with 100 daytime serial listeners<sup>7</sup> showed that different women saw very different things in the same program. Following are the descriptions which four women gave for the same program, namely, *Road of Life*:

It is concerning a doctor, his life, and how he always tries to do the right thing. Sometimes he gets left out in the cold, too.

Dr. Brent is a wonderful man, taking such good care of a poor little orphan boy. He is doing God's work.

It is a drama, Jim Brent and Dr. Parsons—jealousy, you know. There are several characters, but Jim Brent is the important one. He will win out in the end.

<sup>7</sup> From H. Herzog, "On Borrowed Experience," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, 1941.

It is about a young doctor in Chicago. I like to hear how he cures sick people. It makes me wonder whether he could cure me too.

All of these listeners look for the "troubles" in the story and how they are solved, but each interprets the "trouble"-situation according to her own problems. Thus, for example, a sick listener stresses the sick people cured by the doctor in the story. The young high school girl, who wishes she knew interesting people like Dr. Brent, picks the jealousy aspect of the story and the way Dr. Brent stands up to it. The woman over forty, with the memory of a sad childhood, insists that Dr. Brent "is doing God's work." And the mother, sacrificing herself for an unappreciative family, feels a common bond in the fact that "sometimes he [Dr. Brent] is left out in the cold too."

Each of these women also listens to a number of other programs. In picking the programs she likes, she selects those presenting problems which are, to her mind, most intimately related to her own. Sometimes all the stories listened to have the same central theme to the listener. Thus the woman quoted above, who likes Dr. Brent because of his kindness to the orphan boy, listens to four other programs which have a "kind adult" as one of their leading characters. Her comment on *Right to Happiness* is: "The mother is a fine woman. She gave her life up for her child." Of *Hilltop House* she says: "The woman there is not getting married because she has to take care of the orphanage." She also listens to *Myrt and Marge* and *The O'Neills*, which she describes in similar terms as having a "kind mother" as the leading character. On the other hand, the young high school girl who would like to know a person like Dr. Brent listens, in addition to *Road of Life*, to two more programs which she describes as "love stories." They are *Our Gal Sunday* and *Helen Trent*.

Sometimes the listeners go through quite a complicated process of shifting and exchanging incidents and characters in their favorite stories to suit their own particular needs. This behavior was brought out clearly in the case of a middle-aged, quite balanced woman, whose chief interest in life is her family. She listens to only two radio programs because she claims she has "no time for more." Listening for her has the function of keeping in contact with the various members of her family when the real members are absent at work or in school. Her favorite story is *Pepper Young's Family*. She is interested in it because "the son there acts against his father just the way our son does." But she doesn't care for the mother in this sketch because "she is too submissive!" So she turns to a second program, *Woman in White*, for there "the woman is boss." By scrambling the mother in the one sketch with the father and the son in the other, she establishes a family situation which she considers "similar" to her own.

The highly subjective manner in which daytime serial listeners pick from the programs they hear those aspects which best meet their personal needs implies that women with very different characteristics might be found among the listeners to the same program. Another factor working against the development of a simple relationship between the content of a specific daytime serial and the structure of its audience is the extent to which the selection of a serial by the listener depends on its position in the program schedule.

#### *The Role of a Program's Position in the Broadcasting Schedule*

At night, radio caters to a much more heterogeneous audience than during the day. It is therefore rare that two programs of the same type and with the same appeal follow each other on one station. During the daytime, however, the network sta-

tions and the program sponsors count on a relatively homogeneous audience. They tend to put on chains of serials, advertising foods, household goods, cosmetics, and similar everyday articles. What are the consequences of the "several in a row" arrangement for the audience structure of individual daytime serial programs?

From the two surveys quoted previously, data were available on the serials which each of about 5,000 serial listeners had heard in the previous week<sup>8</sup> or tried to listen to regularly. For the network serials<sup>9</sup> mentioned by the respondents a time schedule was drawn up, listing for each area the time and the network station over which they were broadcast. According to this schedule a number of serials had to be excluded because they did not permit the analysis intended.<sup>10</sup> We finally studied eleven serials in the nationwide survey and fifteen of the serials mentioned in the Iowa survey.<sup>11</sup> Each of the serials was paired with all other serials. Each pair was then examined as to the number of listeners the two serials had in common. The overlapping audience, that is, the proportion of listeners who heard both serials of a pair, was obtained from fourfold tables. The example below will illustrate just how these tables were set up and what is being measured.

It can be seen from this table that *Stella Dallas* and *Young Widder Brown* have 320 listeners in common. The overlap-

<sup>8</sup> This was the listening index used in the nationwide survey. The Iowa survey asked for serials the respondent tried to hear regularly. Incidentally, it would be important to establish a standard index for what is to be called a serial listener. This would greatly further the use of material available from several sources.

<sup>9</sup> Only network serials were considered to permit broader comparisons.

<sup>10</sup> Types of serials excluded from the analysis were: (a) instances of network serials which were broadcast locally in transcribed form and at a different time of the day than the live serial; (b) serials for which the continuity pattern in the Pacific area was different from that in other zones; (c) serials which are broadcast over several networks so that it could not be decided from our material on which station the serial had been heard.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix C for a list of the serials covered.



TABLE 5.—OVERLAPPING LISTENING TO “STELLA DALLAS” AND “YOUNG WIDDER BROWN”

|   | <i>Listens to<br/>Young Widder<br/>Brown</i> | <i>Does not listen<br/>to Young Widder<br/>Brown</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|--|--|--------------|
| Listens to <i>Stella Dallas</i> . . . . .   | 320  | 367  | 687          |
| Does not listen to <i>Stella Dallas</i> . . | 186  | 1,672  | 1,858        |
| Total . . . . .                             | 506  | 2,039  | 2,545        |

ping listening for this pair is 54 per cent.<sup>12</sup> Tables like the one shown above were set up for all other pairs of serials and the extent of overlapping computed from them. The percentages of overlapping for each pair were entered in Figures 1 and 2, according to the time distance<sup>13</sup> between the two serials compared. Figure 1 summarizes the data for serials on the same station and Figure 2 refers to serials broadcast over different stations. The fitted lines in both Figures show the average trend of overlapping audiences by time distance of the serials.

A comparison of Figure 1 with Figure 2 will show the reader that the proportions of overlapping audiences for serials carried by the same station are generally higher than those for serials heard over two different stations. Secondly, for serials on the same station (see Figure 1) there is in both surveys a sharp drop in the proportions as time intervals increase.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The proportion of women who heard both programs is 320 out of 506, or 63 per cent if measured in terms of all listeners to *Young Widder Brown*. It is 320 out of 687, or 41 per cent if measured in terms of all listeners to *Stella Dallas*. The average of these two percentages is considered a measure of the overlapping audience. For reasons which need not be further discussed here, the geometric average has been computed.

<sup>13</sup> The time distance between the two serials of each pair was measured from the beginning of the one serial to the start of the other.

<sup>14</sup> For serials on the same station, in the nationwide survey, differences in time intervals explain 88.6 per cent of the variation in the average percentage of overlapping listening. A logarithmic estimating equation was used. In the Iowa survey, an exponential estimating equation explains 75.7 per cent of the variation. For serials on different stations, there is no significant correlation between overlapping listening and time intervals, the percentage of variation explained by differences in time intervals being only 12.6 per cent for the nationwide survey, and 5.7 per cent for the Iowa survey.

Summing up, we can say that for serials carried by the same station there is a strong inverse relationship between overlapping listening and time distance. The closer two serials are to each other in terms of time the higher the overlapping audience.<sup>15</sup> For serials broadcast over different stations there is little

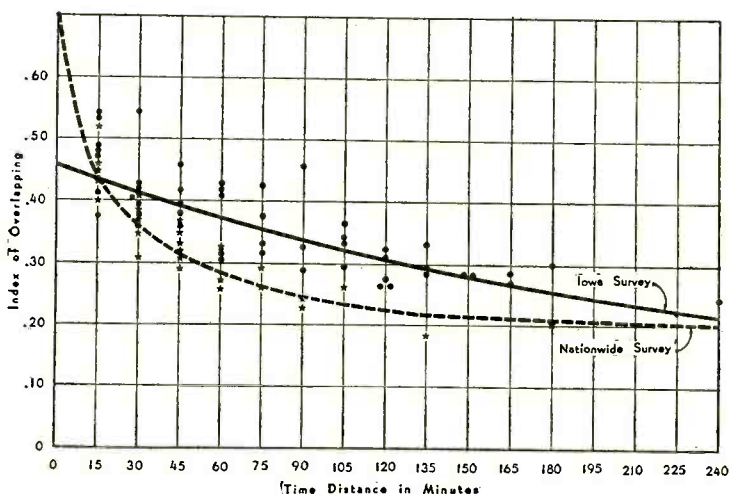


FIG. 1.—CORRELATION BETWEEN INDEX OF OVERLAPPING LISTENING AND TIME DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO DAYTIME SERIALS BROADCAST OVER SAME STATION

overlapping. Whatever there is, is largely due to chance. This finding is another reason for the smallness of variation in the audience structure of different serials. Once a woman has ac-

<sup>15</sup> The several-in-a-row arrangement in the broadcasting of serials makes for a relatively uniform but also a large audience of the individual serial broadcast in a chain. This can be seen from the following example: *Young Dr. Malone*, high-rating CBS program, is broadcast in the Eastern and Central Time Zones as part of a chain of serials. It was mentioned as listened to by 25 per cent of serial listeners in the Central Time Zone sector and by 13 per cent in the Eastern Time Zone sector, in the nationwide survey. On the Pacific coast, the same program does not appear in a chain. The last complex of CBS serials ended, at the time of the study, at 1:30 P.M. At 2:30, and again at 3:00 P.M., two more serials were available. After that no CBS serial was on for an hour. Then, at 4:15, *Young Dr. Malone* came over the air with no more CBS serials following. Only 5 per cent of all serial listeners in the Pacific area mentioned that they listened to this particular program.

quired the habit of listening to a program she is likely to keep the dial tuned in and just hear the next few programs as they

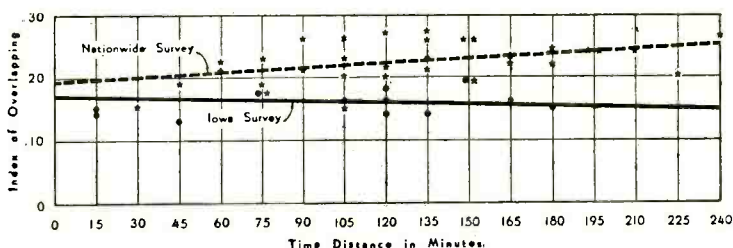


FIG. 2.—CORRELATION BETWEEN INDEX OF OVERLAPPING LISTENING AND TIME DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO DAYTIME SERIALS BROADCAST OVER DIFFERENT STATIONS

happen to come. "I'm just tempted to go on listening" is the way the matter was sized up by several respondents.

### *The Role of the Content*

And yet, if we look at the serials which follow each other on the same station, there are still marked variations in overlapping. Around the trend curves shown in Figure 1, the different pairs of serials are scattered, not too closely. Can it be shown that these variations are due to differences in the content of the serials?

This final aspect of our whole problem is different from our original one. At the beginning of this paper we wondered whether the content is reflected in the structure of the audience. Here we raise the question whether two serials with a highly overlapping audience have more in common than two other serials with low overlapping audience, when the time distance between the two serials in each pair is the same. A few illustrations will be given to show that such relationships seem to exist.

*Valiant Lady* and *Arnold Grimm's Daughter* are two serials which follow each other on the NBC network stations. Overlapping listening for these two programs is high, amounting to 52 per cent. On the other hand, *Ma Perkins* and *Guiding Light*, although they too follow each other on NBC stations, command an overlapping audience of only 40 per cent.

The serials of the first pair are *similar* in many respects. In both the heroine is a young married woman who is kind and helpful to others, as exemplified in numerous blocks of episodes, while at the same time her own life is undergoing eventful developments. Both women are attractive, feminine, stimulating men to chivalry. Each of them has a husband outstanding in his field, but a good deal of his actual success is due to his wife's assistance and sacrifice of her own comfort. Joan Scott of *Valiant Lady*, and Connie, Senator Grimm's daughter, are always tolerant, free from bitterness or prejudice, invariably looking for the redeeming features in people. These exemplary qualities suffice to bring about the reform of the weak and selfish persons who find themselves in difficult situations. Where their own affairs are concerned, both young women are passive, misunderstood, and suffering because they stand for the right principles. Conflicts in both stories ensue because of external circumstances and sudden events rather than for psychological reasons. Developments proceed at a brisk pace. Superficially it might seem that the settings of the two serials are different. In *Arnold Grimm's Daughter* the setting is almost exclusively upper class. In *Valiant Lady* the leading characters' circumstances are undeservedly poor. They remain so at least for the time being because these persons prefer professional integrity to crookedness or cold business principles. Yet frequently, in melodramatic contrast, the scene is set in upper class, at times millionaires circles when the heroine successfully breaks the

ice around the heart of a newspaper magnate or a famous surgeon. The presentation of these upper class people and the heroine's function among them is alike in both serials. They have to take recourse to her unselfish willingness to help them.

This similarity in content of the two serials is reflected in the relatively large proportion of women who listen to both of these programs.

On the other hand, *Ma Perkins* and *Guiding Light*, the two successive serials with a relatively low overlapping in their audience, are quite *different* in content. First of all, the central characters of the two serials are of opposite sex. An older, even though very active housewife, Ma Perkins, has obviously a different position and role in life than the clergyman Dr. Rutledge of *Guiding Light*. Both have the main function of helping others, but in Dr. Rutledge's case this is part of his profession whereas Ma Perkins is outstanding because she takes tasks upon herself which are outside the average housewife's competence and which only too often cause her great discomfort. Her actions are motivated by her desire to see the right win out. Common sense and an instinctive knowledge of human weaknesses, plus her sporting spirit, are her weapons. Dr. Rutledge's is very much the part of the father-confessor. As the light burning at the window of his parsonage symbolizes, he is always ready, day and night, to hear those who are in distress. Advice or help given by Dr. Rutledge consists mainly of spiritual comfort. The persons to whom it is extended have to work out their problems themselves. Ma's help is very practical and active; she herself settles difficulties for the people who find themselves in trouble.

In *Guiding Light* the source of difficulties lies in the mentality of the characters; in *Ma Perkins*, in exterior circumstances. Thus *Ma Perkins* offers a quick succession of climaxes. With

each block of episodes new characters and new problems may be introduced. In her exploits Ma is as invariably successful in exposing evil, as Sherlock Holmes is in the realm of crime detection. Correspondingly, the suspense created by the presentation is very much of the kind produced by a detective or adventure story. The atmosphere of *Guiding Light* is entirely different. The plots are slowly developed and therefore the same problems are dealt with for a long time. Changes in persons or localities occur occasionally only and especially the latter seem of secondary importance since they are rarely exploited as an element of suspense. Thrill or excitement can be derived from *Guiding Light* largely from external factors such as the announcer's interpretations or the melodramatic setting.

The setting of *Ma Perkins* is rural; the principal characters are unsophisticated, with little education, but admirable personalities. In *Guiding Light* the scene is largely urban; setting and persons have an intellectual tinge.

These content differences are reflected in the different audience structure of the two programs. Data obtained in the two surveys quoted before<sup>16</sup> seem to indicate that *Ma Perkins* appeals particularly to low-educated and rural women, while listening to *Guiding Light* is more evenly distributed among the various socio-economic groups. The two programs appear indeed quite different in the type of gratification they provide. *Ma Perkins* is the story of a glorified housewife. Her accomplishments and her trials, the way she is frequently first misunderstood but finally appreciated, allow for pleasant wishful thinking, particularly among women of a similar background. *Guiding Light*, on the other hand, is a type of serial one would expect to appeal to puzzled and worried rather than frustrated and disappointed women. The minister's helpful soothing

<sup>16</sup> See p. 87.

words are not only directed to the characters of the story but to the audience at large. In confirmation of this assumption it was found that the largest proportion of affirmative answers to the question whether daytime serials helped the respondent to deal better with problems in her own everyday life,<sup>17</sup> came from women who had mentioned *Guiding Light* as one of the serials they listened to. Fifty-two per cent of its listeners in the Iowa survey said that serials helped them while on the average only 41 per cent of all serial listeners reacted that way. The audience of *Guiding Light* is thus stratified according to this more psychological index rather than in terms of the socio-economic characteristics of the listeners.

#### CONCLUSION

Differences in the audience composition of individual serials exist but they are not very marked if one measures the audience structure in terms of the so-called primary characteristics of the listeners. One factor which mitigates striking variations along these lines is the "several-in-a-row" broadcasting of serials. It can be shown that serials which come over the same station in a chain have a high overlapping audience. Overlapping decreases the further apart the two serials appear on the broadcasting schedule of the station.

This willingness of a daytime serial listener to hear a serial just because it happens to be offered on the station she is tuned in must not be understood to mean, however, that the content of individual serials plays no role in their appeal. For serials over the same station it can be shown that the overlap-

<sup>17</sup> Cf. H. Herzog, this volume, p. 25, where the general findings of this question are discussed.

ping audience is higher if they are similar in content than if they are different. A listener is relatively more inclined to keep on listening if the succeeding program provides for similar listening gratifications. However, detailed interviews with serial listeners show that listening to these programs is done in a very subjective manner: different women may "like" the same program for different reasons, each one selecting those aspects in it which fit most closely to her own personal problems. This psychological approach in listening to daytime serials is a second factor likely to blur differences in the audience structure of different serials if one studies their structure according to the primary characteristics of its listeners rather than in terms of more refined psychological attributes of the listeners.

Progress in the study of the specific appeal of individual serials depends thus on the development of finer indices to describe the listeners and also on the development of finer categories to describe the content of the serials to which they listen. The content descriptions given in this paper are a crude beginning. There are at least two paths along which we can hope to develop psychologically more adequate classifications of daytime serials.

The first device is to make *detailed comparisons of scripts* which would force us to formulate much more precisely the differences in characteristics which we usually leave on the level of vague impressions. From trivial criteria such as a man or a woman protagonist, a small town or a sophisticated setting, a more or less refined language, we can go on to make finer observations. Is the hero or heroine of the story immediately affected by the problems dealt with or do they happen to other people, making his or her function rather that of an adviser or helper? What is the nature of the problems? Are they



mainly psychological, centering around decisions to be made or are they of an event character, depending upon whether something will happen or whether someone will bring about something? The introspective versus the activistic approach in serials might be another important category. It is quite probable that such systematic comparison of serials will yield a number of further categories. It might be advisable to ask the help of psychiatrists here; they should be able to single out specific complexes involved in the plots of the stories, often probably without the knowledge of the writer. Through the use of the program analyzer<sup>18</sup> it would be possible to draw in the listener herself; the study of liked and disliked parts of a program and of the listeners' explanations of their reactions would again permit the development of aspects from which programs can be judged.

The second procedure would be to apply the statistical method of *factor analysis*. This method has been developed in the field of ability tests. It has been determined that abilities in diversified fields go back to a few central psychological factors. These factors can be found by correlating test performances with each other, that is, by studying which tests are well done by the same people. The assumption is that tests on which the same people perform adequately have something in common psychologically. In the same way, we could look at programs which are listened to by the same people and hope to find thus common psychological features in these programs. If this sort of study of overlapping listening is attempted it can of course only be done after the time factor discussed in this paper has been controlled.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. E. Suchman and T. Hollonquist, this volume, p. 265.



## *II. RADIO IN WARTIME*

The present analysis by Dr. Siepmann gives an idea of the United States Government's radio activities at their peak. It covers the first year of the war and shows the philosophy on which were based the later, more standardized, procedures. The extent to which the earlier expectations were fulfilled or changed by subsequent experiences will be discussed in a future publication.

## AMERICAN RADIO IN WARTIME

*An Interim Survey of the OWP's Radio Bureau*

by Charles A. Siepmann

DRAMATIC critics, pressed for time to get their copy to the printers, or bored by the first act of a play, have been known to leave the theater early and write their critique without waiting for the final curtain. The chronicler of the activities of the Office of War Information's Radio Bureau is forced into a similar situation. The curtain has gone up, Act I is over, but the plot's development remains to be enacted. Judgment, therefore, is premature. But we can gather something of the flavor of this play, and even understand the nature of its construction from clues provided in the curtain raiser which preceded it.

### THE RELATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY

#### *Prelude to War*

This is radio's first war. There were no precedents for its use and functioning. The industry had little warning, and, on the outbreak of war, it was at once under extreme pressure. There had been some talk, some writing on the degree and nature of control by Government to which the radio industry should be subjected in a war. Even the peacetime relations between the two were, at the time of Pearl Harbor, the subject of bitter dispute, resulting from new regulations issued by the

Federal Communications Commission aimed mainly at the elimination of monopoly. Radio, riding uneasily in already troubled waters, was swept overnight into the hurricane of war. Would a new helmsman be called on to steer the ship to safety?

The Federal regulations governing the conduct of radio broadcasting offered only one clue to what might happen. One section of the act, under which the Federal Communications Commission operates, provides that, in the event of war, the President shall, at his discretion, determine whether, and to what extent, Government should assume control over the management and operation of stations. Thus, radio, under the law, might have been taken over, lock, stock and barrel. A few desired this, many more dreaded and opposed it.

Some factors which may have weighed in the balance of decision are worth reviewing.

1. In the last war government information services were under the direction of the Creel Committee. Admirably efficient as it was, the committee was later subject to criticism on the grounds that it had made excessive inroads on freedom of the press. Its activities were felt by many to have been "un-American." Fear and resentment of bureaucracy has increased, rather than diminished, in the years between the wars. Moreover, to the opposition of the press, was now added that of two new and powerful agencies—radio and films—both equally concerned to protect their interests and to defend the principle of free speech. These three agencies formed a powerful coalition.

2. There can be little doubt that public opinion, though less articulate, was also suspicious of government controls over press, radio and films. Two main causes contributed to this state of mind. A twenty years' post mortem on the conduct of the last war, conducted by scholars and aided by publicists and

writers, had created a profound sense of disillusionment among the younger generation about the real grounds and purpose of our participation in it. The work was done so thoroughly that a word with a perfectly respectable ancestry (and indeed dignified in its origin by Mother Church) has become so muddled and distorted in its implications that it can no longer be mentioned without arousing profound suspicion and hostile resentment—the word propaganda. Ailing, and perhaps already past retrieving, the word is now part of obscene vocabulary as the result of its association with the well-publicized activities of Dr. Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda. Government control of the media of communication for the average man means Propaganda, and he will have none of it.

3. But apart from public sentiment, there were practical considerations to weigh. Roughly one third of the transmitters and half the receiving sets in the whole world are in the United States. We are used to doing things in a big way, but was it wise, was it even practicable, for Government to assume responsibility for the direction and operation of so vast and complex a system of communication? If delegation were possible without sacrifice of the public interest, was the assumption of such powers necessary? And what of equity? If radio were taken over, could press and films remain free? Under the law, yes. But was it fair?

4. What, again, of the cost involved? There are more than 900 radio stations in the U.S. Their operating costs run into hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Could Government, in a war crisis, assume such a charge on its already strained resources? Could the country afford the dislocation of established interests among networks, stations, advertising agencies and sponsors?

One can only speculate as to whether these and similar con-

siderations were reviewed and weighed. The decision we know. Rightly or wrongly, it was decided to pursue what we call the democratic way, to continue the peacetime management and operation of radio stations and to harness their services as closely and effectively as possible to Government without jeopardizing private enterprise or forfeiting the confidence of listeners.

### *Government-Industry Relations Defined*

The powers and responsibilities of what is now the Radio Bureau of OWI (and was formerly the Radio Division of the Office of Facts and Figures) were first defined in a letter from Mr. Stephen Early to Mr. Archibald MacLeish, then director of OFF. It was dated December 27, 1941, and read in part as follows:

The time has come when a central clearing point within the Government should be created to give guidance to Government departments and agencies and to the Radio industry as a whole concerning inquiries originating within the Government and received by the Government, by the broadcasting companies and stations, and to handle certain Government programs on the networks within the U.S. I may tell you, therefore, by direction of the President, that the Radio Division of the OFF, headed by William B. Lewis, is designated to carry out this work under your supervision. . . .

To "give guidance . . . concerning inquiries . . ." and "to handle certain Government programs . . .", such were the restrictions of control and of initiative under which the work began.

The only relevant orders affecting the functions of the Radio Bureau, since issued are: (1) The Executive Order of June 13, 1942, "consolidating certain war functions into an Office of War Information." Under this order, "consistent with the war information policies of the President and with the foreign pol-



icy of the United States and after consultation with the committee on War Information," the Director shall perform the following functions and duties.

Formulate and carry out through the use of press, radio, motion pictures, and other facilities, information programs designed to facilitate the development of an informed and intelligent understanding at home and abroad of the status and progress of the war effort and of the war policies, activities, and aims of the Government. . . . Review, clear and approve all proposed radio and motion picture programs sponsored by Federal Departments and Agencies and serve as the central point of clearance and contact for the radio broadcasting and motion picture industries respectively in their relationships with Federal Departments and agencies concerning such Government programs. . . . The Director is authorized to issue such directives concerning war information as he may deem necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this order and such directives shall be binding upon the several Federal Departments and Agencies. He may establish by regulation, the types and classes of informational programs and releases which shall require clearance and approval by his office prior to dissemination. The director may require the curtailment or elimination of any Federal information service program or release which he deems to be wasteful or not directly related to the prosecution of the war effort.

By way of implementing this executive order, there was later issued (2) OWI Regulation No. 2, dated September 9, 1942, over the signature of Mr. Elmer Davis. It reads in part as follows:

All plans or proposals for new or continuing series or for individual radio programs developed by or for the national headquarters of the several Government Agencies for local stations or networks will be submitted to the Chief of the Radio Bureau, OWI, for clearance. . . . At the discretion of the Radio Bureau this material will be channeled to the proper outlets . . . effective October 1, 1942.

From these two extracts it will be seen that no controlling governmental Juggernaut was ever contemplated or now exists. Indeed, to some who complain that too little has been

done, part explanation may be found in the strict limitation of the field of operations assigned to the Radio Bureau. On the side of Government, "guidance" has developed into centralized control and clearance. On the side of the radio industry, guidance remains the limit of its scope.

This much we learn, then, by way of background and prologue, from the curtain raiser. Now for Act I.

The first scene is set in Washington, a scene of inevitably wild confusion. The Office of Facts and Figures is set up by executive decree. December 1941 is already long ago. It is, therefore, worth reminding ourselves today that, unlike Zeus in the Greek fable, this office did not spring into being overnight, full fledged, entire in all its parts, from the brow of a goddess. Like other human institutions it had to grow and develop to full stature and maturity. A mere handful of men then constituted its Radio Division. Conditions of work were chaotic—overcrowded offices, the din of batteries of typewriters, the ceaseless, maddening alarm of telephone bells, calls from far and near, protesting, cajoling, and imploring. The mood of the country was one of indignation, of feverish desire to "do something," of utter disregard for the difficulties involved in getting things done. The pressure of necessity required that we should begin with the cart before the horse—with action out ahead of premeditated thought and of considered *principles* of action. The history of the Bureau's first year represents the still uncompleted task of getting horse and cart into the right relationship. What's still to do exceeds by far what has already been achieved. The road, moreover, at the start, was blocked by such confusion of congested traffic that progress was impossible until a way was cleared. This task was too great for the skeleton staff of a newly fledged division to cope with single handed. True to its own inclinations and to

its official terms of reference, the Radio Division therefore sought, and still relies on, the co-operation of the radio industry. It issued no authoritarian decrees. Its first move was to set up machinery for joint consultation and joint action.

### *Advisory Committees*

That machinery, as since developed, comprises, first, a network of advisory committees. These include a Network Advisory Committee, Advertising Council Radio Committees in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, a Local Station Committee and the "Committee of 25" composed of 25 top radio performers. The existence and work of these committees illustrate a principle worth bearing in mind throughout this survey. Only in rare instances can responsibility for work done be attributed to the Radio Bureau alone. Radio's war service is, much of it, the independent contribution of the industry itself. The bulk of the work, however, represents varying degrees of co-operation between Government and industry. Praise and blame must be distributed as between the partners to a gentleman's agreement.

### *Closed Circuit Talks*

But to bridge the intervals between committee meetings and to foster a personal relationship between Government and *all* those contributing to radio's war effort, a unique device has been contrived, known as the "closed circuit talk." The regular wires of all networks in the country are hooked up periodically for a 15-minute talk heard across the country by radio executives, but not, of course, broadcast on the air. Individual stations arrange some local program during the period. By this means, the voice of Washington can reach out to a great portion of the industry in single session for an off the record discussion

of important problems. The first of these "closed circuit" broadcasts was given by Mr. Archibald MacLeish on February 28, 1942.

### *Working Principles*

With the help of these advisory committees certain working principles have been gradually evolved on which action has progressively been based.

1. The first of these has been anticipated in what has already been said—the basic principle that Government shall steer, not direct or control, radio's wartime services.

2. It seemed desirable that the general structure of programs should not be violently disturbed or transformed, but that war should, as far as possible, be superimposed, on the air as on the people's work-a-day lives, on the peacetime pattern of programs.

3. It was necessary to determine quickly the respective functions of networks and local stations in carrying the war themes and messages necessary to a healthy morale, to decide the "character" that each and all should play and to provide to each a clear copy of its "lines." As a corollary, it was agreed, as an immediate measure, to use programs, already popular with vast audiences, as convenient and effective vehicles for part of wartime's load of information.

4. It was obviously important to conceive of radio's audience, not as one undifferentiated mass, but as a complex organism consisting of many different cells. Service should, therefore, be to each according to his need, to each in terms best calculated to evoke response of interest and understanding.

5. The country's war time needs were defined in three main categories—need for news, need for information as to *what to do* and how to do it, (whether to buy bonds, conserve rubber

or enlist in the marines), need for understanding of the where-for of this war in all its varied aspects, (true knowledge of the enemy, real understanding of our allies, awakened faith in the tenets of our own democracy). Appropriate techniques for communicating knowledge in each of these three categories must be devised.

6. Aim at quality rather than at quantity, a maximum effectiveness with a minimum of duplication and prolixity. From the very first "war fatigue," or surfeit, was anticipated as a danger attendant on any plan for projecting the war to the people.

To record in historical order the several steps taken to give effect to these principles would be tedious and confusing. The progress, like that of all war agencies, brought into being overnight, has been from chaos to a gradually emergent order. It must be stressed again that this is an interim report. But before describing the various services that have been, or are about to be, established, let us return to the confusion and pressure of the first days, to Scene I, sight of which has induced some embittered critics to leave before the final curtain fell and to pass angry and premature judgment on the whole affair. Before it could move ahead, the Radio Division faced a formidable clearance job.

## THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

### *Congested Airwaves, or Washington Run Amok*

Over 900 stations bring radio programs to over thirty million homes in the United States. Three-quarters of these stations use a thousand watts or less. Some 57 per cent have network affiliations, 43 per cent have not. More than one-third are situ-

ated in towns with a population less than 25,000. Networks, clear channel stations, independent local stations, over 900 of them! Here was a complex problem of co-ordination.

And what of Washington? Here were several dozen Government Agencies all of them already in the field of radio, all functioning independently in a mad, unco-ordinated scramble for time on the air. It was only natural that each agency should think first of its own needs and press its individual claims without regard for the prior urgency of the messages it had to offer. In the spring of 1942, a survey made by the National Association of Broadcasters and the Broadcasters Victory Council showed that some stations were getting requests from 122 different sources, 90 per cent of them being Government Agencies. Here is a graphic way of picturing what this meant. The Radio Bureau treasures among its archives a carefully preserved pile of documents. It stands 20 inches high and weighs 16 pounds. It consists of material received by one local station in a single week and it does not include transcriptions.

The kind of material thus issued ranged from messages of immediate and urgent importance for the prosecution of the war to mere trivia. Such was the chaos that prevailed. Before constructive war work could be done, this wild congestion of motley traffic on the road had to be cleared away.

### *The Network Allocation Plan*

It was to meet this situation which, until disposed of, threatened to jeopardize the whole prospect of success in the work which it had undertaken, that the Radio Division devised a scheme known as the Network Allocation Plan. This was the first, and remains even today, the most outstanding and successful service which it has rendered. As with all other work since undertaken, this plan was the outcome of close and con-

tinuous collaboration with the industry. Its purpose was to dispose once and for all of the four major problems: (1) to limit the number of messages broadcast to a figure corresponding more nearly to the listeners' power of digestion, (2) to space them discreetly throughout the radio spectrum, (3) to improve their quality and (4) to get them to the biggest audience possible with a minimum of delay and of repetition and a maximum effectiveness. Speed being the essence of the job, an appeal was made to national advertisers and the four major networks, through and with whom nation-wide coverage could be most rapidly secured.

Under the Network Allocation Plan, an average of three messages a week, selected on grounds of urgency or of importance, are carried on more than 100 sustaining and commercial programs with the highest audience ratings. Simple in its design and basic conception, the plan disposes, at one fell swoop, of the confusion and disorder of the traffic jam. Advertisers, advertising agents and networks are regularly serviced with the material for the selected messages to be broadcast, but to insure their intelligent and clear communication, more was necessary than the selective principle thus far described. Allocation of itself was not enough. In addition to the message, facts about the message had to be communicated.

### *Fact Sheets*

Fact Sheets were therefore prepared which it was felt would help the broadcaster to present the message forcefully and with the accent of emphasis in the right place. In each fact sheet, an effort was made to show: (1) why the need of which the message spoke existed; (2) why it was urgent; (3) what facts it was necessary to convey; (4) what the public should do about it; (5) how the message could most effectively be embodied

in the program on which it was carried. A sample fact sheet <sup>1</sup> is given in Appendix D.

It can be confidently said that, as a result of the Network Allocation Plan, suspicion on the part of networks and of advertisers alike of the competence of Government has been converted into recognition of an orderly procedure and a clarity of aims. Networks have always shown themselves ready, where possible, to co-operate with Government. Among the achievements of the Network Allocation Plan has been the confidence and the co-operation which it has won for Government among new clients—the advertisers, whose good will and co-operation one sees in retrospect to have been essential to the successful dissemination of its many urgent appeals to the public. The plan is continuously being scanned with a view to its improvement. Suggestions for better writing, better placement, a length of message sufficient for its communication in forceful, intelligible terms are constantly being offered and as readily accepted by those co-operating in the plan.

At the start many of these messages were tucked away at the end of programs when the attention of many listeners had been already lost. Some messages were read in off-hand style and hurriedly disposed of as an inconvenient *et cetera*. However, standards have been raised and in many programs great skill is being shown in the integration of the message with the actual script. Where the message is not one of clear and simple information but involves enlisting the emotional sympathy or touching the conscience of the listener, many top ranking programs use the sound and psychological device of putting the words into the mouth of a character already dear to listeners.

<sup>1</sup> The following is a list of subjects on which Fact Sheets have been issued: War Bonds; Coast Guard; Army Recruiting for Glider Pilots, Signal Corps, etc.; Marine Recruiting; Scrap Rubber; Salvage; The Need for Nurses; Victory Food; Price Control; Sugar Rationing; The USO.



Fibber McGee and Molly, Charley McCarthy and many more of radio's favorite characters have done their part nobly in adding to the message the emotional overtone and the persuasive power of their personality at the microphone. The scheme, according to all available evidence, is a success.

The Network Allocation Plan, as has been said, was launched as the quickest and most effective vehicle for nationwide dissemination of necessary information. But the scheme left much territory uncovered and suffered from the grave defect that it left local unaffiliated stations, whose loyalty and whose desire to render service was no less, out in the cold. Back reference to the statistics given as to the number of stations servicing listeners should make clear why this temporary default as regards local stations was necessary. Contact with hundreds of individuals involved time and staff beyond the resources available to the Radio Division when this scheme was launched.

### *Radio War Guide*

As a temporary measure to stop this gap, a number of devices were employed, the first of which was the publication of the *Radio War Guide*. Local stations, as much as networks, had been bowled over by the avalanche of messages pouring out from Washington. Their need for a yardstick was as great. This is what the *Radio War Guide* was intended to provide. The program schedules and the time available on one local station are never the same as those on another. It was, therefore, impossible to devise an adaptation of the Allocation Plan that would uniformly apply to non-network stations. The best that could be done was to provide them with a *Radio War Guide* which constitutes a generalized allocation of war information needs. The *War Guide* is based on the requirements of various Government Agencies, rated according to their urgency and

over all importance to the war effort. The priorities of rating are expressed in terms of AA, A, B, C and D. The ratings of course are temporary and liable to change from time to time as dictated by the progress of the war and the needs of Government.<sup>2</sup> New *War Guides* are therefore issued periodically to bring local stations into line with Government and to secure integration of our work with that done through the Network Allocation Plan. Allocation is made on a nationwide basis (for use on all stations) and on a regional basis (for use of stations in specified areas).<sup>3</sup>

But the *Radio War Guide* offers more than a mere yardstick respecting current information needs. It enumerates, as well, six major themes upon which morale building programs can be based—the six war themes outlined by the President in his address to Congress in January of 1942 (see p. 133). Supplemented by other material to be referred to later, these notes help local stations in their selection and treatment of aspects of the war regarding which understanding is most important.

### *National Spot Allocation Plan*

A second temporary expedient was the National Spot Allocation Plan. Advertising on the air is not limited to sponsorship of nationwide programs. Much of it is purely local. Some of it is regional, involving a limited hookup of a few stations in a selected area. National advertisers who sponsor these "spot" radio programs (in other words, non-network advertisers who buy local programs in a number of cities to advertise a single

<sup>2</sup> In the *Radio War Guide* issued July 1, 1942, for example, national AA material referred to Recruiting for Naval services and the Army, the Production Drive Information, Price Control, Sale of War Bonds and Stamps. C material referred to such items as the Conservation of Electric Power, Household Equipment, WPA Concerts, Civil Service Jobs.

<sup>3</sup> In the July 1, 1942, *Radio War Guide*, Grain Storage, for example, had an AA rating for the Corn Belt, the West Coast and the Great Plains. The Bonville Power Program had a B rating for Oregon, Washington and Idaho stations.

product) had indicated earlier that they wished to carry war information messages on a certain percentage of their broadcasts. To meet this request, a "National Spot Allocation Plan" was devised for sponsors of local programs over 5 minutes in length and broadcast over five or more stations. Rather more than 50 advertisers of this kind are co-operating under this scheme. Under the Network Allocation Plan, the advertiser whose program is broadcast once a week is asked to carry one Government message a month. Programs broadcast more than once a week carry two Government messages a month. Under the National Spot Allocation Plan, the advertiser is asked to carry a Government message every three weeks.

As under the Network Allocation Plan, Fact Sheets are issued to avoid duplication of messages already being covered by the Network Allocation Plan. The messages carried by the National Spot Allocation Plan are for the most part different. The scheme thus supplements the Network Plan and increases the number of messages which can be broadcast. Care, however, is taken that the number of messages thus carried are not beyond the listeners' capacity to absorb at any given time.

#### *Football and Baseball Allocation*

Here is another supplementary scheme. Baseball and football broadcasts reach an enormous selective audience. All local stations therefore carrying such programs were approached and gave their consent to the inclusion of two messages in each and every program broadcast. 33 different advertisers are participating in the plan and collectively during the baseball season, they sponsored about 300 baseball broadcasts per day. The messages carried were and are the same as those broadcast on at least one of the other Allocation Plans already mentioned.

This scheme thus reinforces rather than supplements the other two.

### *Future Plans*

Successful within limits as the provision, hitherto, for local stations has been, it has never been thought of as the final answer to the problem. The Network Allocation Plan will be continued. The other temporary plans will, it is hoped, be absorbed later under a new comprehensive scheme better calculated to do justice to the desire of local station members to contribute to the war effort and more effectively to supplement the network plan.

The principles of this new scheme are similar to those already applied under the Network Allocation Plan. The scheme aims (1) at saving local stations from being flooded with a plethora of messages, (2) at an orderly spacing of messages throughout the day, (3) at priority for the most urgent information, and (4) at a generally more effective use of available facilities with a minimum of inconvenience for stations and a maximum advantage to the listener. The disorder which still prevails regarding local station operations may be judged from the fact that stations, at the present time, are scheduling Government announcements with a frequency ranging from three to 88 a day. Some obviously are doing too little, some far too much. The average of messages now being carried over local stations is 16 a day.

Under the new scheme it is proposed to make the same orderly apportionment of messages to local stations which now obtains on networks. It is planned that in the future stations affiliated with networks shall carry 12 daily messages over and above those which they carry on the network or spot allocation plans. Unaffiliated local stations will be asked to carry 16 such

messages. The burden will thus be fairly distributed to the advantage of stations and of their listeners alike.

Experience has shown that few Government messages can be effectively presented in less than a minute. Stations will, therefore, be asked to observe this minimum and to concede a greater length for such messages as seem to warrant fuller explanation. Many local stations are likely to be short of time in which to carry even this modest load. It is therefore being suggested to them that, as with the networks, local advertisers be approached with a view to enlisting their co-operation. Few advertisers are likely to grudge the donation of such time, and the burden on the local station will thus be eased. The messages to be broadcast, and accompanying Fact Sheets, are being issued weekly by the Radio Bureau with the same care and concern for detail as has characterized material issued under the Network Allocation Plan.

Thus, approximately within a year of the outbreak of war, chaos has at last been finally dispelled and the full resources of the radio industry harnessed to the war time needs of Government and people in this important sphere.

#### *Known Results of the Allocation Plans*

But what of results? Do these schemes work? Has radio, in fact, proved effective in keeping Government and people in close harmonious relationship? No overall answer to that question is now possible. For one thing, few of the Government's campaigns of information have been carried exclusively by radio. Credit for what has been achieved must be shared with other media, though radio may rightly claim the lion's share. But a few facts and a few testimonials are worth quoting as evidence of overall achievement.

1. Before the Network Allocation Plan was in full opera-

tion, the then Radio Division had opportunity to protest its prospects of success. In the early spring of 1942, the Department of the Interior worked with the Radio Division in allocating special "Buy Your Coal Now" announcements on a typical cross-section of network programs. The messages went out on 28 network shows (only about a quarter of the programs usually involved in the weekly allocation plan). The results were startling. The country's normal coal production in early April when the test was made, ran about 7 million tons. But for the week during which the drive was on, coal production jumped to 11 million two hundred seventy-five thousand tons. Throughout each of the two succeeding weeks, it was up at 11 and one-half million tons. The Coal Industry War Council informed the Radio Division that never in history had there been such a wave of coal buying during early spring.

2. War Bond announcements have, of course, been carried in the press, on posters and in films as well as radio. The overall result has been that from July through October, 97.7 per cent of the quota set has been realized.

3. Here is brief but eloquent testimony. "With the assistance of the Network Allocation Plan, Signal Corps applications increased 1,000 per cent."—C. J. MacIntyre, Lt. Colonel, Signal Corps.

4. And here is another. "A capacity number of candidates for glider schools turned up by this campaign after previous efforts by both Army and CAA had failed."—Paul Felix Warburg, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Commerce.

5. And again, "Prior to the Network Allocation Plan Price Ceiling Campaign, 20 per cent of dealers were posting prices. After the campaign, 50 per cent were posting them."

6. And again, "Announcements on local stations increased

the pace of the recruiting drive. But the real lift came with the campaign on the Baseball Allocation Plan and the Network Allocation Plan. 101.66 per cent of the quota was achieved by the end of the Network Allocation drive in mid-October. Applications were still flooding in during the following weeks but no count was made inasmuch as requirements had been met.”  
—Captain Frank E. Pellegrin, War Department.

7. One last example. The Allocation Plan was put to work on the problem of recruiting student nurses. Only four days after the concentrated radio drive began, the Information Bureau of the National Nursing Council had received over 3,000 letters from applicants. When analyzed a high total of 87 per cent were considered top eligible material. This is a record never before approached. One week later, 4,000 more applications had been received and at the end of the second week, the rate had jumped to 800 daily. The established quota which could be accepted by nursing schools for the year was more than met.

The reach of radio's long arm may be gathered from the fact that messages on car pooling and gas shortage broadcast over a five-week period are estimated to have reached 153 million family units. War Bond messages during a 16-day period reached 847 million eight hundred thousand family units; junk salvage 111 million six hundred thousand family units.

There is, then, at least presumptive evidence of success in general. Radio, by its very nature, is a speculative trade. We cast our bread upon the waters hoping that it may return to us after many days. The hope can never be statistically verified. Far, indeed, from being drunk with its success, the Radio Bureau keeps asking itself awkward questions. With a long war in prospect, the question arises as to what assurance we can place in the continuing success of such a method as that devised

under the Allocation Plan. At what stage do we face the prospect of surfeit, of a gradually mounting sales resistance? Could similar results be realized with a greater economy of effort, with less frequent messages or less urgency of tone in the appeals?

There has been no time as yet in which to seek an answer to such questions. The voice of doubt and of concern is likely to sound more insistently as time goes on. The whole purpose and method of the scheme has been directed to sparing both radio and radio's public excessive insistence on the Government's claims upon them. Perhaps an even greater economy and a more constant hitting of the bull's eye of public attention may yet be achieved. The whole problem of surfeit is at the present time the subject of close scrutiny and all appropriate adjustments will follow the findings of research.

But however imperfect the achievements of the plan, one fact of lasting significance has been established. The lie has been given to those who claim that oil and water do not mix, that radio and Government cannot work harmoniously together. Harmonious and effective co-operation has been achieved. It is a precedent pregnant in its implications for the future.

This summary outline does little justice to the detailed finesse involved in the elaboration of an extremely complex operation. The broad outlines have been given, the subtler shades and finer lines of detail are inevitably missing from the picture. It is difficult to convey briefly the thought and care that has been taken to secure that the right messages are carried by the right programs, that message and program are skillfully integrated, that even the voice and character of the man or woman speaking the message shall, as it were, blend with the message itself. A quite subsidiary activity of the Radio Bu-



reau may perhaps be mentioned as index of the Bureau's detailed concern over such finer points.

### *Program Inventory*

To assist not merely with the Allocation Plan but with other endeavors to be detailed later, a catalog has been compiled of practically all network programs currently on the air. Not a few may be surprised to learn that the four networks carry between them 360 concurrent programs. All these are listed, all are kept up to date—not only their titles, their day and time, their subject, but the producers, writers, actors too. Thus, by reference to this catalog any message can be placed at short notice with detailed knowledge of the program and even of the writer and the actor for whom it is best suited. When, for instance, the Germans perpetrated the massacre at Lidice, reference to the catalog disclosed at once programs and writers who had been most anxious for background and factual material to incorporate in their programs. One hardly needs to say that the compilation of this record is not a police activity but a safeguard against inept approaches to the wrong person. It ensures that the work of the Radio Bureau is integrated as far as humanly possible with that of its collaborators in the radio industry.

## THE FURTHERING OF UNDERSTANDING

### *How Promote Understanding?*

We have been concerned thus far with information only—with acquainting the public about Government measures, telling them what to do, invoking their patriotism in the interest of War Bond sales, etc. If this were the whole of an effective

war time information service, we might well rest on our oars. But it is a small part only. There is harder, subtler work to do. There remains the problem of insuring a universal grasp not of the things that we are called upon to *do*, but things which we must *understand*. For victory and for the peace, not only the sinews of men's bodies and the skill of their hands, but heart and brain and spirit must be harnessed to the war effort. How shall we communicate to men and women, isolated by great distances from the events in which they are involved, indifferent (because unaware) to the great issues at stake and to the peoples, the world over, involved with them, the practical significance *to them* of events, of sufferings, of great and pertinent abstractions of philosophy, elusive and intangible, beyond the grasp of hand or sight of eye? Whom do we fight? What for? Who are these United Nations and how united? What manner of people are they and what relevance have they for us? What is the future? What is the writing on the wall scrawled by the rough hand of war? What are these imperious necessities which prophets warn that we must grasp and master or they will master us to our own detriment? What answer have we to such questions?

One thing is certain. No single answer can encompass them. There are many answers, many ways of phrasing them. At this deep crucial level of intelligence and understanding, there is "no golden road to Samarkand." Let us be frank. Government has done no more than stab at these tremendous questions. The Radio Bureau, facing what without question is the toughest problem in the whole field of wartime public relations—the education and inspiration of the masses—is still feeling its way tentatively to some partial answers to some portion of these questions. The history of its efforts, the record of the programs and the techniques with which it has experimented, do scant

justice to the thought, perplexity and the concern which has gone to their execution. This cannot be a history of its thought, and it must therefore be a very partial and inadequate account of its achievement and intentions.

Its basic plan of action rests on the firm foundation of the six main themes, already referred to, cited by the President as vital areas of understanding for the successful prosecution of the war. These are the themes.

1. The Issues. What we are fighting for.
2. The Enemy. The nature of our adversary.
3. The United Nations. Our brothers in arms with whom we are allied in fighting.
4. Work and Production. The war at home.
5. Sacrifice. What we must give up to win the fight.
6. The Fighting Forces. The job of the fighting man at the front.

How carry the full significance of these six themes to the vast complex organism that is radio's listening public? That was the question faced. It will be remembered that among the first principles established by the Radio Division was that of differential provision for the needs of the constituent elements of radio's audience. If little has been done as yet for the minorities, whose intellectual and spiritual significance is in inverse proportion to their numbers, this is the consequence of a prior concern for service to the mass audiences which radio musters. Their need is greatest, as is the problem of devising suitable techniques for conveying to them in simplest terms the true implications of these six "understanding" themes. Inadequate as it must be as a record, one can but list the variety of ways in which understanding has been communicated. The list is neither complete nor does it imply an order of significance.

*Spot Campaign*

Nearest in its technique to the Allocation Plan described above is a Spot Campaign on the United Nations. Research disclosed a degree of ignorance and of misunderstanding and prejudice throughout the country to which counter measures were clearly called for. A list was therefore compiled of facts about various countries calculated to disprove the prejudices and to dispel the ignorance which research showed up. Forty-three such facts were collected. Radio commentators of nationwide repute were asked to read them and the whole sequence was recorded. The records were distributed to several hundred stations, each of whom guaranteed to broadcast each fact at least six times throughout an intensive campaign period of six weeks. The campaign which ended in October is now the subject of analysis. (See later under Radio Bureau's relations to research, page 143.)

*Special Assignment*

First cousin to this scheme is the Special Assignment Plan. Under this scheme, certain programs on the air were asked to incorporate a message or report on a selected theme regarding which fuller understanding was sought. Messages of this kind have been drafted and carried on such programs as *Alias John Freedom*, *the Farm and Home Hours*, *Cheers from the Camps*, *Good Will Hour*, etc. During its summer season, the Columbia Symphony Orchestra donated ten minutes during the interval for talks on the United Nations organized by the Radio Bureau. By this means, the scale of Britain's war production, China's strategic significance, various facets of the enemy's philosophy and practice, and other topics covering a wide range of understanding, were woven into programs with

audiences already established for them. As in the Allocation Plan, care is taken to see that the theme is suited to the program.

A lengthening list of programs co-operating in this way is growing up. But the scheme as such is still in its early stages. Plans are under way for its extension. A special department is being organized to secure a personal working relationship between the Radio Bureau and a long list of writers and producers of successful programs on which it is hoped 12 major subject fields will be covered. It is intended that the scheme shall cover not only programs with a large general audience but such as cater specially for significant minorities, e.g., programs popular with Negro audiences, women's programs, programs with a special appeal for younger listeners, etc. The principle of catering for differential audiences will be progressively adhered to.

### *Program Series*

It was early recognized, however, that even the cumulative impression of "spot" campaigns and messages, however full and however skillfully conveyed, is skin deep only and a piecemeal partial contribution to real understanding. The true nature of the Enemy, the realities of suffering and endurance on the part of our allies, the full story of our own fighting forces, the crescendo of effort and output on our production front—such themes need the fuller exposition and the broader canvass that only full length series can provide. The Bureau has applauded and assisted the independent efforts of networks to present such series. On several occasions networks have accepted suggestions from the Radio Bureau for the radical modification of shows contemplated, with a view to imparting understanding on subjects which the Radio Bureau, in its overall re-

view of programs as a whole, found to be insufficiently provided for. Programs like "They Live Forever" have thus modified their plans to deal with timely subjects suggested by the Radio Bureau. "The Man Behind the Gun" series, originally planned to reflect the activities of men in our own fighting forces, was "retooled" on the very eve of production to incorporate treatment of the fighting men of allied countries.

The Radio Bureau itself has made contributions of its own. Series planned, and executed in whole or in part, by the Bureau and by other agencies of Government come readily to mind—"This Is War" (a series which, whatever its defects, at least merits recognition for the promptness with which it was put on); "This Is Our Enemy"; "You Can't Do Business with Hitler"; the weekly series put on by the War Department and the Navy Department. But, as with the Allocation Plan, our concern has been increasingly with quality rather than with quantity, an apportionment of time corresponding to the relative urgency of understanding of different subjects. What is aimed at is a carefully balanced and fully effective treatment of the main themes necessary to good morale. A review of current programs on the air shows a plethora of series on many wartime subjects. Are there too many and are these programs doing the job with a maximum of effect? Neither question admits as yet of a satisfactory reply. The Radio Bureau is now working on a really integrated plan for securing a carefully balanced treatment of the main "understanding" themes, for a sensible and discrete apportionment of time to each such theme and for a differential approach to radio's multiple audiences according to the needs of each.

In addition to series, advantage has been taken of anniversary occasions giving opportunity for special emphasis on special issues. Here again, the bureau was early active in the field.

For many Norman Corwin's "Bill of Rights" program, with a talk by the President for climax, is still a vivid and significant memory. George Faulkner's "Toward the Century of the Common Man," broadcast on Flag Day, is another milestone along the road of major commemorative broadcasts. A very good example is the celebration of International Youth Day in a special program broadcast on November 17.

### *Transcriptions*

The above instances of multiple approaches to the problem of understanding have reference to networks only. As with the Allocation Plan, the question arose how best to offer service to local stations and the vast audiences available to them. As a temporary expedient, a service of transcribed programs has been made available to local stations for use at their discretion. Successful series and single programs on the networks have thus been transcribed and made available for repeat performance. In addition, special programs have been transcribed to create understanding on a wide variety of subjects. Outstanding among such programs is a series on the Enemy "You Can't Do Business with Hitler" distributed to 790 stations and broadcast weekly since January last. Other examples of programs broadcast 3 to 5 times a week are "Treasury Star Parade" and the OWI's Victory Front and Victory Volunteer Series. Individual programs from a number of Government Agencies have similarly been issued to cover topical campaigns.

But here too improvement is looked for, a better-correlated, better-proportioned outflow of material. It is hoped in 1943 to secure the co-operation of local stations in an orderly plan under which each station in the country will be asked to set aside a 15-minute strip of time, Monday through Friday, for program series to be scheduled under some general title

such as "Your Part in the War." Where there are two or more stations in any community, their war program managers will be asked to get together to arrange time periods so chosen as to reach various segments of the audience at various times of the day. Thus, assuming four stations in a community, Station A might set aside a morning period like 10 to 10:15 A.M. Monday through Friday; Station B might take an afternoon period like 3 to 3:15 P.M.; Station C an early evening period like 6:30 to 6:45, and Station D, a late evening period like 10:45 to 11 P.M. Thus access to different audiences would be assured.

The Radio Bureau would, for its part, ask *all* Government Agencies to make their 15-minute individual transcriptions an integral part of this plan. The subject matter of these broadcast programs would comprise both short- and long-term objectives. Arrangements have already been made for the inclusion of one weekly broadcast on the United Nations running for 26 weeks. Other short- and long-term themes are under discussion.

The purpose of the plan, of course, is to build audiences for these important war information programs. As they are scheduled today, it must be sheerest accident if any appreciable number of listeners hear them. The Bureau will insist in all cases that writing, performance and production be of first rate caliber. It will see to it that all subjects fit logically into the overall framework.

The Radio Bureau has not lost sight of the first and primary function defined for it—guidance. Where it has itself stepped in to write and produce programs, it has done so either to fill in a serious gap in radio's general information service or to lend to the program the special imprint of Government authority. But for the most part, it has adhered to the principle which its own inclination and sheer practical necessity in a field so



vast and complex as that of radio suggested, namely, the provision to the radio industry itself of the tools and equipment with which to carry out the job. Here again it employed a number of devices.

### *Background Material*

On a number of important information themes, it has prepared "Radio Background Material." These publications, concisely drafted, give guidance as to (a) why the subject is important, (b) what is known of public attitudes to and knowledge about it, (c) suggestions as to how radio can best deal with the problem, (d) facts and figures as basic material for thematic treatment in programs.

Take as an example, background material issued on the United Nations, a subject so vast as to imply absolute necessity for guidance on aspects of it regarding which information is most needed. Facts are given regarding public attitudes to e.g., Britain, Russia, China. Many believe that Britain is not going all out in its war effort. Many fear that Russia may pull out of the war at her own convenience. Few realize China's strategic importance in the war. To such prejudices and misconceptions, factual answers are given and to the facts are added notes on source material to implement the facts.

The response to these Background Sheets is wholly favorable. Networks and local stations alike use them as a basic work of reference and many programs have been built on their foundations.<sup>4</sup>

In addition radio stations have received pamphlets prepared

<sup>4</sup> Background material sheets have so far been issued on the following subjects: Rationing; United Nations; The Enemy; Conservation; Salvage; Women in War; Men for our Merchant Fleet; Fuel Conservation; America's Transportation Problem; Manpower; National Mileage Rationing. More are in preparation.

by the OWI for general release to all media of communication. These include:

- Divide and Conquer —an exposure of enemy propaganda techniques
- The Unconquered People—a description of resistance in occupied countries
- The Thousand Million —providing basic facts about the 29 United Nations.
- The Four Freedoms
- Toward New Horizons —covering statements and speeches which define or illuminate the developing policy of the United Nations

#### *Policy Directives*

At the request of the industry, policy directives have been issued on questions regarding which the radio industry was concerned not to run counter to Government information policy. The treatment of rumor and propaganda, of spies and saboteurs, has thus been covered. Similar service has been offered in connection with the observance of important anniversaries. Appropriate themes to be incorporated in programs on e.g., Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day, the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, Christmas Day, etc., have been suggested.

#### *News Letter*

As a further means of maintaining close personal relations between the Bureau and those co-operating with it in the radio industry a regular news letter (the Radio Front) is now being issued to all stations covering general questions of policy, topi-

cal hints and information of use to stations in handling current wartime themes.

Individual advice to networks and private stations on specific programs and special issues of background material for their use are a regular and continuing feature of the Bureau's work.

## THE RADIO BUREAU AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

### *Clearance*

The Radio Bureau not only has responsibility for initiating action but for securing that, on the side of Government, at any rate, there shall be co-ordinated action. With the multiplication of Government Agencies, the risk is great of Government's right hand not knowing what its left hand does. As a safeguard against duplication of effort, and of self-contradiction, OWI Regulation No. 2 was issued on October 1, 1942. This regulation has to do with the clearance of all proposed radio programs and of material furnished to radio programs emanating from Government Agencies. All such clearance is now dealt with by the Script Clearance Division of the Radio Bureau. Government radio material placed on local stations by the field offices of any agency are cleared through the field office of the Radio Bureau. Clearance has three main purposes.

1. To assure an adequate treatment of all war information problems without giving a single problem or a single agency disproportionate emphasis.

2. To secure that a uniform policy is observed in relation to any given war problem by every Government Agency concerned with any aspect of it. For example, if the Treasury Department in its drive for the sale of War Bonds, urges the public to refrain from unnecessary spending, care must be taken

that in its details such a message does not run counter to the interests of another agency. If Treasury says, "Don't Buy Apples," because it is not necessary, we must see to it that Agriculture's policy of buying more apples to relieve a seasonal over-supply is not violated. Again, when the African campaign was launched, many agencies and their radio programs spoke of the campaign as a second front. This was an unwitting violation of policy, since the White House stated clearly that the African campaign was not properly, and at that stage, a second front.

3. To review Government programs from the standpoint of quality, programs are scrutinized for even minor errors of taste and judgment.

The number of scripts thus cleared amount in Washington alone to a total of between 175 and 200 a week, over and above information bulletins and straight news releases and exclusive of field clearance in the 12 regional offices of the Radio Bureau. The intention clearly is not to impose the dead hand of bureaucratic censorship on Government releases but to secure their orderly distribution, to safeguard the interests of stations in respect to the quantity of program material sent to them and to realize the highest possible standards of taste and of presentation.

#### *Inter-office Relations of the Radio Bureau*

This brief review of the functions and activities of the Radio Bureau covers its external relations only. Nothing has yet been said of its relations to other bureaus within the OWI. While such description lies outside the proper scope of this study, the Radio Bureau's relationship to two of its sister organizations in OWI throws further light on the various activities described above.

a. *Relations with Intelligence Bureau:*<sup>5</sup> The Intelligence Bureau undertakes continuous studies in the field of public opinion to gauge at periodic intervals developing attitudes among the public to current war issues. No information policy can be intelligently carried out without some such acquaintance with what the public knows and does not know, what it feels and how it reacts to the various decisions of Government as these affect the ordinary citizen. By use of sampling techniques, by polls and sample interviews, the Intelligence Bureau keeps Government in touch with the country's information needs. Its studies range from surveys on general attitudes to, say, the enemy or to our different allies, to specific attitudes regarding specific acts of Government, e.g., rationing, oil conservation, etc. Such intelligence reports are used by the Radio Bureau to anticipate misunderstanding and to remedy defects of information. The timing and emphasis of its activities are thus related to accurate information about the public which it seeks to serve. Intelligence takes the pulse and keeps the temperature chart of public opinion. The Radio Bureau, with other operating specialists, provides the preventive or remedial medicine that the charts indicate as necessary.

But in addition to such general surveys, the Radio Bureau relies on the co-operation of Intelligence increasingly to test the effectiveness of its various campaigns and of its experiments in technique. For example, The United Nations Spot Campaign (see page 134) was undertaken avowedly as an experiment in technique. The Intelligence Bureau co-operated by making a sample survey of the public regarding its attitudes to various nations covered in the spot campaign before the campaign was launched. Toward the close of the campaign, a fur-

<sup>5</sup> Since the writing of this article, the functions of the Intelligence Bureau have been taken over by the Bureau of Special Services.

ther sampling of the public was undertaken to check whether and to what extent pre-existent attitudes had been modified by the campaign.

Another example of co-operation is a study on the general question of surfeit. Is the public being overdosed with information? To what information programs and to what appeals is the reaction positive or negative? Answers to such questions are increasingly relevant to the work of the Radio Bureau. Absence of such information has handicapped its efforts hitherto.

b. *Relations with the Campaign Bureau:* It is hardly matter for surprise that in the first stages of its work the OFF, and now the OWI, should have failed properly to integrate the work of its various bureaus. Radio is only one field of operations in which the OWI has defined responsibility. Press, films, and graphics also come within its scope. On the side of organization, the Bureau of Campaigns is the tangible evidence of an effort to secure co-ordinated action by each and all of these media. The dimensions of the problem are suggested by the fact that at any one time, the Bureau of Campaigns may be at work on as many as 60 proposed or active Government campaigns. It is not of course intended that all these campaigns shall be launched concurrently, but in due course the 60 major problems of public information must somehow be disposed of.

The procedure adopted by the Bureau of Campaigns is briefly as follows. To begin with, representatives of all agencies affected by or interested in a given campaign are brought together. The problem is defined. A booklet is then prepared embodying a statement of the general nature of the problem and of its constituent elements. Representatives of the various operating bureaus are then called in to learn at first hand from experts about what the problem is and what specific information

needs to be communicated. Each of the operating bureaus then prepares a plan and time table and works out the details of presentation involved.

Campaigns are given various priority ratings, and the volume of publicity releases is proportionate to the campaign rating.

Now let us see how the execution of such a campaign applies to radio. The separate listing of the Radio Bureau's different methods of handling various themes gives little idea of their relation one to another. Viewed as constituent elements or channels of a single campaign, the degree of their planned co-ordination can be more clearly seen. For a major campaign all of the previously discussed radio services may be used. For a lesser campaign, a decreasing number of these services will be called in. According to the urgency and importance of the campaign, its length may vary from a week to a month or more. The frequency of messages is graduated on a tapering scale diminishing throughout the weeks as it is estimated that a saturation point has been reached.

### *News*

The absence of any reference to radio news service needs explanation. The reason for the omission is the fact that service to the news desks of networks and radio stations falls outside the scope of the Radio Bureau. Control and guidance is the responsibility of the office of Censorship, service falls to the News Bureau of OWI. In the early days of OFF, the then Radio Division sat in with representatives of the industry and of the National Association of Broadcasters and co-operated with them in working out radio's wartime code regarding news dissemination. Certain practices were quickly listed as taboo. The industry no less than OFF was anxious to do everything

in its power to prevent repetition of incidents like the tooth paste announcements that once preceded a world-wide talk by Winston Churchill, or the exuberance of the newscaster who followed up a report of an American military catastrophe with the "good news" of a local cut rate clothing sale. Such expressions as "flash," "bulletin," "headlines from" or "good news" in commercial messages are likewise frowned on because of the misleading effect that they may have. Indeed any tie-up between the news itself and the commercial continuity are felt to be undesirable. Again announcers are advised not to shout, dramatize or otherwise incite audiences to undue excitement by the manner of their delivery of war news bulletins. These rules as those of radio censorship, are unique in that they don't represent mandates of authority. They represent joint agreement between Government and private enterprise. With few exceptions, the spirit and the letter of this agreement have been observed.

### THE UNCOMPLETED TASK

The defects of the various schemes and operations here outlined are as obvious to their authors as they are to outside critics. They may, therefore, be briefly listed and candidly acknowledged. Certain extenuating circumstances will occur to any fair-minded reader of this survey, and apology here is in any case out of place.

Radio's information services, though extensive, are as yet far from complete. There are serious gaps. The most serious, perhaps, is that regarding a full understanding of the underlying causes and issues of the war and of the nations engaged in it. But those concerned with war information can properly protest that here they inherited defects deeply rooted in our



educational system and trailing back a long way in our social history. It was not to be expected that a country that had so long cherished the illusion of self-sufficiency and had so resolutely turned its back on Europe's conflicts, calling, like Mercutio, "a curse on both your houses," should become global-minded overnight. A long-term process of education lies ahead of us. It may well be claimed that we have been slow in getting under way, that more intensive methods are long overdue. But again let us remember that we inherit the peacetime habits and predilections of the listener. It is idle at this date to dispute as to whether and how far radio induced, aided and abetted frivolous tastes and the too often barren and demoralizing craving for escapist trash that characterized much peacetime use of radio, or whether radio responded, innocently and willy-nilly, to conditions consequent on something rotten in our social system. The fact remains that, for serious programs and fine fare, listeners were relatively few. War indeed has precipitated a spiritual and intellectual emergency the practical significance of which is still overlooked by many. Without intellectual grasp of the complexities we face in action on the world stage, on which we're called to play our part, without stomach for the role or faith in its magnificence we are likely to cut a sorry figure. We are like actors whose "call" is imminent while they are still imperfectly acquainted with their lines.

In spite of what has been said of the work of the Campaigns Bureau it is true, to date, that little co-ordinated use of all the media—radio, press, films, etc.—has been achieved. We have had no grand strategy for the concerted presentation of the truths and problems that war has thrust upon us.

We have advanced little in our knowledge of techniques; we have comparatively little evidence of success and failure—of what programs succeed and fail and why. Radio research,

apart from the still crude and by no means infallible or accurate measurement of gross audiences for programs, is still in its infancy. The psychology of radio is still largely an unwritten work. We count heads, but reckon little what registers *in* the head.

And we are ignorant, as has been said, of surfeit—of how much is needed by way of gross impact of ideas or information to register a desired impression.

Our methods, too, some may complain, are still crude, over-insistent, overloud. There is of course no proof either way, but some may charge that the facile penmanship and vocal stereotypes of commercial salesmanship have been ill-applied and too little modified in the communication of serious thoughts and real feelings.

This and much else is true and recognized as truth. The play has scarcely begun. The plot's development remains unresolved. There is still time perhaps, to make amends, to save the play from developing into a mere comedy of errors and give it the quality and dignity of real drama. And still we have time, perhaps, to give public expression to two truths that all our piecemeal efforts have as yet scarcely illuminated.

One is a historical truth. We came late into the war, blind overlong to its implications because blind to our own past. The truth of history, which few have grasped, is that this is pre-eminently *our* war. *We* started it—in 1776! It was America that then conceived and brought to birth an idea—the right of ordinary men to freedom. It was America that introduced a new era of history. In 1776 we set a tide flowing that has not yet spent itself, a tide flowing steadily towards emancipation. It began in America—with the emancipation of common men from kings and princes; it went on—pre-eminently in America—to emancipate men of faith from religious persecution. In

our America, the stream bogged down in the middle of the 19th century, and we fought the bloodiest war in history to set it flowing again, to emancipate the Negro from slavery and to demonstrate the truth that a nation cannot be half slave, half free. The tide flowed on to emancipate women from the status of goods and chattels, workers from unorganized dependence on employers.

The simple issue of this war is whether that tide shall continue to flow on or whether stronger forces and a will more resolute shall stem it and force it to the ebb. There is no standing still. We must go on or we must go back. Lulled into a false sense of security, by the isolation of great distance from other countries and the material comforts wrested from our soil, we came to overlook two facts—that distance has been destroyed by the aeroplane and that even our prosperity, in the modern world of trade and economics, was linked to the prosperity of other countries. And, what is worse, we overlooked a truth of history—that we ourselves started a revolution that is still incomplete, awaiting the full realization of the Century of the Common Man. The Nazis have whipped the youth of Germany into a state of fanatical belief in their own destiny. The Japanese have done the same with their people. Their faith rests on a quicksand.

But have we a comparable faith in the *true* destiny of the ideal that we ourselves gave to the world in 1776? Have we sufficiently conveyed to listeners the lesson of America's own history—that *democracy cannot stand still*, that, indeed, it must regress if it fails to expand? Are the revolutionary forces of America still on the march or have we lapsed into lip service only to what our own ancestors fought for and achieved? Do we perceive that the tide which America set flowing can only surmount the obstacles of greed and selfishness and lust for

power, at home and abroad if it is fed by the tributary streams of other countries like-minded with ourselves? Beyond the mere facts are the truths of our own history, providing us with an incentive more powerful than appeals to our self-interest or defensive slogans of security. *We* have a destiny, to fulfill which we need to tap the reservoir of faith and purpose embodied in our history.

The second truth is an abiding, spiritual truth, akin to the truth associated with our history, but universal, timeless, more profound—and simpler. It is a truth epitomizing the tragedy of the war in which we are involved, expressed many times in history in different words but never better than by an English poet, John Donne, who, on a bed of sickness, stumbled on a paradox. In the solitude of sickness he discovered that he was not alone. Grasp of the full implications of what he then wrote is grasp of the abiding truth on which the outcome of this war and the prospect of peace depends.

No man is an island, entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the Main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as much as if a promontory were, as much as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were. Every man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind. And, therefore, never send to know for whom the Bell tolls. It tolls for thee.

## *RADIO AUDIENCE RESEARCH IN GREAT BRITAIN*

by Robert J. E. Silvey

RADIO AUDIENCE RESEARCH for the British Broadcasting Corporation is a healthy youngster of seven years, almost four of which have been years of war. Its aims and methods, and the conditions under which it has to work, naturally differ from those of Radio Research in the United States. The fact that British broadcast time is not sold to advertisers has two vital bearings on radio research—or listener research as it is called here—for the BBC. It means that there are no sponsor's sales curves which can be examined for an indication of the effectiveness of programs. It also means that listener research is not involved in the process of selling time.

The war has had a profound effect on British broadcasting. Quite apart from an enormous expansion in short-wave services, with which we are not concerned here, the British listener's radio diet has altered radically. To quote a few examples: He must now, unless he listens to enemy, or to the rare neutral stations, choose between two medium-wave alternatives, known as the Home Service and the Forces Program. On the other hand, he can hear News bulletins at either 7:00 A.M., 8:00 A.M. or 1:00 P.M., as well as at 6:00 P.M., 9:00 P.M. and midnight, whereas before the war, by agreement with the Press, no news was broadcast before 6:00 P.M. The austerity of the BBC's previous Sunday programs was proverbial. Now the lis-

tener finds all types of programs represented in the Sunday schedule.

The effect of war conditions upon listener research was no less considerable. The dispersal of a substantial proportion of the population from the large cities, the black-out and, as time went on, the increasing call-up of men and women for the Forces and for industry all helped to bring about radical changes in the map of broadcasting. It was for listener research to trace that map.

But the objectives of listener research can be defined in such a way as to hold good for peace or war. Briefly they are:

- (1) To build up a corpus of information on the basic tastes and habits of the listening public.
- (2) To measure the quantity of listening hour by hour.
- (3) To assess the reactions of listeners to individual programs.
- (4) To assess the reactions of listeners to the broad principles of BBC policy.
- (5) To supply a continuous stream of information on the public attitude to problems with which broadcasting should deal.

#### PRELIMINARY EXPERIMENTS

During the last three years of uneasy peace the activities of the BBC Listener Research Department were largely devoted to methodological experiments. These were mostly concerned with the extent to which the voluntary co-operation of listeners could be enlisted in listener research and the degree of reliability which could be attached to the results so obtained.

For example, in an attempt to achieve objective (1) above,

questionnaires were sent to random samples of wireless license holders and the results were compared with those obtained by sending the same questionnaire to any listener who cared to apply for it. In an attempt to meet objective (2), panels of listeners were enrolled to act as "listening log-keepers," recording the programs that they listened to day by day, and the results were compared with sample interviews. The panel method was also applied to objective (3). Volunteers undertook to listen to, and report upon, individual broadcasts, and experiments in the wording of questions, the lay-out of questionnaires, and the use of rewards were carried out.

One of the most valuable results of all these experiments was the discovery that there existed, among British listeners, an almost illimitable goodwill towards the BBC. Provided they were told frankly and clearly what they were required to do, and given assurances that their results were contributing to the improvement of broadcast programs, there was never at any time any insuperable difficulty in securing the required degree of co-operation from all types of listeners. Although, as will be shown later in this paper, listener research no longer relies exclusively on voluntary co-operation, this does still play a vital part in British radio research. It may, therefore, be wise to set out at once its rationale. No one will deny its disadvantages, but it is well to be clear what the limits of these disadvantages are, for experience has shown that there is no practical alternative to the use of voluntary co-operation if certain jobs are to be done.

The central problem can be stated thus: in what respects and to what extent, if at all, are volunteers unrepresentative? And, if they are unrepresentative, in what respects and to what extent must conclusions drawn from the study of their behavior

and attitudes be modified before they are applied as generalizations to "universes" of listeners?

In a great many respects the representativeness of volunteers can be measured and, if the supply is great enough, a process of "selective draft" can be applied to make the group whose offers of help are accepted comparable in structure to the universe it is required to represent. Characteristics which can be treated in this way include sex, age, geographical and socio-economic distribution. There remain, however, certain relevant characteristics which are difficult to measure and to which, even if they could be measured, the selective draft principle could not, in the nature of things, be applied.

The very act of volunteering singles out the volunteer as untypical for the obvious reason that not everyone who hears an appeal for volunteers responds to it. But this may, or may not, be of practical significance. If, for example, a group of volunteers are asked to pass judgment on a program and their answers are found to differ in no way from those of a random sample of the "universe," then the untypicality of the volunteers has in this case no practical significance.

It has never been feasible to carry out a complete set of tests which would establish once and for all how far the reactions of volunteers are untypical. But a sufficient amount of data has been accumulated to provide a working hypothesis which considerable subsequent experience has done nothing to invalidate. Before stating this hypothesis it is necessary first to call attention to the fact that the listening public does not consist of a mass of individual listeners whose degree of interest in the radio is uniform. At the one extreme there are listeners to whom broadcasting means a great deal, at the other there are listeners who, at the most, do no more than switch on news bulletins, and who hear programs only as a last resort when



there is nothing else to do. No data as yet exist as to the proportions in which various general attitudes to broadcasting are to be found, but it is not unsafe to assume that this might be represented in the form of a pyramid, with the keen listeners at its apex and the casual constituting its base. It should be clearly recognized, however, that the position of any individual listener in this diagram is not necessarily, though it may be incidentally, dependent on such factors as the height of his brow and the size of his income. The sole criterion is his attitude towards radio.

The hypothesis which we are seeking to explain is based on the not unreasonable assumption that listeners who volunteer to take part, without payment, in listener research work, will tend to be drawn from the apex of the pyramid. That is to say, the average volunteer will be more interested in radio than the average member of the listening public. Here we come to the heart of the matter. Our hypothesis is that the difference between the apex and the base is not one of quality but of degree, that the reactions of keen listeners are not fundamentally different in kind from those of casual listeners, but are of a more intense character; that though they are keen listeners, clearer as to their own likes and dislikes, those likes and dislikes are, on the average, the same as those which casual listeners feel in a much fainter degree.

If this hypothesis is accepted then the conclusion which follows is this: A sample, selected as carefully as possible, from a group of listeners who volunteer to help in listener research work, will give results which are almost certainly different from those which would be given by a random sample of the universe, but the difference will be one of exaggeration and not contradiction, so that policy conclusions based upon the sample of volunteers are unlikely to do any fundamental injustice to

listeners generally. This is not, of course, a hypothesis without precedent. It is precisely the same as that employed by tea blenders when they rely upon professional tea-tasters to guide them in anticipating public taste. The tea-taster has a far more refined palate than the average tea-drinker, but here again the difference is one of degree only. The tea-taster is the average tea-drinker, raised to the *n*th power.<sup>1</sup>

Before leaving the subject a warning note must be sounded. Nothing which has been said should be taken as indicating that the importance of the size of the sample of volunteers can be ignored. The limitations attaching to small samples obviously apply with no less forces here than elsewhere.

#### CURRENT TECHNIQUES OF LISTENER RESEARCH

##### *A Continuous Survey of Listening*

Listener research methods have now crystallized to a considerable extent—though naturally experiment continues unceasingly. Three basic methods are now employed. The first is a continuous survey of listening. Its primary, but not its sole, purpose is the measurement of the *quantity of listening*. Ever since December 1939 a daily quota of 800 interviews have been made for the survey. The quota is so distributed as to be

<sup>1</sup> In his book *Skyscrapers and Other Essays*, published in 1931, Professor L. B. Namier advances a similar theory to account for the operation of public opinion in representative government. He writes: "Where is it [public opinion] to be found? And how is it to be ascertained? How many people hold clear, articulate views about the most important national concern?" . . . "The true ideal of representative government is to place men in office who are likely to react to problems, situations and events in the same way as the great mass of their countrymen, only to do so first and in a more articulate and deliberate manner than the masses can; this is called leadership. In other words, the rulers, if properly chosen, should be able to find the directive of public opinion in their own consciousness and feelings; and if they fail to find it there, they are not likely to ascertain it correctly by any other means."

representative in terms of sex, socio-economic class, age and geographical distribution of the whole adult population of Great Britain. Save for a break of ten days during the first week of the blitz—when the department was “bombed out” of its headquarters—the continuity of the survey has been maintained. It so happened that Coventry was included in the schedule for investigation at the time of its severe bombing. The investigator working there carried on and he never failed to turn in his quota: though he confessed to finding the work “a little difficult” the morning after the great raid.<sup>2</sup>

The interview is of the aided recall type. Each investigator carries with him a list of the previous day’s broadcasts, chronologically arranged. Having secured his contact he must record—or “log”—the programs heard on the previous day. Before he undertakes an assignment, he is required to study a specially compiled “manual” which lays down the principles under which the work is to be done and carries instructions on such matters as “what to do if the contact hasn’t heard the whole of an item” or “how to deal with people who only listen with half an ear—or less.” The logs of the sample’s listening are translated, by the Hollerith punch-card system, into daily tabulations of the quantity of listening expressed in percentages, collectively known as the *General Listening Barometer*.

Although the “logging” is the primary purpose of the survey it is not, as has been said, the sole purpose. It has, for instance, been found that the interview is appreciably assisted if the investigator is armed with additional questions to put to his contacts. These additional questions are of two types: a constant and a variable. The variable questions may deal with any aspect of broadcasting, subject only to the limits imposed by

<sup>2</sup> Throughout the whole of this period the fieldwork of the Survey was carried out for the BBC by the British Institute of Public Opinion.

the nature of the interview. On occasions it has dealt with the degree of confidence which listeners repose in broadcast news bulletins, at other times with factual points on such matters as the age of the contact's receiver. Other questions have sought to establish the relative popularity of variety artists, cinema organists, conductors or well-known broadcasters.

The usual procedure is for the investigator to be supplied with the exact wording of the question, which is so drawn as to permit of a limited number of pre-codable answers. Recently, however, this practice has, in one particular type of inquiry, been varied, with valuable results. This inquiry was an attempt to measure the basic attitudes of the listening public towards the various types of broadcast output. Types were taken one by one and investigators were instructed to introduce the "type of the week"—say *Plays* or *Variety*—into the conversation with the contact. Considerable freedom was allowed to investigators in the form in which their inquiries were made, but the end-process had to be the classification of the informant according to a five-point scale. "A" was to receive the enthusiasts for the type, "C" the neutrals, and "E" those to whom the type was anathema, with "B" and "D" taking intermediate positions. Each type was investigated for at least one week so as to accumulate for each one a sample of some 5,000 (persons without sets being excluded).

One "consistency" check was available: a day-by-day comparison of the grading of each contact with his actual listening behavior in respect of programs of the type in question. From this kind of check the system emerged unscathed. It is now felt to have passed the experimental stage, and plans have been made for an annual repetition of the inquiry. This may be cited as an example of the employment of the Survey as a means

towards the achievement of objective (1)—to build up a corpus of information on the basic tastes of the listening public.

The constant question is a simple one; it reads, "Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with current BBC programs?" The alternative answers *Yes*, *No* and *No Opinion* are provided, and supplementary comments are recorded verbatim. Tabulations of the answers are made weekly, and the percentage "satisfied" is plotted as a curve known as the BBC *Thermometer*. Experience has shown that the invitation to contacts to comment, though necessary as part of the interview, yields little of value for research purposes. Investigators have not time to probe, and comments are usually of a superficial and conventional character, whether laudatory or condemnatory.

### *Listening Panels*

The second method of inquiry is known as the Listening Panel method. Its primary purpose is to assess the *reactions of listeners* to programs which they hear. Panels are made up of volunteers who work without reward. They are recruited in the first instance by microphone appeal in which the duties are clearly explained. The first response of volunteers goes through a "sieve" which consists of requiring them to complete a detailed form indicating their program preferences and stating a number of necessary personal particulars about themselves. It is found that some 30 per cent usually fail to complete this form and are, therefore, not enrolled as willing panel members. From the remainder a number of panels are built up. At the time of writing there are five of these: a (Serious) Music Panel, a Talks and Discussions Panel, a Feature (Documentary) Programs Panel, and a Plays Panel, each of 600 members, and a Light Entertainment Panel of 1,100 members. As far as possible listeners are drafted to the panel which they

wish to join. In no case is a listener allowed to join a panel which deals with programs in which he is not interested.

Panel members receive, at the beginning of each week, three questionnaires relating to programs to be broadcast during the ensuing seven days. They are particularly enjoined *not* to vary their normal listening habits but to listen to, and report upon, only those programs to which they probably would in any case have listened. The questionnaire contains up to five or six questions designed, in consultation with the producer, to throw light upon particular points in the broadcast; a space for general comment, and a request to "mark" the program on a scale from 0 to 10.

Analysis of the returned questionnaires forms the basis of reports on fifteen individual programs a week. Each report shows the extent to which the program has been heard—obtained from the Listening Barometer, its Appreciation Index, i.e., the average of "marks" awarded, and the conclusions drawn from the tabulation of the answers to questions and the general comments.

The Listening Panels, consisting as they do of groups of the more articulate listeners with special interest in particular types of programs, can be used as sounding boards for points of general policy—unrelated to particular broadcasts—concerning the types of output which they serve.

### *Local Correspondents*

The third method of listener research currently employed in Great Britain is a system of Local Correspondents, together with a parallel system of Correspondents in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Correspondents are listeners who, by the nature of their normal activities, are *well placed to hear and sound the opinions of listeners*—rural store-keepers, welfare workers, in-

surance collectors, club secretaries, trade union secretaries, for example. Once again they are recruited from those who offer their services on hearing broadcast appeals and who can show that they are in fact able to collect and reflect opinions.

They are divided at random into four groups, each of which receives a questionnaire once in four weeks. The questionnaires may deal with any aspect closely, or remotely, connected with broadcasting. Within recent months questions have been asked concerning the presentation of news bulletins, the kind of information which listeners would welcome concerning the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R., the relative standing of the radio and the press as sources of news, the appeal of long standing variety acts, and the progress of the fuel economy campaign.

It is of the highest importance that Correspondents should not be taxed beyond their strength. They should not be required to make any inquiry involving the expertise of social investigation: questions must be simple—the place for expertise is in the analysis. At the same time, the best results are obtained when Correspondents are taken frankly into the BBC's confidence, told the objects of the inquiry, and the reasons why it is being made.

In order to encourage all listener research workers, whether voluntary or paid, to feel themselves part of a team, a monthly News Letter is circulated, giving in simple language some of the more interesting results, explaining the workings of the Headquarters staff, and sometimes retailing some of the lighter moments of listener research, as when a soldier, asked whether he liked Bing Crosby, replied, "My girl adores him, I adore my girl."

This, then, in briefest terms is the present shape of the BBC Listener Research Department's organization. It would be wrong to imagine that the three tools which have been evolved

have necessarily reached their most perfect forms. A constant process of adaptation and modification is indeed at work. But by and large, no fundamental change in them seems called for at present. Ninety per cent of the problems which listener research is called upon to solve yield their secrets to one or a combination of two or more of these methods.

### SOME RESULTS OF LISTENER RESEARCH

In the compass of the present paper it will not be possible to do more than cite examples of results obtained by listener research. Since, at the outbreak of the war, listener research had barely emerged from its adolescence, these results will inevitably be from among those obtained in the years of war-time listener research.

#### *Listeners' Tastes*

In Great Britain, as in the U.S.A., the civilian listening public is not far short of being coterminous with the whole civilian population. In both countries they listen, in the main, under similar conditions—in family groups. The outstanding exception is the absence in that country of car radio. Private motoring in Great Britain virtually no longer exists. The word “civilian” has been used advisedly. A substantial proportion of the male population of Great Britain is now in the Services. Exact data as to the distribution of radio receivers among them are not available, but much is known about their listening conditions which differ radically from those of civilian life. The vast majority of the personnel of the Services must listen, if at all, in canteens, barrack rooms or huts. These are noisy places, where, with the best will in the world, programs which call for



quiet, undistracted listening stand little chance of obtaining a hearing. The way of the "minority audience" is hard.

In planning its programs the BBC has rightly taken cognizance of these facts. One of its two services is dedicated to the Forces—it is known, in fact, as the Forces Program. This program consists in very large measure of light material which can be listened to under "canteen conditions." The more classical music, when it is given, must eschew concert-hall presentation. Talks must be short. Even the lighter programs, which constitute the vast majority of its content, must be so designed as not to lose their appeal if they have to be heard in competition with the noise of dominoes, darts playing, conversation, and the consumption of cocoa.

It is, however, a very significant fact that in so designing a special Forces Program the BBC has met a widespread need on the part of the civilian public. A recent inquiry of a random sample of listeners showed that 16 per cent of them always, and another 25 per cent of them usually, prefer the Forces Program to the Home Service. On the other hand, only 1 per cent violently disliked it. For corroborative evidence we can turn to the evidence of the Listening Barometer. This, which records action and not intention, shows that of those who listen to the BBC, on the average about 35 per cent to 45 per cent are usually listening to the Home Service, whereas 55 per cent to 65 per cent are usually listening to the Forces Program. (All news bulletins are simultaneously broadcast in both services.)

A picture of the listening tastes of the British public is revealed by the results of the inquiries, described earlier, in which random samples of listeners (each of at least 5,000) were classified on a five-point scale denoting their attitude to the main types of program output. For those who want to compare

such information with American experiences, a number of detailed tables are reported and discussed in Appendix E, Tables 1-7. In the main text we stress findings closely related to recent developments. In 1942, the inquiries of 1941 were repeated—each one about twelve months after its first occasion. These “second inquiries” reveal some significant changes in public taste. They are shown in Table 1. Group A represents those

TABLE 1.—COMPARISONS OF “TASTE” INQUIRIES MADE AT 12-MONTHLY INTERVALS

|                      | <i>Proportion of the listening public classified as</i> |               |               |               |               | <i>Total</i><br>% |
|----------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
|                      | <i>A</i><br>%   | <i>B</i><br>% | <i>C</i><br>% | <i>D</i><br>% | <i>E</i><br>% |                   |
| Variety              |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| September 1941 ..... | 51  | 28            | 13            | 5             | 3             | 100               |
| September 1942 ..... | 35  | 33            | 20            | 9             | 3             | 100               |
| Cinema Organs        |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| August 1941 .....    | 34  | 26            | 23            | 10            | 7             | 100               |
| August 1942 .....    | 27  | 23            | 27            | 13            | 10            | 100               |
| Plays                |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| July 1941 .....      | 20  | 27            | 25            | 19            | 9             | 100               |
| August 1942 .....    | 31  | 24            | 23            | 12            | 10            | 100               |
| Brass Bands          |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| August 1941 .....    | 21  | 24            | 25            | 17            | 13            | 100               |
| August 1942 .....    | 21  | 23            | 27            | 17            | 12            | 100               |
| Symphony Concerts    |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| September 1941 ..... | 10  | 13            | 17            | 20            | 40            | 100               |
| August 1942 .....    | 11  | 14            | 23            | 23            | 29            | 100               |
| Chamber Music        |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| August 1941 .....    | 5   | 8             | 17            | 24            | 46            | 100               |
| August 1942 .....    | 7   | 11            | 21            | 23            | 38            | 100               |
| Religious Services   |   |               |               |               |               |                   |
| September 1941 ..... | 16  | 25            | 30            | 18            | 11            | 100               |
| September 1942 ..... | 21  | 26            | 27            | 17            | 9             | 100               |

very enthusiastic, Group C those who are neutral to the program type, and Group E those who are hostile, with Groups B and D representing intermediate positions.

It will be seen that there has been a marked increase in the seriousness of public taste. Considerably fewer people are en-

thusiastic about Variety<sup>3</sup> or Cinema Organs than were so a year ago. On the other hand, a significant increase in the popularity of Plays<sup>4</sup> and Religious Services will be noted as well as a remarkable decrease in the frequency of marked hostility to Chamber Music and Symphony Concerts. Little change in the distribution of taste for Brass Bands is noticeable.

### *The Audience for News*

As has already been said, the British listener has now only two alternatives on medium waves from which to choose—the Home Service and the Program for the Forces. The coverage of both is pretty complete over the whole of the British Isles. The Home Service is at present available from 7:00 A.M. until 12:15 A.M. and the Program for the Forces from 6:30 A.M. until 11:00 P.M. News bulletins are broadcast, in both services, at 7:00 and 8:00 A.M. (9:00 A.M. on Sundays), 1:00 P.M., 6:00 P.M., 9:00 P.M. and midnight. In the daily listening curve these news bulletins stand out as precipitous mountains. The limits within which news bulletin audiences varied during September 1942 (the percentages are of the adult population of Great Britain) are shown in Table 2.

Normally, on a typical weekday about 25 per cent of the adult civilian population listen to no news bulletins at all, 18 per cent listen to one, 23 per cent listen to two, 22 per cent to three, and 12 per cent to four or more. The number listened to each day, in a typical week in September 1942, was 1.6 per adult member of the population. To a very large extent the

<sup>3</sup> To some extent this may be a reflection of the fact that two popular series which were running in September 1941 had not been replaced by anything of equal popularity in September 1942.

<sup>4</sup> It may be remarked that the term Plays in British radio does not include quarter-hour sketches of the "washboard weeper" type. Much of this output is 45 to 60 minutes in length and established dramatists are exceedingly well represented.

TABLE 2.—LIMITS WITHIN WHICH NEWS BULLETIN AUDIENCES VARIED DURING SEPTEMBER 1942

| <i>Weekdays</i>    |             |           | <i>Sundays</i>     |             |           |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
|                    | <i>From</i> | <i>To</i> |                    | <i>From</i> | <i>To</i> |
|                    | <i>%</i>    | <i>%</i>  |                    | <i>%</i>    | <i>%</i>  |
| 7:00 A.M. . . . .  | 16          | 21        | 7:00 A.M. . . . .  | 6           | 8         |
| 8:00 A.M. . . . .  | 25          | 30        | 9:00 A.M. . . . .  | 28          | 30        |
| 1:00 P.M. . . . .  | 29          | 37        | 1:00 P.M. . . . .  | 42          | 47        |
| 6:00 P.M. . . . .  | 27          | 38        | 6:00 P.M. . . . .  | 34          | 38        |
| 9:00 P.M. . . . .  | 37          | 49        | 9:00 P.M. . . . .  | 40          | 43        |
| Midnight . . . . . | 4           | 9         | Midnight . . . . . | 4           | 6         |

8:00 A.M. bulletin is a repetition of the 7:00 A.M. one and consequently the overlap between them is small. The most frequent combinations of bulletins heard are the 8:00 A.M. and the 6:00 P.M., and the 1:00 P.M. and the 9:00 P.M.

Since "the news" in any case draws so large a public, its audience is relatively inelastic; nevertheless, an increase on special occasions is observable. When it is announced that the Prime Minister will speak before the 9:00 P.M. news and 60 per cent or 70 per cent tune in to hear him, the news figure will jump to nearly 60 per cent. On the evening of the Dieppe Raid the 9:00 P.M. news figure jumped to 52 per cent.

### *The Audience for Entertainment*

The frequency of listening to news has a marked effect on the extent to which entertainment is listened (if we may use the term loosely to cover all programs other than News and Government Announcements). Programs which follow the news benefit by a carry-over—the tendency for people to leave their radios switched on. Thus, the Sunday evening talk at 9:15—known as the Postscript to the News—benefits very materially from following the most popular news bulletin of the day. This period has been sedulously built up as one at which well-known persons can deliver fireside chats on matters of national

importance. On the other hand, short programs which precede the news benefit as well—presumably because of the unreliability of the average listener's watch. These factors also operate, in proportionate degree, to benefit programs which follow any peak broadcast. Of the other factors which determine the size of an audience, easily the most important is, of course, time of day. The average percentage of the adult population who are listening to the BBC entertainment programs at any given moment in the daytime (up to 6:00 P.M.) is about 12 per cent, the corresponding figure in the evening (after 6:00 P.M.) is about 18 per cent. These audiences are normally split between the two alternative programs, though sometimes programs are given on both Services, known technically as SB (simultaneously broadcast). Typical audience figures for September 1942 are given in Appendix E, Table 8. Some cases of exceptional audience figures within recent months are shown in Table 3 (all are evening programs with the exception as stated).

TABLE 3.—EXAMPLES OF HIGH AUDIENCE FIGURES DURING 1942<sup>a</sup>

|   | <i>Per cent of adult<br/>civilian population</i> |
|---|--|
| Radio adaptations of films:                                       |  |
| "Next of Kin" . . . . .   | 24   |
| "How Green Was My Valley" . . . . .                               | 22   |
| "The Young Mr. Pitt" . . . . .                                    | 19   |
| Special service on National Day of Prayer (11:00 A.M.) . . . . .  | 18   |
| Gilbert and Sullivan opera . . . . .                              | 16   |
| Play: "The Weakness of Frau Borkhardt" . . . . .                  | 20   |
| Handel's Oratorio: "Messiah" . . . . .                            | 19   |
| Feature program on Russian resistance: "Salute to Life" . . . . . | 16   |
| Music production: "Homage to Johann Strauss" . . . . .            | 15   |
| Opening concert of the Promenade Season . . . . .                 | 10   |

<sup>a</sup> All evening programs except where stated.

### *Sectional Listening*

The average length of BBC entertainment programs is about twenty-five minutes. Table 4 shows the number of programs

heard each day by the average adult in a typical week in September 1942, Monday through Saturday.

TABLE 4.—NUMBER OF ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS HEARD PER DAY PER ADULT IN TYPICAL WEEK, SEPTEMBER 1942

|                          | <i>Daytime</i><br>(Before 6:00 P.M.) | <i>Evening</i><br>(After 6:00 P.M.) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Upper middle class ..... | 1.83                                 | 1.59                                |
| Lower middle class ..... | 2.41                                 | 1.92                                |
| Working class .....      | 2.05                                 | 1.64                                |
| Men .....                | 1.09                                 | 1.66                                |
| Women .....              | 2.91                                 | 1.73                                |
| Age groups—              |                                      |                                     |
| 16-19 .....              | 1.53                                 | 1.77                                |
| 20-29 .....              | 2.09                                 | 1.67                                |
| 30-49 .....              | 2.04                                 | 1.63                                |
| 50 and over .....        | 2.37                                 | 1.52                                |

As an examination of Table 4 shows, the lower middle class are the greatest listeners. Naturally in the daytime women listen very much more than men, but even in the evening they are also rather greater listeners. The oldest age group are greater listeners in the daytime. In the evening the differences between age groups are less marked, but it is in the oldest age

TABLE 5.—NUMBER OF NEWS BULLETINS HEARD PER DAY PER ADULT IN TYPICAL WEEK, SEPTEMBER 1942

|                          | <i>Daytime</i><br>(3 bulletins<br>broadcast) | <i>Evening</i><br>(3 bulletins<br>broadcast) |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Upper middle class ..... | 0.86   | 0.95   |
| Lower middle class ..... | 0.92   | 0.96   |
| Working class .....      | 0.73   | 0.82   |
| Men .....                | 0.65   | 0.80   |
| Women .....              | 0.88   | 0.82   |
| Age groups—              |  |  |
| 16-19 .....              | 0.59   | 0.63   |
| 20-29 .....              | 0.70   | 0.73   |
| 30-49 .....              | 0.79   | 0.87   |
| 50 and over .....        | 0.85   | 0.83   |

groups where least listening is done: a reflection of the fact that older people tend to go to bed earlier.

News bulletin listening follows rather a different pattern. The figures in Table 5 have been extracted for the same period. They show the average number of bulletins heard by each category of listeners.

As indicated in Table 5, the working class listen to news bulletins markedly less than other classes. Women listen slightly more than men in the evening, and the youngest age group listens less than its elders even in the evening.

### *Fluctuations in the Level of Listening*

Figure 1 illustrates the extent to which the general level of listening fluctuates from month to month.

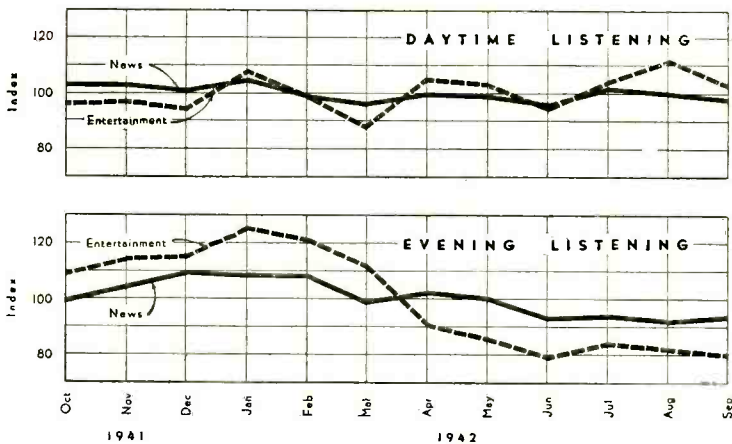


FIG. 1.—INDEX NUMBERS SHOWING THE LEVEL OF LISTENING TO ENTERTAINMENT AND NEWS FROM OCTOBER 1, 1941, TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1942

It will be seen, from the curves in Figure 1, that the level of news listening is subject to far less fluctuation than that of

entertainment listening. Thus, the daytime news listening index fluctuated from 96 to 105—100 being the average listening level for the total year—whereas the daytime entertainment listening index moved between 88 and 111. Similarly, the evening news listening index fluctuated between 92 and 109, whereas the evening entertainment listening index moved between 79 and 125.

Daytime listening of any kind is subject to less variation than evening listening for the obvious reason that the variations in the hours of darkness only affect the evening. Hence it is in the level of evening listening that seasonal fluctuations may be expected to be most noticeable. So far as news listening is concerned, the seasonal variation is not very great. The December evening news listening index is 109 as compared with 93 for June, i.e., 17 per cent higher. But the seasonal variations in listening to entertainment is pronounced. The evening entertainment index figures mount to a peak of 125 in January and fall to a trough of 79 in June, making January nearly 60 per cent higher than June.

#### *Appreciation of Programs*

If the whole concern of the BBC were to attract the maximum number of listeners to every program, then listener research would have fulfilled its main task by providing a means by which the number of listeners could be assessed. But to regard "large numbers" as the sole objective would be the most superficial form of democracy, which has been aptly defined as a state in which minorities get a square deal. Furthermore, to assess the relative merits of two programs by counting the number of people who listened to them and ignoring the extent to which the programs were enjoyed, would be like trying to assess the accommodation in two buildings by comparing the



acreage of ground space which they cover without counting the number of floors in each one.

Hence the existence of a systematic study of the way in which programs are received by those who choose to hear them. The method by which this is done—the Listening Panels—has already been described. Perhaps the most striking general conclusion is the absence of any correlation between the size of an audience and the quantity of pleasure which it gives to those who hear it. Numerous cases exist of programs, such as chamber music recitals, with small audiences but with higher Appreciation Indices than, say, variety programs with audiences many times as great. Even within a single category of programs an absence of such correlation is evident. Thus, during the three months ended mid-September 1942 forty-four plays were reported upon by the Plays Panel. The results are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6.—RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN APPRECIATION INDICES AND AUDIENCE FIGURES FOR PLAYS FROM MID-JUNE TO MID-SEPTEMBER 1942

|   | <i>Average audience</i><br>% |
|---|------------------------------|
| 12 plays with Appreciation Index of over 80 . . . . . | 8.7                          |
| 21 plays with Appreciation Index of 70-79 . . . . .   | 9.6                          |
| 10 plays with Appreciation Index of 60-69 . . . . .   | 8.5                          |
| 1 play with Appreciation Index of 56 . . . . .        | 8.5                          |

The Listening Panel method makes it possible to locate the source of a program's success or failure among the many factors which may contribute to this. In Plays it has been found that the quality of acting is generally regarded as uniformly high, and that if listeners dislike a play this is sometimes because of defects in production but more often because of dislike of the theme. In Variety again, the standard of performance is seldom the cause of a program's falling below standard; the script is far more often held to be responsible. In Talks the

voice and manner of the speaker are factors probably of equal importance with the script. In Music the choice of the program plays a greater part in determining the listener's enjoyment than the quality of the performance. These may seem somewhat obvious conclusions but it should be remembered that the value of this part of the listener research service does not reside in general conclusions but in their application to individual programs.

### *Listeners and BBC Policy*

Since the war began listener research has thrown light on the listening public's attitude to a great many features of broadcasting policy, largely by recourse to Local Correspondents whose function has already been described. A few examples will be sufficient to indicate their scope.

(1) As a wartime measure the BBC formed a number of Repertory Companies as a permanent pool from which players in drama, documentary, and variety programs could be drawn. Some misgivings were felt lest the frequent use of familiar voices should irritate listeners. Inquiries showed that these misgivings were not well founded; far from this being the case, the prevalent feeling was positively in favor of the use of the "reps," considerable interest being taken in hearing well-known voices in different roles.

(2) A substantial number of people in Great Britain have now to "stand by" between midnight and 7:00 A.M. There are Air Raid Wardens, Fire Guards, shift-workers, to say nothing of Anti-Aircraft defenses. Often all but a nucleus of these may relax, though they must remain awake, and it was, therefore, natural that the question of broadcasting during these hours should receive consideration. The issue is not a simple one however. While the few are awake, the many are asleep, and

most of the duty-posts are cheek by jowl with homes where people are sleeping. The question was, therefore, whether the demand for programs was such as to justify the possible disturbance of the rest of those not on duty.

Inquiries were made, not of those always on duty, nor of those never on duty in the small hours, but of those with a foot in both camps. The answer was decisive. They replied that rather than have their rest jeopardized when off duty, they would prefer not to hear programs when on duty.

(3) It is customary, when Parliament is sitting, for the 9:00 P.M. News period to be extended from its normal twenty-minute length to twenty-five minutes, the last part of the period being devoted to a summary of the day's proceedings in Parliament. Inquiries were made about the popularity of this policy. The results were an interesting commentary on the vitality of the democratic spirit. While it was true that only a minority of listeners made a regular practice of listening to the full Parliamentary reports (though this minority was a very substantial one), there was no demand that they should be eliminated. It was as though those who did not listen to these reports every day were glad to feel they were there, much as the man who spends Sunday on the golf-course would sincerely regret to hear that the Churches had closed their doors!

(4) Though to American ears all British accents may sound alike, such a notion would be incomprehensible to the average Britisher. Every region has its distinctive speech. The Cockney can identify the Lancashire man before the latter has uttered a sentence; acute ears can even differentiate between voices from half a dozen counties in a region smaller than one New England state.

Traditionally Lancashire is the accent of comedy, but though inquiries showed that it is acceptable in that context all over

England, they revealed that it was markedly less popular in Scotland. Cockney was found to be unpopular in Scotland and Wales and, to a lesser extent in the North of England. The Scottish accent in comedians is unpopular in Wales and the West of England. The Irish accent is not unpopular in England, but the Welsh accent is definitely not liked by very large numbers of non-Welsh listeners.

This particular inquiry did not cover the "American accent" which, to most Britishers, is a single, easily identifiable, speech. The talkies have gone far to familiarize us with it and it may be surmised that it is only unintelligible, if at all, to the older, and more conservative, age groups. Furthermore, it is difficult to disentangle obscurity which arises from non-British pronunciation and idiom, from that which arises from the greater tempo of much American speech. There is evidence that the latter, in such programs as those of Jack Benny and Bob Hope, sometimes baffles British ears.

(5) In the height of the 1940 blitz the machinery of Local Correspondents was employed to survey the conditions of listening at this time. It was found that the vast majority of people sheltered in their own homes and therefore had access to their radio receivers. At first people tended to switch them off so as "to hear what was going on." But as they became accustomed to nightly raids the demand for broadcasting reasserted itself, first for news and then for entertainment. Gradually, after a slump of about 33 per cent, the level of listening to entertainment reverted to normal. One effect of raids upon public taste was similar to that of any crisis: the sharpening of appetites all round. Those who always prefer more serious programs declare that "in these grave days frivolous programs are inappropriate." Those who always prefer lighter material de-

clare that the BBC "should cut out these symphony concerts and talks and take our minds off the war."

### *Broadcasting and Public Opinion*

Mention has been made of the use of listener research for the study of the public attitude towards problems with which broadcasting should deal. In pursuit of this aim inquiries have been made on such matters as the prevailing feeling towards the Indian Question, the Food Problem, the Fuel Shortage, and Post War Reconstruction. "What do people want to know about the U.S.A." was the theme of an extensive study—and the answer can be put in a sentence: "More about the everyday lives of ordinary people."

The following may be cited as an example of this type of inquiry. Three statements were laid before the network of Local Correspondents. They were asked to indicate whether, in their experience, each statement represented the views of all, a majority, a minority, or none of the people with whom they were normally in contact.

The three statements were:

- (i) "Broadcast sermons and religious talks should be confined to questions of personal spiritual faith, life and conduct."
- (ii) "Broadcast sermons and religious talks should not fail to deal with the application of Christianity to public affairs, such as political and economic problems."
- (iii) "It doesn't matter what broadcast sermons and religious talks deal with, because people have lost confidence in religious institutions."

Some 650 Local Correspondents took part in this inquiry and their replies are summarized in Table 7.

The nature of the method employed is not sufficiently precise to enable any exact estimate to be made of the answers

## 176 RADIO AUDIENCE RESEARCH IN GREAT BRITAIN

TABLE 7.—ANSWERS OF LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS TO QUESTIONS ON THE SCOPE OF RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

|                                    | <i>Percentage of Local<br/>Correspondents who said<br/>that Statement (i) represented<br/>the views of—</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|
| All of their contacts .....        | 3   |
| A majority of their contacts ..... | 35  |
| A minority of their contacts ..... | 55  |
| None of their contacts .....       | 7   |
| Total .....                        | 100   |

|                                    | <i>Percentage of Local<br/>Correspondents who said<br/>that Statement (ii) represented<br/>the views of—</i> |
|------------------------------------|--|
| All of their contacts .....        | 3  |
| A majority of their contacts ..... | 60   |
| A minority of their contacts ..... | 33   |
| None of their contacts .....       | 4  |
| Total .....                        | 100  |

|                                    | <i>Percentage of Local<br/>Correspondents who said<br/>that Statement (iii) represented<br/>the views of—</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|
| All of their contacts .....        | 1   |
| A majority of their contacts ..... | 7   |
| A minority of their contacts ..... | 61  |
| None of their contacts .....       | 31  |
| Total .....                        | 100   |

which would have come from a random sample of the public, but the trend of opinion is clear: the bulk of the public does not regard the issue with indifference, it believes that religious broadcasts should be concerned with the application of Christianity to public affairs.

In conclusion it should be stated that listener research has been, and will continue to be, a severely practical activity. Depending as it does upon public funds, the BBC has not felt it right to subsidize academic research, and certainly will not do so in wartime when every activity must be submitted to the test

of utility. Furthermore, listener research is, and must always remain, the servant of programs. Its function to the broadcaster is precisely that of the chart to the navigator: it records the soundings, but does not dictate the course. Once let it be allowed to usurp its proper function, and broadcasting will cease to be a living creative art.

## RESEARCH IN GERMAN RADIO PROPAGANDA

*Three Studies of the Research Project on Totalitarian  
Communication*

### *Foreword*

IN the following, we report on three studies conducted at the Research Project on Totalitarian Communication, a project organized under the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of the New School for Social Research, and financed by the Rockefeller Foundation. The project is devoted mainly to the study of enemy radio propaganda. The scope of the research and the methods applied are largely determined by three factors: The purpose, certain general concepts concerning the study of communication, and the material available for analysis.

Wartime conditions determine the *purpose*. The Project was organized in April 1941. One of its functions was to offer an opportunity for specialized training for communication analysts, who might at a later date find employment in Federal services. The study of enemy communication in wartime is an essential part of intelligence. The project is meant to participate indirectly in this work; its function is not the analysis of current material—short-term intelligence—but rather the attempt to devise methods suitable for the study of trends and patterns over longer periods of time. In this sense the function of the project is experimental.

Experimentation is, of necessity, based on certain *assump-*



*tions*. A complete study of communication embraces the communicator and his intentions, the nature of the communication, and audience reaction. Of the three only the communication is accessible to us. The other two, however, are not equally inaccessible.

The communicators' intentions are known to us in general terms: In war time radio propagandists, by their broadcasts, wish to strengthen home morale, to undermine enemy morale and to impress neutrals favorably. They obviously adjust their intention to the changing political and diplomatic scene. We may reasonably expect them to act differently when victory is assured or obtained than when it is doubtful. A detailed study of the situation is, therefore, essential; but it needs supplementation. In asking how we would expect a propagandist to act in a given situation, we still omit the fact that we are dealing with a specific—namely, the National Socialist—propagandist. Here the study of National Socialist Germany supplies the general background. But this general background does not suffice. In order to assess the potential predispositions of the propagandists we must have information pertaining to the function of communication on National Socialist society. While we are not, in war time, in a position to assess its effect, we must know what effect the propagandist expects it to have. This leads us to the study of the National Socialist view on social psychology and of the image of man underlying their practices.

In speaking of the intentions of the propagandists we naturally assume planning on various levels; we assume that central directions of policy are supplemented by less general directions, permanent propaganda lines by day-to-day guidance. Theoretically, we cannot always determine the extent of such planning. We can exclude neither the factor of accident nor that of unplanned action by an individual propagandist. In

practice, however, a decision is possible more often than not; through published propaganda instructions we know that, at least in some cases, the directions for the propagandist embrace long-term policy, devices to be used, as well as slogans to be applied.

The audience which listens to the broadcast analyzed is not accessible to us for purposes of investigation. And yet this audience comes to life in the text. It is, of course, not the real audience, but rather what the propagandist imagines the audience to be like. In studying changes in communication we do not, therefore, gain insight into corresponding changes in the audience; what we find are changes in the communicator's views of his audience; even they may be significant.

The methods used for our analysis are largely determined by the nature of our *source*. At the outbreak of war the British Broadcasting Corporation organized a comprehensive monitoring service. Its mimeographed report, the Daily Digest of Foreign Broadcasts, a confidential document of approximately 60,000 words, is our source.<sup>1</sup> The Digest includes full records of broadcasts to the German people and to European audiences. The project has studied mainly standard wave transmissions not audible in the United States—except for certain parts which may be re-broadcast on short wave.

The Digest is carefully edited and its reliability is considerable. However, it is, as a rule, two steps removed from the original broadcast. Verbatim transcripts are rare, and none of the transmissions here discussed are rendered verbatim; the transcripts, moreover, are English translations of the original broadcasts. The principle of abridgment is dictated by the in-

<sup>1</sup> We wish to express our gratitude to the British authorities, and especially to the British Broadcasting Corporation, for the privilege granted to us.

tention to reduce the bulk of reading and printed matter; nothing is omitted that may be of importance for political or military intelligence. Comparison with verbatim records, whenever possible, indicates that, generally speaking, no essential ideas are lost. Even more important, however, is the fact that the principles of relating these broadcasts remain constant; essentially they have not changed during the period of our study.

The fact that we do not study verbatim reports limits the choice of methods. While we cannot apply certain types of quantification—the measuring of space—there are others that have proved to be satisfactory.

## I. THE GERMAN RADIO HOME NEWS IN WARTIME

by Ernst Kris and Howard White

### INTRODUCTION

SIX to eight times a day the German radio broadcasts, on standard wave, news bulletins to German audiences. The size of a bulletin varies, but they generally contain 17 to 23 items and have an average duration of 10 minutes. The news coverage is not so complete as in some of the German newspapers writing for a public with high educational standing—such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*—but it is more complete than local papers.

This study is based on the analysis of a sample bulletin, broadcast at the peak listening time, at 7 P.M. In doubtful cases our analysis has been extended to all news casts.

We present a survey of some findings, followed by a discussion of examples of trends.

In order to illustrate our findings we use comparisons and shall refer to the following differences:

To differences not in the audience, but in what the broadcaster supposes the audience to be;

To differences from time to time—that is, situational differences;

To differences between the German broadcasts and others—that is, structural differences.

For this purpose occasional comparisons with the Home News of the British Broadcasting Corporation will be presented. It is centralized as is the German radio and therefore lends itself better to comparison than the individual transmission in the United States. These comparisons, however, will be qualitative rather than quantitative.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF GERMAN HOME NEWS BROADCASTS

##### *Sequence*

The German news bulletins are carefully constructed. The construction is psychological, it follows to some extent a pattern of "We are strong, they are weak; we are moral, they are immoral." It starts customarily with military victory. Then the villainy of the opponent—whether England, the United States, Russia, or all three—is stressed. Then the bulletin continues with the world situation, emphasizing either the popularity of Germany or the loneliness in the world of, for example, Britain, the consolidation of the German and the disintegration of the British Empire. We have put this into an equation: news on "a recently opened school in Slovakia" ("Our Empire consolidates"), and news on "unrest in India" ("Theirs disintegrates") are equivalent.

Thus the sequence follows a pattern of alternations: the news

is made to tell a story of its own. Its leitmotif is the propaganda line. This line becomes apparent through the link which is used to associate unassociated news.

We give an example provided by a broadcast dealing with the sinking of the *Hood*. The opening items dealt with German military success and with the awe in which the rest of the world was said to hold the great naval victory. Then followed an interview which von Raeder gave to *Domei*, warning United States "warmongers," a notice of the sensation which the *Domei* interview had caused in the Japanese press and a discussion of a Japanese naval anniversary. We need hardly add that items regarding Japan, when associated with the sinking of the *Hood*, were so associated for a definite reason.

Omissions and insertions thus create an atmosphere. There are also, however, days of "moderation" in the German news. In 1940 on Christmas Eve and again on New Year's Eve all items are so qualified as to show German advantage rather than enemy disadvantage. For these two occasions there seems to be no vilification of England but items to the effect that Nazi generals spent the holidays with their men. A short-lived moratorium on vilification seems to be the Nazi substitute for good will. The moratorium was not repeated in 1941.

Our analysis of these patterns has confirmation. Dr. Raskin, the late chief of the German short wave radio, has indicated what the introduction of a news bulletin should offer:

The first sentence is often decisive for the retention of the audience and an acoustically well-constructed opening is to the listener what the headlines of a paper are to the reader.

The attention of the listeners is firmly guided from the first item:

The shock value of news, which because of its suddenness immediately leads the hearer to take up a definite attitude, can be specially utilized

in broadcasting, chiefly because the first news can be followed at will by supplementary items, using the receptive attitude which has been produced in mind and spirit, to achieve the desired end. The news first given over the wireless can then be built up and strengthened by well-thought-out interplay between the press and the wireless.<sup>1</sup>

The British Broadcasting Corporation Home News has to the best of our knowledge no such pattern; we do not know of any theory directing it. It starts out with the announcement: *This is the BBC Home Service. Here is the news*, "John Smith" reading it. After a summary, the news begins. It transcribes official announcements, making them more understandable, more human one might say as far as some of them—for example, those issued by the Admiralty—are concerned, and it follows subject matter strictly. The end may bring a short eye-witness report or some official announcement. The BBC Home News tells the listener what he may reasonably expect to hear first: "There are more reverses in Crete." Thus they begin. This is not all. In re-writing they try to explain. They inform. They address reason.

### *Situational Pattern*

German news usually follows a distinct pattern for each situation—a pattern for preparation, a pattern for victory, a pattern for unfavorable news, etc.

The basis of the pattern for *preparation* is nearly always the cliché that the enemy is plotting to extend the theater of war or to attack Germany. Before the invasion of Denmark and Norway the German radio had insisted for some time that the British planned to extend the theater of war to Scandinavia. Before the attack on the Low Countries, with somewhat less insistence, the Nazis maintained that the Allies were planning

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Eckert, *Der Rundfunk als Führungsmittel*, Berlin, 1941, p. 63.

an attack on the Balkans. In the case of Yugoslavia the Germans may have been taken unawares by the Belgrade Revolution. The accusation was made, but was first presented as a diplomatic defeat for Great Britain and the United States. Only when the whole world knew of German intentions did the charge take its usual form. In the case of Russia the pattern was not applied. The accusation that Russia would attack Germany was not made until after the invasion of Russia had begun. Apparently the preparation pattern previously used had become too familiar; its use had led to the forecast that Germany would attack. On the news broadcast the Russian attack came as a complete surprise. The German radio explained its silence as a device to mislead the enemy.

To describe one such campaign in detail—in the first few days of April 1940 immediately preceding the invasion of Norway, the radio is cluttered with new campaigns against enemy leaders and against the alleged intentions of the Allies to divide up Europe, the discussion of the villainy of the British in their treatment of the neutrals and the changes in the British cabinet. These themes, though apparently dealing with widely different subjects, have one main purpose. They attempt to show the aggressive intention of the democracies. German home news during this period has one object—to acquaint the home listener with the dishonorable designs of England and thus to justify to the German people the dishonorable actions of their own government in the campaign that was being prepared.

Another situation, which is treated very differently from a preparation period, is that of a *military engagement in process*, in which the broadcaster tries to establish a reputation for accuracy of reporting. Our most startling evidence of this is the Norwegian campaign itself. During this campaign commentary declined, the more lyrical broadcasts of the earlier time gave

way to technical and detailed reporting. Particularly in the broadcasts to England, actual reporting of military events was the overwhelming concern of the news broadcasts—to a greater extent than in most subsequent campaigns. The same thing, however, happened during the first summer in Russia. The broadcaster gave news with technical details, with many figures, place names, etc., and listeners were supposed to believe that these details connoted accuracy. The slogan seemed to be: "Let the facts speak for themselves."

*Unfavorable situations* are treated in various ways, and the variety may depend on the extent to which the events have to be reported. While a world-wide Nazi propaganda had forecast the conquest of Britain and the end of the war late in 1940, the German people were told only of air attacks. As far as they were concerned, the Battle of Britain did not take place. This evasion was made possible by the nature of air warfare.

Different conditions brought a different technique in the case of the first British advance in Libya (December 9, 1940—February 6, 1941) and the concurrent Greek victories in Albania. Some Italian defeats were reported, although reported scantily and inaccurately. Bad weather was at first held responsible for the failure of the Italian blitzkrieg in Greece. Greek victories were seldom mentioned. Of the British advance in Libya the home population was told that the war would not be won in the Mediterranean. The broadcaster turned to the home front. No previous period of the war covered finds so much concentration on the speeches of minor leaders, on the official announcements of home ministries, on culture and social problems at home. German domestic policies have an importance which they have at no other time. In this, the principal period of Italian defeat, the Italians are presented to the



Germans as stronger than ever before—but not, of course, to the British.

A similar development occurred during the long winter of stalemate in Russia (1941-1942). While the Japanese victories were used in part to turn away from the cold winter in the East, the home front, with many medal awards, appeals to sacrifice, and emphasis on the politeness campaign, was also used.

### *Specific Devices*

In addition to these patterns in the handling of different situations we may also consider the introduction of certain devices, used for specific occasions.

One such device is the use of special announcements on a large scale. Repeatedly during the Norwegian campaign, for example, the whole of the German network was suddenly interrupted—a special announcement was blared forth. There is some evidence that listeners complained about too frequent victories interrupting opera broadcasts. (The opera broadcasts were discontinued.) The same technique has been applied in other circumstances. Early in the Russian campaign, on June 29, 1941, the Germans issued eleven special announcements which were broadcast extensively throughout the day. By keeping the public waiting for these announcements the party in power applied the technique of the war of nerves to communication.

The devices used to report major military victories such as the fall of Paris, diplomatic achievements like the Tripartite Pact, or speeches by Hitler, show a marked similarity. On such occasions the neutral press is quoted extensively. Favorable neutral papers—early in the war subsidized South American papers—are selected and it is shown that the world is with the Germans in approving the deed. As the war has progressed,

the statements from the neutral press have tended to be replaced, more and more, by statements from the press in occupied territories.

### *Stereotypes*

It is not easy to quantify when questions of style are involved. It is particularly difficult in our material, which is not quite verbatim and much of which is in translation. When, however, the translated broadcasts do not differ in style from those originally given in English—they use in fact the same stereotypes and the same methods of heroization and vilification—we are justified in considering the translation accurate enough for style analysis. Moreover, the low level of the style and its emphasis on repetition make quantification relatively simple. Among the aspects of style which we study are the use of stereotypes, the treatment of individuals, and the treatment of groups. The expression “stereotype,” in a sense similar to that in which we consider it, was introduced by Walter Lippmann.<sup>2</sup> Among its characteristics are frequency, emotional appeal and the creation of an image. The word Jew is a stereotype for the Nazis, since people are expected to know what Jews are like. But in general a stereotype is a word or a phrase used by a propagandist in a situation in which a writer of objective prose would prefer a more dignified one. The extensive use of such terms is a method of inflating style. Names of individuals and of groups are stressed not only for their actual “news” value but also as they are the object of publicity campaigns to apportion praise or blame.

Thus the German broadcaster carries campaign oratory into the daily expressions of the news, and uses shifts in Hitler’s titles, frequency of mention of the leader, as well as specific

<sup>2</sup> Cf. W. Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, New York, 1922 & 1927.

praise, as parts of a campaign to keep the idol on his pedestal.

In the treatment of Germany as a whole, stereotypes show us something of the way in which the party in power desires the subjects to consider the war. The most important positive stereotypes—words like “New Order,” “young nations,” and “liberation”—show the concern of the propagandist with youth as a major attribute of the Nazis. In the Russian Campaign this picture changes. Now the Germans are told not only that they fight for a “New Order,” but also that they fight for “Tradition,” for “Civilization,” for “Christianity,” and for “Chivalry,” against those who are neither old nor young but sub-human. For a while age takes the place of youth and then youth and age march side by side. The German radio is young and old at the same time.

Even more than the self, the enemy is treated with stereotypes; individuals and groups are vilified. The intensity of vilification is of course to a certain extent dependent on changes in the intensity of political campaign.

Further, the changes in the kind of leading stereotypes applied to the enemy show clearly the shifts in the publicity campaigns, corresponding frequently to shifts in the military situation. In March 1940 the leading stereotype is “plutocrat.” In the period prior to the Norwegian campaign it is “warmonger.” In the Norwegian campaign it is “liar,” and in the period prior to the invasion of the Low Countries it is “aggressor.” In general the term “plutocrat” is used to describe the political and social structure of Great Britain and later of the United States. The terms “warmonger” and “aggressor” are used to attack the military and diplomatic policy of England. The terms “liar” and “propaganda” are used to arouse distrust in enemy communication.

The Russians are vilified with another set of stereotypes.

These stereotypes stress primarily the sub-human and the Godless aspects of the enemy. Such terms as "vultures," "bestial," "Godless," "anti-Christ," and "Red hordes" are added to the usual "Jew" and "criminal"—terms applied to any opponent. Vilification is generally more important in the German Home News Broadcasts than heroization. There are many more negative stereotypes than positive.<sup>3</sup>

### *Planning*

In discussing the problem of planning, we are aware of many limitations. We do not know how much is planned and when changes occur, we must always consider the extent to which the situation itself may cause the changes and the extent to which they are manipulated. Often it is impossible to tell. Some concrete evidence is presented, however, which shows definite planning.

Late in March 1940 the Germans published a White Book making charges against diplomats, chiefly American diplomats, who were accused of helping to sow the seeds of war. At the same time, *Regime Fascista* published a picture of Reynaud standing before a map which was said to show the way Europe would be divided after the war.<sup>4</sup> What is interesting here is not so much the manufacture of these allegations as their occurrence at a specific time. The publication of each was so timed as to coincide with the preparation of the Norwegian campaign, discussed above. These news stories were not, like the fall of Paris, events which had to be reported immediately. Their publication at a time when the German publicity campaign con-

<sup>3</sup> This subject is treated more fully in Research Paper No. 7 of the Research Project on Totalitarian Communication. This paper is part of a doctoral dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science, New School for Social Research, by Jacob Goldstein.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the Reynaud map, cf. H. Speier, "Magic Geography," in *Social Research*, August 1941.

centrated on the alleged immorality of Allied intentions is meaningful.

Another significant instance of planning the news refers to the conquest of Crete. German news sources did not refer to the parachute attacks of the island before they were reasonably sure that the conquest of the airport would guarantee victory. For several days the German people knew nothing of the bitter fighting in Crete. Had the exploit failed they might never have known it.

When there is a high degree of language conformity and when, in that same framework, an expression, rare on other occasions, becomes frequent, we can also infer conscious manipulation. It can be seen in the Czech censorship instructions<sup>5</sup> that the use of specific words is authorized by the Ministry of Propaganda. Thus we are justified in supposing that the same thing may happen again. Immediately before the invasion of the Low Countries, for example, the German radio referred extensively to the Allies as "aggressors." This word hardly occurs in German broadcasts for one year, beginning in March 1940, except during these few days. For once the British are not so much plutocrats, warmongers and Jews as aggressors.

The use of predictions in the German broadcasts is another indication of the planning of news. These predictions are usually either very general, such as "We will win," or specific but embodying a high degree of control. The predictions involving lower degree of control, concerning more specific operations, and suggesting a greater degree of risk, are evidently not left to the authority of the broadcaster alone. What involves less risk is the use of implied predictions. Just before the Battle of Britain the broadcaster gives the British advice

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. Kris, "German Instructions for the Czech Press," *Social Research*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, May 1941.

on what to do in case of invasion, although he is wary of promising this invasion. A repetition of this treatment happened before the fall of Singapore. Sometimes predictions are made which are quoted from foreign sources, and in that case the broadcaster frees himself of responsibility. Most interesting, however, is the use of leader talks for predictions. A speech by Hitler frequently gives the key to the subsequent statements of the news broadcaster. Hitler often predicts, but in this case, too, many predictions involve very little risk. On January 30, 1941, however, Hitler stated that the submarine warfare would increase in the spring. For a week the radio was flooded with this prediction and with news of all sorts dealing with submarine warfare. Frequently the citation was not given, but the broadcaster acted on probable instructions.

Perhaps the most clear-cut example of Hitler's direct influence on radio planning is provided by the speech of January 30, 1942. Hitler introduced a new pattern for the description of his own previous career; it became one in which setback and success alternated. The situation then prevailing on the Russian front was presented by a historical parallel: Hitler referred to Frederick the Great who, after Kunersdorf, had carried on to victory in spite of the reluctance of his generals. "Frederick the Great," he said, "had to fight against an enemy of almost crushing strength. . . . And in those times one man kept the flag flying, with iron will, despite all setbacks, and never wavered in his belief in success." The speech gave an obvious clue to the broadcaster. "We live in a Frederician time," Hitler had added. For many days the Topics of the Day, the Political Review, and other transmissions were filled with items comparing Hitler with Frederick the Great. On March 2 announcement was made of a new film on "The Great King." Goebbels attended the opening and announced that: "After the defeat of Kuners-

dorf, Frederick is alone, but more resolute than ever to stake everything for Prussia." Thus the difficulties of Germany's present are identified with the difficulties of her past. And Hitler is said, at his own suggestion, to stand alone, like Frederick, and be ready to triumph as Frederick did.

All this shows the hierarchical structure of the broadcasts. The lines of Nazi mass communication are to a considerable extent derived from leader talks. The German radio serves the dual function of radio and gramophone and echoes His Master's Voice. In November 1939 Hitler said that Churchill (note Churchill, not Chamberlain, even then) was too old to understand the New Order. The German radio was soon filled with statistics giving the ages of the British Cabinet officers. Hitler also spoke of class rule. Radio Hamburg gave a talk on "The Old School Tie."

These examples of planning may suffice to illustrate management. Of course, actions as well as propaganda are planned. Some of the German actions were undertaken in order to be announced. Intimidation is a supplement to active brutality. What is astonishing is not that such methods are used but that they so deeply pierce the spine of communication—the news reports. The news, it has been asserted by National Socialists, time and again, has to serve the interests of the State. The German Radio Home News bear witness to this maxim. The interest of the State is safeguarded whether the news is good or bad. In this respect the difference between totalitarian and democratic news reporting clearly emerges. Neither type of broadcaster will include what he considers desirable to exclude, but the notion of what is desirable and undesirable varies. By and large, undesirable news to the British Broadcasting Corporation is news that has no relevance to the war situation and little interest to the public at large. Undesirable news to the

German radio is news which is unfavorable to the propagandistic pattern of German communication.

If the news is on, conversation in public places in Germany is ordered to stop; in 1941 factory intervals were planned to "enable" workers to listen to the news. Information by the German Radio is public speaking addressed to crowds.<sup>6</sup>

### TRENDS IN GERMAN HOME NEWS BROADCASTS

#### *Sources*

The German news broadcast quotes extensively from German, neutral and enemy sources. One might expect that at all times quotations from German sources are most frequent. This is not the case. There are times when the enemy is quoted even more frequently. The German propagandist may quote the enemy sources with approval or with disapproval; it is the former which seems especially significant. The British press, for example, contains many items criticizing the Government, attacking some phase of the social structure, or admitting the inadequacies of supply. The Germans are in the fortunate position of having this material, whereas the democratic broadcaster will look in vain for quotations from the German press suggesting the mildest imperfection in the Government or its policy.

Throughout most of the war it has been the policy of the National Socialists to present a weak and disunited Britain, in which opposition to the Government and even to the war itself played a major part. On at least one occasion this policy changed completely. Just before the invasion of Norway, as we

<sup>6</sup> See G. Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 247, who describes the "new style of broadcasting . . . which need no longer address itself to the individual listener."



noted above, the British were accused of desiring to extend the war. In presenting a nation as ready to attack defenseless neutrals, it was clearly inadvisable to present it as weak and disunited.

During this period the approved quotations from British sources referring to social disunity in England disappear from the sample home broadcasts. They drop from 1.9 per cent of all news items between March 14-30 to 0.8 per cent in the week immediately preceding the invasion (April 1-8). The supply of newspapers was not cut off. The German Legation in Dublin continued to telegraph its daily press review. And British newspapers continued to attack the Government. The material was available and was used in the broadcasts to England. In these broadcasts there was a rise from 6.6 per cent of references to social disunity in Britain for the two last weeks in March to 11 per cent for the first week in April which immediately preceded the invasion. The picture of British disunity continued to be given to the British. For the moment the Germans, however, were given exclusively another enemy picture—that of an aggressive and cruel enemy.

We have chosen this example to illustrate the potential value of the study of trends for intelligence purposes. Perhaps even more illuminating is the use of Russian sources. In the thirteen months from March 1, 1940, to April 3, 1941, the Russian press had a part in the large collection of neutral sources which were said to testify to German greatness. After April 4, these quotations dropped from 1 per cent of all items to 0 per cent. On April 4, 1941, the Germans began a Libyan counter-attack, the first of a series of spring campaigns. From this date, a few days after Matsuoka left Berlin (see p. 198), until June 22 the sample broadcasts contained no quotations from Russian

sources.<sup>7</sup> With the invasion of Russia, these items increased to 2 per cent. They played of course a different part and were entirely negative.

Yet in spite of this rise in the percentage of quotations from Russian sources after the invasion of Russia, Russia as a vocal belligerent was only of secondary importance. Figure 1 shows the references to English and Russian sources after the invasion had begun. At first disapproved Russian sources were more frequent than disapproved British sources, but this continued for less than a month. Then it was the British who took over. The British seem to present the case for Russia and fight, according to the National Socialists, the Russian war in the news. Thus we seldom find that the claims of Russian victory are attributed by the Germans to Russian sources. The home radio broadcasts mention the Soviet communiqué only twice during the period covered, both times in June 1941. Yet the Germans consistently contradicted claims of Russian or denials of German success on the Eastern front—British claims and denials. In the news it was the British who lost the battles of Smolensk, Kiev and Kharkov. In this way the German radio closely identified England with Russia and contributed to the theme, built up in many other ways also, that England had been “Bolshevized.”

We may speculate as to why the Germans have chosen the British as their opponents in communication, the vocal enemy. Perhaps jamming makes the reception of Radio Moscow in Germany impossible. Or the Government may feel that anyone who, after nine years of National Socialism, persists in his alle-

<sup>7</sup> Since writing this we find confirmation in the form of press instructions. Louis P. Lochner, former bureau chief of the Associated Press in Berlin, secured a number of such instructions issued by the Propaganda Ministry. On February 19, 1941, an instruction read: “Strict attention is to be paid to the instructions that the press may bring no news reports or editorial comment out of Moscow. DNB reports alone will be issued.” L. P. Lochner, *What About Germany?*, New York, 1942, p. 277.

giance to Radio Moscow is a hopeless and inveterate Communist. On the other hand, we know that the British Broadcasting Corporation has a large audience in Germany and enjoys some

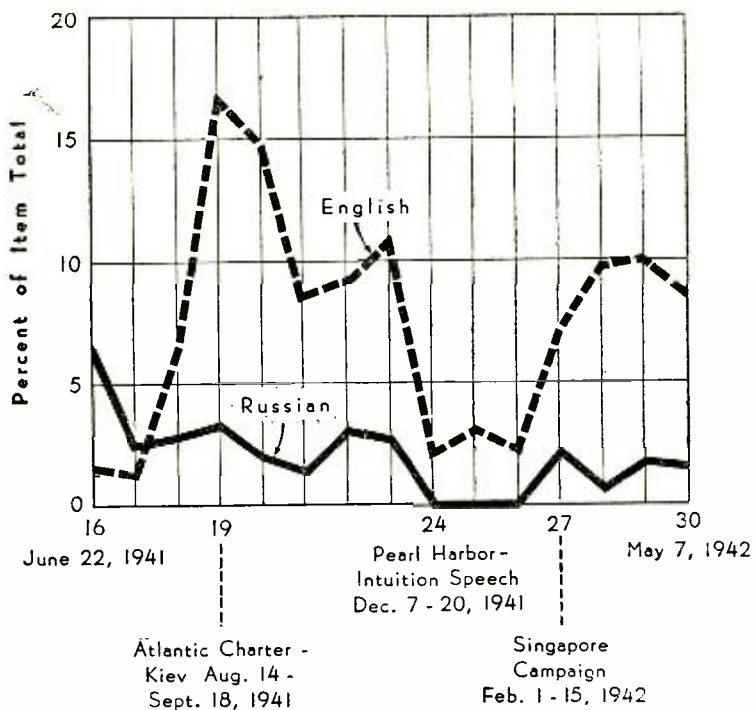


FIG. I.—DISAPPROVED ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS IN GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS FROM JUNE 22, 1941, TO MAY 7, 1942<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Units on X-Axis refer to different periods of events, see Appendix F.

credence. Throughout the war the British have been regarded as the most dangerous competitors for the attention of the German radio public. A campaign to identify the word "liar" with Churchill, Reuters, and the British Broadcasting Corporation was begun early in the war, and, while its intensity has varied, the campaign has never been abandoned. Perhaps the German

propagandists assumed, rightly or wrongly, that the reputation for accuracy of England was greater than that of Radio Moscow.

Figure 1 indicates quite interesting trends in disapproved quotations from British news sources. The British curve shows a rising trend up to the fall of Kiev (unit 19 on the X-Axis).<sup>8</sup> The curve declines after the German retreat from Rostov. It rises again at the time of the Battle of Singapore (Unit 27). The low point of both the British and the Russian curve is, of course, the Russian winter. In other words, even the German denial policy takes into account the situation in which the audience lives. If there is much hardship, there is less denial of enemy claims.

### *Proper Names*

In publicity, names are repeated in order to attract attention, a technique frequently adopted by the German radio. The best example is that of the visit of the Japanese Foreign Minister, Yasuo Matsuoka, to Europe in the spring of 1941. On March 12, Matsuoka left Tokyo for Berlin and Rome. For days the German public was treated to an extensive travelogue. Detailed descriptions of the journey were presented daily. The reception in Berlin was a great ceremony.

Our trend curve (Figure 2) shows the day-to-day intensity of the mention of Matsuoka's name in the German Home News. The peak indicates the arrival in Berlin. In order to assess the publicity importance of the news on Matsuoka we compare it with the most important political event which took place during his visit. Two days before his arrival the Yugoslav Government signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany. Matsuoka wired his

<sup>8</sup> Each unit for this figure and in figures 3-5 covers a specific period. For the details of the periodization, see Appendix F.

congratulations and the news seethed with two diplomatic triumphs for two days. Then the clamor of a victory over British diplomacy died. There was a revolution in Belgrade. Yugoslavia almost dropped out of the news the moment news was made there. It took the German Government until April 1 to

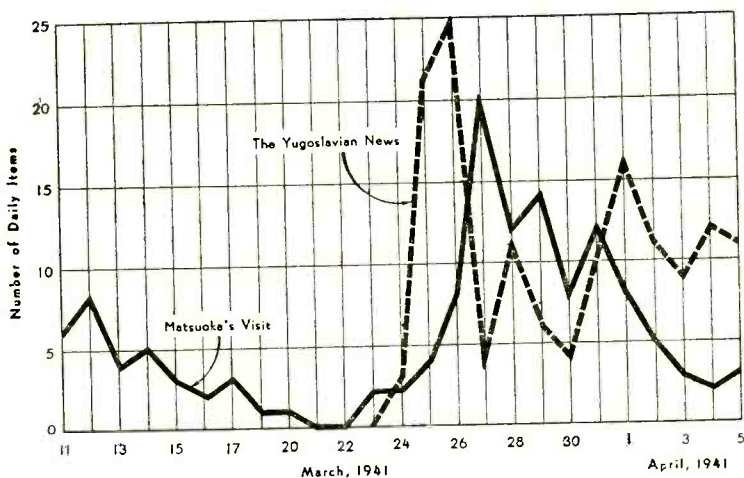


FIG. 2.—NUMBER OF ITEMS PER DAY DEALING WITH MATSUOKA'S TRAVELOGUE AND WITH YUGOSLAVIAN NEWS FROM MARCH 3 TO APRIL 5, 1941<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Data for March 19, 1941, not available.

decide publicly that this was more than a local revolution. By that time Matsuoka had left.

The importance of Matsuoka's visit, as presented by Radio Berlin, is demonstrated not only by its relation to a competitive event. Our sample broadcasts show that at the time no other name (including Hitler) was as frequently mentioned as that of the Japanese Foreign Minister. On the day of Matsuoka's arrival in Berlin his name appeared in 28 per cent of all news items broadcast to the German people. Apart from communiqués and official announcements the listener heard little news

not related to the visitor. Through this emphasis on Matsuoka the importance of the future alliance was brought home to the German people. The Matsuoka campaign was started the day Roosevelt signed the Lease-Lend Bill, which was interpreted as a sign of the increasing opposition of the United States. Japan might keep the balance.<sup>9</sup>

The names of the chiefs of government undoubtedly play conspicuous parts in American and British news broadcasts. The difference lies in the context in which a name appears in the German Home News. Hitler is mentioned in many capacities. His speeches are frequently announced and quoted; important laws and announcements are his province; it is he who awards the medals, he who is responsible for victory, and he who is born again every 20th of April. Frequently the repetition of his name is part of an obvious and rather clumsy plan. On the other hand, the British Broadcasting Corporation seldom says anything of Churchill except what has actually happened. The news broadcaster is concerned with giving the news. The German broadcaster says, without citation: "Hitler is the greatest statesman in all time." Both military and diplomatic triumphs are ascribed to Hitler, and are used as devices for enhancing his prestige. We need hardly suggest that he is a most unfortunate hero who must constantly compel his public to be reminded that he is a hero at all.

Figure 3 shows the per cent mentions of Hitler's name in terms of total news items and in terms of all names mentioned,

<sup>9</sup> The German radio was not alone in using the name of Matsuoka as its publicity focus. Radio Moscow, very different in spirit from Radio Berlin, adopted the same device. Matsuoka supersedes not only Hitler but also Stalin.

Again Lochner gives a press instruction showing that the newspapers had a similar policy: "Foreign Minister Matsuoka will proceed to Germany. This item is to be given smash display. It is a world sensation. All articles must duly emphasize Matsuoka's importance."—Lochner, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

in the tested period. In studying the relation of Hitler's name to the sum of the names mentioned on the German radio, we find that three of the peaks of our curve (I, II, III) occur at the same time as his birthday, a national holiday.

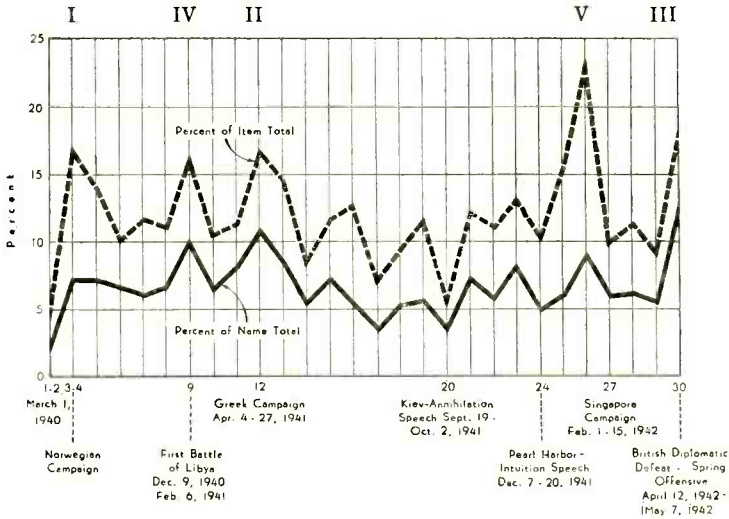


FIG. 3.—MENTIONS OF HITLER'S NAME FROM MARCH 1940 TO MAY 1942<sup>a</sup>  
(IN PER CENT OF ITEM AND NAME TOTAL)

<sup>a</sup> Units on X-Axis refer to different periods of events, see Appendix F.

In 1940 the birthday occurred in the second week of the Norwegian Campaign, coincidental with the landing of the ill-fated Allied Expeditionary Force at Namsos, a landing which, however, had not yet been announced. It was the first victory birthday. After a long and dreary winter, a winter which included the always concealed defeat in the Battle of Britain and the Italian rout in Libya and Albania, the birthday of 1941 brought with it the conquest of Mount Olympus. The third birthday came before the spring offensive of 1942. The frequency of Hitler's name reached a similar height, but the treatment was different. Seldom has an occasion been celebrated by so much lack of celebration. There was an imposed austerity. The German people were told repeatedly that Hitler would spend his birthday at his desk. It was "a custom more honored in the breach than in the observance."

But there are other peaks. The first British advance in Libya took place from December 9, 1940, to February 6, 1941 (indicated as IV in curve). The victims of German air raids became the victors of Ethiopia and North Africa. The German radio turned away from the uncheering world news to the recollection of triumph in France and the achievements at home. Hitler's name dominated the news, but it was as the hero of the home front that he was known, the victor of winter relief and fountainhead of medal awards.

In January 1942 this curve reaches its highest peak (V). On December 21, Hitler, guided by his "inner voice," took over personal command (observe unit 25 in figure). As the curve shows, however, his new importance developed gradually rather than immediately. To understand the new height we must go back for a moment to the preceding September. After the fall of Kiev (observe unit 20), there was progress, but slow progress made at great cost. Hitler decided on the onslaught against Moscow. He made his fatal speech of October 3, predicting the annihilation of the Russian Army.<sup>10</sup> The Russian attack failed in the fall of 1941. The crisis of the winter followed, cold was intense, the army was ill-clad, clothing was collected throughout Germany and the occupied countries. The assumption of personal command presented a solution for the propagandist. This brought a new peak in the discussion of Hitler.

<sup>10</sup> Erroneous forecasts of leading men are always dangerous. They are tolerated in democracies, since "we are all human." For the totalitarian leader, incorrect forecasts mean loss of charisma, and the omnipotence of the leader may be questioned. In the spring of 1942 Goebbels discussed the problem of the mistake in prediction, comparing this one failure with Churchill's considerable record. Hitler himself in his speech of September 30, 1942, said that he was a true prophet. See E. Kris, "Some Problems of War Propaganda," a note on propaganda old and new, *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 1943 (in print). Also H. White, *Prediction and Political Power*, Doctoral dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science at the New School for Social Research, 1942.



This height, however, was dependent in part, as the lower curve of Figure 3 indicates, on the fact that few other persons were mentioned at the time. This second curve shows the frequency of Hitler's name in relation to the total of all items broadcast. Generally the trends of these two curves (Hitler's mention in terms of name and of item total) are rather similar. However, the greatest height in the second curve occurs not when personal command was assumed (observe unit 25), but when it might hope to yield results. It is just before the Kerch offensive (unit 30) that Hitler's name is used most often in relation to all the radio news items. It is the time when in his Reichstag address of April 27, 1942, he declared his intuition supreme not only in military affairs, but also in the courts of law.

In the German Home News enemy leaders play almost as important a part as Hitler. In certain periods Churchill and Roosevelt are each mentioned more frequently than he is. Of course he is the hero, they are the villains. What space does not permit us to show is that, whereas in the case of Hitler's name the ratio of praise to simple mention shows a relatively low proportion of heroization (about 1 to 4), Roosevelt and Churchill are attacked almost every time they are spoken of.

Figure 4 shows the relative frequency of the mention of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, beginning with the attack on Russia.

The figure shows that Stalin is far less important than Churchill and Roosevelt, that Roosevelt is usually the leading enemy figure. Churchill is rarely his superior in villainy, the most important exception being the Singapore Campaign. At the same time as Hitler's "intuition" accounts for a peak of ref-

ferences to him, the enemy leaders drop in the news. They had no inner voice. Hitler's prestige early in 1942 was placed against a background in which the enemy played little part.

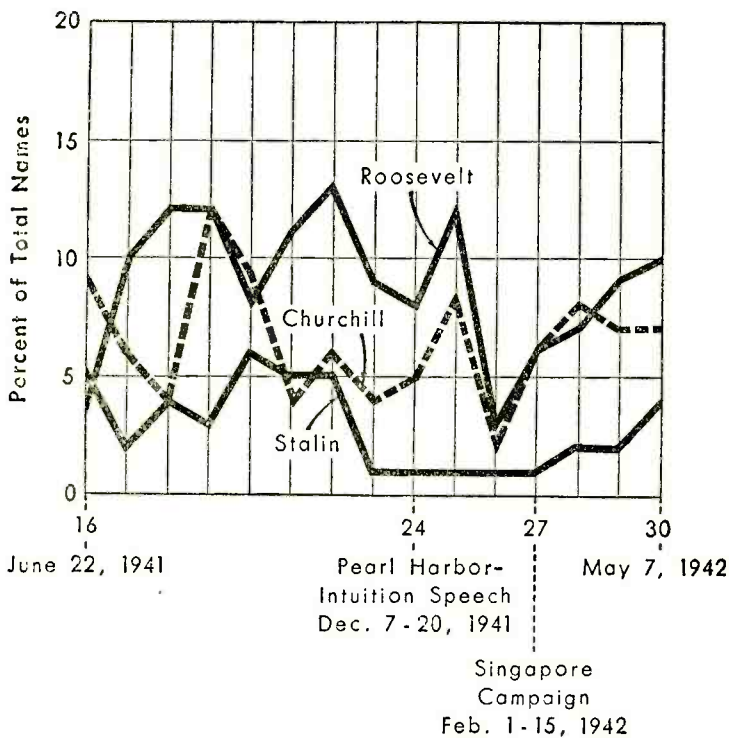


FIG. 4.—MENTIONS OF ROOSEVELT, CHURCHILL AND STALIN FROM JUNE 1941 TO MAY 1942 (IN PER CENT OF NAME TOTAL)

Roosevelt's pre-eminence since July 1941 may illustrate an awareness of America's future participation in the war. It does not indicate that the newscaster spoke more about the United States than he did about Russia. In fact, the contrary is true for the obvious reason that there was fighting in Russia. Stalin, however, is not held to stand for Russia, and the attack is not

personalized. The attack on this country, however, is highly personalized.<sup>11</sup>

The facts are difficult to interpret. Perhaps a sub-human enemy has no leaders. Perhaps the National Socialists expect Roosevelt and Churchill to have a meaning to the German people, but not Stalin. Moreover, one may overthrow a democratic leadership. Any negotiation with Russia would have to be made with Stalin. In any case, it is interesting that Hitler violently attacks aristocrats and squires. He seldom attacks his social equals. Perhaps the best explanation is that Roosevelt and Churchill led the opposition to National Socialism before their countries were at war. In Stalin's case this was less clear.

We turn from the chiefs of state to a more general question: the relation of praise and blame of all individuals in the German Home News. This is shown in Figure 5. Names in the news are not always evaluated. Axis representatives may be praised or mentioned neutrally.<sup>12</sup> Allied representatives may be blamed or mentioned neutrally. The graph shows vilification and heroization only and does not include neutral mentions.

The attack on enemy representatives was never so violent in the German news as before the war in the North and the West began (I in Figure 5). After the battle period (units 6 and 7) the decline is steady until in the winter of 1940-41 praise supersedes blame. As we noted above, German propagandists become home and culture conscious. The next peak of vilification (II) is reached in the spring of 1941 after Yugoslavia failed to report to Berlin (units 12-14). This is undoubtedly connected with Roosevelt's appeal to the people of that coun-

<sup>11</sup> This, of course, cannot be seen from the accompanying chart. Space does not permit us to present other figures which would verify this contention.

<sup>12</sup> When Hitler makes a relief appeal or awards medals, when there is a change in the British Cabinet, when a Hungarian diplomat visits Spain, the mention may well be neutral.

try<sup>18</sup> and with the atrocity stories published during the Greece and Crete campaigns. Then the Atlantic Charter (III) gave rise to a hate campaign. Versailles and Wilson's Fourteen Points were stressed. It seems that any statement on a "new Anglo-American order" is at any time considered by the Ger-

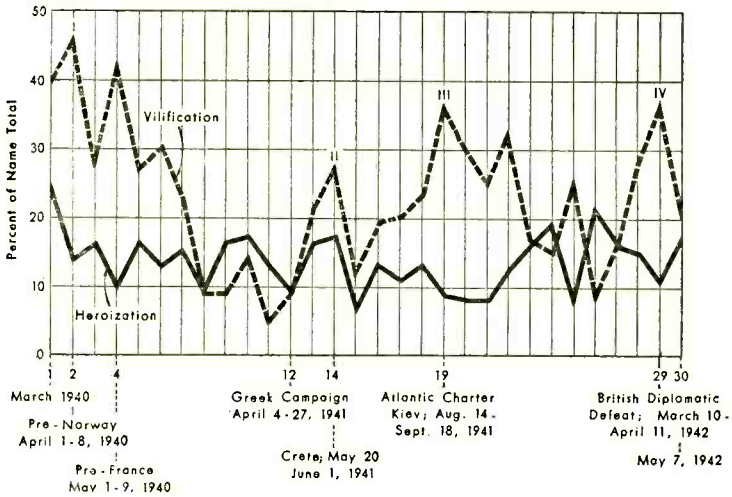


FIG. 5.—VILIFICATION AND HEROIZATION OF INDIVIDUALS (IN PER CENT OF NAME TOTAL)

man propagandists as worth vilifying. The fourth peak in vilification (IV) is connected with the Cripps mission to India. Its prospects of success made it seem dangerous to the German propagandists. The mission was stigmatized as a new evidence of British imperialism and the negotiator as both the harbinger of imperialism and the plenipotentiary of Moscow. Roosevelt and MacArthur also figured largely in the vilification at that time. MacArthur, it is charged, deserted his men in Bataan and Roosevelt closed the Metropolitan Opera House. In vilifi-

<sup>18</sup> This point too is covered by one of the press instructions published by Lochner, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

cation there is no logic. Images are created rather than situations discussed.

From other findings also we know that vilification is more important in the German home news than admiration. The attitude which such findings represent is not one common to all propagandists. Harold Lasswell and Dorothy Blumenthal have shown that slogans used by Communist propaganda in Chicago between 1930 and 1935 are overwhelmingly positive. They refer more frequently to the common goals of the working class than to the common enemy, capitalism. The relation is roughly one of 75-25.<sup>14</sup>

We do not know precisely how far this difference applies to wartime communication. Our attempt to quantify the use of stereotypes in the British Broadcasting Corporation home news has shown that they are very rare and that the British radio is cautious with praise as well as with blame. The British seldom attack persons in these broadcasts—and when they do so it is usually in factual reports, quoting what is said, for example, in Commons. Moreover, the German radio never praises the actions of an Englishman. Whereas the Nazis say, "Roosevelt is even a greater swindler than Churchill," a characteristic British news broadcast states that, "The Duke of Aosta made a terrific effort to save his country's honor—so tarnished by Mussolini."

When we study these differences in the discussion of individuals, what we study are not merely differences in communications but differences in the social structure as they are manifested in communication. On December 3, 1941, the German news bulletin, discussing the sinking of the cruiser *Sydney*, said:

Our joy at the success is all the greater as we learn that the majority of the German crew was saved, while the British cruiser was so quickly overtaken by its fate that the entire crew lost their lives.

<sup>14</sup> See H. D. Lasswell and D. Blumenthal, *World Revolutionary Propaganda, a Chicago Study*. A. A. Knopf, New York, 1939, p. 121.

The joy of the democratic broadcaster is of a different order. In discussing the removal of the wounded prisoners after the *Bismarck* sinking, the British Broadcasting Corporation said:

One man on a stretcher reached out his arm as if to clasp the rail. He need not have troubled for he was being carried as gently as a child.

On February 3, 1942, the United States War Department communiqué quoted General MacArthur:

The enemy resisted with the courage which is characteristic of Japanese troops, but at the end were glad to surrender. They are being treated with the respect and consideration which their gallantry so well merits.

## II. GERMAN RADIO PROPAGANDA TO FRANCE DURING THE BATTLE OF FRANCE

by Hans Speier and Margaret Otis

### A. CATEGORIES OF ANALYSIS

THE results obtained by a quantitative content analysis of verbal propaganda are dependent on the way in which the propagandistic statements are classified. A given propagandistic text contains many individual statements, while the scheme of analysis consists of a limited number of general categories under which all individual statements must be subsumed. The construction of the scheme of analysis is not only a matter of *comprehensiveness* (so that all statements can be subsumed under one of the general categories). Nor is it only a matter of *mutual exclusiveness of the categories* (so that each statement can be subsumed under one category only). It is also a matter of *analytical purpose*. Evidently, the content of propa-

ganda can be analyzed in very many ways, each requiring a special set of categories appropriate to a specific end. Which classificatory scheme is used is a matter of choice among the questions and hypotheses which the analyst formulates *before* he begins to define the categories of his analytical scheme. In other words, the strategy of an analysis of content depends on clearly formulated hypotheses as to what the analyst should try to discover.

The main objectives of the following study of German radio propaganda to France before, during and after the Battle of France have been derived from a general theory of propaganda to the enemy in total war.

#### THE FUNCTION OF PROPAGANDA TO THE ENEMY IN TOTAL WAR

If one tries to analyze the function of propaganda in total war, one must have an understanding of what is meant by total war. For our purposes it is sufficient to bear in mind that total war is not *merely* and not *always* a matter of physical violence. Mr. Cyril Falls has recently said that total war can be defined as "*a state of hostility independent of acts of violence, which are called forth only when the circumstances favor them.*"<sup>1</sup>

This definition is both appropriate and orthodox. As a matter of fact, it is a restatement of Hobbes' understanding of war:

. . . Warre, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known: and therefore the notion of *Time*, is to be considered in the nature of Warre; as it is in the nature of Weather. For as the nature of Foule weather, lyeth not in a showre or two of rain; but an inclination thereto of many days together; So the nature of *War*, consisteth not in actuall fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, dur-

<sup>1</sup> Cyril Falls, *The Nature of Modern Warfare*, New York, 1941, p. 9.

ing all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is *Peace*.<sup>2</sup>

Thus war, according to Hobbes, has its periods of "phoney-ness," when there is no overt fighting and when propagandists can pretend to be the friends of their enemies. Certain Nazi writers clearly realized this nature of modern war and described in detail the techniques of various kinds of non-military warfare in those periods of total war in which the caissons are not rolling.<sup>3</sup>

What, then, is the function of propaganda to the enemy in total war? *Propaganda to the enemy is an attempt to realize the aim of war—which is victory—without acts of physical violence, or with less expenditure of physical violence than would otherwise be necessary.*

Consequently, one may distinguish two functions of propaganda to the enemy in war, depending on the relation of propaganda to the specific stage of total war: in periods of "phoney war" (when the weather is foul although it does not yet rain) propaganda is a *substitute for physical violence*, whereas in periods of actual fighting propaganda changes into a *supplement to physical violence*. Before actual fighting starts, the propagandist may succeed in persuading the enemy that it is expedient for him to negotiate rather than to fight, to wait rather than to arm, to reconsider rather than to act, etc. In particular, the propagandist may succeed in terrorizing the enemy with words—or so we say when we mean that he terrorizes him with the threat of physical violence. In all the territorial conquests of the Nazis before the invasion of Poland propaganda was successfully used as one of the substitutes for physical vio-

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Everyman's Library ed.), p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. especially, Rupert von Schumacher and Hans Hummel, *Vom Kriege zwischen den Kriegen*, Stuttgart, 1937.



lence. In the period of the "phoney war" in the West, i.e., before the invasion of the Low Countries, German propaganda served again this function of a substitute for military action.

The situation changes when actual fighting begins: bombs become more important than words, and military success more significant than the activities of propagandists. Doing something is always more important than saying that something will be done or has been done, or that it means this or that. A situation arises in which the "enemy is not beaten by radio communications but by heroism and valor"<sup>4</sup> and by superiority of arms.

In view of these considerations we have decided to divide the whole period under analysis into sub-periods of foul and rainy weather respectively, not dividing according to length of time but according to stages of the total war. This "periodization" enables us to study the dependence of German propaganda on the general "event structure" of the social process of which propaganda is a part. The following periods have been distinguished:

- Period I: April 26 to May 9, 1940: preceding the campaign in the West. (*Phoney War*)
- Period II: May 10 to May 28, 1940: from the invasion of the Low Countries until the surrender of King Leopold of Belgium. (*Invasion*)
- Period III: May 29 to June 4, 1940: from the beginning of the evacuation of Flanders to the completed evacuation from Dunkerque. (*Retreat*)
- Period IV: June 5 to June 20, 1940: from the second major offensive (*Battle of the Somme*) to the armistice.<sup>5</sup>
- Period V: June 21 to July 3, 1940: after the Battle of France. (*Post-Armistice*)

<sup>4</sup> *Red Star* (October 1942), quoted in the *N. Y. Times* of Oct. 11, 1942.

<sup>5</sup> On June 20, Hitler received Petain's note announcing the names of the four French plenipotentiaries.—For the periodization, cf. Hamilton Fish Armstrong, *Chronology of Failure*, New York, 1940.

## THE "NATURAL AIMS" OF SYMBOL WARFARE

If the propagandist's cause is to be victorious without acts of physical violence or with less expenditure of physical force than would otherwise be necessary, the enemy must do something foolish. Propaganda to the enemy is thus an invitation to foolishness, to do anything but fight, which, in war, is reasonable.

The first aim of symbol warfare is therefore the enemy's surrender without fighting it out: this we call *submission*.

The second aim is fighting the wrong opponent. Ally may turn against ally, civilian against soldier, the rank and file against the officer, labor against capital and vice versa, Gentile against Jew, citizens against their government: this we call *subversion*.

The third kind of foolishness may be called *co-operation* with the enemy when he is erroneously regarded as a friend, protector or partner.

Fourth, people may come to think that their individual safety and gain and comfort are more important than the defense or power of their country. This is foolish, because it works only as long as not many people think and act in terms of what we call *privatization*.

Finally, the soldiers cannot fight and the workers do not work when there is *panic*. Panic is therefore another natural aim of symbol warfare.

Submission, subversion, co-operation, privatization and panic, then, are natural aims of symbol warfare—being those actions of the enemy which spell his defeat. Submission is military and political non-action against the enemy; subversion is politically inverted action against parts of the collective self; co-operation is politically reversed action *with* the enemy; pri-

vatization is non-political action *for* the private self; and panic is socially undirected action.

### *Types of Symbol Warfare*

How do those who engage in symbol warfare try to induce these foolish actions? Obviously, they may either *suggest them directly*, in which case we speak of *agitation*. Or they may merely present such a picture of the situation that their listeners are induced to act foolishly, without being told explicitly what to do. In this latter case we speak of *propaganda* in the narrower sense of the term, which may be distinguished from and related to agitation by regarding it as implicit or concealed agitation.

For purposes of content analysis, then, all agitational statements will be so classified as to correspond to the five types of foolish action of the propagandee. The "natural aims" of symbol warfare are types of agitation.<sup>6</sup>

Different from the types of agitation, the main classes of propagandistic statements cannot be derived from the natural aims of symbol warfare, because propaganda consists of news and opinion pertaining to the situation in which the propagandee is to act, whereas an agitational statement suggests a specific action to the propagandee. And seldom can a situation be so described, propagandistically or otherwise, that only one course is open for action. "Throw the British out of France!" is subversive agitation. "The British have a jolly good time behind your lines" is propaganda which may possibly dispose the French toward doing something *against* the English, but may also induce them to co-operate *with* the Germans or to act *for* themselves.

<sup>6</sup> Within the five types, however, we also distinguish between agitation in the form of commands or suggestions, and agitation for actions or attitudes.

What connection then exists between agitation and propaganda? The *ultimate* goal of the propagandist coincides with that of the agitator; both of them want to contribute to victory by means other than physical violence. In other words, there is an ultimate connection between the main directions of propaganda and the types of agitation, but there is not necessarily a correspondence between each specific direction of propaganda and each specific type of agitation. We have constructed a scheme for the classification of propagandistic statements whose categories correspond *logically* to the types of agitation (in a way to be indicated presently). This scheme permits us to study how far there is an *actual* correspondence between the directions of propaganda and the types of agitation.

It seems to us that the principal ways in which propagandists in war may hope to induce the enemy toward submission, subversion, co-operation, etc., are these:

1. They *may attack the enemy's confidence in victory* by pointing out that the odds are against him; because he is weak or has failed, while the propagandist's side is strong or has had success.

2. Similarly, propagandists may point out that the enemy is socially divided or that the propagandist's side is really united with that of the propagandee.<sup>7</sup>

3. They *may attack the enemy's conviction of the right to victory* by telling him that he is guilty of all sorts of immorality, whereas the propagandist's side shines in the glory of a just cause and is generally angelic.

4. They *may confuse the enemy's understanding of the complex world he lives in*, in particular by presenting certain groups and leaders on his own side as his real enemies, i.e., as

<sup>7</sup> This, to be sure, is a particular kind of weakness and strength respectively, but may for certain purposes be distinguished from military, economic and all other kinds of weakness and strength.

internal enemies or exploiters. Correspondingly, propagandists may make every effort to present their own side, the external enemy, as a partner, real friend or protector who is going to treat his misled foe with consideration.

5. Finally, propagandists may depoliticize their audience not by confusing the roles of enemy and friend, but by presenting non-political values and loyalties as more important than the political ones. Statements pertaining to exploitation by internal "enemies" and good treatment by external "friends" may be said to split the listener socially, while statements on the senselessness of the war and appeals to the listener's private safety and comfort may be said to divide his soul: they divide the French citizen from the man who happens to be French.

On the basis of these considerations we distinguish five general classes of propagandistic statements or *main directions* of propaganda. Each propagandistic statement is either a non-moral or a moral statement, and any statement "discourages" or "divides" the listener. In addition, each propagandistic statement can be classified according to "*subject reference*": it is positive when the subject is on the German side, negative when it is on the enemy side. Therefore, within each main (general) direction there are two *supplementary* (specific) directions. Thus, the following directions can be distinguished:

- |                  |                 |  |   |                |
|------------------|-----------------|--|---|----------------|
| I. Weakness      | } non-moral     |  | } | Discouragement |
| Strength         |                 |  |   |                |
| II. Guilt        | } moral         |  | } |                |
| Rightness        |                 |  |   |                |
| III. Division    | } non-moral     |  | } |                |
| Unity            |                 |  |   |                |
| IV. Exploitation | } moral         |  | } | Schism         |
| Good treatment   |                 |  |   |                |
| V. Peace lost    | } privatization |  | } |                |
| Peace retained   |                 |  |   |                |

Directions I-IV are interrelated in three ways:

First, (a) weakness, guilt, division, exploitation, are directions of statements referring to the *enemy* side, whereas

(b) strength, unity, rightness, good treatment, are directions of statements referring to the *German* side.

Second, (a) weakness, division, strength, unity, are directions of statements *without* any moral evaluations, whereas

(b) guilt, rightness, exploitation, good treatment, are directions of statements *with moral evaluations*.

Third, (a) weakness and guilt are directions of statements referring to the *enemy side* as a whole or to some internal group of that side with which the listener is *identified*;

(b) strength and rightness are directions of statements referring to the *German side* as a whole or some internal group on that side from which the listener is entirely *excluded*;

(c) division and exploitation are directions of statements referring to the *relation* between the *listener* or a group with which he is identified *and the enemy side* or an internal group on that side;

(d) unity and good treatment are directions of statements referring to the *relation* between the *listener* or a group with which he is identified *and the German side* or an internal group on that side.

It appears thus that each propagandistic statement can be classified<sup>8</sup> when the following questions are answered:

1. What is the subject reference of the statement, both general and specific?
2. With what group is the listener identified or to what group is he opposed?
3. Does the statement contain a moral evaluation?

<sup>8</sup> To insure reliability of the coding procedure we have established rules for the way in which the answers to these questions have to be found.

The general relation between the natural aims of symbol warfare (our "types of agitation") and the "directions of propaganda" can be stated as follows:

1. To submission correspond statements in the direction of *discouragement*;
2. To subversive actions correspond statements in the direction of *division* (from internal enemies) and *exploitation* by internal enemies;
3. To actions involving co-operation with the enemy or the conqueror correspond propagandistic statements in the direction of *unity* (with external friends) and *good treatment* by external friends;
4. To actions increasing privatization correspond propagandistic statements in the direction of *peace lost* and *peace retained*;
5. To panic no single type of propagandistic statement can be said to correspond.

### *The Elasticity of Propagandistic Reasoning*

In addition to our main purpose of discovering how the aims of propaganda vary with the structure of events we were also interested in discovering how the Nazis used various types of arguments in their propaganda. Thus, besides classifying propaganda statements according to direction, we have distinguished between different statements within each of them. That is, we have distinguished between the different sorts of attributes and actions<sup>9</sup> given as reasons of enemy weakness, guilt, division or exploitation, and own strength, rightness, unity or good treat-

<sup>9</sup> Although these attributes and actions have been listed as single words, each category includes any word of approximately the same meaning; nine groups of attributes with related meanings were eventually formed in order to facilitate the technical problem of studying elasticity. See p. 241.

ment. These attributes<sup>10</sup> do not exhaust all actual meaning found in the material analyzed. They were listed by us, after several preliminary codings, as being the most important ones.<sup>11</sup> For example, in the statement, "Frenchmen, you must save your beautiful country from ruin," we would not code beauty as an attribute of France.

Each statement containing an attribute which is included in our final list is regarded as a unit for purposes of coding and counting. If two attributes occur within a single sentence, that sentence constitutes two units, and, conversely, if a number of sentences all pertain to a single attribute, they only constitute one unit. The one exception to this general rule is in the case of a single attribute having more than one subject reference, in which case it is counted as a corresponding number of items.

In thus listing attributes within the directions it was soon found that the same attribute often appeared in more than one direction. In other words, an attribute would be put to different argumentative purposes in different contexts. This dependence of the argumentative purpose of an attribute on its context is true of discourse in general. My bravery may be your foolhardiness. It is particularly true, however, of any wartime propaganda, where it is expedient to present similar attributes as both praiseworthy or reprehensible, depending on whether they refer to the self or to the enemy. It may thus be said that a wartime situation favors the *elasticity* of reasoning. Thucydides wrote of Greece during the Peloponnesian wars that "even the common meaning of words was changed arbitrarily." (III.2) It is possible, however, that the extent and pattern of

<sup>10</sup> From now on the word "attribute" will be used to signify both attribute and action.

<sup>11</sup> If during the final coding a new attribute was found which seemed of sufficient importance to be included in our list, we re-examined the coded material to be sure that this attribute had not occurred before.



this elasticity should differ, depending on the philosophy of the propagandist concerned. We classify attributes in such a way as to show within the framework of our scheme the extent and pattern of their elasticity in Nazi propaganda.

Attributes are classified as pairs of opposites: a positive attribute and the corresponding negative attribute, such as successful-unsuccessful. Each attribute may appear with the German or the enemy side as subject reference, which gives us four initial versions of the same general attribute:

1. You have the positive attribute
2. You have the negative attribute
3. We have the positive attribute
4. We have the negative attribute

Each of these versions can be put to many argumentative purposes, i.e., many different conclusions can be drawn from each of them. These possibilities we have reduced to six major classes. According to our scheme, each attribute may be used as a reason for:

1. Non-moral weakness
2. Non-moral strength
3. Immorality connected with strength
4. Morality connected with weakness
5. Immorality connected with weakness
6. Morality connected with strength

There are thus 24 possible meanings for every attribute listed. As our coding system allows us to identify an attribute as having any one of these meanings, we are able to study the elasticity of reasoning in Nazi propaganda in terms of this scheme.

## B. FINDINGS

## AGITATION

German symbol warfare against France was predominantly propagandistic rather than agitational in character. Out of a total of 2,309 entries for all periods (from April 26 to July 23, 1940), 2,209 or 96 per cent were propagandistic statements, and only 100 or 4 per cent were agitational ones. These statements, taken from a sample program of a news bulletin and commentary for each day whenever possible, were distributed over the five periods as indicated in Table I.

TABLE I.—DISTRIBUTION OF PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION  
(IN PER CENT OF TOTAL REFERENCES)

|                        | <i>Period</i> |           |            |           |          | <i>Total</i> |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
|                        | <i>I</i>      | <i>II</i> | <i>III</i> | <i>IV</i> | <i>V</i> |              |
|                        | %             | %         | %          | %         | %        | %            |
| Propaganda .....       | 100           | 93        | 93         | 94        | 98       | 96           |
| Agitation .....        | 0             | 7         | 7          | 6         | 2        | 4            |
| Total per cent .....   | 100           | 100       | 100        | 100       | 100      | 100          |
| Total references ..... | 364           | 395       | 260        | 790       | 504      | 2,309        |

There was practically no agitation in the period of phoney warfare (I) and in the period following the armistice (V). It thus appears that in periods where symbol warfare is a substitute for violence it does not take a direct form; in periods where it is a supplement to violence it sometimes does.

We distinguish between agitation in the form of suggestions and agitation put in the form of commands. Within each of these categories we further distinguish between agitation for attitudes and agitation for actions. As might have been expected, very little agitation was found in the form of commands, as this would be more suitable for a conquered country than for an enemy country. Also, agitation for action predomi-

nates in all periods except the last. Only after the armistice (Period V) do the Nazis become more concerned with attitudes than with actions.

Agitation is used mainly for submission and subversion, less for co-operation and privatization, and not at all for panic (see Appendix G, Table 1). The continuance of subversive agitation after the armistice (Period V) can be explained by the fact that although it was no longer necessary for the Nazis to preach revolt against the French Government, they continued to preach revolt against England. Since the French had no longer any immediate contact with the British, this would naturally take the form of agitation for attitudes rather than for actions.

DIRECTIONS OF PROPAGANDA

In their propaganda as distinguished from their agitation the Germans talked much more about the enemy than about themselves. This is in line with the principle, expressed by many Nazi leaders, that also in symbol warfare the offensive is preferable to the defensive.

TABLE 2.—PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PROPAGANDISTIC STATEMENTS ABOUT OWN AND ENEMY SIDES AT DIFFERENT PERIODS (IN PER CENT OF TOTAL PROPAGANDISTIC REFERENCES)

|                          | <i>Period</i> |           |            |           |          | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
|                          | <i>I</i>      | <i>II</i> | <i>III</i> | <i>IV</i> | <i>V</i> |              |
|                          | %             | %         | %          | %         | %        | %            |
| Own side . . . . .       | 28            | 31        | 23         | 35        | 30       | 29           |
| Enemy side . . . . .     | 72            | 69        | 77         | 65        | 70       | 71           |
| French . . . . .         | 5             | 33        | 32         | 43        | 32       | 29           |
| English . . . . .        | 45            | 19        | 31         | 17        | 32       | 29           |
| Allied . . . . .         | 22            | 17        | 14         | 5         | 6        | 13           |
| Total per cent . . . . . | 100           | 100       | 100        | 100       | 100      | 100          |

As indicated in Table 2, for the average of all five periods only 29 per cent of all statements pertained to the German

side, while 71 per cent had the enemy side as subject references. The distribution of attention given to the two sides in the five different periods did not vary much. The Nazis talked least about themselves (23 per cent) in Period III (during the retreat), and talked relatively more about themselves in the last two periods, i.e., during the Battle of the Somme and after the armistice.

### *French—English—Allies*

The attention given to the French, the English and the Allies (French and English undistinguished) by the German radio in the five periods affords some insight into the dependence of German propaganda on the specific stage of the war.

As the war progresses, the Germans refer less and less to "the Allies" when talking about the enemy. In other words, the statements about the enemy become more *specific* with regard to nationality as the war proceeds. In addition to the steady decline of references to the Allies, the Germans talked more about the English when they talked less about the French and vice versa. The highest percentage of references to the English was of course the period of the phoney war (Period I), when these references were nine times as frequent as references to the French.<sup>12</sup> This was the period of the war in which German propagandists were trying to persuade French listeners that Germany had no quarrel with France, and that the English were the trouble-makers. In this period, propaganda was a substitute for military action, and the main effort of Germany's symbol warfare was directed to divide the Allies. The function of propaganda changed with the invasion. Now, with symbol warfare relegated to a merely supplementary function, the French are attacked by words as well as guns, and French

<sup>12</sup> Strictly speaking, statements having France as a subject reference.

listeners now hear more about the French than the English. This was found to be true even during the retreat (Period III), when references to the English were of course more numerous than they were before and after Dunkerque. After the armistice, however, when France was down, German propagandists became again more eloquent about the English. In fact, they talked as much about the former allies of the French as about the French themselves. Propaganda, freed from its merely supplementary role, tried to focus French attention on British, rather than German, villainy.

### *Country vs. Countrymen*

In coding subject references we have also differentiated between *impersonalized and personalized designations*, such as "France" as distinguished from "the French." The content of the statement that "France" is going to lose the war seems hardly different from that of the statement that "the French" are going to lose it; but we thought that the difference between these forms of subject references may be significant in propaganda and provided for specific coding in our scheme. The results, presented in Figure 1, have borne out our hunch.

It is not primarily important that the country references are generally more frequent than the countrymen references. What is important is the different ratio of these two designations as we compare France, England and Germany.

*The ratio is highest for Germany.* The German propagandist when speaking of his own side refers only once out of 18 times to the *Germans* and usually prefers to speak of *Germany*. Obviously he is of the opinion that the designation "Germans" is more likely to arouse antagonistic feelings on the part of the listener than the designation "Germany." Furthermore, the majority of the German statements refer to strength, and it is

plausible that Germany, rather than the Germans, is presented as strong.

In the case of *England* the situation is different. When speaking about England, references to the English rather than the country are made once out of five times. As we shall see, exploitation and guilt are relatively more important than weak-

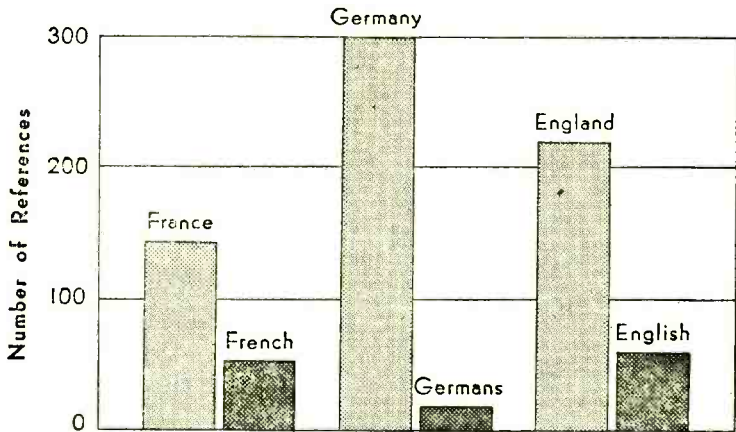


FIG. I.—REFERENCES TO COUNTRY VERSUS COUNTRYMEN

ness on the English side, while on the German side strength is relatively more important than the good treatment and rightness. Exploiters are likely to be personalized; we should expect, therefore, relatively more references to Englishmen than to Germans.

*The ratio is lowest for "Frenchmen vs. France"* (the former being referred to once out of every four times), which is again partly due to the fact that exploitation plays a considerable role on the French side. In addition, we may suspect that in German broadcasts to French listeners the difference between country and countrymen as designations is less important in the case of France than in the case of Germany or England: both

“Frenchmen” and “France” are presumably of equal appeal to a French audience.

*Distribution of Directions*

The relative importance of both main and supplementary directions for all periods taken together is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3.—DISTRIBUTION OF MAIN AND SUPPLEMENTARY DIRECTIONS OF PROPAGANDISTIC STATEMENTS FOR ALL PERIODS (IN PER CENT OF TOTAL PROPAGANDISTIC REFERENCES)

| <i>Supplementary directions</i> |              | <i>Main directions</i> |              |                                       |       |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| <i>Own</i>                      | <i>Enemy</i> | <i>Own</i>             | <i>Enemy</i> |                                       |       |
|                                 | %            |                        | %            |                                       |       |
| Unity . . . . .                 | 0            | Division . . . . .     | 4            | Unity-division                        | 2     |
| Other strength . . .            | 71           | Other weakness . .     | 34           | Other strength-weakness . .           | 45    |
| Rightness . . . . .             | 18           | Guilt . . . . .        | 24           | Rightness-guilt . . . . .             | 22    |
| Good treatment . .              | 11           | Exploitation . . .     | 30           | Good treatment-exploitation . . . . . | 25    |
| Peace retained . . .            | 0            | Peace lost . . . . .   | 3            | Peace retained-lost . . . . .         | 2     |
| Residual * . . . . .            | 0            | Residual * . . . . .   | 5            | Residual * . . . . .                  | 4     |
| Total per cent . .              | 100          |                        | 100          |                                       | 100   |
| No. references . .              | 679          |                        | 1,350        |                                       | 2,209 |

\* See the discussion of this category in the text.

To recapitulate our definition: “main” direction refers to the total class of statements irrespective of whether they pertain to the enemy or the German side; “supplementary” covers these two respective sides. Thus “weakness” would be a supplementary direction for the enemy and “strength” for the German side. Both types of statements are summarized in the main direction “weakness-strength.”

It appears that by far the most important direction is that of weakness-strength, under which almost one-half of all propagandistic statements could be subsumed. Within this main di-

rection, statements conveying the impression of enemy social division amounted to only 2 per cent of the total.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly enough, the supplementary direction, own strength, is of much greater importance in the total of all statements pertaining to the German side than is enemy weakness on the enemy side. While 7 out of 10 statements pertaining to the German side are statements on own strength, only approximately 3 out of 10 statements pertaining to the enemy side refer to enemy weakness. Thus the pattern of German propaganda is not "We are strong and you are weak," but rather "*We are strong and you are immoral.*" The German morality-statements (rightness plus good treatment) constitute 29 per cent of the German total, whereas the corresponding directions on the enemy side (guilt and exploitation) amount to no less than 54 per cent of the enemy total.

Like unity-division, the direction peace retained-peace lost was quantitatively of little importance, amounting to only 2 per cent of the grand total. The fact that we found no single statements to be subsumed under "peace retained" may be partly due to the scarcity of *talks* in our sample. It is however safe to say that the Nazis, when talking about the comforts of peace, tend to stress those which the enemy has lost more than those which the Germans have retained in spite of war.<sup>14</sup>

As *residual entries* we have listed all statements which, contrary to expectations, stressed *French* strength or morality. Most of these statements occur in the last period, when France is defeated. We found no such statements on the German side

<sup>13</sup> There were no entries for "unity" (of Germany with France). In the following discussions, tables and graphs, "division" will always be included whenever we speak of "weakness," German domestic unity being included in "strength" in any case.

<sup>14</sup> It is quite possible that this pattern is reversed in German propaganda to this country.



("admissions" of deficiency), so that the small percentage of 4 per cent for residual statements is entirely made up of "concessions" to the (defeated) enemy.

### *The Three Main Directions at Different Periods*

The relative importance of the three most frequent directions—strength-weakness, rightness-guilt, good treatment-exploitation—amounting to 94 per cent of all statements is shown in Figure 2 for each period. While the specific propa-

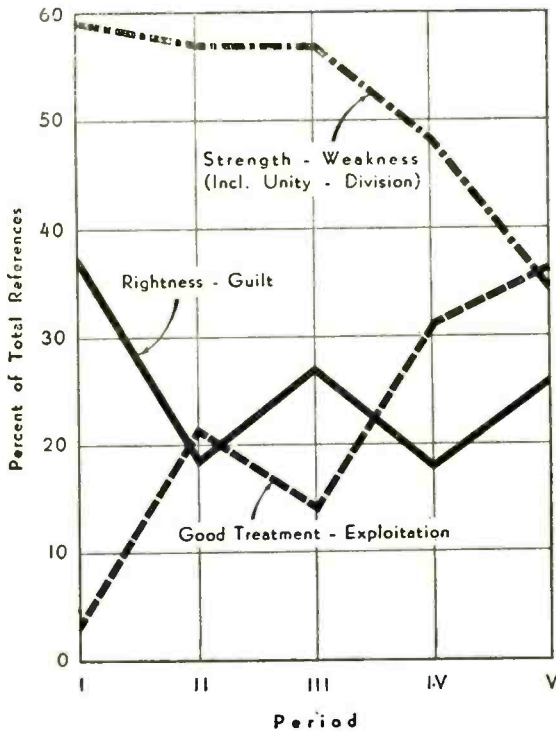


FIG. 2.—DISTRIBUTION OF THREE MAIN DIRECTIONS FOR EACH PERIOD<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The percentages shown by the three curves do not add up to 100% for each period because the direction Peace retained-Peace lost (Privatization) is not shown on the graph.

gandistic meaning of this graph requires an analysis of the *supplementary* directions—as shown in Figure 3—even the trend of the *main* directions (i.e., class of statement regardless of subject reference) reveals a few general characteristics of German propaganda in its dependence on events.

The direction strength-weakness is highest in the first period, before the actual fighting begins. It remains high until Dunkerque, drops sharply during the Battle of the Somme and is slightly lower than the direction good treatment-exploitation after the signing of the armistice. Statements pointing out that Germany will treat (treated or treats) France (and the Frenchmen) well and especially all assertions to the effect that the English (or French leaders) take advantage of the French by exploiting them, were designed to drive wedges into the enemy's social structure and paralyze his will to resist. Such statements were rather infrequent in the period of the phoney war, but they rise to one-fifth of all statements in the invasion period and to more than one-third in the last two stages of the conflict.

The direction good treatment-exploitation comprises all statements involving an immoral (or moral) attitude *toward France*. Assertions of the enemy's guilt or Germany's just cause in this war are also morality statements, but the enemy's immorality is directed *towards Germany* and, conversely, German morality is not specifically related to France. Such assertions have been classified as statements on rightness and guilt.<sup>15</sup> Except for the last period under analysis, the frequency of

<sup>15</sup> It may be objected that when Nazi propagandists tell Frenchmen "England is responsible for this war" or "The British Government consists of warmongers," the *effect* on the French audience may not be very different from that of Nazi assertions that England dragged *France* into the war. However, according to our rules, we have coded the former statements as "assertions of guilt," the latter as "exploitation," since the classification of content must not depend on an appraisal of its presumable effect.

these statements is in inverse relation to statements on good treatment and exploitation. Especially during the phoney war, when Nazi propagandists did not talk much about exploitation on the enemy side or on the good treatment of Frenchmen by Germans, they did talk a great deal about enemy guilt.

### *The Dependence of Propaganda on Events*

The *logical* opposites which we have distinguished as supplementary directions in each main direction, viz., strength *vs.* weakness, rightness *vs.* guilt, good treatment *vs.* exploitation, are not *factually* interdependent. As is evident from Figure 3, Nazi propaganda manipulates supplementary directions independently, stressing either weakness *or* strength, guilt *or* rightness, etc., rather than both weakness *and* strength, guilt *and* rightness, etc. Thus the development of the *main* directions from period to period as shown in Figure 2 somewhat obscures the strategy of Nazi propaganda.

A comparison of the supplementary directions in Figure 3 shows that weakness, guilt and exploitation, the enemy directions, fluctuate more than do strength, rightness and good treatment, on the German side: *the dynamics of propaganda is determined by the presentation of the enemy rather than by the presentation of the self.* Or to put it differently, the way in which German propagandists talk about Germany is less dependent on events than is their talk about the enemy. The fluctuations of the main directions as shown on Figure 2 are chiefly the result of fluctuations of the *enemy* directions.

The fluctuation of a trend curve can be stated in terms of *range* or of *amount* of fluctuation. The range of fluctuation is the distance between the highest and lowest points of a curve. For example, the curve for guilt, Figure 3, reaches its peak (34) in Period I and its trough in Period IV (10); its range

is 24. The amount of fluctuation is the sum of all distances between adjacent points of the trend curve. The amount of fluctuation displayed by the curve for guilt in Figure 3 is very high (54) because the curve, within its range of 24, fluctuates considerably from period to period. Two trend curves can have

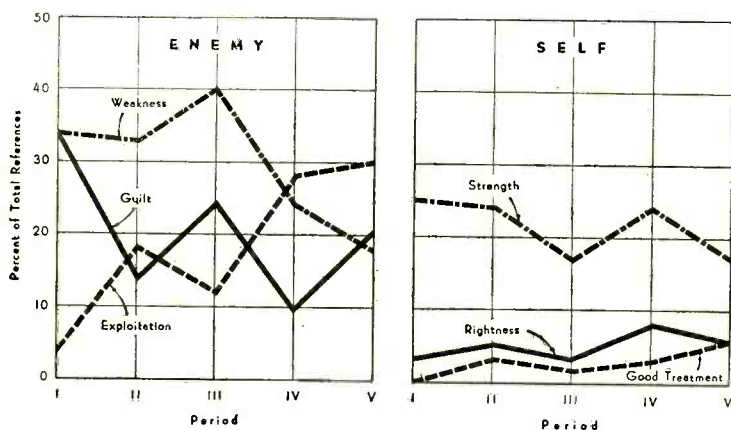


FIG. 3.—DISTRIBUTION OF THE THREE SUPPLEMENTARY DIRECTIONS ON ENEMY AND GERMAN SIDES (IN PER CENT OF TOTAL REFERENCES)

the same range, but if one of them moves up and down more frequently, its amount of fluctuation will be larger. If a curve goes steadily in one direction without reversal, range and amount of fluctuation will be identical. If a curve shows reversal, amount is higher than range of fluctuation. The difference between amount and range is a measure of smoothness, zero meaning no reversal in direction.

The range of fluctuation for the supplementary directions (see Table 4A) bears out more precisely the contention that the dynamics of German propaganda to France are determined by the presentation of the enemy rather than by the way in which the Nazis talk about themselves. The range for state-

ments on the enemy (enemy directions) is about three and a half times as great as that for statements on the self (German directions). More specifically, assertions about rightness show the smallest range, statements on exploitation the widest range of fluctuation, with guilt as a close second.

TABLE 4A.—RANGE AND AMOUNT OF FLUCTUATION

| <i>Directions</i>       | <i>Range</i> <sup>a</sup> | <i>Amount</i> <sup>b</sup> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Exploitation .....      | 26                        | 38                         |
| Guilt .....             | 24                        | 54                         |
| Weakness .....          | 16                        | 30                         |
| <i>All Enemy</i> .....  | 66                        | 122                        |
| Strength .....          | 8                         | 22                         |
| Good treatment .....    | 6                         | 8                          |
| Rightness .....         | 5                         | 11                         |
| <i>All German</i> ..... | 19                        | 41                         |

<sup>a</sup> Range expresses difference between highest and lowest proportion of references to each direction at any of the five periods.

<sup>b</sup> Amount expresses sum of differences in proportion of references to each direction from period to period.

The *amount* of fluctuation is a better index of the dependence of German propaganda on events than the *range* of fluctuation, since the former does not obliterate reversals of the curves within the range. Generally speaking, the amount of fluctuation of all statements on the enemy is four times as large as that for all German directions. As to the individual directions, guilt (which has only the second highest range) is the direction with the largest amount of fluctuation. It may therefore be said to constitute the direction with the greatest sensitivity to events. Since statements on exploitation too show a high amount of fluctuation from period to period, it appears that *the German propagandist readjusts his propaganda strategy primarily by changing the frequency of specifically directed immorality charges (guilt and exploitation) to changes in the total situation; secondarily he does so by changing the fre-*

quency of assertions of enemy *weakness*. In comparison with these adjustments, all others are definitely of subordinate importance.

It would be erroneous, however, to conclude from this result of our study that German propaganda is less concerned with the adjustment of its "factual," non-moral statements (on strength and weakness) to the changing scene than with the adaptation of its charges of immorality to such changes. This conclusion is correct only as long as guilt and exploitation are distinguished as they have been in the preceding discussion. An inspection of the trend curves for guilt and exploitation in Figure 3 shows, however, that the conclusion must be revised when the two curves are combined so as to obtain the trend curve for the *combined* immorality directions. With the exception of Period V, the *specific* assertions of enemy immorality (guilt and exploitation) are inversely related: when guilt rises, exploitation drops. However, if all immorality statements are taken *together*, regardless of whether they indicate guilt or exploitation, a much smoother curve results for the five periods. Consequently for *all* immorality statements (guilt and exploitation combined) range and amount of fluctuation are smaller than they are for either guilt or exploitation statements<sup>18</sup> (see Table 4B).

Thus, once the number of propagandistic directions is reduced to four (*viz.*, enemy weakness and enemy immorality, own strength and own morality), it appears that enemy *weakness* is the direction with the highest amount (though not with the widest range) of fluctuation. Similarly, the relative emphasis on German strength varies (within a rather small range) almost as much as that on enemy immorality.

<sup>18</sup> With the exception of the difference between Periods IV and V, when *both* curves *rise*.

TABLE 4B.—AMOUNT AND RANGE OF FLUCTUATION OF NON-MORAL AND COMBINED MORAL DIRECTIONS

| <i>Directions</i>           | <i>Amount</i> <sup>a</sup> | <i>Range</i> <sup>b</sup> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Weakness . . . . .          | 30                         | 16                        |
| Immorality . . . . .        | 24                         | 18                        |
| <i>All enemy</i> . . . . .  | 54                         | 34                        |
| Strength . . . . .          | 22                         | 8                         |
| Morality . . . . .          | 15                         | 9                         |
| <i>All German</i> . . . . . | 37                         | 17                        |

<sup>a</sup> Amount expresses sum of differences in proportion of references to each direction from period to period.

<sup>b</sup> Range expresses difference between highest and lowest proportion of references to each direction at any of the five periods.

In other words, while Nazi propaganda does not altogether live up to its avowed principle of letting the facts speak for themselves, it certainly tries to make the most of the military defeat and weakness of the enemy.

As to *incisiveness of certain events*, it is rather interesting that Dunkerque had a greater impact upon German propaganda strategy than the beginning of the actual fighting war. The total amount of fluctuation from Period III to Period IV was 59 points for all specific directions as over against 41 points for the differences between Periods I and II. In Period III (from the surrender of Belgium to the completed evacuation of Dunkerque) Nazi propaganda was particularly concerned with stressing the *weakness* of the enemy. In this period 40 per cent of all statements were assertions of enemy weakness, the highest percentage of any direction for all five periods. Clearly, Dunkerque was presented by Nazi propaganda as an Allied defeat rather than as a German victory, while the period leading to the Fall of France (Period IV) was as much of a German victory as an Allied defeat (see Figure 3).

*Own Morality vs. Enemy Immorality*

As has been said, Nazi propaganda talks more about the enemy than about Germany (see Tables 2 and 3). This is true for each period. A breakdown of all propagandistic statements into moral and non-moral assertions shows that the denunciation of enemy immorality is a particularly urgent concern of the Nazis: the ratio of statements about the enemy to statements about the self is higher for morality assertions (4.2:1) than for non-morality statements (1.2:1) or for all statements (see Appendix G, Table 2).

Thus, *own morality is less important than enemy immorality in German symbol warfare*. And while it is true that also own strength is regarded as less important than enemy weakness, the predominance of statements about the enemy is far greater in the category of morality assertions than in the category of factual statements (weakness and strength).

To the extent that own morality is mentioned, the Nazis present themselves as both right (just) and generous (promising good treatment). As Figure 3 shows, the directions rightness and good treatment reinforce each other. By contrast, enemy immorality is not always presented the same way regardless of what happens. Rather, it is presented by the propagandist with a view to the event structure.

When Nazi propagandists make statements about German rightness they commit themselves less than when they promise good treatment. One should therefore expect a higher proportion of rightness statements than of statements in the direction of good treatment. The figures, as shown in Figure 3, seem to fulfill this expectation, but the differences are not statistically significant. The relation of assertions of guilt to assertions of exploitation on the enemy side is clearer. During the



period of the phoney war, Nazi propagandists tried to discourage their French audience by impressing upon it the war guilt of the Allies. With the start of the real war, exploitation, the more aggressive, more dramatic and more provocative of the two types of moral accusations, became more important than guilt. Only Period III presents an exception to this generalization: during the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force general immorality charges outweigh specific exploitation statements.

### *French vs. English Weakness, Guilt and Exploitation*

In order to understand these shifts in emphasis more fully, it is important to consider the relative weight attributed by the Nazi propagandists to *French* and *English* weakness, guilt and exploitation, respectively, in the five periods. We have shown before (Table 1) that statements about the English and the French develop inversely, while statements about both of them ("the Allied") drop steadily as the war goes on. Table 5 contains the breakdown of statements on the three main directions for English and French subject references.<sup>17</sup>

It appears that in the period of the phoney war (Period I), when Germany pretended not to be really at war with France, the overwhelming propaganda attack in broadcasts to French listeners was directed against *England*. Not the French were weak, but the English; not the French were immoral (guilty) but the English. The picture changes with the outbreak of actual fighting. Now violence speaks its own language and propagandists are relegated to perform a function which is distinctly

<sup>17</sup> The reader should keep in mind that we are talking about statements in which "the English," or "the French" or "the Allies" are *subjects*. When the German propagandist declares "Germany shall defeat France," he talks about France, but "Germany" would be the subject reference, and the statement would be coded as *German* strength. We have also coded *object references*, but report only on findings pertaining to subject references.

TABLE 5.—DISTRIBUTION OF FRENCH VS. ENGLISH WEAKNESS, GUILT AND EXPLOITATION  
(IN PER CENT OF TOTAL REFERENCES ON ENEMY SIDE, EXCLUDING NEUTRAL COUNTRIES)

| Directions    | Period |    |     |    |    |
|---------------|--------|----|-----|----|----|
|               | I      | II | III | IV | V  |
| Weakness      |        |    |     |    |    |
| French .....  | 2      | 25 | 25  | 26 | 9  |
| English ..... | 30     | 9  | 19  | 8  | 12 |
| Guilt         |        |    |     |    |    |
| French .....  | 5      | 6  | 6   | 8  | 8  |
| English ..... | 29     | 5  | 8   | 2  | 10 |
| Exploitation  |        |    |     |    |    |
| French .....  | 0      | 10 | 8   | 24 | 19 |
| English ..... | 4      | 14 | 12  | 17 | 24 |

subordinate to that of the soldiers. In Period I, when the propagandists "fight" alone, they attack the *British* by pointing out their weakness. In the three battle periods (II-IV), however, German propagandists have the task of echoing the language of bombs and pointing out *French* weakness (to their French audience) becomes their major concern. Even during the evacuation from Dunkerque (Period III), when statements on English weakness rise considerably, they are outnumbered by assertions of French weakness. The propagandistic meaning of statements about enemy weakness varies therefore with the amount of actual violence in war and correspondingly with the function of propaganda.

The propagandistic *intent* of German statements about enemy weakness during the period of the phoney war may be said to be closer to the meaning of statements about exploitation than in any of the actual battle periods, since most of the weakness statements point out *English* lack of strength to a *French* audience. Likewise, the rise of anti-English assertions *after* the Battle of France was decided (Period V), which contrasts so sharply with the drop of statements on French weakness, invites a similar comment. In order to disrupt whatever

bonds between France and England still existed, and in order to destroy whatever was left of loyalty to the former Allies in the hearts of the French, German propaganda spoke more about English exploitation, guilt *and weakness* than about the immorality and weakness of the French.

As to all accusations of immorality—guilt as well as exploitation—German propagandists were concerned with England more than with France in all periods except during the Battle of the Somme (Period IV). This predominance of charges against the *English*, rather than the French, was particularly great again in Period I (phoney war).

#### *Military vs. Political Weakness and Exploitation*

Within each direction we have classified and coded all propagandistic statements in such a way as to be able to analyze the particular relation between each direction and particular *spheres* of life, such as military, political, economic, cultural, etc.

As Figure 4 shows, *weakness is a predominantly "military" direction, while exploitation may be called a "political" direction*. One might expect this in times of war. What one might not necessarily anticipate is the fact that in the period of phoney war (I) German propagandists went so far in concealing Germany's belligerent intent as to stress the enemy's political weakness more than his military lack of strength.

A somewhat more general inference may be drawn from Figure 4. German propaganda charges the armed forces of the enemy with weakness rather than immorality, while the enemy politicians, political groups and institutions are accused of immorality rather than inefficiency (and other kinds of weakness). Or to relate this generalization to the intelligibility

of the complex world in which the listeners live, military defeat, which affects the structure of this world more incisively than anything else, is reported factually, in non-moral terms. *Political matters, which are more obscure in the sense that their factual meaning is less evident, are presented by propagandists*

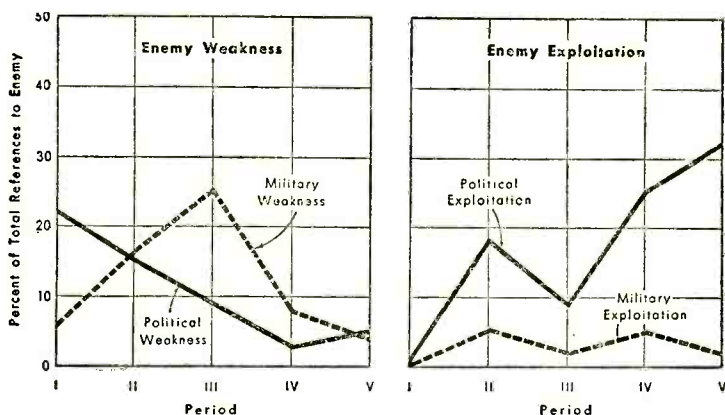


FIG. 4.—MILITARY VERSUS POLITICAL WEAKNESS AND EXPLOITATION

*in moral language, so as to define targets for indignation.* If one does not shun a simplification, he might say that propaganda to the enemy merely communicates existing military facts, but tries to create (or may try to create) a political world.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> This statement really contains two simplifications: (1) Propaganda may lie about, distort or slant military news (instead of merely communicating the knowledge of facts "objectively"). Since Germany was overwhelmingly victorious in her campaign against the West, she had less reason for departing from the truth than, say, in the Russian campaign. Cf. on this problem, Hans Speier, "The Radio Communication of War News in Germany," *Social Research*, Vol. VIII, November 1941 (dealing with German *domestic* broadcasts during the campaign against France), and *German Military Communiqués*, Research Paper No. 2 of the Research Project on Totalitarian Communication (mimeographed). (2) By revealing corruption of, and exploitation by, political individuals and groups, propaganda may communicate the knowledge of *facts* in spite of its moral language.

## ELASTICITY

*The Pattern*

The most popular instance of the "elasticity" of German propagandistic reasoning pertains to air raids. When German planes raid enemy towns they smash military objectives with unflinching accuracy, whereas enemy planes are equally accurate in destroying hospitals, schools and churches. Thus, air attacks are given the meaning of strength in the one case and that of immorality in the other. Toward the end of the Battle of France the Germans went so far as to boast of their raids on the open city of Paris. "The bombing of Paris has created a deep impression in the Italian Press which says that Germany has scored once more and that she is taking the initiative every day" (June 3, 1940).

The elasticity of propagandistic reasoning is not only a result of a different evaluation of one's own and one's enemy's conduct and characteristics. Elasticity may also result from a different evaluation of the same action by the same actor at various periods. Finally, the propagandistic objective to prove that the enemy is immoral (or the self moral) may influence "reasoning" to such an extent that an action is interpreted in the same way in which the failure to act is interpreted. Thus, in propaganda to France, German broadcasters sometimes presented the enemy's success as well as his lack of success as reasons for his immorality. The charge of lack of success was used chiefly after June 1940, for instilling a sense of guilt into fallen France. On the other hand, "success" was attributed to the enemy (and given the meaning of immorality) almost exclusively with reference to their victory in 1918, as for instance:

A nation (i.e., Germany at the time of the first World War) which has given its blood on the battlefield for four years but was undefeated in arms, had to bow its head and to submit to a regime of force imposed by the conquerors (June 30, 1940).

Such instances of the elasticity of propagandistic reasoning could be multiplied. This elasticity follows a definite pattern with only a small residual percentage in the use of attributes which does not conform with it. The pattern may be illustrated with reference to the attribute "attacking—not attacking." The following six meanings of this attribute are given overwhelming preference by the propagandist:

1. *If you (the enemy) attack*, this is likely to mean immorality associated with strength, for example, brutality (c).<sup>19</sup>
2. *If you do not attack*, this is likely to mean plain (non-moral) weakness (a) or
3. Immorality associated with weakness, for example, cowardice (e).
4. *If we attack*, this is likely to mean either plain (non-moral) strength (b) or
5. Morality associated with strength, for example, bravery (f).
6. *If we do not attack*, this is likely to mean morality, for example, considerate saving of lives (d).

Generally speaking, the elasticity of propagandistic reasoning is not schematically perfect. The pattern of the six preferred meanings represents a selection from twenty-four logically possible meanings, as is illustrated by the following scheme:

<sup>19</sup> These six meanings are also indicated in the schematic scheme of page 241.

SCHEMATIC PRESENTATION OF THE TWENTY-FOUR MEANINGS WHICH THE FOUR VERSIONS OF ANY ATTRIBUTE MAY HAVE

|                 |                                     | <i>Non-Moral</i> |                 | <i>Mora</i>                  |                            |                              |                            |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                 |                                     | <i>Weakness</i>  | <i>Strength</i> | <i>Immorality (strength)</i> | <i>Morality (weakness)</i> | <i>Immorality (weakness)</i> | <i>Morality (strength)</i> |
| Your<br>(Enemy) | Positive <sup>20</sup><br>attribute |                  |                 | c                            |                            |                              |                            |
|                 | Negative<br>attribute               | a                |                 |                              |                            | e                            |                            |
| Our<br>(Self)   | Positive<br>attribute               |                  | b               |                              |                            |                              | f                          |
|                 | Negative<br>attribute               |                  |                 |                              | d                          |                              |                            |

Schematically perfect elasticity of propagandistic reasoning would exist if the meanings of each version of all attributes were evenly distributed over all six schematically co-ordinated meanings, giving about 16 per cent of all cases for each version to each meaning. As has been said, a distribution approximating such schematic perfection, which would be indicative of a complete arbitrariness in the use of words, does not exist. No less than 97 per cent of the attributes used in Nazi propaganda to France, when classified according to the preceding scheme, fell in the six categories (a) to (f). The remaining eighteen possible meanings were assigned to attributes in only 3 per cent of all cases extending over all periods. In the last period (V), however, this *residual* percentage—referring to meanings out-

<sup>20</sup> A word of explanation is necessary for our classification of attributes as being "positive" or "negative." As can be seen, this distinction does not refer to German or Enemy side as do the directions; neither does it necessarily follow the wording of an attribute. To have a consistent and easily applicable aspect of classification for all attributes, we considered as positive the wording which connotes strength while we considered as negative the wording connotating weakness. Thus "attacking" would be considered positive, "non-attacking" negative; however, "undemocratic methods" would also be positive, because in German propaganda it is associated with strength while "democratic methods," associated with weakness, would be classified as a negative attribute.

side the pattern—rose to 9 per cent. After the armistice, the Nazis inflated the *strength* of the defeated nation—for purposes of flattering the “enemy” when he was going to be “converted” to a “partner,” as well as for purposes of heightening the glory redounding to the self. In Periods II and III, the residual percentage was as high as 6 and 5 per cent respectively, because during the invasion and at the time of Dunkerque, Nazi propagandists attempted to split the British and the French by praising the second at the expense of the first (“You fight, the British retreat”).

The pattern of the six preferred meanings may be said to reflect the Nazi views on propaganda efficiency in reasoning. From it the following rules pertaining to the elasticity in propagandistic reasoning may be derived:

I. *Rules That Support the Elasticity of Propagandistic Reasoning*

An attribute shall have a different meaning depending on whether it is used:

- (1) With regard to myself or with regard to my enemy;
- (2) Positively or negatively;
- (3) With regard to the enemy as a whole or to some sub-group on the enemy side (i.e., whether it is used for purposes of discouragement or creating schism);
- (4) At one time or at another in the course of events.

II. *Rules That Limit the Elasticity of Propagandistic Reasoning*

- (5) Seldom can generally recognized indisputable facts be convincingly interpreted as having two opposite meanings. Thus an attribute having a non-moral meaning (i.e., strength) should not also be given the opposite non-moral meaning (i.e., weakness).
- (6) It is only rarely expedient to speak of my enemy as either strong or moral and of myself as either weak or immoral.

The *residual* percentage of meanings which do not fit into the pattern of propagandistic reasoning may be considered, in a sense, as violations of the above rules.



The criticism might be made here that the rules and the pattern itself are typical of *all* war propaganda in general, from the time of Thucydides to the present day. This is probably true to some extent, for there is no doubt but that war favors opportunistic reasoning according to the "rules of elasticity." Under this heading would come the exploitation of the "fifth column" to explain all early reverses of the war, and the preference given in democratic countries to denunciatory words where neutral ones would be more appropriate. Thus, the *New York Times* of October 26, 1942, wrote:

There are two words in the American war vocabulary that have been overworked and should be deleted for the duration. The first is "treachery," which always applies to a successful Japanese attack. . . . The other word is "sneak." There have been too many sneak raids popping into our naval vocabulary. . . . Let's forget "treachery" and "sneak" and talk about attack.

Even the skeptic who is inclined to attribute the "elasticity of propagandistic reasoning" to the wartime situation at large rather than to the Nazis, will have to admit that warnings like the one just quoted are not possible in present Germany. Ultimately, however, a comparative study of Nazi war propaganda and democratic war propaganda is needed in order to determine conclusively whether or not the elasticity of propagandistic reasoning is a specific Nazi-phenomenon or a general war-phenomenon. Most likely, the question is not one of "whether" but one of "how much." It is in this regard that our study of the elasticity of propagandistic reasoning in German propaganda to France provides some insights which may be useful: we have found that *attributes most intimately connected with Nazi philosophy are more elastic than attributes more generally used by all propagandists in times of war.* This result of

our study is briefly discussed in the following, concluding, pages.

*Elasticity Within the Pattern*

While the meanings of the attributes used fall almost wholly in the pattern of the six preferred classes, there are significant variations in the distribution of meanings within the pattern. One type of attributes classified under the three groups "successful—unsuccessful," "affected by war—not affected by war," and "confident—not confident," were given predominantly non-moral meanings of "weakness" or "strength" respectively. The percentages of such meanings lay between 70 and 80 per cent for the groups. (See Appendix G, Table 3.) These attributes may be called "*non-moral attributes.*" Another type of attributes, classified under the three groups "unjust—not unjust," "belligerent—not belligerent," "inflicting—not inflicting suffering," were given predominantly moral meanings, the percentage ranging between 83 and 88 for these groups. (See Appendix G, Table 4.) These attributes may be called the "*moral attributes.*" It can be seen from the tables that *the Nazi propagandists used the moral attributes less often in a non-moral sense than they used the non-moral attributes in a moral sense.* In the hands of Nazi propagandists, morality is handled more rigidly than the world of facts.

There is a third type of attributes which may be called "*ambivalent*" because the meanings attached to them are neither predominantly moral nor predominantly non-moral. Instead (as can be seen from Appendix G, Table 5), they are more evenly distributed, not only between non-moral and moral categories, but between all six categories of the pattern which we found to exist within our scheme. Also, the residual percentage of meanings outside the pattern is much higher for ambivalent

attributes than it is for either the non-moral or the moral attributes. (14 per cent as over against 5 and 2 per cent, respectively.)

These ambivalent attributes comprise again three subgroups: "effective—not effective," "taking—not taking the initiative in war" and "young civilization—not young civilization." Of these three groups, the last one is the most elastic. Assertions pertaining to national "age" and its evaluation are an important concern of Nazi propagandists. They shift freely the meaning of "age" with relation to events. Until the outbreak of the war with Russia, the Nazis presented themselves as a vital young nation at war with the decadent democracies of Europe. After this event they assumed the role of an old and cultured nation defending the European heritage against Asiatic barbarism. Then, in his speech of November 8, 1942, Hitler went so far as to call English civilization "infantile." In propaganda to France, however, the specific attribute of national age was *not* yet elastic. But other attributes within that group which are associated in Nazi propaganda with national age were so. Thus, for example, "democratic methods" (which is associated in Nazi propaganda with old civilization) is used to signify enemy weakness and enemy immorality. However, "undemocratic methods" (associated in Nazi ideology with young civilization) is also used to signify enemy immorality.

The democracies react to a crisis with democratic methods, namely a change of government. (May 9, 1940)

In this statement, "democratic methods" signifies weakness (classified under *a* in the scheme). In the following quote, the same attribute of "democratic methods" is used to signify immorality connected with strength (this represents a residual meaning according to the scheme).

For a long time past, the Western democracies have been trying to enlarge the present conflict. This has been their sole political aim. (March 9, 1940)

The next quote shows how the same meaning of immorality connected with strength is signified by the attribute of "undemocratic methods" (this corresponds to *c* in the scheme). Furthermore, when this same attribute is applied to the Germans rather than the British, it has the meaning of morality connected with strength (this corresponds to *f* in the scheme).

There is just one thing which the British understood about National Socialism—its forcefulness. Therefore, they recognized that to oppose it a man of dynamic character was necessary. They settled on Churchill. . . . But there is the German kind of dynamism—progressive, elastic and revolutionary—and there is the brutal type, devoid of any instinct, except social and military prejudices, as typified by Churchill. (June 9, 1940)

The general Nazi practice on the subject of democracy is to refer scornfully to the "so-called Allied democracies." As it is impossible to tell whether the scorn is directed against the "so-called" or against the "democracies," there is the double implication, first, that the Allied governments are not democratic, and, second, that even if they were, democracy is in itself an evil.

It is interesting that the three groups of ambivalent attributes which have the highest elasticity should be, of all groups listed, the ones used with the German side as a subject reference most frequently (28 per cent of total references as compared with 22 and 19 per cent in those groups of attributes with a predominantly moral or immoral meaning) and most intimately related to Nazi ideology with its stress on youth, action and planning. One would perhaps suppose that attributes closely related to the ideology of the propagan-

dist would have more stable meanings than those marginal to it. The fact that this is not so is not merely further proof of the opportunistic character of Nazi ideology. Rather, it sheds light on the status of ideas in Nazi politics in general.

The Nazis do not attach any intrinsic value and any stable meaning to the ideas which according to their claims are important to them. The elasticity of those ideas which are most intimately connected with Nazi ideology proves that these ideas, too, are used instrumentally. These ideas, too, are subordinate to what really matters to the Nazis: success and power.

### III. SOME PRINCIPLES OF GERMAN PROPAGANDA AND THEIR APPLICATION TO RADIO

by Hans Herma

#### *Radio and the Mass Meeting*

THE spoken word and the mass meeting are the center of National Socialist propaganda theory and practice. "The mass meeting," says Hitler, "being direct and personal . . . was the only way of exercising a really effective influence [upon] great parts of the nation."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Goebbels states that "even modern propaganda is essentially based on the effect of the spoken word," and that "the suggestion of an effective speech is incomparably superior to the paper-dry suggestion of a newspaper editorial."<sup>2</sup> And Hadamovsky only voices what has been the conviction of all National Socialist propagandists when he attributes a "magic power" to the spoken word. "The natural

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Kampf*, Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1941, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *Fight for Berlin* (Kampf um Berlin), Munich, 1934, p. 18 ff.

man and even more so the mass unfailingly yields to the power of the word, irrespective of its inner truth. . . . Certainly words are by their very existence propaganda and a spiritual chain.”<sup>3</sup> The orator-audience relationship may therefore well be considered the model in terms of which one can explain a number of National Socialist propaganda principles.

The press, for instance, was deliberately re-modeled so as to make it more closely resemble the orator-situation. “The political leader in our press,” says Dr. Goebbels, “is a written poster, or better still, an address of a street corner speaker brought to paper. . . . The reader is supposed to get the impression that the writer is in reality a speaker standing next to him and wanting to convert him to his opinion. . . .”<sup>4</sup>

Evidently the radio retains a number of these features. It appears that it was this peculiarity of the radio which permitted the National Socialist propagandists to apply their technique of the mass meetings, with only minor modification, to the new medium on a nationwide scale when they gained access to power.<sup>5</sup> It was also in that sense that Dr. Goebbels declared the radio to be the National Socialist medium of communication par excellence.<sup>6</sup> Reviewing one year’s work since the Party’s ascent to power, he states:

In order to realize what changes the technical apparatus of propaganda has undergone in the last years, one only has to think of the truly revolutionary significance of the invention of radio. Only through the radio has the mass-effect of the spoken word been made truly possible.

<sup>3</sup> E. Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power Policy* (Propaganda und nationale Machtpolitik), Oldenburg, 1933, pp. 11 and 13.

<sup>4</sup> J. P. Goebbels, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> G. Eckert, *The Radio as an Instrument of Leadership* (Der Rundfunk als Führungsmittel), Berlin, 1941.

<sup>6</sup> J. P. Goebbels, *The Radio as the Eighth Great Power* (Der Rundfunk als achte Grossmacht), in *Signale der Neuen Zeit*, Munich, 1934.

Yet it also goes to show that the essence of the art of propaganda . . . remains the same beyond all changes of the technical means.<sup>7</sup>

It is therefore a problem worth considering how the radio was adapted by National Socialist propagandists to the "orator model" and to see whether we can find a link to it also in those aspects of National Socialist propaganda where they deviate from it. Or, to put it in other words, from which source they might derive the psychological power which has made Dr. Goebbels state that the radio has proved to be the "most potent and far-reaching instrument for leading the people" at the disposal of the National Socialist regime.<sup>8</sup>

The radio affords the listeners immediate experience of reality in several respects. The listener is in immediate contact with the speaker, who to him is a "real" person. In addition to that, given certain conditions, the listener can "transplant" himself to where some event takes place, for example a mass meeting; and this not merely in his phantasy as when reading a novel, but as an actual experience. A listener to a speech thus cannot only hear what the speaker says and how he says it, he can actually participate in the meeting. Eckert testifies that: "Since October 1933, Adolf Hitler has never spoken from a studio to unseen listeners alone, but all his speeches have been relayed from political demonstrations and meetings."<sup>9</sup> Thus the leader, in swaying the physical audience, is more apt to also make the radio audience experience his power over them than the democratic leader. The latter broadcasts from the studio, speaking as an individual to individuals; "the level of responsibility and

<sup>7</sup> J. P. Goebbels, "Propaganda as a Link between Elite and Masses," *Voelkischer Beobachter*, Sept. 8, 1934.

<sup>8</sup> J. P. Goebbels, in the Foreword to Hans Fritzsche, *War against the Warmongers, Eight Weeks' Political Review in the Newspaper and the Radio*, Berlin, 1940.

<sup>9</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

not of power constitutes the difference between the speaker and his audience"<sup>10</sup> in a democracy.

But the totalitarian radio goes even further in adopting this "new style of broadcasting . . . which need no longer address itself to the individual listener."<sup>11</sup> For the National Socialist propagandist is not satisfied with "merely relaying a political speech or demonstration." This gives still too much freedom to the individual. He may preoccupy himself with other things while listening or he may prefer to stop listening altogether. The crowd-situation of the meeting is not completely re-established by the radio unless "a whole group of listeners are brought together to the loud-speaker so that . . . the whole nation is able to share in the experience."<sup>12</sup> Only "community listening . . . forces the individual to subordinate his will to that of a community" completely.<sup>13</sup> Eckert thus expresses explicitly the psychological purpose of reconstituting the mass meeting through the radio on a gigantic scale: to reduce the freedom of reaction of the individual and thus to make him more susceptible.

It is obvious that the literal transformation of the broadcasting situation into the orator situation is limited to special occasions, such as a leader speech, a national celebration, etc. It is only in rudimentary form that it survives in that "combatant note" in the announcer's presentation, which, according to the National Socialist conception of propaganda, "is inseparable from any propaganda instrument."<sup>14</sup> The radio, however, provides an experience of reality not only with regard to the person speaking and events in which one can participate, but also with respect to the events for which the listener has

<sup>10</sup> E. Kris, "The Danger of Propaganda," *The American Imago*, Vol. II, 1941, No. 1, p. 41.

<sup>11</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>12</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>13</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>14</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 266.



a strong and spontaneous interest, namely, the news. The attention he gives to the news, and the speed of the transmission give the radio its "actuality" character, to which Dr. Goebbels attributes its "greatest potential danger," but in which he also sees its "greatest strength."<sup>15</sup> It is a foregone conclusion also for the National Socialist propagandist that "the effectiveness of the radio as a propaganda instrument depends on the good will of those who use it."<sup>16</sup> For it is "impossible to think of the radio as a political instrument without the existence of an abundant and varied programme, which keeps attracting the listener to his radio set—and holds him there."<sup>17</sup>

A new link is here established to the orator-audience model. The listener is supposed to be dependent on the radio like the audience at a meeting, which is captivated by the orator. Eckert considers "nothing more uncivilized than that liberalistic way of just picking out those broadcasts which happen to appeal to the mood of the moment."<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, he is by no means in favor of radio journals providing for a selection of programs, since "this detracts from the actual living interest of the transmission . . . and the listener will be able to choose only those commentaries which interest him particularly, so that some commentary which is broadcast for a special propaganda reason may not reach him."<sup>19</sup> The aim of program manipulation is that the listener be "led unconsciously to the radio set and then directed to those transmissions which are of particular importance for leadership."<sup>20</sup> Thus not only things which "must be brought to his notice are worked into a delightful program," but also themes "which might have no particular influence in themselves can be used for leadership if they are

<sup>15</sup> J. P. Goebbels, *The Radio as the Eighth Great Power*, p. 202.

<sup>16</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

<sup>19</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>17</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>20</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>18</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

carefully built up.”<sup>21</sup> It is a “particularly clear example of leadership in program planning” when at the time of the armistice with France “pieces of music were brought together, each of which came nearer to the essence of the affair.”<sup>22</sup>

### *Manipulation Through Program Planning*

With these few remarks we have by no means exhausted the “technical and psychological miracles of the radio,” as Dr. Goebbels puts it, i.e., the managerial potentialities of the radio.

One opportunity which the radio gives for psychological manipulation through program planning seems rather peculiar to this medium of mass communication. It is due to the fact that one can listen in to broadcasts which are addressed to a third partner. For example, the civilian may listen to the special programs broadcast for the fighting forces on the Front, and thus become witness and participant in a “communication event.” The National Socialist propagandist does not, of course, fail to take advantage of such a chance. Eckert asserts that such broadcasts have been “powerful instruments of leadership” inasmuch as they have “acted as a bridge between the Front and the home.”<sup>23</sup> The ideal field for this type of broadcast seems to be propaganda to foreign countries.<sup>24</sup>

Another feature of manipulation is the unified planning of the communication in terms of the content of the programs. On the German radio there is no broadcast which is an isolated element, however “decisive a contribution to the effectiveness

<sup>21</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>22</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>23</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>24</sup> This point of view was adopted for the explanation of certain peculiarities of the so-called “Freedom Stations,” i.e., German stations which pretend to be illegal stations broadcasting in the country of the addressed audience. See Research Paper No. 3 of the Research Project on Totalitarian Communication.

of the whole output" it may constitute. On the contrary, Eckert asserts, "in political broadcasting all the apparently separate factors must be welded into an indivisible whole."<sup>25</sup> This planning applies not only to the program as a whole, but also to the individual items within the broadcast. The impact of such unification in program planning cannot be other than to produce in the listener a similarly unified picture of the world. Needless to say, this world has exactly the features the propagandist intends it to have. This indirect and impersonal management of the listener may appear to be fundamentally different from the model of the "direct and personal" orator situation. Yet such an impression is not warranted, as the analysis of one concrete instance of manipulation will show.

*The "Wool Revolution" of 1942*

In January 1942 the National Socialist Propaganda Ministry found it necessary to convince the German people that German morale was not impaired and that the collection of warm clothes for the soldiers should not be taken as a symptom of disintegration. The campaign was started on the radio on January 1, by an article of Dr. Goebbels in *Das Reich* in which he said:

When two weeks ago we appealed over the radio for the collection of winter equipment for the Front, the address was not yet ended when a stream of telephone calls began to pour in from all over the Reich, which for hours blocked all the lines of the Ministry. . . . The next day . . . we were interested to see that London was once again expecting the German revolution, the first symptom of it being the collection of winter things for the Front. We leave the English to it as they enjoy it so much. Anyhow, they know as much about the German people as a cow about X-rays.

<sup>25</sup> Eckert, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

On the 3rd, this line of thought is elaborated by the German radio star, Hans Fritzsche, who gives a vivid description of a report which the British radio was alleged to have broadcast that "a procession of demonstrators had stormed the Anhalter Station in Berlin to prevent the transport of woolen comforts to the Eastern Front." On the following days the campaign is in full swing on various transmissions, where the story is given a new twist: "preventive measures in Germany against a revolutionary uprising." We do not intend to trace the details of how these or the previous reports on the Anhalter Station have entered the press of the neutral countries. Suffice it to say that rumors circulated by German agents in Stockholm and reported by neutral correspondents were an important phase in "planting the news."<sup>26</sup> We are interested only in the handling of this report by the German radio. This is how Hans Fritzsche broke the news to the German people on January 8:

Just imagine, my dear listeners! Just as I wanted to go to the microphone I was phoned and told that, according to Radio Schenectady in Spanish, machine guns have been put in position to prevent a coup d'état against the Hitler Government—so they say. I asked where the machine guns had been set up. I was told, on the Wilhelmsplatz. I went to the Wilhelmsplatz—I have just come from there—I looked and looked; two policemen helped me; I have not yet been able to find those machine guns; but I shall go on looking later.

Fritzsche then goes into the other incidents, enlarging them to a veritable picture of a revolt in Germany:

But these machine guns on the Wilhelmsplatz which Roosevelt's radio invented are not isolated phenomena—no, the most silly things have been invented for days. On the Anhalter Bahnhof, which first the English and then the Bolsheviks asserted they had destroyed and which is

<sup>26</sup> Cf. E. Kris, "German Propaganda Instructions of 1933," *Social Research*, February 1942; "German Instructions for the Czech Censorship," *Social Research*, May 1941; and "Morale in Germany," *Am. Journ. of Sociol.*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3, 1941.

still standing, wild excesses are said to have occurred, which also could only be stopped by machine guns. . . . Finally, admirals or generals—just as it comes—have planned coups d'état here—planned them or carried them out.

On the following days there are several programs which carry references to these stories. On the 13th, Fritzsche gives a detailed account of the foreign press and radio reports—with “date and source every time to be quite on the safe side”—starting with a BBC report of January 7th that “the German generals are planning to take over the power and remove all members of the NSDAP from the leading positions.” It is significant that Fritzsche selected for his first talk on the subject not this earlier and more sensational item but the apparently insignificant item on the machine guns on the Wilhelmsplatz, allegedly broadcast by Radio Schenectady one day later. In this review his comment on the latter report is of significance for our later discussion:

You see, Radio Schenectady no longer troubles to ask whether there were any machine guns on the Wilhelmsplatz. Oh, no! The Americans have already proceeded to the question, Why had machine guns been mounted there?

The last of the “foreign reports” develops into a vivid description of a veritable campaign of the foreign press with ever increasing wild exaggeration, Fritzsche winding up his dramatic testimonials with the following:

The finest report of all, however, came from Radio New York on 8th January; Party emissaries, it said, have had 25,000 officers executed at the Front, and the Armed Forces were thirsting for revenge. The BBC for four days apparently searched its mind whether or not to bite the tempting bait. It did, on the 12th January, though cautiously; for instead of claiming that 25,000 officers were shot, it only mentioned 62 as having been overtaken by this dreadful calamity; not 60, perhaps, nor 65, but precisely 62—oh, aren't they accurate!

Goebbels, in *Das Reich* on the 16th, goes to excesses in ridiculing the exaggerated "enemy reports."

The police literally tore them [the clothes] off the backs of pedestrians in the streets, leaving them exposed to the winter cold, naked and bare, swearing and trembling. Is it surprising that the women of Berlin assembled for protest demonstrations, remonstrated against the transport to the Front of garments torn from their backs, lay down on the railway tracks and stopped the departure of the trains? . . . Or perhaps they harboured the suspicion that the hardships of the Russian winter were nothing but an invention of the Nazis, whose only aim in this collection was to steal their winter clothing to decorate their own bodies.

It is interesting to note the turn which the campaign takes at the same time. On January 15th, Fritzsche asserts that the "unscrupulous enemy . . . is forced to carry his propaganda devices to such grotesque length that their absurdity becomes apparent." He then continues:

. . . London and Washington, after vain endeavors to disown the disruptive slogans they have launched, are now trying to find another way out. Mr. Knox was the first to declare . . . that rumors about difficulties, disturbances and even symptoms of disintegration in Germany had been deliberately forged and circulated by—I give you three guesses—by ourselves! We had intentionally spread lies about . . . a revolution in Berlin. . . . Having utterly disgraced themselves, the authors of these false reports are compelled to add to their shame by asserting that we fathered their nonsense.

With this statement Fritzsche apparently follows the lead of his master. Dr. Goebbels, in *Das Reich* (broadcast on the 16th and probably published earlier), comments on the alleged claim of the foreign press that "once more, as in 1918, the Reich's hour of weakness is at hand," with the following rather revealing passage:

On careful scrutiny one might think these things fantasies from a madhouse. Some people may suspect us of exaggeration. Both assumptions are wrong. Everything we quote here has been stated literally by

the English papers and radio for the last three weeks and more. We had no reason to add anything.

These last remarks of Goebbels' also hint at why German propaganda should go to the length of planting news instead of simply inventing it. (The difference is of course only a technical one as far as the moral aspect of the matter is concerned, and there is ample opportunity left for what Fritzsche calls "the art of lying.") First, it may help in the foreign propaganda; if it does not create confusion it will at least affect the news prestige of the foreign press in its own countries. Second, in some form or other the reports may be used by the foreign radio broadcasting to the German people. Here again there is a chance of counteracting this influence by compromising it. And as far as those are concerned who might tend to believe rumors of this nature, we must look at it as the naive German listener would see it, the listener whom Fritzsche has in mind and whom he describes thus:

The German people at home live their lives; they go about their work and grapple with the problems and troubles naturally arising in this third winter of the war—problems which will be mastered in view of the goal for which many a German soldier has made a heavier sacrifice than the homeland. Then suddenly British propaganda raises the cry: "There is revolution in Germany!" The people of Germany know nothing about this cry, while the few who are compelled by their profession to take note of it only react with an inward "You know where you can put it!"—without interrupting their work.

What will be the reaction of the naive radio listener? If he is a Nazi he will feel relieved: "Everything is going all right, nothing to worry about." If he is an anti-Nazi, he will be disappointed: "Still no indication of growing unrest." Each would react differently, but both will react *emotionally*. In both the reaction corresponds to a conviction: "Everything

is quiet." To create this conviction was the intention of the propagandist. The subject's rational capacity of analyzing the facts is outwitted, it plays no part in the situation; and a comprehension of the real situation is successfully forestalled by the propagandist.

### *Thinking Reduced to Perception*

Our example illustrates well the indirectness of the management. Conditions unfavorable for the rational comprehension of either the facts or the manipulation are created in the listener. To put it in Hitler's own words:

His fellow-citizens, as stupid as they are forgetful, will not recognize the real originator of the entire dispute . . . and so the scoundrel has actually achieved his goal. (*Mein Kampf*, p. 145)

Let us speak in terms of psychology now, instead of communication technique. The *frame of reference* created by the planted news transforms the problem for the propagandee in several respects.

In the first place, the *issue* is veiled, since the relevant question of whether or not the state of morale in Germany is impaired is replaced by the question of whether or not the enemy lies. The problem is shifted from a state of affairs into the realm of "propaganda-war"—the quest for trust, the issue of which is "Who tells the truth?" The wool collection now stands in the shadow of the immoral enemy's talk about the "wool revolution," as the whole affair is called in one program.

In the second place, the *attention* is shifted from observation of the self to action of the enemy, since the news communicated by the German radio is presented to the listener as the wicked, though stupid, propaganda deed of the enemy. Through this, feelings and emotions can be canalized in the appropriate direction.



Third, the "allegation of the enemy" is so presented to the public that convincing *perceptual evidence*—the absence of machine guns on the Wilhelmsplatz—"disproves" it. In our example, the Nazi propagandist does not *argue* about the problem of his concern. He does not say: "It is not true that there is unrest in Germany because of the wool collection, nor should this collection be taken as a symptom of disintegration." No, he communicates the "news" of the machine guns on the Wilhelmsplatz as if derived from an enemy source, in order to destroy whatever doubts or apprehensions might have crept into the minds of the German people.

It is this aspect of the manipulation which is of paramount significance for the psychological interpretation of National Socialist propaganda techniques. A complex problem is so reformulated by the manipulation that it can be answered for the propagandee on the *level of perception*. The fact is that on a perceptual level only two answers are possible to any question: yes or no, existence or non-existence, acceptance or rejection. The meaning of the answer is solely determined by the question posed. Given the frame of reference created by the news manipulation, the man crossing the Wilhelmsplatz is hardly aware that, in fact, he answers with "no" the question: "Is it true that morale in Germany is impaired?" if he vaguely takes notice of the absence of the machine guns. Unable to realize the shift of the frame of reference, he is still less able to re-formulate the question and undertake a rational analysis of the actual issues implicit in the situation.

We need not be amazed, therefore, to find that National Socialist propagandists have as much confidence in the common sense of the people, as is expressed by Dr. Goebbels in connection with this campaign:

. . . *I feel no need for giving any answer.* Such lies, which are as base as they are stupid and inane, only condemn themselves. . . . There is nothing left to us but to let ordinary common sense disprove (it) and facts which are convincing. (January 14 and 15)

The "incredible" exaggerations in the whole affair are meant to play an important part in the game. They are to strengthen the tendency of the listener to look upon all his experiences in terms of "stories which refute themselves."

The listener does not realize that he is being manipulated, because of the immediate evidence of perception. Therefore, all problems of political and social significance to the propagandee, ranging from the question of the responsibility for the war to the question of victory or defeat, are reduced by National Socialist propaganda so that they can be dealt with on the level of perception. The all-inclusive role which perceptions play in the experience of the listener tends to paralyze the proper function of the most potent and penetrating instrument for the testing of reality—rational thinking.<sup>27</sup> The attack upon reason through the manipulation of the listener into channels of perception links such indirect management to the orator situation. And so Dr. Goebbels is satisfied with the effect of his expertly done job of averting the dangers for German morale arising from the necessary wool collection. Turning the shock into a new propaganda victory, he says:

<sup>27</sup> That a preponderance of perception tends to inhibit the functioning of rational thinking is indicated by experiments of Jean Piaget. The laws of thinking and perception are completely different. While the objects of perception (space, time) are established once and forever, i.e., are irreversible, operations of thinking are reversible. If perception becomes an integral part of reasoning, the latter assumes the laws of the former; a critique of perceptual evidence is impossible. Cf. in particular, J. Piaget, *La construction du réel chez l'enfant*, Neuchâtel-Paris, 1936; and "Remarques psychologiques sur les relations entre la class logique et le nombre et sur les rapports d'inclusion," *Recueil de Travaux*, Université de Lausanne, 1937, pp. 59-85. Also K. Wolf, "Jean Piaget's Group Theory—A Model of Human Thought," in preparation.

To carry out this collection was a cause close to the hearts of the German people and thus it was from the very beginning rather a deed of the national community than an act of propaganda.

But for once he seems to be too humble when he adds that "it was left to our enemies to give it a political interpretation."



### *III. RADIO IN OPERATION*



## LISTENING TO THE LISTENER

*Experiences with the Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer*

by Tore Hollonquist and Edward A. Suchman

THIS is a study of that radio enigma—the listener. It contains a detailed proposal for systematic research into the complex reactions of the radio audience, an audience that governs by a mere twist of the wrist the fate of everyone living by radio. And so the listener is treated with reverence.

Everyone engaged in radio production will admit that he has much to learn concerning the effectiveness of any broadcast, especially the effectiveness of its component parts. He knows from the program ratings approximately how many listeners the ultimate product has reached, but this verdict comes to him with scant, if any, explanation. Be the judgment favorable or unfavorable, he seldom knows the all-important reasons why.

We propose a form of jury trial with the listeners as jurors. We propose the introduction of the vital question “why” alongside the established “how many.” We propose a new technique that will enable the broadcaster to analyze and to predict the success or failure of a radio production. We will ask the listener to judge the radio program for us, and we will give him the means of telling us in a constructive way what his reactions are. We will enable him to register continuously for every second of the program his like or dislike of what he is hearing. We will ask him to tell us just why he thinks this program was

good here and bad there. And most important, we will be able to check upon the reliability and validity of what we have been told.

This plan calls for an accurate measuring instrument, and such a device has been developed.

#### A. THE PROGRAM ANALYZER

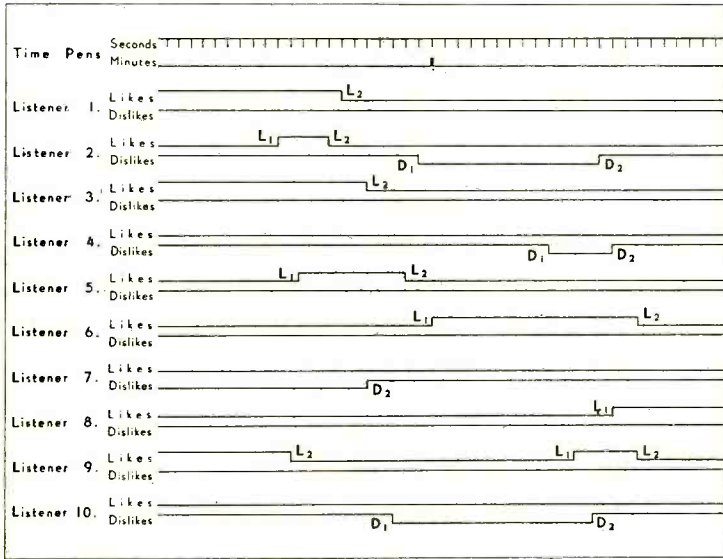
During the last five years the Office of Radio Research at Columbia University and the Columbia Broadcasting System have been experimenting with an apparatus designed to record listener reactions to radio programs. This machine, called the Program Analyzer, is the result of the combined efforts of Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld of Columbia University and Dr. Frank Stanton of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

The Program Analyzer is a device for recording permanently the listener's reactions to a radio program while he is hearing it. The reactions are recorded in terms of Like, Dislike, or Indifference.

The listener holds a green button in one hand, and a red button in the other. If he likes a particular part of the broadcast, he presses the green button, and keeps it pressed down for as long as that like continues. If he dislikes what he hears, he presses the red button, and keeps it pressed down as long as his dislike continues. If he feels indifferent, he does not press either button. The buttons are connected electrically to a battery of pens, resting on a continuously moving paper tape. When a button is pressed, the corresponding pen is jogged down an eighth of an inch in a direction perpendicular to the movement of the tape. The pen remains in this position until the button is released. Two timing pens serve to synchronize reactions



with the program. The result is a continuous record, accurately timed, of the listener's feelings during each second of the broadcast.



L<sub>1</sub> - Like push button pressed  
 L<sub>2</sub> - Like push button released  
 D<sub>1</sub> - Dislike push button pressed  
 D<sub>2</sub> - Dislike push button released

FIG. 1.—A SECTION OF THE PROGRAM ANALYZER TAPE

Ten listeners expressing Like, Dislike and Indifference, can be tested at one time. The use of transcriptions permits the testing of as many groups as is desired. A reproduction of a section of the moving tape, as it looks when removed from the Analyzer, is shown in Figure 1. A pen connected with an electric second-timer has marked off the tape into one-second intervals along the upper edge. Minutes are marked off on line number two. The third and fourth lines from the top show the Like and Dislike reactions of subject No. 1; the subse-

quent pairs of lines are the registered responses of subjects Nos. 2 to 10. The time lines serve to identify the parts of the program to which listeners reacted. Thus, the responses of each subject to specific episodes are easily determined.

The total number of Likes and Dislikes for the entire test group, for each second of the program, is presented graphically in the form of a *program profile*. One such profile is shown in Figure 2, page 276. A time scale, in minutes, has been laid out across the top of the chart. Along the bottom, a legend divides the program into major units of content or production. Each scene, it will be noticed, is identified by number. A vertical scale, showing the total number of reactions at any given point, runs along the left side of the chart. Like responses are plotted from the zero-line up; Dislike responses from the zero-line down. As reactions are entered by 6-second intervals, there are ten judgments to a minute.<sup>1</sup>

The chart shows, at a glance, the number of positive and negative reactions at any given time during the broadcast. At the beginning of Scene 2, for example, between 5:00 and 5:06, there were 25 Like and 8 Dislike responses, while 24 seconds later (four entries further on), there were 20 Likes and 14 Dislikes, indicating a drop in listener approval.

### *How Is a Test Conducted?*

The Program Analyzer test can, for convenience, be divided into four stages.<sup>2</sup> The *first*, or preparatory stage, involves the planning of the test in terms of specific problems to be studied. Is the producer interested particularly in listener reactions to

<sup>1</sup> Any desired time interval may be used. A 6-second grid was chosen for the profiles shown in this report in order to facilitate the reading.

<sup>2</sup> For the present purpose, these stages are presented in outline only. All questions of technique and problems of analysis are discussed in detail in the final section, "The Program Analyzer as a Research Tool."

the sound effects? Is the script writer anxious to know how the audience responds to some of his ideas? Does the sponsor want to gauge the relative effectiveness of his commercials? Or does the broadcaster want a list of "do's" and "don'ts" that will help him in his efforts to strengthen the program's appeal? The broadcast is studied carefully with the specific purposes in mind. Parts deserving particular attention are noted down for separate investigation. Instructions for the participants in the test are formulated, and a questionnaire is worked out. This questionnaire will furnish vital information regarding the listening habits and personal characteristics of the listeners, as well as other information that is relevant to the problem at hand. The size and composition of the test audience is decided on, and arrangements are made for listener participation. A test audience may be secured in various ways. It has been found that most radio listeners welcome an opportunity to "talk back to the producers" and are easily persuaded to participate in a test.

The *second* stage begins when the invited listeners are seated in the Program Analyzer studio. During a warm-up period, they are made to feel at home, and are familiarized with the test procedure. The operation of the Program Analyzer is demonstrated and the instructions are read. When a preliminary test has shown that every participant knows how to operate the buttons, the group is told to "just relax and listen," and the recorded broadcast begins.

When the program is over, the test enters its *third* stage—the stage of interviewing. The questionnaires are distributed and filled out under the supervision of the interviewer. Next, the tape is removed from the Program Analyzer and put up on the wall where it can be seen by the participating subjects. The interviewer begins his questioning, directing himself to

individuals as well as to the group as a whole. Constantly referring to the tape, he tries to uncover the *reasons* for each positive and negative response. He asks for comments and suggestions on specific problems. A stenographer takes down and transcribes all questions and answers during the interview. Occasionally, portions of the program are played back a second time to help a listener recall his motives for a favorable or unfavorable judgment.

Three sets of data—the Program Analyzer tape, transcripts of the interviews, and written questionnaires—have now been obtained. The *final* stage is that of analysis and interpretation. It begins with the construction of the program profile. Next, the program is divided into sections, and an average attitude score is computed for each of its component parts. Scores may be computed for major content units as well as for special features, musical transitions, individual sound effects, and even single lines of speech. Finally, the interview material pertaining to reasons for reactions is organized and summarized, and related to the profile curve. (It is usually convenient to cut out all comments concerning a certain aspect of the program or a certain part, and paste them together on a single sheet of paper.) If the test has been successful, a valid explanation will be found for each major peak of Like or Dislike appearing in the profile.

Profiles are sometimes constructed for each of the various stratifications of the audience. Thus, the reactions of men and women, young people and old people, people who liked the program and people who did not, may be studied separately.

#### *Some Advantages and Limitations*

The Program Analyzer offers the producer a new technique for measuring listener reactions to radio programs. It has cer-

tain unique attributes, which make it particularly valuable as a reaction gauge, but it also has specific limitations. As in the case of most other scientific measuring devices, the value of its contribution will depend upon the intelligence with which it is used in the areas of research for which it has been found suitable.

In the past, attempts have been made to study listener reactions to radio programs by means of questionnaires. This method, however, seldom yielded more than general opinions of the program as a whole. Little could be learned about the specific causes of success or failure, for the simple reason that listeners could not recall their specific listening experiences. Invariably, they would remember but a few of the numerous ingredients of a radio production—and they would tend to stress the end of a program more than the beginning. Interrupting the program at various points—presenting it in stages—would solve the problem of recall, but would destroy the basic listening experience. Thus, the questionnaire method could not uncover sufficient detailed information to enable the producer to improve his show.

The limitations of the questionnaire method of program analysis may be attributed, in part, to the very artificiality of the procedure. This weakness is not inherent in the Program Analyzer technique. By retaining to a large extent the actual experience of listening, the Program Analyzer allows the subject to judge the broadcast much as he would judge it when listening at home. Furthermore, it permits him to record his immediate judgment at the time of listening. After the broadcast is over, this record will remind him of his reactions to specific parts.

A definite advantage of the Program Analyzer is that it focuses attention on the listener as the final judge of radio pro-

ductions. The program is evaluated by standards of judgment that closely approximate those of the radio audience—standards which may be quite different from those of the experts.

Another important characteristic of the Program Analyzer has already been pointed out: It enables the broadcaster to study, in detail, specific parts or aspects of the program. It makes it possible for him to determine, among other things, audience reactions to a particularly crucial statement, the effectiveness of a complex production technique, the recognition of a subtle pun, the qualities of the announcer, and listener acceptance of the authenticity of the material presented on the program. If the introduction is too long, if the sound effects do not contribute to listener orientation and enjoyment, if a punchline is delivered too fast, if the program structure is generally weak, the Program Analyzer will register the fact and provide a practical solution.

Those are some of the advantages of the Program Analyzer. What are its limitations?

One of the most important limitations results from the different meanings which may be expressed in the listeners' pressing of the Like or Dislike button. "Like" to most listeners seems to mean general approval, the desire to "hear more," while "Dislike" seems to mean general disapproval, the desire to "turn off" the radio. Difficulties of interpretation will arise whenever characters or program parts are intentionally designed to create a negative reaction in the listener. Such characters or parts are frequently used on melodramatic programs to provide contrast and suspense. This negative reaction may be expressed as a "dislike" reaction on the tape, although listening interest in reality is high. In fact, the more vehemently the listener presses his red button, the less may be his desire to turn the radio off. The stronger his Dislike, the stronger will be his

relief when things come out all right. In the end he will be pressing green.

This limitation can be overcome by the detailed interviewing of the listeners after they have heard the program. By asking the listener to tell exactly why he pressed the red or the green button, the investigator can fairly easily arrive at the real basis for the subject's judgment. The difficulty of interpreting correctly the meaning of Dislike reactions can, of course, also be reduced in advance by means of detailed instructions.

Another limitation of the Program Analyzer technique relates to the fact that the listeners hear the program in a studio, and not in their homes. This artificiality is the price the experimenter must pay to be able to direct the responses of his subjects along the most profitable channels. This factitiousness, furthermore, will be partly offset if everything is done to approximate the home listening situation. The listener should be put at ease. He should be comfortably seated in pleasant and informal, not too impressive surroundings. The Analyzer should be hidden from view, and the subjects should hold the push-buttons in their laps so that one participant cannot see the reactions of the others. The frequency with which listeners begin the explanation of their reactions with, "Well, if I were at home, I would have . . ." would seem to indicate that the listeners themselves judge what they are hearing in terms of their listening at home.

The Program Analyzer is a new technique in radio program research. Entering as it does into virgin territory, it must make its way slowly and carefully, modifying its method to meet different conditions. The results to be presented on the pages that follow, will serve to demonstrate the use of the Program Analyzer as a practical means of studying audience reactions

to radio programs. Combined with other methods of research, and adapted to meet special problems, it seems to hold great promise for the future of program research.

## B. THE PROGRAM CLINIC

Program Analyzer tests so far have been directed toward the improvement of specific programs. The problem has been, for each program tested, to point out and to explain its weak and strong points. Each test has produced results immediately applicable to the "specimen under the microscope." Each test has also added one more case history to a body of data that some day may form a general set of conclusions applicable to a wider range of radio production problems. Some tentative generalizations derived from Analyzer findings will be presented in the following section. First, however, we shall demonstrate the use of the Program Analyzer in the case of specific programs. What do Program Analyzer case records, the so-called program profiles, look like? What are some instances of the applications of Program Analyzer findings?

### SOME PROGRAM PROFILES

#### *The Case of an Adolescents' Program*

*Type of program:* The program tested was one of a series of dramatic comedies aimed at a youthful audience. The story was centered around a young girl, Ann, and her problem in trying to "handle" her family and her dates.

*Composition of test group:* For this test, 49 subjects were selected from among students of high school or grammar



school age in order to approximate the type of listener who would be attracted by this program.

*Program profile:* An explanation of how to read the program profile has been given in the previous section (page 268). While the two other case studies to be presented will single out specific aspects of the profile for discussion, a more detailed account of the complete program profile (Figure 2) is given for this first example in order to illustrate how such an analysis proceeds.

As the program opens with the rhythmic clanking of a bell, the curve of listener Likes rises sharply to a level which is fairly high for the beginning of a program. The low number of Dislike reactions during the commercial indicates that the sales talk which was accompanied by an orchestra and trio, was not badly received by these young listeners.

The curve drops to a lower level during the announcer's short introduction, but recovers somewhat during Ann's<sup>3</sup> reading of her diary. Ann's opening lines with Danny, her boy friend, bring about a sharp increase in Like reactions, and interest remains high during the first half of Scene 1. A minor drop occurs at 3:06 as the conversation turns to Harriet (Ann's rival for Danny).

In Scene 2, two girls, Ann and her friend and rival Harriet, are present. The "giggling" of Harriet at the beginning of this scene produces a peak of Dislike reactions. This part was clearly the low spot of the entire play and was particularly disliked as "childish" by the boys. But as Ann goes on to explain to Harriet her various techniques of gaining popularity, approval of the scene rises to a peak of Like responses at 7:35. Toward the end of the scene there is a minor drop in positive reactions,

<sup>3</sup> Since many of the programs tested are now on the air, no programs will be mentioned by name. Fictitious names will be given to the performers. Each case reported, however, is an actual broadcast.

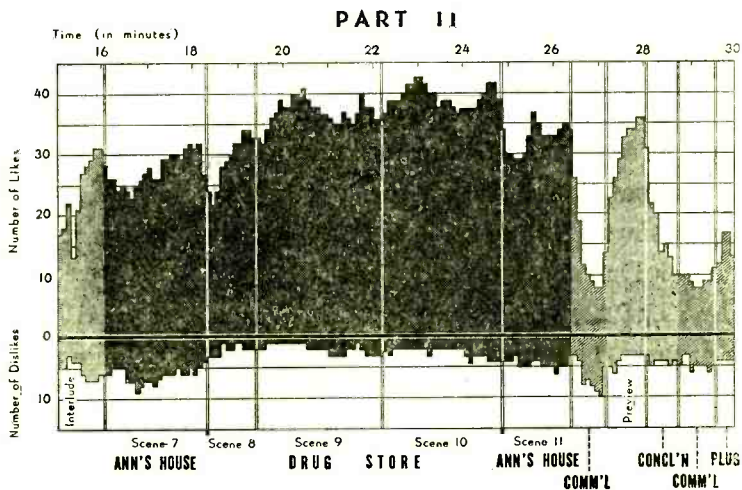
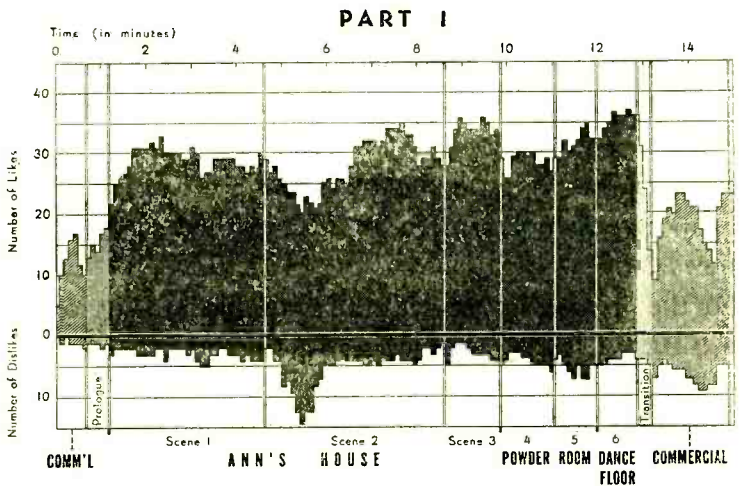


FIG. 2.—PROGRAM PROFILE OF AN ADOLESCENTS' PROGRAM  
(NUMBER OF LIKE AND DISLIKE REACTIONS)

which was explained by listeners later during the interview period as due to over-sophistication in the dialogue. This seemed to hamper identification with the story's characters.

Interest remains high throughout Scene 3, in which Danny meets Harriet. There is, however, a slight increase of Dislike reactions at 9:10 when Harriet springs her newly acquired technique on the unsuspecting Danny.

The two scenes in the powder room (Scenes 4 and 5) prior to the dance the trio is attending, were less liked than the one preceding. Interview criticism again centered on Harriet.

As the triangle story comes to a climax in Scene 6, with a quarrel between Ann and Danny, the Like reactions again reach a peak. The Like curve continues on a high level throughout the dance until the beginning of the 14th minute when the voice of the announcer warns the listeners of the intermission.

Interest recovers quickly as the vocal trio returns, and remains moderately high throughout the dramatized portions of the commercial. The straight sales talk from 14:06 to 14:30 produces a peak of Dislike and a steep decline in the number of Likes. The listeners' reactions at this point indicate a clear preference for commercials that are dramatized or sung.

As Ann resumes her diary there is an increase in Likes as well as Dislikes.<sup>4</sup> The first part of Scene 7, which takes place in Ann's home and consists largely of a discussion of her problems between Ann and her family, is considered only mildly interesting. There is a drop in Likes, while Dislikes increase. Many subjects later expressed resentment at the change in mood, from humor to serious discussion, at this point. Others objected to the scene as being "another of those family discussions," disliking the change in pace from dramatic episodes to slow-moving dialogue. Like reactions increase toward the end

<sup>4</sup> The sudden drop of the curve at 15:20 is due to the changing of records.

of the scene, but drop again during the transition that follows.

From this point on, when all three youngsters are together again in the drugstore, there is a steady rise in the number of Likes. Exceptionally high peaks occur at 20:18, when Ann begins to set the trap for Harriet; at 21:48 when Ann advises Harriet to mention the wave in Danny's hair (which Danny does not like mentioned); at 23:00 when the trap does not work and Danny says, ". . . if you love it—I guess I love it, too," and at 24:36 when Harriet spoils her success by calling Danny a sissy. Scenes 9 and 10 are the high spots of the program.

Interest drops as the scene shifts back to Ann's house, and remains low throughout the family discussion there. A slight recovery is shown at the point in the scene where Danny returns to the fold.

The closing commercial, a straight talk, is the least liked of the commercials included in the program. The curve rises during Ann's final reading of her diary—then drops sharply and reaches a low point during the final plug.

### *The Case of a Morale Program*

*Type of program:* This program was one of a series of dramatizations designed to acquaint the war time listener with the enemy. Its theme was civilian participation in the war in an occupied country.

*Composition of test group:* Of the total group of fifty-nine listeners, 47 per cent were men and 53 per cent women; they were about equally distributed in all age and educational groups.

*Program profile:* This case exemplifies how Program Analyzer reactions may be plotted separately for different groups of listeners. In this example of a morale program, two sepa-

rate curves were constructed: one for those listeners who had near relatives in the armed forces and one for those who did not.<sup>5</sup> Since the reactions of the whole radio audience will presumably become more and more like those in the "Service" group, as more and more men enter the armed forces, careful consideration was given to the reactions of the present Service group. Their reactions provided valuable information for future program planning.

Figure 3 shows the average attitude score for each unit of the program for the Service and Non-service groups separately.<sup>6</sup> The two groups react similarly during the first nineteen units of the program, that is, up to the time when the hostages kill their prospective executioners with the shovels with which they were to have dug their own graves. Here the Service group begins to react with more approval (Unit 20).

One woman explained in the interview:

I have a son—a marine. I hope he has the same courage as the lad who escaped.

Unit 21 is a transitional section. The moderate rises in both curves are of no special significance. But a spectacular difference in the two curves occurs during Unit 22. This is a narrator's speech in which he describes the composition of the Chetnik army—clerks, doctors, plumbers, dentists—"people like you and me." The courage of common people, their ability to de-

<sup>5</sup> Sixteen of the listeners had near relatives in the armed forces. While this sample is rather small, the differences observed are marked enough to be significant. Any generalizations drawn from this example, of course, need further testing before they can be wholly accepted.

<sup>6</sup> The two program profiles of Figure 3 were constructed differently from the profile shown in the preceding example (Figure 2). Instead of plotting the reactions for each successive six-second interval, we divided the program into its constituent units. Instead of showing the number of Like and Dislike reactions, an average attitude score was computed for each unit. (See final Chapter, p. 313, on computation of the score.) As will be seen throughout this report, the manner of presentation of the program profile can be varied, depending upon the particular problems studied.

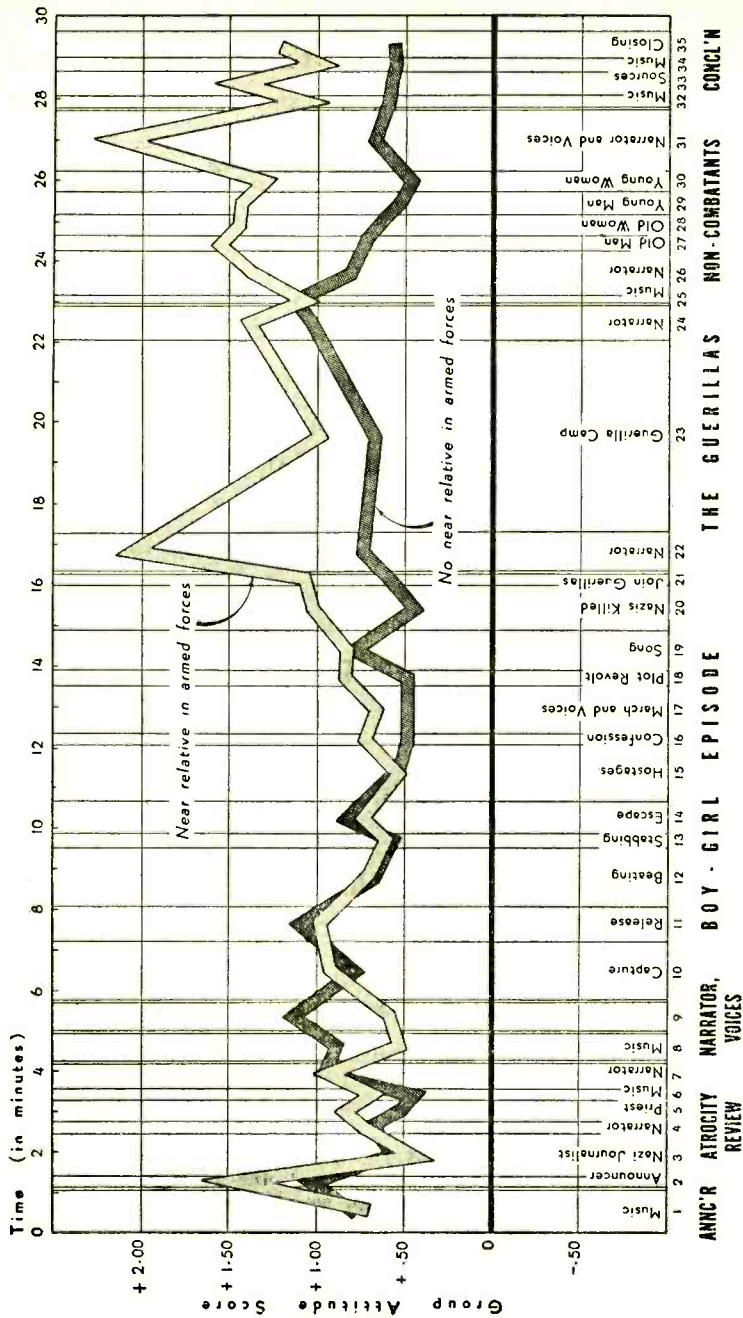


FIG. 3.—PROGRAM PROFILE OF A MORALE PROGRAM  
(GROUP ATTITUDE SCORES)

fend their own country when they have to, seems to have given the Service group a reassurance of their own potential worth in the war effort. Note, by contrast, the moderate rise in the Non-service group curve during Unit 22.

Unit 23 is a tragic scene in the Chetnik camp, during which stories of more mass executions, more villages laid waste, are related. The principal characters hear of the death of their families. This unit brings about a marked drop in approval from the Service group, and a slight drop from the Non-service group. As the scene closes, the Chetniks leave camp to raid a Nazi garrison.

During Unit 24, the narrator announces simply that the garrison has been wiped out. He then gives further factual data on the effectiveness of Chetnik raids, and on the extent of Yugoslavian victories under Mihailovitch. Both curves rise sharply during this good news, but the Service group curve remains well above that of the Non-service group.

The music, Unit 25, has no differential appeal to the two groups. Their attitude scores are practically identical.

From this point on to the end of the program, the interest of the Non-service group dwindles, with a slight rise during Unit 31. For the Service group, however, the broadcast moved to its climax from Unit 25 to Unit 31. During Unit 26, the narrator scorns those who accuse civilians of complacency. An old man, an old woman, a young man and a young woman then appear one after the other in Units 27, 28, 29 and 30. They voice the feelings of the Service group as they tell how they are rejected, and told to "stay at home."

The curve for the Service group rises sharply during the narrator's speech, and reaches a peak as the first "stay-at-home" (the old man) speaks. Then as the old woman, the young man, and the young woman successively dramatize their own feel-

ings, approval ebbs. Finally, in Unit 31, these "stay-at-homes," and the listeners in the Service group, find vindication in the narrator's impassioned promise that they will be as brave and as invincible as the Chetniks if the time comes for house-to-house fighting in the United States. Throughout this whole section the Non-service group shows a mild interest only. The reaction of the Service group has its peak here, indicating their particular need to be assured of the significance of the Home Front.

### *The Case of a Novelty Program*

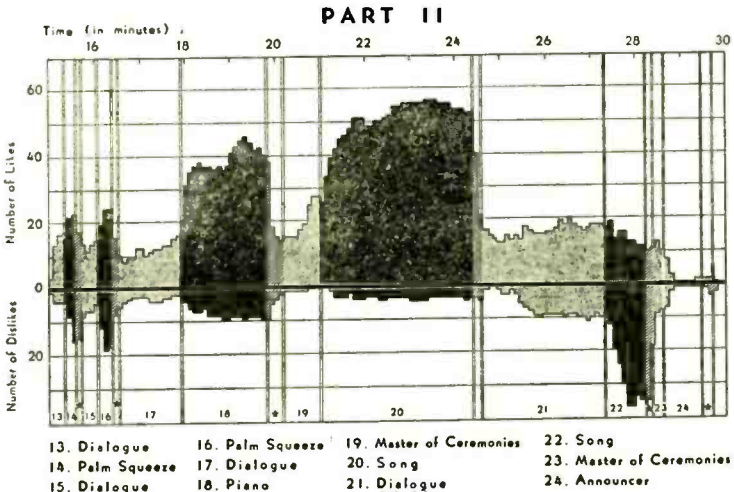
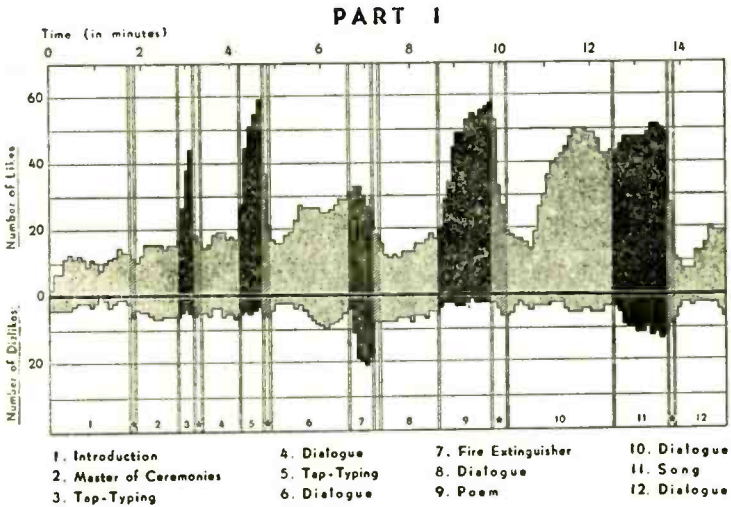
*Type of program:* The program may be characterized as a novelty-variety show, bringing together into a unified entertainment party stunts, tricks, and music. A master of ceremonies provided the continuity.

*Composition of test group:* Eighty-one subjects were selected, covering all age groups of both sexes. There was a somewhat greater proportion of educated than uneducated listeners among them.

*Program profile:* The profile, Figure 4, shows how greatly the appeal of different items in a variety show may vary. According to the curve, the program gets off to a slow start in sections 1 and 2, with most of the subjects remaining indifferent. Section 3, the first variety item, causes a high reaction of approval.

In Section 4, however, there is a marked drop in Like reactions as the Master of Ceremonies takes over, and enters into a dialogue with the performer. In this and each dialogue section that follows, the curve does not begin to rise until the entertainer who is to perform enters into humorous conversation with the M.C. It would seem that the M.C. takes too much time for his introductions, since the "dialogue" sections





\* Apolause

FIG. 4.—PROGRAM PROFILE OF A NOVELTY PROGRAM  
(NUMBER OF LIKES AND DISLIKES)

of the curve are low in Like reactions and rise slowly. The only exception to the low number of Like reactions to the M.C. himself is in Section 19, during which he paints a vivid word-picture of the type of sophisticated party frequented by the next singer.

The relative popularity of the variety items can be seen from the profile. The items in Sections 14 and 16, for instance, compare unfavorably with the others, producing almost as many Dislike as Like reactions, with about half of the listeners registering Indifference.

With the two musical features, Sections 18 and 20, the program reaches its climax in the 24th minute. After that point, there is a definite decline in Like responses during the last five minutes.

The unit with the most disapproval is in the position which should have been the climax of the program. In this episode, Unit 22 on the curve, a male quartet sings. According to the listeners, these men's only virtue was the fact that, in quite another field, they were celebrities. The Dislike reactions show that their prestige did not make up for their lack of musicianship.

#### HOW THE RESULTS ARE USED

If changes made on the basis of Program Analyzer data increase the audience appeal of a program, the practical value of the Program Analyzer can be considered established. Such improvement may be measured according to standard audience ratings, or by a new Program Analyzer test, made after changing the program. Tests may be requested to improve a current program or to pre-test a new program or new techniques used in a program.

One such test referred to a radio-newsreel type of report

on recent war developments and their implications. It attempted to clarify the meaning of the war to people all over the world, and to listeners in the United States. The material was naturally rather heavy, and yet it was important that the program reach as many people as possible. In one part of the program where a Jewish refugee boy told the story of his escape, the producer was afraid that a formal reading of this part would become boring and lack forcefulness. He did not want an actor to read it, because the boy himself would add authenticity to his own story. The director decided, with some hesitation, to let the boy talk as naturally as possible. In contrast to the dramatized sections of the program, the boy sounded unrehearsed and conversational. Would this be effective, or would it sound sloppy?

Results on the Program Analyzer showed that the director's decision had been right. The listeners responded very well to this section, which was one of the high points of the program. Apparently this technique, if used as occasional contrast to drama, is very much worthwhile.

Another section of the same program turned out less successfully, bearing out the results of previous tests. On the basis of Program Analyzer tests, a recommendation had been made not to use very short dramatic episodes in which no characterization was established. However, such a series was used on this program, in an effort to elaborate on the narrator's story by inserting frequent brief dialogues between stock characters. For reasons already predicted, the program profile dipped sharply at each one of these interludes, the listeners commenting that they rarely knew who was talking.

From tests on another series of programs which were similar to the one just described, two definite recommendations for improvement were made. The first was to change the wordy

introduction to a music and code presentation, namely Beethoven's V-theme, the theme also to be identified in words. The second suggestion was to omit all German dialogue.

The following week's program made one of the two changes. It began with the V-theme, but still contained the German proclamation in the introduction. The profile of this program (which was tested on a new listening group) bore out the recommendations beyond doubt. The V-theme opening caused a surprisingly high number of Like reactions for the beginning of a program, and should have set a high level of Likes throughout; but the curve dropped abruptly soon after the introduction, when brief German dialogues were featured. In the second half of the program, where longer dramatic scenes with more plot content were used, the curve rose steadily toward a final climax, with no appreciable drop between scenes. While the reactions to this program bore out previous findings, it was impossible to test the validity of the more specific suggestions because the subject-matter and the characters changed from week to week in this series.

Within the format of a serial which did retain the same pattern over a period of time, the results of successive tests could be incorporated into the program as it went along. The program combined dialogue covering homely philosophy, old sayings, and rural gossip with old-time songs, hymns and spirituals. It was found that those listeners who were inclined to be religious themselves were the only ones who thoroughly enjoyed the hymns, while other listeners objected to them strongly. On the other hand, all listeners liked the old-time songs, and therefore it was recommended that the hymns be removed, or reduced in number, in favor of those songs with a broader appeal.

On the first two programs tested in this series, the average

attitude score according to Program Analyzer ratings was .48<sup>7</sup> both times. A similar test was made of a later program in the series, in which the preponderance of hymns had been reduced to only two and the rest of the songs were old-time selections. For this program, the average Program Analyzer rating went up to .66 and the scores for the singing parts separately also rose. The two religious songs which were included received a better reception than any of the religious songs on the preceding programs. This is particularly significant since the singing parts were scattered throughout the programs.

Further program improvement was possible. In the previous programs tested, there had been a lot of talk which the listeners characterized as "chit-chat"; it did not add anything particularly to the story and they expressed Dislike because it slowed down the program. Furthermore, the characters and the atmosphere were distinctly sectional—they were typical of a certain part of the country, but strange to others. It was therefore decided that a more general background for the characters would broaden their appeal. In another way the program had originally limited its audience; by emphasizing old folks, memories, old sayings, it had been much more attractive to older people than young ones. Over a period of time, however, the characters became gradually more youthful, with increasingly favorable results.

While these suggestions for changes were made, there were also some aspects of the program which had shown up well in the tests. The items of home-spun philosophy, already mentioned, were scattered throughout the programs, but they received consistently high attitude scores on each test. It was therefore recommended to leave that part of the program intact. Also, when references to the war and the home front had

<sup>7</sup> The meaning of this average score is discussed in the last section, p. 313.

been made they received high scores, and repeating them again seemed advisable.

It is understood, of course, that actual responsibility for the success or failure of any program lies with the people who write and produce it. Recommendations for improvement serve only as an indication of the direction in which changes should be made. Certainly audience research does not make a program. But in the case cited above, in which the Program Analyzer results had been applied creatively, the standard audience rating of the program was more than doubled.

### C. A DIGEST OF PROGRAM ANALYZER FINDINGS

The Program Analyzer, then, is essentially a "clinical" instrument. Its basic application is to the individual program. Each program must be approached as a new case to be analyzed and treated for its own particular ills. Some of the findings, however, would seem to have a wider application and may be summarized in this digest. Although many more tests are needed before these findings can be accepted as final generalizations, some are offered now as suggestions for further research.

#### *The Introduction*

Why do some introductions attract attention while others do not? Good introductions seem to have a combination of what is in demand for any program—vividness, clarity, and speed. As one listener remarked happily:

They begin shooting stuff at you that keeps your interest.

On the other hand, vagueness and confusion discourage the listener from the start.

An example of an introduction which was ineffective because it was not speedy enough, was one copied from the old vaudeville stage. During this speech, as can be seen from the following tabulation of Like reactions registered for each three-second interval of the script, half of the subjects expressing Like at the beginning of the introduction changed to Indifference before the introduction was completed. Since the name of the speaker being introduced was well known to all radio listeners, it was suggested to mention it sooner. This would probably have caused immediate approval, as can be seen from the rise in Like reactions when the name was finally mentioned.

| <i>Time</i> | <i>Script</i>  | <i>Number of listeners recording Likes</i> |
|-------------|--|--|
|             | ANNOUNCER:   |  |
| 13:18       | Ladies and gentlemen of the radio audience, the man I am . . . | 20   |
| 13:21       | about to introduce to you is not known to you as a             | 15   |
| 13:24       | public speaker, nor a public official. He                      | 11   |
| 13:27       | can best be described as an American from                      | 10   |
| 13:30       | the State of . . . He is a veteran of the last                 | 10   |
| 13:33       | war—a veteran you have all heard about.                        | 11   |
| 13:36       | Through special facilities direct to                           | 12   |
| 13:39       | Station . . . (name of station and location)                   | 13   |
| 13:42       | we present Mr. . . . (name of well known hero)                 | 22   |

No wonder one of the listeners exclaimed:

I would have turned the radio off here—the *introduction was terrible*.

Confusion at the start is bad for any program. At the beginning of a radio drama about existing conditions in a conquered country, a fairly well known refugee from that country made a brief speech in English. He was given an introduction which

merely told his name and status. Almost all of the listeners were confused by his message because they did not know who he was. An analysis of the reasons for their almost complete Indifference to the talk showed that none of them saw the connection between his speech and the main body of the broadcast. Some even thought that he was part of another program; many said they would have turned the program off during the introduction. As he was not sufficiently identified he failed to add to the program the intended authenticity.

On the other hand, a successful technique for arousing listener interest was used in a program of old songs. It consisted simply of an opening invitation to "join in" the singing. A background for the familiar music was established by old-fashioned characters and descriptions which created the setting of a home gathering. The listeners were introduced to a musical memory contest during which they registered a large number of Likes, possibly because it gave them the emotional satisfaction of taking an active part in the gathering. They found the small town home setting very appealing, and were glad to be given a chance to "step right into the picture" themselves, as some of them put it.

### *Setting and Mood*

While it is important that the setting of a scene be strong enough to catch the listener's attention, Program Analyzer tests have indicated that, occasionally, the emphasis on setting can be so strong that the scene fails to create the effect intended by the writer.

In one of the historical dramas tested on the Program Analyzer, there was a brief scene in which a famous man was facing the crisis of his life. He was described as standing near an open window, late at night, in a room which the listener al-



ready connected with a tradition of tragedy. A bit of foreboding background music faded out as the door opened, there were footsteps, and a man said: "I am leaving the latest war reports on the table. It is rather late, Mr. . . ."

Interestingly enough, at this point, before the scene had really begun, most of the subjects had already shown Like responses because of the strong setting and mood of the opening. However, the important speeches that followed, received less approval from the listeners than the effective introduction. Somehow the promise of a dramatic intensity was not fulfilled. The setting was forgotten as soon as the characters began to speak.

It seems that once the setting has established an anticipative pattern in the listener's mind, the illusion must be sustained. Anything which breaks the established mood tends to be disliked by the listener, though he may not realize why. For this reason a basic change of emphasis or setting requires a careful transitional build-up.

An example of "breaking the pattern" occurred in a comedy-drama about a small-town family. All of the homely, humorous, and likeable characters were supposed, according to the author, to create the impression that such pleasant people were typical of American family life. However, this effect was spoiled by a character, a child, which evoked a great number of Dislikes every time he appeared on the scene. Listeners stated:

*I thought it was a nice happy family. But then that brat comes in and starts yelling, and there's too much fighting after that. I didn't like that part, with all the squabbling. I get enough of that stuff at home.*

Up to the point where the child entered the scene, the listeners had felt that the idyllic family life they were hearing

about was quite real. The "brat" not only spoiled the happy picture, he also made them see the difference between what they recognized as the tensions and problems of reality, and the illusions of the radio play.

Similar examples of breaking the program mood in the wrong spots all caused a large number of Dislike reactions. Listeners to a program of sentimental songs were disturbed by the intrusion of whistling, talking, and humorous music. During another program, which was supposed to advise the listeners, chumminess and informality were resented, because the program's success depended upon the adviser's authoritative-ness.

In another program designed to create good will for its sponsoring organization, the serious message was inserted in a light comedy scene. Most of the critical comments related to the peak of Dislike at this point were to the effect that the material was out of place on a program of that sort. It didn't fit smoothly into the pattern of the program and was immediately felt to be propaganda.

In stressing these disruptions of the mood, it is important to remember that they are particularly dangerous on the radio. In a movie or stage play, the audience is prepared to sit through the entire performance. However, very rarely will anyone continue to listen to a radio program once he has become confused or annoyed.

### *"Frame of Reference"*

What has been said about the vague introductions of speakers can be generalized for any unit of a program. It is of utmost importance to the listener's enjoyment that he understand what he is hearing. The listener needs a "frame of reference" to which he can relate what he hears.

One program without explanation opened with a proclamation in German which lasted for more than thirty seconds. The subjects did not know what kind of a program to expect. They registered Dislike, and later described their reasons. Some thought it was a foreign language broadcast; some thought it was a transcription of Hitler, and all said that it was boring and confusing. They were given no "frame of reference" into which they could place this tirade in German. As a result, more than half of the 69 subjects tested on this program said that they would have turned it off during the first thirty seconds—a fact which was clearly indicated by the immediate Dislike reactions recorded by the Program Analyzer.

Another program involved the intermittent use of a mythical narrator and short, illustrative dramatic scenes. It told the life story of one of the foremost contemporary political figures in Europe. He was presented as the pupil of the devil, who, in the person of the narrator, furnished an account of the politician's career. The narrator, however, did not identify himself as the devil until the end of the program. It was found that most listeners could not fit the narrator into any meaningful context. Matters were complicated by the fact that a mythical narrator was a contradiction in a factual program; thus the listeners did not know whether or not to take what he said seriously. The average attitude score decreased consistently as the program went on. Furthermore, peaks of dislike reactions were found for every appearance of the narrator.

### *Sound Effects*

Among radio producers arguments about the use of sound effects still go on. But what about the listeners? Their reactions show that sound effects are important in creating the setting of a scene and catching the listeners' attention provided they

do not detract attention from the program itself. Comments on the *detached* elements of voice quality, sound effects, and music are almost always adverse because when the listener is very much absorbed in the program, sound, music, and voice become an integral part of the scene. Effective sound effects recreate definite associations, and according to many of the comments, "form a picture" so real that the listener feels he can see what is going on. The following is an example from a dramatic program which illustrates the successful use of sound effects.

The program was a story about convoys, taking place on the bridge of a ship. First the voices of two officers could be heard close by, talking quietly about football games back home. For the first minute the scene was calm, and interest was apparently sustained on a more or less even level. Then distant gunfire was heard and briefly reported. There followed in quick succession a command, a bugle, a "bo'sn's" whistle, an alarm, and a crescendo of many running feet on the deck.

The following table condensed from a Program Analyzer profile shows that the number of Likes which were 17 at the beginning of the scene, reached a peak of 27 Likes as the sound effects built up to the climax.

| <i>Time</i> | <i>Sound effects</i>            | <i>Number of listeners<br/>registering Likes</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 16:48       | Distant gunfire, commands ..... | 17   |
| 17:03       | Bugle .....                     | 19   |
| 17:06       | Whistle, bo'sn's pipe .....     | 22   |
| 17:12       | Alarm sounds .....              | 24   |
| 17:15       | Running feet, commands .....    | 27   |
| 17:21       | Martial music .....             | 27   |
| 17:36       | Introduction, new scene .....   | 21   |

### *The Narrator*

Many of the programs tested with the Program Analyzer were documentaries, combining narration and short dramatic

episodes. It was therefore possible to study in some detail the function of the narrator on the radio program, and also the use of montage and documentary scenes.

In programs where the narrator makes the transition between scenes, listeners often respond most eagerly to the dramatized sections, but register boredom during long narrator intervals. There seems to be the constant danger that whenever the narrator takes over, there will be a "let-down" on the listener's part. Even on the best programs, there seems to be a limit to the length of narration that listeners can take. In one program which consisted of many short scenes punctuated by narrations, tests showed that interest was sustained throughout, except for the planned climax. At this point, even though two voices were used, a long narrated section failed to hold the listener's attention, and an increasing amount of Indifference was registered. Evidently, although narration was accepted as a punctuation between scenes, it did not appear adequate to draw the program threads together into a final and crucial scene.

In another program tested, the narrated sections were well received throughout the program. From the beginning, the trend was consistently upward toward more approval as the narrator introduced the body of the broadcast. At the climax of the program, the narrator took over the plot action and carried it to its conclusion. Analyzer data showed that interest was sustained, although the production had abruptly changed from drama to narration. In this instance the narrator had really carried the story forward, rather than summarized what had already been dramatized.

For programs in which narration is a technique used to impart information and introduce new material, several hypotheses can be made.

1. Interest is lost, and dislike may be accentuated by having the narrator mull over action that has already been dramatized.
2. Narrator's speeches should provide a judicious amount of new information, but not too much.
3. Narrator's speeches should either set the stage for new action, or should actually carry the action forward.

### *Short Flashes*

In conjunction with the narrator, short, illustrative dramatic flashes are frequently used in a documentary technique. As programs of this type often try to pack a good deal of information into a small space of time, the problem of orientation becomes most apparent. Certain uses of montage, especially the use of several illustrations to the same theme, create a special problem of comprehension for the listener. He must quickly recognize the identity of many new sounds and voices, and relate them to the rest of the program. Some suggestions, as brought out by Analyzer tests of documentary and montage scenes, are offered for further research.

1. Cross references to other scenes should not be left for the listener himself to make.

In a program which included 28 distinct episodes, packed into 30 minutes, the relation of one scene to the other was lost, and consequently there was no sense of movement from the beginning to the end. Characters who were introduced in one scene and then reappeared several scenes later had by that time been completely forgotten by most of the subjects.

2. The moods of consecutive sections should not be changed too often or too quickly. This is especially important since there is a good deal of change in the technique itself.

The following comment illustrates the listener's sensitivity to such disruptions in the smoothness of the program development.

I didn't like the switch from lecture form to drama form so quickly—*constantly switching back and forth broke up my mood*. It didn't leave me time to feel or think.

3. The speed of the montage scenes should be regulated by the listeners' familiarity with the words and sounds which are used. The less familiar the material, the longer it takes listeners to grasp each new impression. Quick flashes should use only well-known symbols.

In one program dealing with recent history, the past events of the last five years leading up to the war were skimmed over in 40 seconds, by mentioning the names of people and places which were supposed to have meaningful connotations for the listeners. It was found, however, that for all except the more sophisticated, this was not the case. Therefore, the entire sequence was over the heads of many listeners, and produced only Dislike or Indifference reactions.

Here is one confused listener's reaction to a geographical montage:

Well, I mean that as I recall it he was talking about various places on the globe where that sole activity was going on. And he kept piling up one name on top of another so fast and I think there was a lot of music underneath or over the top of it, and *by the time you got through you didn't remember much of it*. All you got was just a list of places here and there; it interfered with getting the best possible picture of the thing.

4. Particular consideration must be given to the use of musical effects for the punctuation of montage scenes.

In several programs subjects registered Dislike during the music in a montage scene, though the complaints, when explained, were not about the music itself. Listeners commented that while they were trying to grasp the meaning of one word picture, the music came in and drowned it out; before they had understood the preceding word picture, another one had started. The tendency was to criticize the music because "it mixes me up."

### *The Commercial Announcement*

Especially great care and skill are required in handling the commercial announcement. Since it really does not fit into the content of the program, it intrudes on the listener's mood. Occupying such a critical position, the announcement may even create ill-will and do more harm than good.

*The lead:* It appears of primary importance to avoid signaling ahead that the next minute will not add anything to the listeners' enjoyment of the radio program. Figure 5 shows the change in listener reaction when (a) the listener was "pre-warned" about the coming of the commercial and when (b) this warning was not given. When the announcer began, "And now a word about . . ." there was an immediate change of reactions (to Indifference), with the peak of change occurring in the very first second of the commercial announcement. On the other hand, when the announcer introduced the commercial without pre-warning, after a remark about the program itself, the peak of change (toward Dislike and Indifference) occurred only in the fifth second.

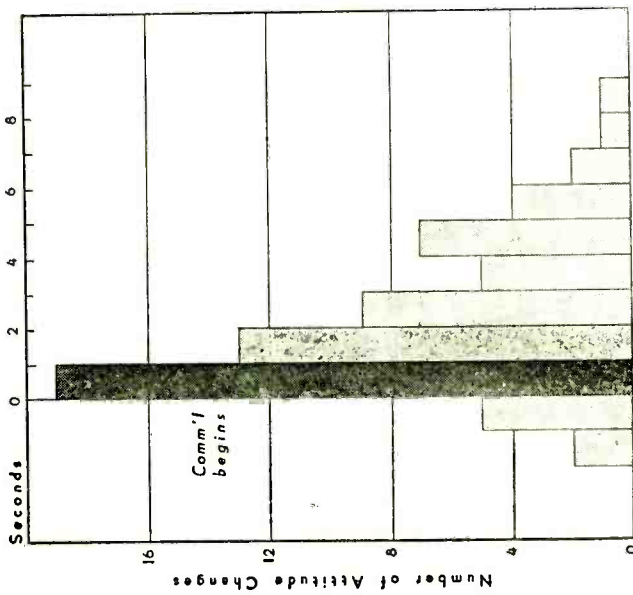
An illuminating validation of this point was found during a sustaining dramatic program, when the announcer introduced a message which was going to explain that the program was not sponsored, by stating:



### A. CLOSING COMMERCIAL

11:07 - 11:36

SUBJECTS PRE-WARNED



### B. OPENING COMMERCIAL

6:53 - 7:21

SUBJECTS NOT PRE-WARNED



FIG. 5.—LEADING INTO THE COMMERCIAL  
(SECOND-BY-SECOND CHANGES DURING TWO COMMERCIALS)

Almost every radio program has a commercial. The commercial tells you why the program is on the air. Well, we are going to give you a commercial now. We are going to tell you why this program comes on the air every Sunday night.

During this introduction interest dropped sharply to a record low. From a peak of 25 Like responses and no Dislikes preceding this introduction, listener reactions fell rapidly to 10 Likes and 2 Dislikes. It was evident that the reference to the commercial interrupted the thoughts and the mood of the listeners as effectively as if a real commercial had been introduced on the program at this point. Most listeners believed that a real sales talk was being put on, and were quick to register Indifference.

An interesting exception to the general reaction of rapid change to Dislike at the beginning of the commercial was found in a woman's program. The housewives did not register sharp Dislike. The commercial had started with the words, "Wives, does . . ." which, as a direct appeal to a special group, succeeded in holding their interest.

Since we find that the peak of listening attention occurs at the beginning of a commercial, the most important parts of the sales message—the punchline—should be given immediately at the beginning of the announcement. Similarly, it would seem wise to mention the sponsor right away. To avoid anticipation of the commercial, its position in the program should be varied. It also appears helpful to insert the last commercial slightly before the very end of the program.

*The text:* After one Program Analyzer test of the two commercial announcements used in a program, the listeners were asked on a questionnaire to rate the commercial on a twenty-point scale, with zero meaning very bad and twenty meaning very good. In addition to rating the commercial as a whole,

specific characteristics of the commercial and the announcer were also rated.

The only characteristic of the commercial that was found to be related to liking it as a whole was that of "convincingness." Those listeners who registered relatively more Likes on the Program Analyzer gave the commercial an average rating on "convincingness" of 13.5 on the scale of zero to twenty. On the other hand, those who registered less Likes gave it an average rating on "convincingness" of only 7.7. This relationship between questionnaire rating and Program Analyzer reaction held true for both the opening and closing commercials separately. It is interesting to note that those people who disliked the opening but liked the closing commercial, rated the "convincingness" of the sales talk at 13.6, while those who liked the opening but disliked the closing commercial gave the commercial a rank of 9.4 on the scale of "convincingness."

Another important question of interest to all advertisers is the extent to which liking of a commercial depends on liking the program. That there is, perhaps, some direct relationship between these two factors can be seen by studying reactions to the program and the subsequent change in attitude toward the closing commercial. Those people who disliked the first commercial but liked the second, gave a much higher rating to the intervening program than those who liked the opening commercial but later disliked the closing commercial. In fact, this latter group was lowest of all groups in its estimate of the program. Here, then, is one argument for increasing the effectiveness of a commercial by first increasing the audience's liking for the radio program itself.

An interesting relationship was also found between previous acquaintance with the program tested and the attitude toward the commercial. Of those listeners reacting favorably to the

commercial, 59 per cent stated that they listened regularly to the program at home. On the other hand, of those subjects who disliked the commercial, only 23 per cent mentioned the program that was being tested as one of their favorites. Here we have a strong indication of the relationship between regular listening and a favorable attitude toward the sponsor.

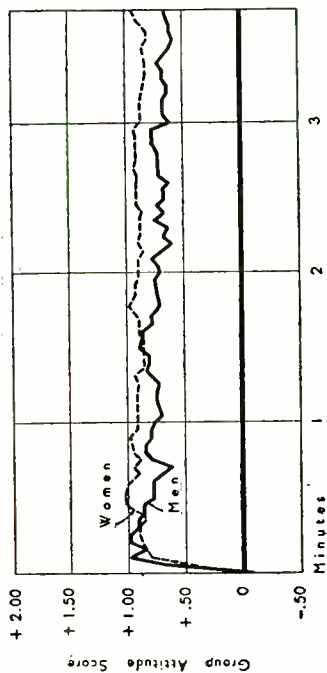
### *The Program Audience*

Analyzing radio programs in terms of the listeners' reactions makes it possible to study in greater detail not only the liked and disliked parts of the program, but also to find out the characteristics of the audience making each judgment. This analysis of "who likes what and why" can help to improve a program in such a way that it attracts those listeners we are most interested in reaching. We shall discuss two audience breakdowns which seem generally important.

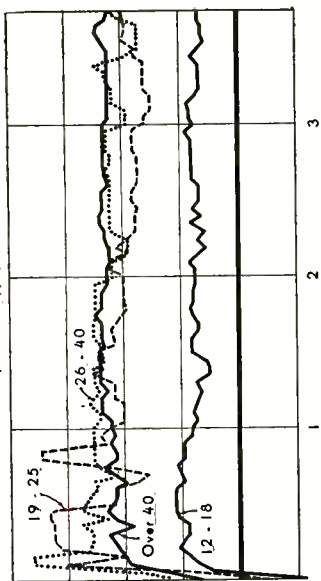
*Audience composition:* By analyzing the program profile separately for different groups of the population, it is possible to determine how a program appeals to different listeners. For example, as shown in Fig. 6, a program profile can be constructed separately for young and old listeners, educated and less-educated listeners, etc. As can be seen from the separate curves, there are points within the program where the men register a higher number of Likes than the women, despite the generally greater Like response of the women to this broadcast as a whole. This is particularly true for the opening item which deals with the Army Service Extension Bill. At this point, also, the 19-25-year age-group, in the profile breakdown by age, shows an exceedingly high peak of interest.

One can, thus, arrive at some generalizations concerning a program's appeal to different listeners. For example, in the case of a dramatic series, it was found that the young, less-edu-

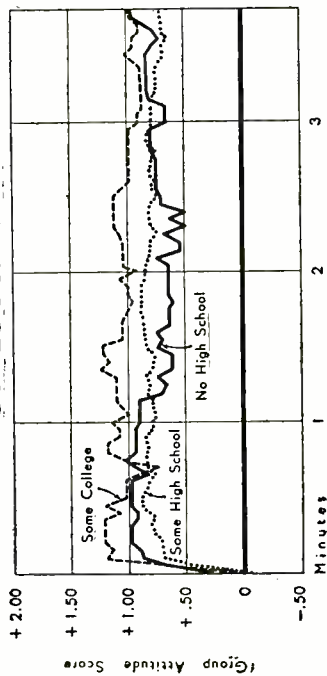
### BY SEX



### BY AGE



### BY EDUCATION



### BY OCCUPATION

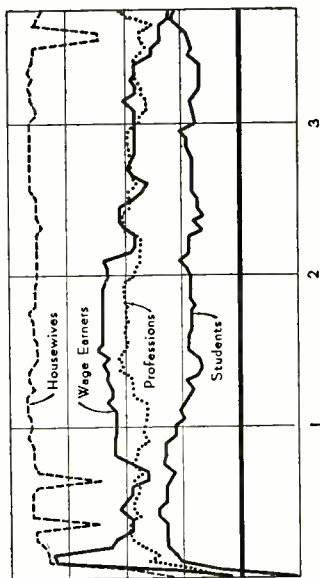


FIG. 6.—PROGRAM PROFILE ACCORDING TO AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS  
(AVERAGE ATTITUDE SCORES)

cated people liked scenes which were emotional in content, whereas the educated listeners preferred scenes which brought home the program's message in a more direct manner. Inspirational episodes were less liked among the older, less-educated groups. All groups liked those parts which were related directly to something with which they were familiar. The housewives expressed Like during domestic scenes and Dislike during scenes dealing with the technique of production, while working men reacted conversely.

In the same way it is possible to analyze the relative appeal of the constituent parts of a variety program. Since the variety program is usually aimed at the entire family, such an analysis is extremely valuable in balancing the proportions of each type of entertainment so that all members of a family may find something to interest them.

*Regular and occasional listeners:* It has been estimated that a large part of any program's audience is formed by occasional listeners—listeners who may or may not tune in to the next broadcast.<sup>8</sup> Since much of the effectiveness of the radio message depends upon its repetition, the loss of such occasional listeners seems a serious problem. An analysis of the Like and Dislike reactions of the different types of listeners can help to show how these occasional listeners may be changed into regular listeners.

In one test the listeners were divided into those who evaluated the program on a questionnaire as: (a) Liked the program as it is; (b) Would improve it a bit; (c) Would improve it a great deal. The individuals in these groups might be thought of as those who would predominate in the regular, occasional, and non-listener groups respectively. By constructing the pro-

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *The Passing of the "One Night Stand,"* Columbia Broadcasting System, 1941 (pamphlet).

gram profiles separately for these three groups as in Figure 7, we can study their reactions to specific items within the program.

In general, the profile of those listeners who "would improve it a bit" follows that of those who "liked it," rather than of those who "would improve it a good deal." The rank correlation of program parts according to number of Like reactions among those who "would improve it a bit" and those who "liked it" is  $+0.27$ . The rank correlation between the former group and those who wanted a great deal of improvement is  $+0.06$ . The opposing trend between those who "liked it" and those who "would improve it a great deal" is evidenced by a negative correlation of  $-0.31$ .

An increase in one's radio audience may be attempted by improving a program along existing lines in order to hold the occasional listener, or by changing the general pattern of the program to bring in new listeners. The Program Analyzer profile highlights the parts of a program which need improvement (since the attitude scores are relatively low for both regular and occasional listeners)—as well as the parts that would need to be changed completely in order to gain new listeners, (i.e., the parts for which attitude scores are relatively low among non-listeners only).

For example, after a series of experiments with music recordings, it was possible to determine the type of people to which the records would probably appeal. Before the test, the listeners filled in a questionnaire on their musical tastes. Thus they could be classified into two major groups—those who liked "hot jazz" and those who liked "sweet swing."

It seems that as far as popular music is concerned, "What's one man's meat is another man's poison." A series of solos in hot-jazz style kept the "hot jazz" group in the green button

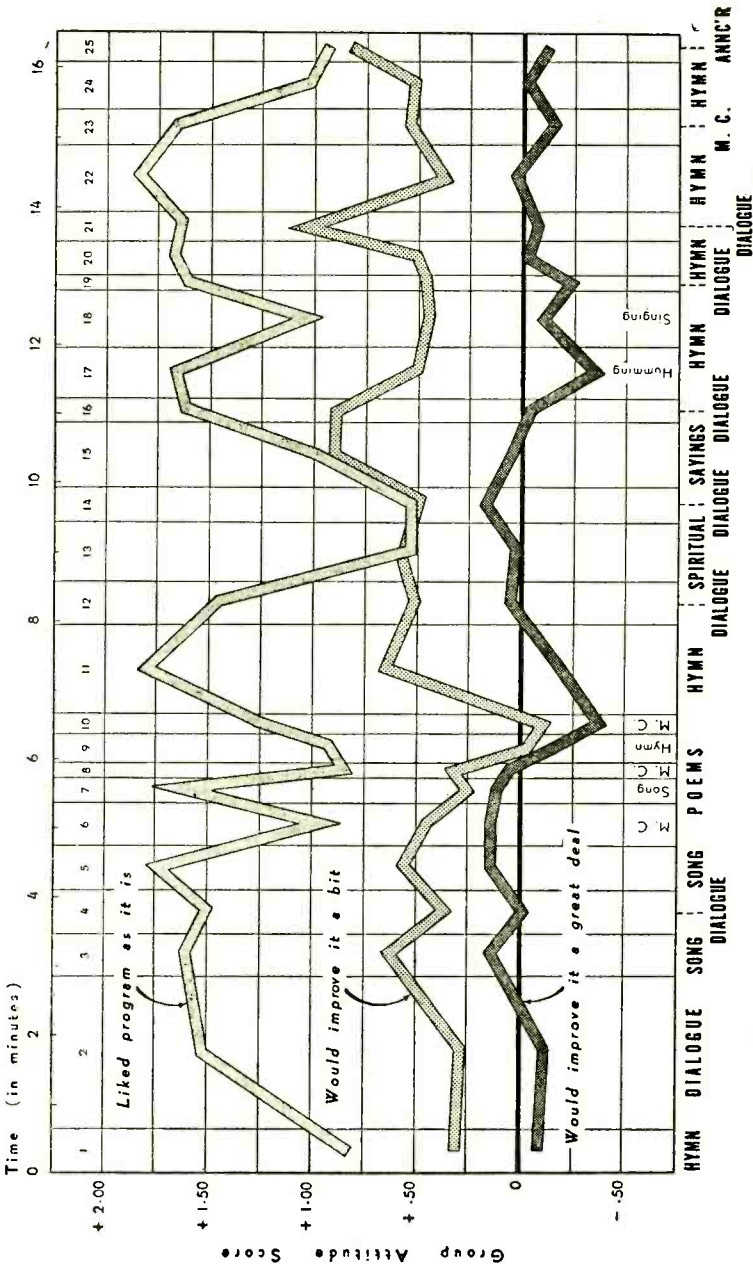


FIG. 7.—PROGRAM PROFILE ACCORDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM (AVERAGE ATTITUDE SCORES)



groove, while the "sweet swing" fans expressed Dislike. However, it was evident from the profile that parts of the recording had marked appeal for both groups. What the "sweet swing" group would have liked, in place of the trombone break to which their reaction was definitely negative, was a good vocal, one or two minutes in length. Such a vocal sequence would have eliminated many of their Dislikes for this part of the recording. It would have added a great deal to the broadness of its appeal, by definitely increasing its popularity among the "sweet swing" group, without necessarily losing the interest of the "hot jazz" listeners.

Though much is learned about the audience from telephone ratings and other data, this information lacks specific application. The details of a program, as well as its general concept, must be liked by the audience for which it is designed. With the type of data discussed in the foregoing examples, a study of listener attitudes toward these details has begun.

#### D. THE PROGRAM ANALYZER AS A RESEARCH TOOL

The previous sections have emphasized the operation and the application of the Program Analyzer to radio research. We have avoided any detailed discussion of the more technical problems involved. Many different methods of analysis and interpretation, as well as techniques of test operation, have been experimented with and are still being studied. The results of this research cannot be presented in all its detail in the present paper. However, it may help the reader to understand the Program Analyzer as a scientific measuring instrument if the main results of these investigations are summarized.

exist, relate to minor "ups and downs" in the accumulated curves.

Correlating the rank order of the different program parts for each group by all other groups produced correlations between .60 and .80. This means that, for the most part, each of the four groups ranked the same parts of the program in the same order of popularity. The correlation coefficients are fairly high, considering the fact that many of the items were very much alike and therefore received almost identical scores. An additional tabulation showed that the reactions recorded for the average program second for all four groups differed from

APPRAISING THE ACCURACY OF THE RESULTS

Before any testing device can be accepted it must first be tested itself. There are two basic scientific criteria by which the worth of any measuring instrument can be determined—reliability and validity. Knowing the reliability of the measuring device enables its user to know to what extent his results are consistent. Obviously, if the Program Analyzer gave a different program profile for the same type of listening group and the same program each time it was used, it would be of little value. But if it can be shown that we can trust the results, and expect

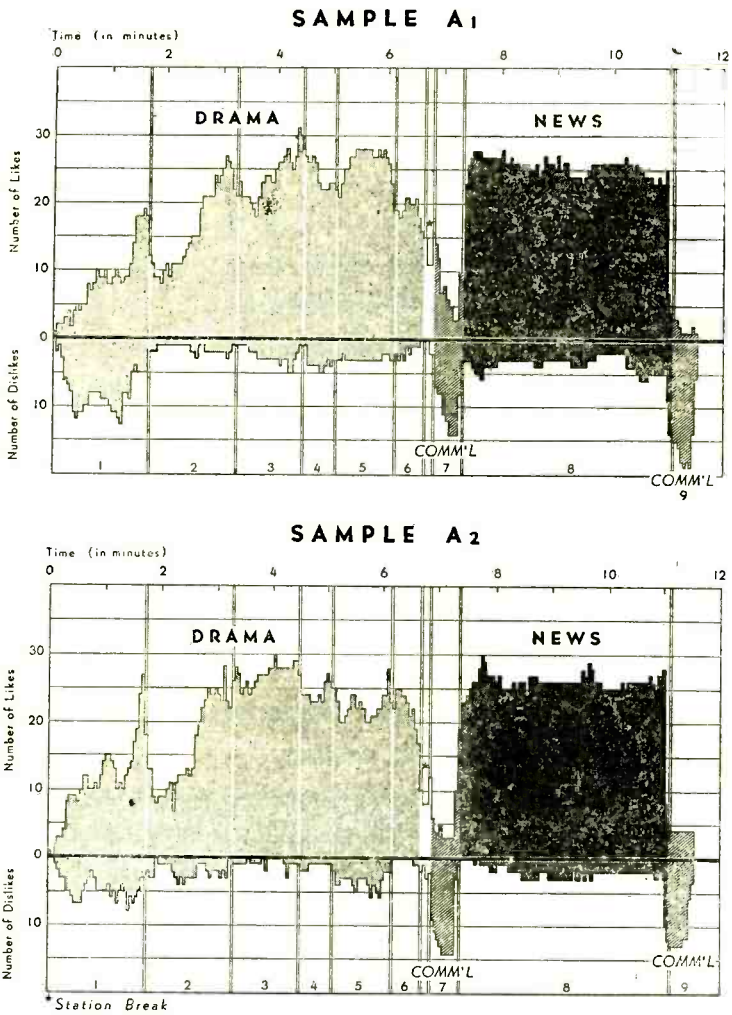


FIG. 8.—PROGRAM PROFILES OF TWO OUT OF FOUR MATCHED SAMPLES

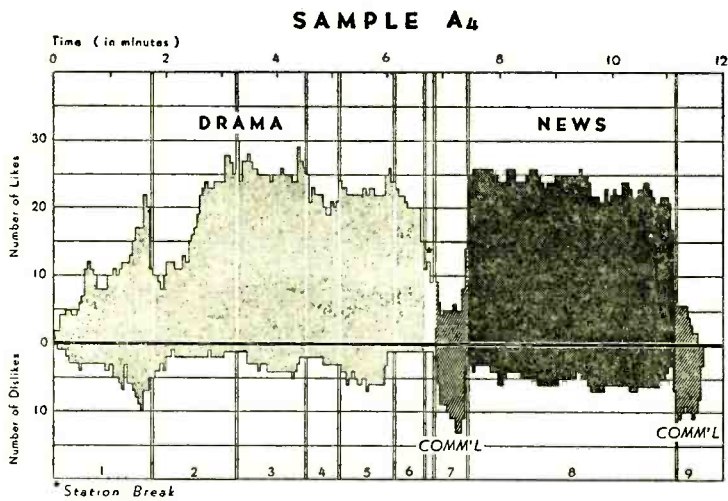
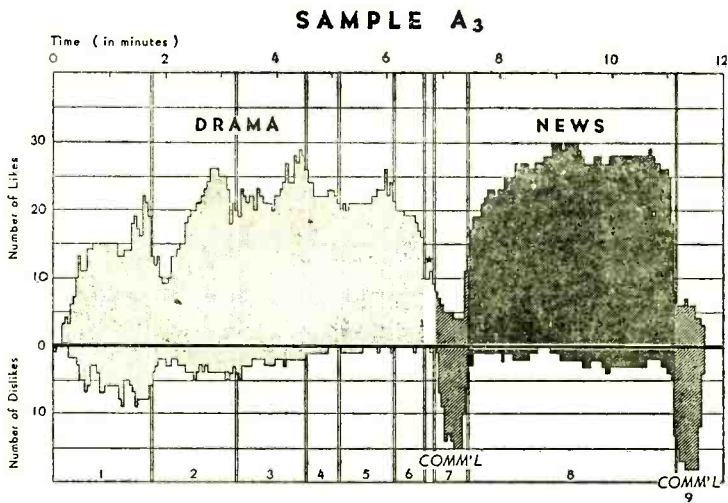


FIG. 8A.—PROGRAM PROFILES OF TWO MORE OUT OF FOUR MATCHED SAMPLES

each other by only 2 per cent for the Likes and 3 per cent for the Dislikes.

Using this technique of testing the same program on different groups which were similar in their personal composition, additional evidence of reliability was obtained. Two samples of 40 cases each listened to a variety program; they showed a correlation of .91 in their relative liking for the different parts of the program. For a dramatic program with two groups of 35 subjects each, the correlation was .74.

The technique of testing the same program on different listener groups can also serve to indicate what size of sample is needed to produce a stable program profile. For both a variety and a dramatic program, the correlation was obtained between the total group of subjects and each of several smaller matched samples of this total group, according to the rank order of the scores for the different parts of the program. As can be seen from Table 1, the correlation increases as the size of the sample increases.

TABLE 1.—RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS OF AVERAGE SCORE FOR PROGRAM PARTS BETWEEN SAMPLES OF DIFFERENT SIZES AND THE TOTAL SAMPLE

| <i>Dramatic program</i>                   |                    | <i>Variety program</i>                    |                    |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| <i>Sample size</i><br>(Total sample = 70) | <i>Correlation</i> | <i>Sample size</i><br>(Total sample = 80) | <i>Correlation</i> |
| 10  | .68                | 15  | .64                |
| 25  | .69                | 25  | .90                |
| 35  | .79                | 40  | .92                |
| 45  | .80                | 55  | .92                |
| 60  | .87                | 65  | .98                |

It appears from this table that fairly small samples can be used in order to determine the relative popularity of the different parts of the program. While these small samples would suffice to determine the probable trend of reactions and the general appeal of major sections of the program, they would not be sufficient to study the relative appeal of specific small

items within the major sections themselves. The size of the sample, therefore, should depend upon the detail with which one wishes to study a program.

### *Validity*

Since the Program Analyzer is usually used to show up parts of broadcasts that need improvement, the effect of changing the defective parts upon the following retest constitutes a test of validity. If, after making changes recommended on the basis of Analyzer findings, the program stimulates more approval during the revised parts, then the procedure is a valid one.

One such test was provided by a change in the standard opening of a program series. The change was recommended on the basis of Analyzer data. The opening of the first program tested in the series received an average attitude score of  $-.40$ , with as many as half of the listeners indicating that they would have turned the program off at this point, if they had been at home.<sup>10</sup> The offending portion, a German language proclamation, was eliminated and an English language opening was used in the next broadcast studied. The average attitude score for this opening was  $+.57$ . A further improvement was made by shortening and preceding the opening announcement with a musical V-theme. When this change was made in the opening of the third broadcast of the series, an average attitude score of  $+.95$  was obtained.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This average attitude score is determined from the Likes, Dislikes and the Indifference reactions according to a method devised by Lazarsfeld and Robinson. The final score, called a "Trichometric" score, ranges from 0 to  $\pm 3.19$ . The zero score represents complete indifference or an equal number of Likes and Dislikes. The 3.19 rating, if negative, signifies complete Dislike reaction throughout the entire broadcast; if positive, complete Like is indicated. A score therefore ranges between plus and minus 3.19. Cf. P. F. Lazarsfeld and W. S. Robinson, "Some Properties of the Trichotomy Like, No Opinion, Dislike and Their Psychological Interpretation," *Sociometry*, Vol. III, #2, 1940.

<sup>11</sup> This example and others relating to the effectiveness of recommendations have been discussed on page 286 ff. (section entitled Program Clinic).

Validity may also be determined by comparing the results of the measuring device with results obtained by different methods of established validity. Since such proven methods are very rare in program research, it is necessary to use tests similar to those of reliability. By comparing the evaluation of the program by the listener, as expressed on a questionnaire, to the second-by-second record of the Program Analyzer, we can determine to some extent the validity of these second-by-second responses.

Such a comparison is given in Table 2, which shows the average score recorded on the Program Analyzer for the program as a whole according to how the questions on liking the program were answered after the test. People who on the questionnaire rated the program as "very interesting," the produc-

TABLE 2.—AVERAGE ATTITUDE SCORE ON PROGRAM ANALYZER ACCORDING TO PROGRAM EVALUATION BY MEANS OF QUESTIONNAIRE <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Questionnaire rating</i>                   | <i>Average program analyzer score</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Program as a whole</i>                     |                                       |
| Very interested . . . . .                     | 1.28                                  |
| Interested . . . . .                          | 0.85                                  |
| Indifferent . . . . .                         | 0.67                                  |
| Bored . . . . .                               | -0.07                                 |
| <i>Production</i>                             |                                       |
| One of the best . . . . .                     | 1.23                                  |
| Very good . . . . .                           | 0.83                                  |
| Average . . . . .                             | 0.76                                  |
| Bad . . . . .                                 | -0.50                                 |
| <i>Content</i>                                |                                       |
| One of the best . . . . .                     | 1.12                                  |
| Very good . . . . .                           | 1.12                                  |
| Average . . . . .                             | 0.57                                  |
| Bad . . . . .                                 | -0.07                                 |
| <i>If I happened to turn on this program:</i> |                                       |
| I would listen again . . . . .                | 1.21                                  |
| I would listen to end . . . . .               | 0.79                                  |
| I would turn it off . . . . .                 | 0.10                                  |

<sup>a</sup> Average attitude scores vary between -3.19 and +3.19, ranging from Dislike to Like respectively.

tion and content as "among the best" they had heard on the radio, and who said they would "listen again" if they happened to turn on the program, have a better score on the Program Analyzer (recording their reactions while listening to the program) than those who rated the production and content as "bad," the program itself as "boring," and who said they would have "turned it off" at home.

Similarly, in a study of listener reaction to a popular "jazz" recording, the expression of Like reactions on the Analyzer during the test correlated very highly with the subsequent questionnaire evaluation of the recording. Among those listeners who liked "sweet swing" music, only 22 per cent registered Like to more than half of the jazz selection, as compared to 54 per cent of the "hot jazz" group. On the questionnaire following the test, the "sweet swing" group, on the average, rated the recording as "Pretty Bad," while the "hot jazz" group rated it as "Pretty good."

The high correlation between those individuals who register Like for the program on the Program Analyzer and those individuals who listen regularly to the program at home can be taken as an index of the validity of using the Program Analyzer to determine regular listeners. For a news program, the regular listeners to the program averaged +1.00 on the Program Analyzer, whereas the non-regular listeners averaged +.34. (See footnote, page 313.) For all the programs tested, it was found that the greatest approval of the program was registered by those persons who named the same type of program as one of their favorites. Similarly, when listeners who had heard three previous broadcasts of a program series were asked to rank the fourth program of the series which was being tested, those people who had ranked the fourth program as the

best averaged  $+1.23$  on the Program Analyzer while those who ranked it worst averaged  $-.06$ .

As more and more programs are tested, additional data will be secured on the validity of the Program Analyzer. The most valid measure would involve a series of tests in which a program is tested, improved, and re-tested with a new group of listeners, similar in composition to the first group. If the improvements, as suggested by the program profile and interviews, are valid, the new profile should no longer show the same points of Dislike and should indicate, on the whole, a more favorable reaction.

#### THE EXPERIMENTAL SITUATION

Basic to the application of the Program Analyzer as a scientific measuring instrument is an understanding of how the listeners make use of this instrument. Do different subjects use the push buttons in different ways? To what extent can the subjects use them correctly to express their attitudes? What exactly do they mean by these expressions of Like, Indifference, and Dislike? It is important to know the answers to such questions about the Program Analyzer in order to insure its most satisfactory use by the subjects and to justify interpretation of the graphs.

#### *Use of Instructions*

Since the listeners' use of the Program Analyzer buttons is extremely important for the success of a test, a series of special experiments was made, using different instructions in an effort to determine the most appropriate emphasis. The instructions were varied for each test. In the first experiment subjects were informed to react only to the *content* or the *production* aspects



of a dramatic program; in the second they were instructed to make judgments on a *Like-Dislike* or an *Interest-Uninterest* scale.

The experiment was done with two fairly well-matched groups, an experimental and a control group. For the first hearing of the program, both groups were given the same instructions; for the second hearing, these instructions were changed for the experimental group but not for the control group. In this way it was possible to isolate the effect of the changed instructions upon the reactions to the program.

In regard to production or content, very little difference was found in the listening reaction between the two types of instructions. In general, the average listener could not distinguish consistently between production and content in the radio program and reacted indiscriminately to both of these elements.

Testing each of the different parts of the program for any change in reaction according to the two kinds of instructions revealed no significant differences. Combining all the music parts, however, that group instructed to react to production only had, on the average, 13 per cent more reactions to these parts than the control group. Even this difference for music, an outstanding element of production, is not very high.

There are several reasons for this. Production and content in a radio program are probably so closely interwoven as to be experienced as an entity. Moreover, the use of production techniques such as sound effects and music may have a content meaning in themselves. Finally, it would appear that the average radio listener is not able to distinguish between the content of a program and the way in which it is presented.

The experiments, instructing one group of subjects to judge whether they Liked or Disliked the different parts of the program, while another group of listeners were told to

judge whether they were Interested or Not Interested, resulted in program profiles containing only slight variations. Despite the instructions, most listeners appeared to react to the type of material being broadcast and changed their basis of judgment as this material itself changed. For example, during the musical parts of a program, the judgments reflected Like or Dislike; during the presentation of news or straight informational content, the nature of the response was that of Interest or Uninterest; and the reactions to the forum and discussion units were largely determined by Agreement and Disagreement with what was being said.

Thus, pressing the red or green button can best be interpreted as meaning Approval or Disapproval, or signifying the desire to "hear more" or the desire to "turn off" the radio. It therefore becomes apparent that in order to understand the reasons for a listener's judgment of any part of a radio program, it is necessary to interview him after the Program Analyzer record has been obtained. The Program Analyzer test must include an adequate interview with the listener to determine how and why he reacted as he did.

### *The Interview*

The interview, following the Analyzer test, presents certain unique problems arising from the fact that the Analyzer interview is essentially a group of individual interviews conducted simultaneously. For practical reasons, it is usually impossible to conduct ten private interviews after each Analyzer test. Still, the objective is that of a private interview—it is to get a maximum of relevant information from each individual, with a minimum of bias introduced by the interviewer or by other respondents. Individual reactions must be drawn out even though they conflict with majority reaction for it is the individual

changes of reaction on the Analyzer tape which must be explained.

No specific rules can be stated at the present stage of experimentation. These general observations can, however, be offered:

1. Interviews should start with very general questions which leave the subject free to comment on what is uppermost in his mind. For example: Number 4, what did you think of the program?
2. When reactions to such general questions begin to dwindle more specific questions are in order. These questions should in most cases relate to the portions of the Analyzer tape that show unusual amounts of Approval or Disapproval.
3. Occasionally, the interviewer should pose individual reactions to the whole group for a show of hands. For example: Number 6 feels that she would have turned off the radio during the patrol scene if she had been listening at home. Let's have a show of hands. How many of you would have turned off the radio or tuned to another program during this scene if you had been listening at home?
4. In some cases, subjects may deny having pushed the red button in order to avoid stating a minority opinion. For this reason, questions addressed to individuals should be reserved until rapport is secure. The tape should be in view of the interviewees so that subjects are faced with objective evidence of their reactions during the broadcast.
5. In some cases, subjects cannot remember their responses to specific episodes. In such cases, the specific portion of the broadcast in question should be replayed.

6. In general, it has been found unprofitable to ask subjects how a program should be changed in order to improve it. The very idea of arranging a broadcast is so foreign to the listener's experience, that his imagination balks at this point. The main value of the Analyzer technique is in locating the crucial spots. It is generally the task of the writers and the producers, with suggestions from the researchers, to improve the broadcast.

### *Three Types of Listener Reactions*

There are at least three distinct psychological phenomena related to the perception and judgment of radio programs by means of the Program Analyzer. We shall call these "anticipatory," "carry-over," and "lagging" listening reactions. The determination of these elements, in addition to enabling us to interpret more adequately the program profile, can also indicate poor program construction. Their occurrence can indicate the most favorable combination and order of the different program elements; they can serve as a measure of the immediate strength of impact of the program upon the listener; they can show where anticipation of what is to come interferes with or adds to the program's possibility of success; they can help to increase the effectiveness of the program in general.

*Anticipatory:* The listener, through long hours spent before the radio, has developed certain expectations. By association, the listener reacts to an introduction or a subtle cue to anticipate that which will come next. This is most obvious in relation to commercial announcements, where the words "And now for a brief announcement from our sponsor" can produce "psychological deafness." It can be found also in the program profile for a musical number. If the selection is well known, the opening bars account for immediate Like responses which continue

throughout the song. If the musical number is not yet popular, the opening bars will almost invariably be heard with Indifference and only very gradually will Like reactions appear.

Anticipatory reactions apply to both Like and Dislike responses. The building up of these Likes and Dislikes in anticipation can be seen from Figure 9, which analyzes in detail the transition periods between the opening commercial and the program proper (Part A) and between the program proper and the closing commercial (Part B). During the pause between the commercial announcement and the newscaster, we see the beginning of Like responses of the listeners. These are Like reactions in anticipation of what is to come. Similarly, at the end of the program, although not as pronounced, we find anticipatory Dislike responses, while awaiting the closing commercial announcement. This expectancy of development is a strong factor in program enjoyment. The greatest amount of Dislike is usually found to occur where the listener anticipates something pleasant and then hears something unpleasant.

Anticipatory reaction to the development of a program has been studied experimentally with the Program Analyzer by having the same listening group judge a program a second time. Many of the listeners who on the first hearing did not react to a program part until its conclusion, on a second hearing reacted immediately to the introductory moments of the same part.

*Carry-over:* A second psychological phenomenon relating to the listening experience may be called "carry-over" reactions. These are listener judgments which are affected by what has preceded in the program. In a general way this phenomenon is similar to the well-known carry-over of listeners from a popular show to the one following it on the radio schedule. Within the program itself, favorable reactions to a program

part which is liked will continue into subsequent parts. Conversely, disliked parts will serve to lower the listener's esti-

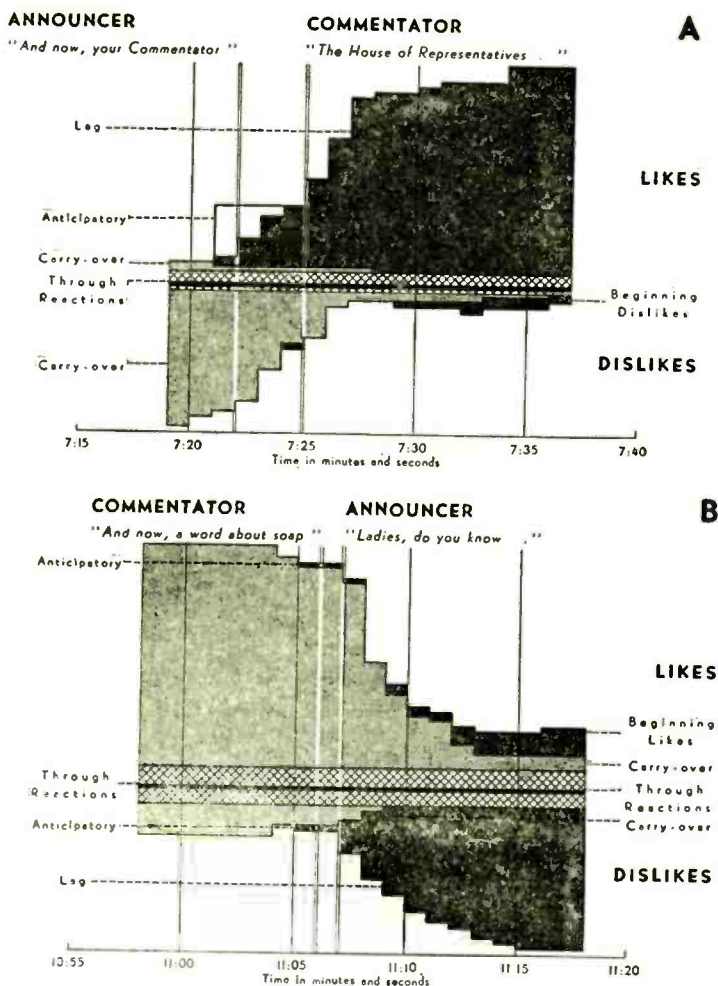


FIG. 9.—ANTICIPATORY, CARRY-OVER, AND LAG REACTIONS

mate of subsequent material. Knowledge of this is important for the program producer, since the proper distribution of his strong units through the program will serve to keep the lis-

tener tuned in. A disliked part following a liked part is tempered for a time. However, two disliked parts will accumulate Dislike reactions, and may well result in a loss of listeners.

The existence of this carry-over effect is clearly seen by referring again to Figures 9 and 5, where carry-over Likes and carry-over Dislikes appear. After the opening commercial announcement has ended, we find the Dislike reactions subsiding only gradually; before the closing commercial announcement, we find some of the Like reactions for the newscaster continuing after the commercial has already begun. These charts show the importance of the carry-over in maintaining listener interest in a commercial announcement. Very rarely will a commercial produce a favorable reaction if it follows a program part that is strongly disliked.

The existence of this carry-over in Like and Dislike responses is clearly demonstrated by the analysis of listener reactions to small program breaks. For example, in a variety program containing ten applause breaks lasting an average 10.5 seconds each, the extent to which this applause was liked depended upon the reaction to the preceding episode of the program. The correlation between the Likes on the applause breaks and the preceding episodes was  $+ .75$ .

The analysis of carry-over shows that it is possible by building up a favorable attitude among the listeners to hold their interest through program breaks, such as commercials, spot announcements, and necessary introductions to new episodes.

*Lag:* Finally, there is the "lagging" reaction. This occurs when the listener's judgment begins sometime after the program episode itself has begun. The analysis of this experience can tell the producer where his efforts have failed to elicit an immediate response. It is difficult to detect "lagging" reactions from the program profile, since the listener may actually be

indifferent to the introduction, rather than "lagging" in his response. However, these "lagging" reactions would occur, as indicated in Figure 9, after the newscaster has already begun to speak and after the closing commercial has begun.

The meaning of a time lag in the listener reaction to a program can be understood better by studying separately the program profiles of one group of subjects who recorded intense Likes on a five-point scale during a special experiment (see page 326) and those registering ordinary Likes on a three-point scale. Whenever the Like judgment was intense, as indicated by the five-point scale, the time lag in response for the three-point scale was smaller. The presence of time lag is seen from the gradual build-up of Likes on the three-point scale as contrasted to the immediate Like reactions of the five-point scale.<sup>12</sup>

In analyzing the program profile, therefore, it is necessary to keep these three kinds of reactions in mind. Particular care should be given to interpreting the curve at the beginning and end of the different program parts. However, since the actual radio listening experience contains these three types of phenomena, it would be mistaken to eliminate them as spurious elements. Rather they should be used to indicate the effectiveness of a program's construction.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The delayed nature of the response to a program can be seen by comparing the reaction during the first hearing of a program with the reactions during a second hearing. Peaks of a reaction on the second hearing preceded peaks on the first hearing by an average of 6.8 seconds. Part of this, of course, is due to the "anticipatory" response.

<sup>13</sup> By analyzing one program in extreme detail through a comparison of the interview material for each individual with his Program Analyzer record, it was possible to reconstruct a new curve. The rank correlation between the two curves was .86, showing that the general reaction to the program parts is not appreciably changed.



*Inter-relation of Likes and Dislikes*

The Program Analyzer permits the listener to express his reaction on a three-point scale of Like, Indifference or Dislike. How do these three reactions relate to each other? It appears from the tests made that for most programs Like and Dislike cannot be taken strictly as opposing judgments. A knowledge of the number of Like reactions does not enable the prediction of the number of Dislike reactions and vice versa. This, of course, is due to the variation in the number of Indifference reactions.

The relation of Likes and Dislikes can take on one of two major patterns. As the Likes increase, the Dislikes can decrease and vice versa. Or it can happen that as the Likes increase, the Dislikes also increase. In the former case, the interpretation appears to be that all listeners agree in their evaluation while in the latter case, there is a definite split in the attitude toward the program. The interpretation of the program profile must therefore take into account both the Like and Dislike reactions at any one point. Once again the importance of an interview based upon the program profile and aimed at discovering the reasons for the subjects' reactions is indicated.

By ranking the program parts in the relative order in which they were liked, and similarly the relative order in which they were disliked, a high variability in correlation between the two was found. The correlations varied from  $+0.47$  to  $-0.37$ . It was evident in many places on the program profile that Like and Dislike reactions must be interpreted separately.

The Indifference reactions present a separate problem. In many cases Indifference may mean simply a neutral reaction. However, it appears that Indifference does not always indicate a reaction lying between Like and Dislike. Rather, it tends to

assume the opposite meaning of the predominant response. In other words, for a person who likes the program as a whole, Indifference signifies Dislike; while for the person who Dislikes the program, Indifference tends to mean Like. This can be seen specifically from Table 3, where the program parts are ranked according to the number of Like, Dislike, and Indifference reactions, and then correlated with each other separately for regular listeners and non-listeners to this type of program. For the regular listeners the rank correlation between Like and Indifference is  $-.98$ . The rank correlation between Dislike and Indifference for the non-listeners is  $-.96$ .

TABLE 3.—RANK CORRELATION BETWEEN PROGRAM PARTS FOR LIKE, DISLIKE, AND INDIFFERENCE ACCORDING TO "REGULAR LISTENERS" AND "NON-LISTENERS"

| <i>Correlation between</i>     | <i>Regular listeners</i> | <i>Non-listeners</i> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Like and Indifference .....    | $-.98$                   | $+.45$               |
| Dislike and Indifference ..... | $+.79$                   | $-.96$               |

Many listeners react on a two-point scale only, either Like and Indifference or Dislike and Indifference. The following comment by a listener illustrates this quite clearly:

I didn't touch the green button; I just took my finger off the red button when I liked it, and pressed the red button when I didn't like it.

The greatest number to use both red and green buttons in any single program test was 32 per cent. This number varied from test to test depending upon the type of program and the composition of the test group.

It is obvious that the more variation there is in the listener response to a program, the more detailed can the analysis be. In an attempt to increase the reaction scale, a special experiment was made with two groups of listeners of 40 subjects in Group A and 39 subjects in Group B. Group A was instructed to use the three-point scale of Like, Indifference, Dislike, while

Group B was instructed to use a five-point scale with the additional judgments of Extreme Like or Extreme Dislike to be indicated by jiggling the button.

The result of this experiment is given in Figure 10, which shows a portion of the program profiles produced by both Group A and B, with the Extreme Likes and Extreme Dislikes of Group B drawn separately. In general, the two curves follow each other closely, the rank correlation for program parts being  $+0.76$ . The use of the five-point scale tends to decrease the number of Indifference reactions somewhat. However, the confusion introduced into the test by the more complicated button operation required to register five possible reactions, seriously interferes with the ease of listening to the program. While there can be no doubt as to the desirability of a graded reaction, it would seem more important that the psychological nature of the listening situation should approximate as closely as possible the ease of listening at home.

#### *Duration of Number of Reactions*

The number of times a subject presses the green or red button and the length of the time he continues to press it varies according to the type of program and the ability of the listener to make judgments. There are those individuals who press the button continuously without releasing it once during the entire length of the program, while there are others who have no reactions at all. In addition, some individuals tend to have numerous short reactions, pressing the button for two or three seconds many places throughout the program, while other individuals press the button for fairly long periods, but at infrequent intervals.

These reactions represent, to some extent, individual patterns, as could be seen by correlating an individual's reactions

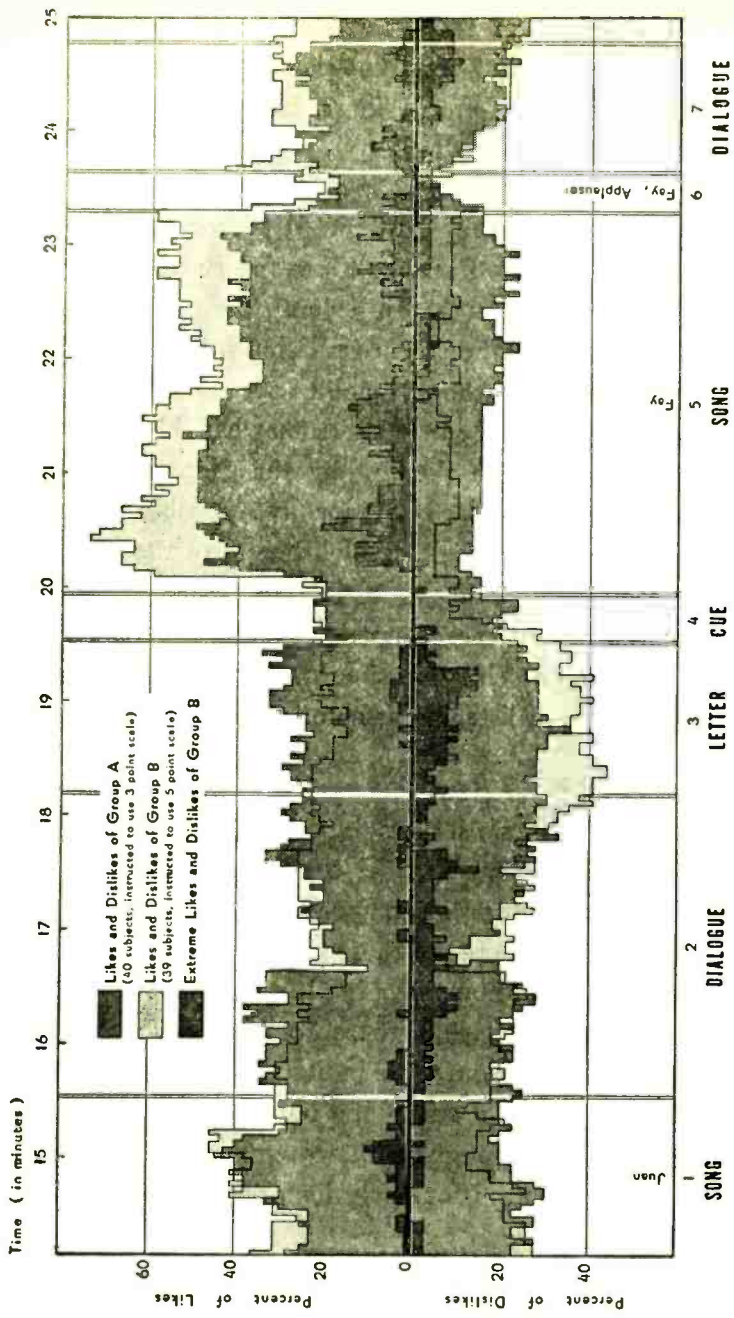


FIG. 10.—PROFILE OF SAME PROGRAM BASED ON A THREE- AND A FIVE-POINT SCALE

for the first and second 15-minute portions of a 30-minute program. The correlation between the number of Like reactions for the two 15-minute parts of a variety program was  $+0.62$  while the correlation for the number of Dislike reactions was  $+0.81$ . For a dramatic program these correlations were  $+0.69$  and  $+0.59$  respectively. In regard to the duration of the reactions, these correlations were  $+0.87$  for duration of Like reactions and  $+0.56$  for duration of Dislike reactions for the variety program, and  $+0.51$  and  $+0.45$  respectively for the dramatic program. These correlations signify that to a large extent an individual who, for example, makes short but frequent judgments will make this type of judgment consistently throughout the entire program.<sup>14</sup>

Comparing the response forms of the educated and the less-educated listeners judging a dramatic program, we found the following differences: the educated listeners had on the average five more Like reactions and seven more Dislike reactions than the less-educated listeners; the average duration of their Like reaction was 16 seconds less and the average duration of their Dislike reactions was 7 seconds more. The educated listeners therefore had more reactions on both Like and Dislike, with the Like reactions being shorter and the Dislike reactions longer.

We may interpret the greater frequency of reaction by the educated listener as an indication of their greater ability to discriminate and make judgments. The shorter Like reactions and the longer Dislike reactions can mean that they are also more critical than the less-educated listener, or else it can simply mean that the program studied was one which had less appeal

<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that this form of response is made whether the individual is expressing Like or Dislike reactions.

to the educated listener. More research is necessary on this aspect of "*who uses the Program Analyzer how?*"

The value of this research lies in determining the most valid and meaningful use of the push buttons. Progress in this direction is of necessity slow, but continued experimentation can hope to give us a more or less standardized response pattern against which we could determine the adequacy of each individual's use of the buttons.

### *The Unit of Tabulation*

The development of the Program Analyzer has witnessed many different forms of tabulation. Essentially there are two major problems, relating to the length of the time-unit of tabulation and the use of a content-unit.

*The time-unit:* Primarily, the program-profile is based on time-units. The unit used for analysis is generally three seconds in length, although the Program Analyzer permits one-second divisions. Profiles have been constructed using one-second, three-second, five-second units, etc. It has been found that intervals up to fifteen seconds in length permit one to analyze the general popularity of the different parts of a program, but do not permit a study of the details of production.

Since this problem is important in the Program Analyzer technique, it seemed desirable to find the largest time unit which would still permit such an analysis. A comparison between profiles based on one-second and on three-second units showed that the three-second units (each unit being considered Liked or Disliked by an individual whenever at least half the period was Liked or Disliked) could safely be used. Should the unit of tabulation be an important factor in shaping the pattern, one would expect the effects to be particularly apparent

at points in the program where many attitude changes occur—for instance, at the breaking points between features. Even at these breaking points, the difference between tabulation by one-second and three-second periods was almost negligible.

*The program unit:* We can also divide the program into structural units or program parts. This is simple in the case of comedy and variety shows where the program consists of separate and easily discernable sections. Though somewhat more difficult in the case of the dramatic program, it is still possible to divide the dramatic story into episodes.

That such divisions are valid was shown by an analysis of the point in a program part where listener reactions begin and end. More than two-thirds of the reactions began during the first half of the program part on the first hearing, while on the second hearing, two-thirds began during the very first quarter of the program part. A similar analysis of where in the formulated program parts the reactions ended, showed that most individuals ended their reactions during the last quarter of the program unit.

Reactions start and end more or less simultaneously with the beginning and ending of the program parts. This is especially true for musical sections and weakest for dramatic episodes where “carry-over” and “lag” reactions are more frequent. Since the peaks of Like and Dislike reactions closely coincide with the structural breakdown of the program, the procedure of analyzing a program by functional parts has been generally followed.

In the foregoing discussion some of the complex experimental problems inherent in the development of any scientific measuring instrument have been brought out. These are problems which can be answered fully only by long and painstaking

research. Each answer in turn will add to the understanding of the experimental application of the Program Analyzer and to the direction of its future development.<sup>15</sup>

### E. SUMMARY

#### *The Program Analyzer*

The Program Analyzer is an apparatus for recording the listener's reactions to a radio program while he is still listening to it. This technique can help the broadcaster to analyze and to predict the success or failure of a radio production. It enables him to determine exactly what the weak and strong points of the program are. It provides him with a permanent record of the Likes and Dislikes of the radio audience, together with the reasons for these reactions.

The listener indicates his judgments by pressing one of two buttons—a green button if he *likes* what he is hearing, a red button if he *dislikes* what he is hearing. These reactions are recorded on a tape which is, in turn, synchronized to the program being broadcast. The result is a *program profile* which enables the producer to tell at a glance the total number of positive and negative reactions of all listeners for any given time during the broadcasts.

#### *Findings*

Several case records are presented in this report together with their program profiles. One deals with an analysis of an

<sup>15</sup> In four years of research a great number of staff members of the Office of Radio Research, of the program-testing division of CBS and of other institutions have given time and thoughts to the accumulation of the material presented in this article. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Maurice Farber, Edrita Fried, Simon Marcson, Jean MacInnis, Robert Merton, John Gray Peatman, Jack Peterman, Horace Schwerin, Gerhart Wiebe et al.



*adolescents' program*, presenting a continuous account of the listener's reactions for the entire program including the commercial. Another case record discusses the reception of a *morale program*, indicating its particular significance to listeners with relatives in the armed forces. A third case record is based upon a *novel variety program*, comparing the listener's reactions to each type of entertainment offered in the program.

Singling out specific results from its long history of research, this report on the Program Analyzer presents a summary of the manner in which these results were secured and the way in which they were applied. While the Analyzer is essentially a "clinical" instrument, applied to a program's own particular ills, some general findings are presented. Some of the topics discussed are the program introduction, the setting and mood, the listener's "frame of reference," use of sound effects, the narrator's function, and use of short flashes.

A special experiment deals with the testing of the commercial announcement. How to introduce the announcement, where to place it in the program, what emphasis to place on the text of the message, the importance of "convincingness" are some of the problems which have been studied.

The program audience is analyzed in terms of "*who* likes what and why." The radio program is investigated for its appeal to different listeners—men and women, young and old people, etc. The audience is also divided into regular and occasional listeners, and the likes and dislikes of each type of listener are studied separately.

### *Technical Discussion*

The consistency of the Program Analyzer method is shown by coefficients of correlation of .99, .97 and .95 obtained for three programs when the split-halves method for testing *reli-*

*ability* was used. Furthermore, Program Analyzer tests of the same program with four different groups of 45 listeners each, matched as to personal characteristics, resulted in correlations between each group and all other groups ranging from  $+0.60$  to  $+0.80$ . Similar tests with different groups of listeners produced correlations of  $+0.91$  for a variety program and  $+0.74$  for a dramatic program. The results of the Program Analyzer tests can be taken as reliable.

*Validity* was studied by means of repeat tests. If, after making changes recommended on the basis of Analyzer findings, the program stimulates more approval during the revised parts, then the procedure is a valid one. On one such series of tests the average attitude score for the opening of a program was raised from  $-0.40$  to  $+0.57$  and finally to  $+0.95$ .<sup>16</sup> Other tests involved the comparison of Program Analyzer scores with questionnaire ratings.

The experimental situation of the Program Analyzer tests was carefully studied. A summary of the results is presented on the following aspects of Program Analyzer research: use of instructions, the interview situation, types of listener perception and judgment, interrelation of Likes and Dislikes, duration and number of reactions, and the unit of tabulation.

<sup>16</sup> See page 313 for the computation of these scores.

## RADIO AND POPULAR MUSIC \*

by John Gray Peatman

### RADIO TIME GIVEN TO PROGRAMS OF POPULAR MUSIC

#### *Nationwide Trends*

POPULAR music continues to consume more of radio's broadcasting time than any other one type of program.

According to the latest national survey of the Federal Communications Commission, made for one week in March 1938, a total of 62,000 hours of programs was presented to the American public. Of this total, slightly more than one-half (52 per cent) of all broadcasting time, sustaining and commercial, was given over to music. This figure is for all kinds of music. For popular music alone, the total was about 40 per cent.

More recent national figures refer to all types of music only. In August 1942, the Federal Communications Commission made a national survey "Concerning Phonograph Records, Electrical Transcriptions, and Musicians" by means of a questionnaire sent to the 890 broadcasting stations of the continental United States. The per cent of radio time devoted to music (all types) was asked for, taking as a sample the week of April 5th through 11th, 1942. In September, the results received from 796 stations were made available.<sup>1</sup> Compared to the findings of 1938, the more recent figures show a slight downward

\* The popular music industry undergoes changes as it develops. A census like the present one by Dr. Peatman gives a picture of its activities at one specific time. It will be kept current in future publications.

<sup>1</sup> Presented by Chairman Fly at the hearing of the Interstate Commerce Subcommittee concerning the American Federation of Musicians' ban on music recordings. See *Broadcasting Magazine*, September 21, 1942.

trend in the proportion of musical programs. A total of 48.2 per cent of all radio time was given over to all-music programs of any kind in the week studied in 1942. In an additional 13.8 per cent of the total radio time, music provided an integral part of the program, such as, for instance, in the Jack Benny show. And, in 14.3 per cent of the time, music was used incidentally, such as in theme songs, as an interlude or background. No breakdown, however, is available from this survey for popular as compared to other types of music programs.

### *Music over the Red and Blue Networks*

More complete trend data on radio time spent for music programs, and specifically for programs of popular music, can be obtained from the yearly surveys of the National Broadcasting Company. They are based on 12 sample weeks and cover both the commercial and sustaining music programs made available to the Red and Blue Network stations.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE I.—TRENDS IN MUSIC PROGRAMS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE RED AND BLUE NETWORK STATIONS—1932 THROUGH 1941

| Year       | Proportion of music programs (all types)<br>% | Proportion of popular music among all music programs<br>% |
|------------|---|---|
| 1932 ..... | 63.0  | ... <sup>a</sup>  |
| 1933 ..... | 67.3  | 61.2  |
| 1934 ..... | 67.7  | 67.0  |
| 1935 ..... | 63.3  | 69.0  |
| 1936 ..... | 63.0  | 66.3  |
| 1937 ..... | 59.7  | 68.4  |
| 1938 ..... | 58.2  | 72.2  |
| 1939 ..... | 57.2  | 75.3  |
| 1940 ..... | 52.3  | 76.4  |
| 1941 ..... | 46.5  | 75.0  |

<sup>a</sup> Data for 1932 not broken down for popular music.

<sup>2</sup> Data for 1932 to 1939 from "Trends in Radio Programs" by Kenneth Bartlett, *The Annals*, January 1941. Data for 1940 and 1941 through the courtesy of Mr. Barry Rumple, Research Manager, National Broadcasting Company.

As can be seen from Table 1, these network data confirm the slight downward trend for music programs of all types as it was found in the nation-wide surveys. While there were 67.3 per cent music programs on the Blue and Red stations in 1933, the proportion of music programs was only 46.5 per cent of all programs for 1941.<sup>3</sup> However, the proportion of popular music within all types of music programs has fairly steadily increased since 1933. While popular music made up about two-thirds of all music programs in 1934, it amounted to 76.4 per cent in 1940 and to 75.0 per cent in 1941.

It is not known at the time this is being written, to what extent the American Federation of Musicians' ban on recordings will affect the nation-wide situation altogether. Chairman Fly mentioned at the September 18th hearing before the Senate Committee that 55.9 per cent of the average station's music time is recorded music. On the other hand, it also remains to be seen how the extension of broadcasting services to a twenty-four-hour basis over many stations will affect the total time given over to popular music.

#### *Popular Music Broadcast in New York City*

For New York City, detailed and recent information about trends in the broadcasting of popular music was compiled from the listeners' daily radio logs of the Office of Research—Radio Division, and of the Accurate Reporting Service.<sup>4</sup>

Data of four sample weeks, namely, the second full week

<sup>3</sup> The 1941 figures were brought together from separate tabulations made for the Red and the Blue Networks. The figures for the two networks were rather similar. The total proportion of music programs in 1941 was 48.3 per cent for the Red and 44.8 per cent for the Blue Network. The proportion of popular to other types of music was 76.3 per cent for the Red and 73.7 per cent for the Blue Network.

<sup>4</sup> Logs of the Accurate Reporting Service were used for the *network* station samples of April and July 1942; logs of the Office of Research—Radio Division were used for all of the other samples.

of November 1941,<sup>5</sup> and of January, April, and July of 1942 were used. Tabulations were made for quarter-hour periods covering for each day of the sample weeks a 17-hour stretch on the network stations<sup>6</sup> (from 8 A.M. to 1 A.M.) and an 8-hour stretch on three independent stations<sup>7</sup> (from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M.). The program information tabulated is based on what was *heard* and as reported in the listeners' logs cited. They are of sufficient detail in program content to permit distinctions within quarter-hour periods, such as five minutes of news and ten minutes of popular music. Also distinctions between different kinds of music were possible so that popular music could be segregated from classical, semi-classical, religious, hill-billy, and old-time music.

As the data were obtained from sample weeks in different seasons, they no doubt provide satisfactory estimates of yearly averages for each day of the week and for the week as a whole. Trends in the amount of time given to popular music at different periods of the day are also indicated in Figures 1 and 2.

In New York City, about one-third (32.5 per cent) of the daily broadcasting time (between 8 A.M. and 1 A.M.) of the four network stations is given over to popular music. More than half (53.9 per cent) of the broadcasting time during the evening hours, 5 P.M. to 1 A.M., on the three independent stations studied is made up of programs of popular music. Network stations broadcast a greater amount of music during the evening hours than during the day; however, it is usually not

<sup>5</sup> November was chosen rather than October because ASCAP music did not return to the networks until late in October. None of the weeks chosen contained a holiday which might have affected the usual program routine.

<sup>6</sup> WEAJ (NBC), WABC (CBS), WJZ (BLUE) and WOR (MBS).

<sup>7</sup> The stations were: WMCA, WHN and WNEW. In the sample week of November 1941, WNEW did not have a full broadcasting period between 5 P.M. and 1 A.M. on Sunday and Monday. This has been taken into account in the tabulations. Logs were not available for day-time performances over these independent stations.

until after 11 P.M. that these stations broadcast popular music as extensively as do the independent stations. After 11 P.M. popular music broadcasts consume about two-thirds of the network stations' time, as compared with one-third of their time given over to such programs between 6 and 11 P.M. (See Appendix H, Table 1). The independent stations, on the other hand, broadcast popular music—mainly recordings—about half the time throughout the evening hours (see Appendix H, Table 2).

### *Daily Trends on Network Stations*

Figure 1 gives the trend in the proportion of time for popular music broadcasts from hour to hour during the seventeen hours of the radio day on the four network stations. The trends of each of the five week days present a rather similar picture for each of the four weeks sampled.<sup>8</sup> They are brought together for a combined five-day week in Figure 1-A.

After 30 to 40 per cent of popular music broadcasts in the morning between 8 and 10 A.M., the proportion continues to fall off until the noon hour, maintaining a low of between 10 and 20 per cent until 3 P.M. After 3 o'clock a rise occurs, with the high point for the afternoon being between 4 and 5 (popular music averaging nearly 35 per cent of the time during this hour). Following a drop between 5 and 6 o'clock (except for July 1942), there is a gradual increase up to 10 P.M. and then a steep rise up through 1 A.M. to an average of about 80 per cent for this last hour of the radio day.

On Saturdays (see Figure 1-B) there is a marked increase in popular music during the morning hour between 10 and 11 A.M. (an average of 60 per cent), a marked decrease around

<sup>8</sup> Separate graphs for each of the five week days were prepared but are adequately summarized by Figure 1-A because of the small variation in trend from day to day. Cf. also the week day data of Appendix H, Table 1.

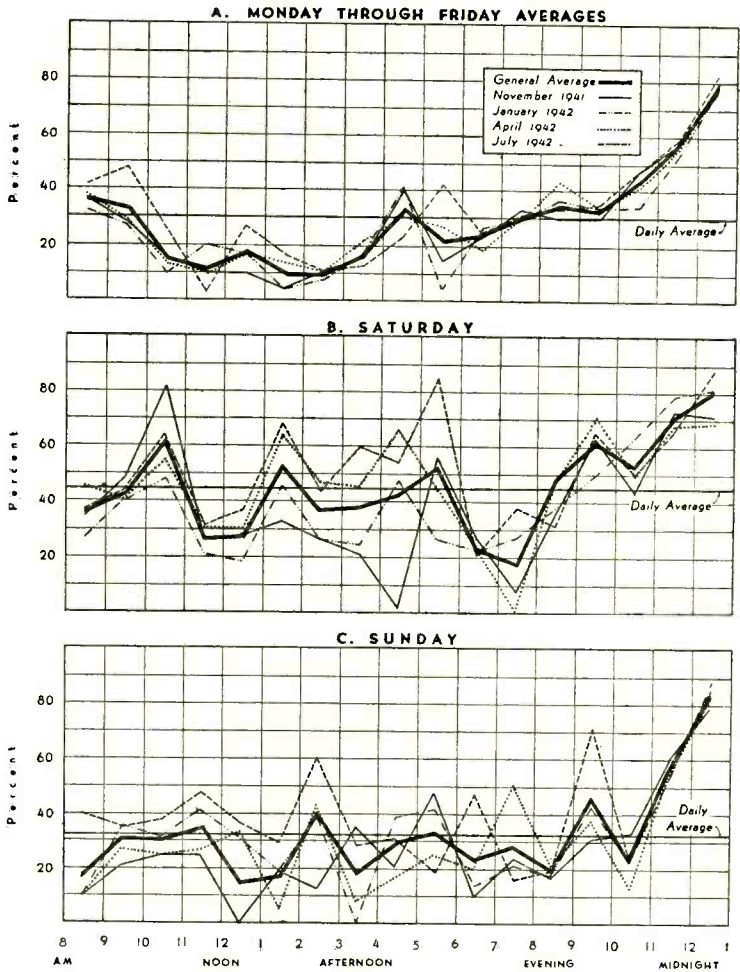


FIG. I.—PER CENT OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCAST OVER NEW YORK NETWORK STATIONS WEAF, WABC, WJZ, AND WOR—8:00 A.M. TO 1:00 A.M.



noon and a sharp rise again between 1 and 2 in the early afternoon. The rest of the afternoon manifests mixed trends for the four sample weeks. The sharp drop to practically no popular music between 4 and 5 for the November week is due to the football game broadcasts. The high point for the late afternoon is from 5 to 6; in July 1942, the proportion of popular music reached 85 per cent for this period. Between 6 and 8 P.M. the average drops to about 20 per cent. After 8 o'clock in the evening the trend is generally in the direction of an increasing use of popular music. From 9 to 10 P.M. the average is more than 60 per cent; it drops to 50 per cent between 10 and 11, and then rises to between 70 and 80 per cent up to 1 A.M.

On Sundays (see Figure 1-C) the trends of the four sample weeks are mixed, but the general trend for the year gives a rise to about 40 per cent from 2 to 3 P.M. and to 45 per cent from 9 to 10 P.M. After a drop to 25 per cent between 10 and 11 at night, there is a sharp increase, uniform for each of the four sample weeks, with the proportion rising to about 80 per cent between midnight and 1 A.M.

Thus, we see that over the network stations all seven days of the week wind up the radio day at 1 A.M. with about 80 per cent of popular music programs during the hour after midnight. Radio sets-in-use are at their lowest at this time of the seventeen-hour stretch (cf. Figures 4, 5 and 6) and popular music stands out as radio's favorite program material to carry on while most people are asleep. Interestingly enough, this is the heyday of many name bands, and "song pluggers" vie with each other to get a broadcast of at least a chorus of their new tunes.

*Evening Trends on Independent Stations*

The popular music programs of the three New York independent stations, WMCA, WHN and WNEW, logged for an eight-hour stretch in the evening from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M., give the daily trends presented in Figure 2.

Unlike the evening hours on network stations, the five week days and Saturday evenings on the independents are given over to popular music more than half of the time. But even at this low point, the proportion is about 35 per cent. Recordings of popular songs, in contrast to the live music of network stations, are the main source of the independents' music material. Striking is the fact that the peak of popular music on Saturday evenings is between 8 and 10 o'clock (consuming about 80 per cent of the time) rather than after 11 o'clock, as in the case of the network stations. Furthermore, Saturday evenings on the independents do not stand out in such sharp contrast with the week day evenings. The average for Saturday evening is 59.0 per cent. Monday is practically the same with 58.6 per cent, and the Monday through Friday average is 54.3 per cent. The lowest evening is that of Sunday; however, the average drops only to 45.9 per cent.

The general trend for Sunday evenings (Figure 2-C) is V-shaped, with the low point of 25 per cent of popular music between 8 and 9 P.M. From 5 to 6 in the early evening, and from midnight to 1 A.M., the general averages are about 60 per cent, but the trends between these hours for the four sample Sundays are noticeably mixed.

*Music Other Than Popular Music on New York Network Stations*

Whatever the variations in the day-to-day proportions of popular music programs, they are small compared to those

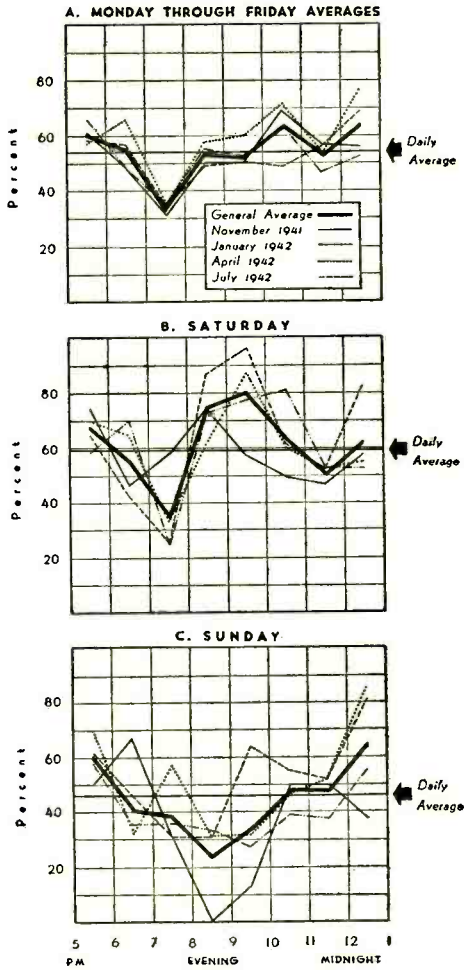


FIG. 2.—PER CENT OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCAST OVER THREE NEW YORK INDEPENDENT STATIONS WMCA, WHN, WNEW—5:00 P.M. TO 1:00 A.M.

found for other types of music. The latter category comprises classical, semi-classical, religious, hillbilly and old-time music. On the four Sundays studied, 21.6 per cent of all time between 8 A.M. and 1 A.M. on the four New York network stations was given to these other types of music, as against only 5.4 per cent on week days from Monday through Friday, and 9.8 per cent on Saturdays.

Thus, on week days the ratio of popular music to other types of music broadcast over the New York network stations is about six to one. On Saturdays, popular music is about four and a half times as frequent as other types of music, while on Sundays the ratio is only three to two. For the total week, the ratio of popular music programs to other types of music on the network stations is about four to one, namely, 32.4 per cent as against 8.3 per cent.

#### EXTENT OF LISTENING TO POPULAR MUSIC

##### *The Listening Audience of One City—New York*

Between 7 A.M. and midnight, nearly one-third of the total listening time in homes of Greater New York is given to programs of popular music. This was found in a "staggered" sample week taken for the first four months of 1942.<sup>9</sup> An average of 6.4 per cent of all radio sets in homes was tuned to popular music programs during this 17-hour period. As indicated, this

<sup>9</sup> The dates chosen were Monday, January 12; Tuesday, March 3; Wednesday, February 11; Thursday, April 9; Friday, March 13; Saturday, January 10; and Sunday, April 12. The data used were made available through the cooperation of Dr. Roslow of The Pulse of New York, Inc. They were obtained from a carefully selected sample of residents of Greater New York interviewed by the roster method. The original tabulations were prepared by Mr. Robert Glaser of the University of Indiana in partial fulfillment of a Research Project for Honors in Psychology under the direction of the writer at The City College of New York.

is about one-third of the average proportion of radio homes with sets-in-use.

It is to be expected that the extent of listening to popular music programs will depend in part upon the availability of such programs. For the period studied, popular music was available always on at least one of the ten New York<sup>10</sup> stations for which listening data were obtained. An average of 3.8 out of the ten stations carried programs of popular music each quarter-hour period. The correlation between availability of popular music programs and extent of listening to popular music programs is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—COMPARISON OF STATION AVAILABILITY AND PROPORTION OF RADIO HOMES TUNED TO POPULAR MUSIC ON DAYS OF A STAGGERED SAMPLE WEEK

| <i>Day of week</i>  | <i>Average station availability of popular music</i> |             | <i>Proportion of radio homes listening to popular music</i> |             |
|---------------------|--|-------------|---|-------------|
|                     | <i>Per cent</i>                                      | <i>Rank</i> | <i>Per cent</i>   | <i>Rank</i> |
| Monday . . . . .    | 3.6  | 6           | 5.1   | 7           |
| Tuesday . . . . .   | 3.7  | 5           | 6.5   | 2.5         |
| Wednesday . . . . . | 3.9  | 3           | 6.1   | 5           |
| Thursday . . . . .  | 4.0  | 2           | 6.4   | 4           |
| Friday . . . . .    | 3.8  | 4           | 6.5   | 2.5         |
| Saturday . . . . .  | 4.7  | 1           | 8.7   | 1           |
| Sunday . . . . .    | 3.1  | 7           | 5.8   | 6           |

Two sets of data are ranked in this table. First, the days of the week are ranked according to the extent of station availability of programs of popular music. Second, a ranking is given of the days of the sample week according to the average proportion of radio homes listening to popular music programs. The rank order correlation between these two sets of data is .66, indicating a fair degree of relationship between station availability and extent of listening. However, there are also marked exceptions in both directions. At times the station avail-

<sup>10</sup> The stations were: WABC, WEAf, WHN, WINS, WJZ, WMCA, WNEW, WOR, WOV, WQXR.

ability is high but the proportion of radio sets tuned to popular music is low, the listeners selecting other types of programs. At other times, there is a high proportion of radio sets tuned to popular music despite a low station availability, marking the appeal of particular music programs.

The relation between station availability and extent of listening can be studied in greater detail from Figures 3, 4 and 5. These graphs show the daily trends of New York listening audiences to popular music programs,<sup>11</sup> by quarter-hour periods, for Wednesday,<sup>12</sup> Saturday and Sunday. In each figure, the top curve shows the proportion of *listeners* with radios tuned in to popular music. Programs which draw a majority of the popular music audience are specified; otherwise "general availability" is marked. The middle curves show the proportion of all radio homes with radio sets-in-use and the proportion of radio homes with sets tuned to popular music programs. The bottom chart shows the *number* of programs of popular music available at each time period.

On the Wednesday studied (see Figure 3) station availability was low between 8 and 9 P.M., there being only two or three popular music programs available within this time period. There were less than 5 per cent of radio homes with sets tuned to popular music, accounting for less than 10 per cent of all listeners at the time. This small proportion of such listeners is accompanied by a low availability of popular music but chiefly resulted from the competition of other types of programs. An hour later, between 9 and 10 P.M., station availa-

<sup>11</sup> Programs broadcasting popular music more than half of the time per fifteen-minute period were included in the tabulation of popular music programs. Classical, semi-classical, religious and foreign music programs (except for Latin-American programs of rhumbas, etc.) were excluded.

<sup>12</sup> Because of space requirements, a trend graph for only three week days is presented. Graphs for the other week days are on file with the writer at the Office of Research—Radio Division.

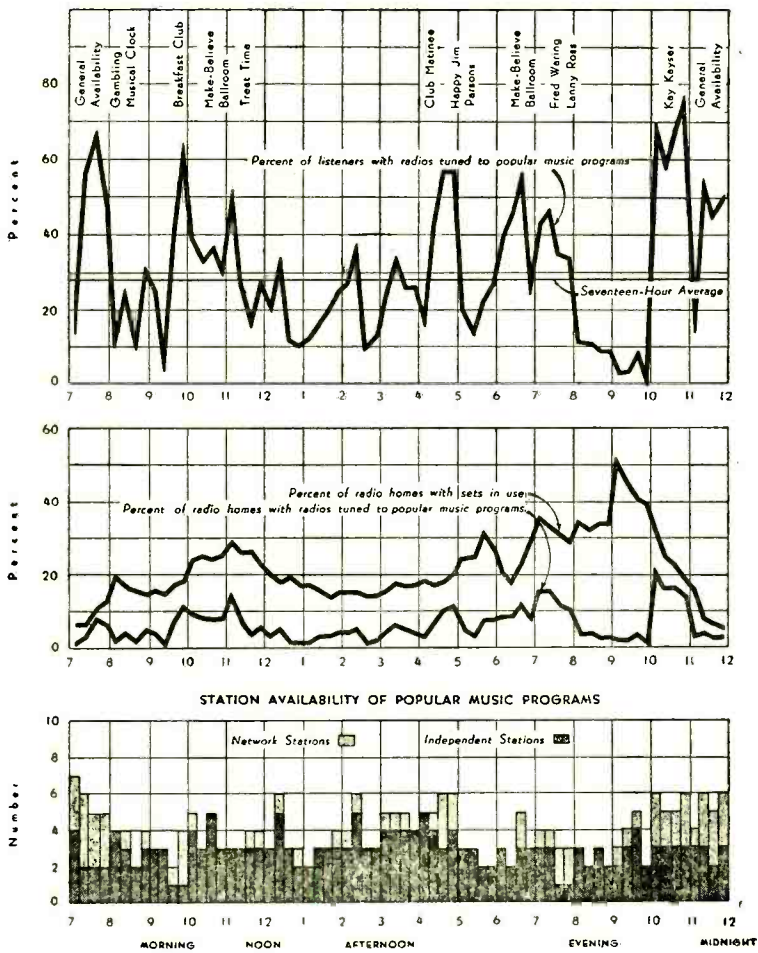


FIG. 3.—NEW YORK LISTENING AUDIENCES TO POPULAR MUSIC PROGRAMS  
 WEDNESDAY 7:00 A.M. TO MIDNIGHT

bility of popular music is somewhat higher, varying between 2 and 5 programs per quarter-hour period. However, radio homes with sets tuned to popular music and the proportion of popular music *listeners* are still less than the hour before. On the other hand, the total sets-in-use curve is up to between 40 and 50 per cent as against less than 35 per cent the hour before. This illustrates the continued competitive pull of other types of programs despite the increased availability of popular music programs. Still an hour later, with the advent of the Kay Kyser program, the picture has changed completely. If we take into account all radio homes, whether or not the sets are in use, the proportion tuned in to popular music has risen from about 3 per cent for the preceding hour to between 15 and 20 per cent. Of those homes in which sets are actually in use, the proportion of listeners to popular music has risen from about 10 per cent the preceding hour to between 60 and 70 per cent. The total of all sets-in-use, however, is down from a peak of 50 per cent the hour before to about 25 per cent. At this time, then, the majority of the listening audience is tuned to popular music. And although there are five or six programs of popular music available throughout this period, a great proportion of the popular music audience is nevertheless listening to one particular program, namely, the Kay Kyser program.

A comparison of Figures 3, 4 and 5 also permits a study of the peaks in listening for different days of the week and for different periods within each day.<sup>13</sup>

Saturday is the big day for listening to popular music with a daily average of over 40 per cent of New York listeners hearings programs of that type; it is also the day with the highest station availability for programs of popular music. Sunday and

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix H, Table 3 for a table summarizing the results.



the week days from Monday through Friday are lower in proportion of listeners as well as station availability for programs

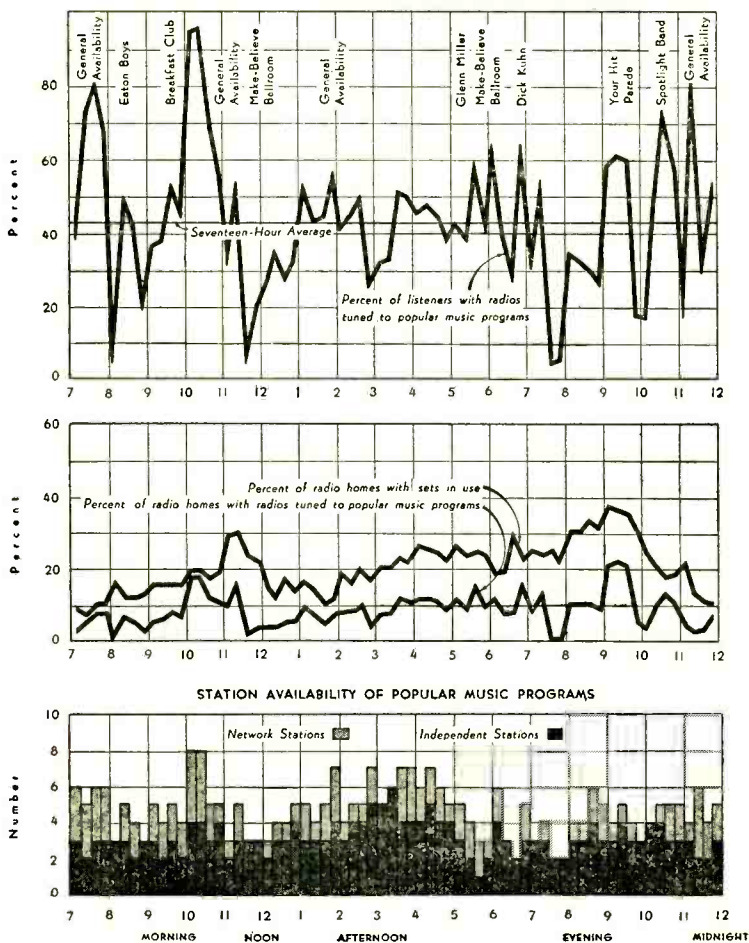


FIG. 4.—NEW YORK LISTENING AUDIENCES TO POPULAR MUSIC PROGRAMS  
SATURDAY 7:00 A.M. TO MIDNIGHT

of this type. Variations in extent of listening between these days are slight, the average for most of them being close to 30 per cent.

tions of the South. They may be largely due to two factors. First, the proportion of rural homes is greater in the South than in other sections of the country. Secondly, there is a smaller proportion of radio homes in the South.<sup>19</sup>

### *Educational Differences*

Whether listeners have had some high school or some college education evidently makes little difference in their liking of popular music programs. There is, however, a considerable difference in preferences as well as in listening figures between these two educational groups and those who *never went to high school*. In the Iowa 1942 survey, about 50 per cent of the college and high school educational groups mention popular music as one of five best-liked program types; only 27 per cent did so among people with less than a high school education. According to the Kansas 1942 survey, *Your Hit Parade* is usually heard by about 70 per cent of the people with some college or high school education as against 42 per cent among people with no high school education. The national survey data of Roper reveals a similar proportionate difference in listening to this program and to Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra. In evaluating these differences between the college-high school and no-high school educational groups, it should be kept in mind, however, that the average age of the latter group is considerably greater than that of the first two groups. We have already noted the lessened interest of older age groups in popular music; hence, age differences rather than educational differences no doubt comprise the more relevant factors.

<sup>19</sup> According to the 1940 census, in six of the southern states there are less than 60 per cent radio homes, with considerably lower proportions in the rural areas. On the other hand, in 16 states of the North, New England and Pacific-Mountain regions, there are more than 90 per cent radio homes.

the morning, 1 and 3 in the afternoon, 5 and 5:30 in the late afternoon, and after 11 at night. What happens week day evenings between 8 and 11 very much depends on each evening's schedule of commercial programs on the network stations. We have pointed out already the low of sets-in-use tuned to popular music on the Wednesday studied, particularly between 9 and 10 P.M., and the following peak due largely to the Kay Kyser program. Daily music programs with marked pulling power and mainly responsible for regular peaks in listening are the Make Believe Ballroom (both morning and evening), the Breakfast Club, Club Matinee, Fred Waring and Lanny Ross.

The *Sunday peaks* are from 10:30 to 11:30 in the morning, from 5:30 to 6 in the afternoon, and from 7:30 to 8 in the evening. The latter peak is mainly accounted for by the Fitch Bandwagon program, making this time the peak of the day for sets-in-use tuned to popular music programs. Lows for sets-in-use tuned to popular music on Sunday occur in the morning up to 10:30, around noon, in the afternoon from 3 to 3:30, also from 6 to 6:30, from 8 to 9 P.M. and generally after 10:30 at night.

On *Saturday* about 95 per cent of all radio sets-in-use are tuned in to popular music between 10 and 10:30 in the morning. The Make Believe Ballroom attracts a large majority of this audience despite availability of popular music programs on 8 of the 10 stations covered in the survey. Again in the evening Your Hit Parade plays the major role in the sets-in-use rating of more than 20 per cent and the listening audience rating of about 60 per cent. The Make Believe Ballroom and Glenn Miller at 5:30, the Rhythmaires at 6 P.M. and Dick Kuhn at 6:45 also attract a major share of audiences listening to popular music and pull up the Saturday rating at these

times. And at 10:30 P.M. Spotlight Bands do most in building up a sets-in-use rating of 13 per cent for popular music, with about 70 per cent of the listening audience.<sup>14</sup>

*The Listening Audience of One Popular Music Program—  
“Your Hit Parade”*

A national picture of listening to a favorite popular music broadcast is provided by data for the Lucky Strike Hit Parade. On the basis of a survey made in January 1940, by Elmo Roper for the Columbia Broadcasting System, more than 46 million men and women were estimated to listen to this program an average of 2.9 times per month.<sup>15</sup> This figure represents slightly more than half of all adults in the United States and does not include boys and girls under 18 years of age.<sup>16</sup>

A picture of the continuing popularity of Your Hit Parade can be gained from the regular Hooper surveys.<sup>17</sup> For every month of a three-year period from July 1939 through June 1942 the Hooper Hit Parade rating was higher than the average rating of sponsored network programs during the evening period up to 10:30 P.M. (See Appendix H, Table 4.) The proportion of Hit Parade listeners during the first six months of 1942 was close to 50 per cent of all sets-in-use at the broadcast period.

<sup>14</sup> For a summary breakdown of listening to programs of popular music per day of the week and for different time periods within each day, see Appendix H, Table 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Roper Counts Customers*, CBS, 1941.

<sup>16</sup> More recent surveys of two states, Iowa and Kansas, 1942, reveal for Iowa that 38 per cent of men and women usually listen to Your Hit Parade, and for Kansas, that 64 per cent usually listen. This difference between the two states is perhaps mainly due to the better broadcasting conditions of CBS in Kansas, as compared to Iowa. (The Summers-Whan Surveys.)

<sup>17</sup> Data through the courtesy of C. E. Hooper, Inc.

## WHO ARE THE LISTENERS TO POPULAR MUSIC?

All kinds of people listen at one time or another to popular music. However, some kinds of people more than others show definite preferences for this type of program. The following is a brief summary of the facts available from several sources.<sup>18</sup>

*Age Differences*

Differences in preference for radio programs of popular music are most striking for people of different age groups. The appeal of popular music is considerably greater for *young* people of both sexes than for the older ones.

The 1942 Iowa Radio Audience Survey and the 1941 Kansas Radio Audience Survey established the proportion of people in these two states who mentioned popular music as one of five best-liked types of programs, choosing from a list of 16 program types. It was found in both surveys that about four times as many people in the teen-age group preferred popular music as compared to those over 50 years of age; up to the age of 35, a majority of both men and women picked popular music as one of their five favorite types of programs.

Roper's nation-wide data on actual listening to two popular music programs confirms the age trends found in the Iowa and Kansas surveys dealing with program preferences. Among people between 18 and 40 years of age, a greater proportion listened to *Your Hit Parade* and *Paul Whiteman and His*

<sup>18</sup> The surveys are: 1. The 1942 Iowa Radio Audience Survey by Dr. F. L. Whan, University of Wichita; through courtesy of Mr. J. O. Maland, Vice-President, WHO, Des Moines. 2. The 1941 and 1942 Kansas Radio Audience Surveys, by Dr. H. B. Summers and Dr. F. L. Whan; through courtesy of Dr. Summers, Public Service Manager of Blue Network Co. 3. A national survey by Elmo Roper for the Columbia Broadcasting System; data on *Your Hit Parade* and *Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra* through the courtesy of Dr. Frank N. Stanton, Vice-President, Columbia Broadcasting System.

Orchestra than among people over 40 years of age, the differences in the extent of listening between the two age groups being in the ratio of about four to three.

### *Sex Differences*

Sex differences in the appeal of popular music programs are *slight* and not consistent. The overall picture is that *women* generally prefer popular music programs slightly more often than men. Iowa and Kansas women listed popular music as one of five favorites slightly more often than men in all age brackets except one; however, compared to other types of programs, popular music ranked *third* for men and *fourth* for women. A study of sex trends in preferences for popular music programs in different years from 1939 to 1942, also reveals that Iowa women mentioned popular music as one of five best-liked program types slightly more often than men in each of these years except 1941.

An analysis of the 1940 nation-wide listening figures to Your Hit Parade shows that it was listened to at least once a month by 48.8 per cent men and 51.6 per cent women. On the other hand, for Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra, the survey figures were 39.6 per cent men listeners and 37.1 per cent women listeners.

### *Urban-Rural Differences*

A third comparison can be made according to type of residence. Popular music programs are *generally* more preferred by *urban* than by rural groups. Thus, it was found in the Iowa survey of 1942 that in towns over 2,500 population 52.6 per cent of the men listed popular music as a favorite as against 38.8 per cent in villages under 2,500 population, and against 33.7 per cent of men living on farms. The same trend holds

true for the women covered in this survey and also for people of both sexes covered in the Kansas survey for 1941. However, if one studies the actual listening to specific popular music programs in this area, one finds that these urban-rural differences are not always consistent. Listening figures for Your Hit Parade and for Kraft Music Hall steadily decrease from large to small towns and farms. On the other hand, programs like Manhattan Merry-Go-Round and Abe Lyman's Waltz Time do not show any such decrease in trend.

Nationwide figures on listening at least once a month to Your Hit Parade and to Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra also show a difference between urban and rural people: for these two programs the proportion of listeners among urban people was 55.7 and 43.3 per cent, as against 42.7 and 31.6 per cent for the rural group (in villages under 2,500 population and on farms); and according to the 1942 Kansas study, more than 70 per cent of urban men and women indicated they usually listen to Your Hit Parade, as compared to about 64 per cent of men and women in villages, and 54 per cent on farms.

### *Regional Differences*

This suggests the question whether there are any regional differences in the liking of popular music programs. Listening figures for Your Hit Parade and Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra by sections of the country show that both programs draw relatively the greatest proportion of listeners in the Western, Northern and Middle Atlantic regions and the *least* in the *Southern* regions. The range in variation is considerable: from 69.9 per cent (Mountain region) to 38.6 per cent (South Atlantic) for Your Hit Parade, and from 55.1 per cent (Mountain) to 31.5 per cent (South Atlantic) for Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra. The low listening figures hold true for all sec-

tions of the South. They may be largely due to two factors. First, the proportion of rural homes is greater in the South than in other sections of the country. Secondly, there is a smaller proportion of radio homes in the South.<sup>19</sup>

### *Educational Differences*

Whether listeners have had some high school or some college education evidently makes little difference in their liking of popular music programs. There is, however, a considerable difference in preferences as well as in listening figures between these two educational groups and those who *never went to high school*. In the Iowa 1942 survey, about 50 per cent of the college and high school educational groups mention popular music as one of five best-liked program types; only 27 per cent did so among people with less than a high school education. According to the Kansas 1942 survey, *Your Hit Parade* is usually heard by about 70 per cent of the people with some college or high school education as against 42 per cent among people with no high school education. The national survey data of Roper reveals a similar proportionate difference in listening to this program and to Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra. In evaluating these differences between the college-high school and no-high school educational groups, it should be kept in mind, however, that the average age of the latter group is considerably greater than that of the first two groups. We have already noted the lessened interest of older age groups in popular music; hence, age differences rather than educational differences no doubt comprise the more relevant factors.

<sup>19</sup> According to the 1940 census, in six of the southern states there are less than 60 per cent radio homes, with considerably lower proportions in the rural areas. On the other hand, in 16 states of the North, New England and Pacific-Mountain regions, there are more than 90 per cent radio homes.



*Income Differences*

As far as economic differences go, breakdowns of listening figures to the two popular music programs studied show that a somewhat greater proportion of middle-class economic groups listen to these two programs than do the "prosperous" and "poor" economic groups. However, both these programs have a very broad appeal cutting across all income groups. Nationwide variations in the percentage of listeners to Your Hit Parade range from 41.8 per cent of the lowest and 45.4 per cent of the highest income groups to 54.5 per cent of the middle class. And 31.4 per cent of the highest and 34.0 per cent of the lowest income groups listen to Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra, whereas 40.7 per cent of the middle income group were found to do so.

*Preferences for Other Types of Music Programs*

The data of the 1942 Iowa survey also allow a study of the relative preference for programs of popular music as against other types of music programs. Of the five types of music programs (classical, popular, band, old-time, religious music) on which preferences were ascertained, popular music stands out as the most preferred. This was the case for both sex groups, for all age groups except the oldest (51 to 75 years), for the urban and small town people (but not for the rural) and for people with some college or high school education (but not for the grade school group).

Generally, classical music programs were least preferred, although there were a few exceptions such as a preference for these programs by about 20 per cent of men and 36 per cent of women with some college education. Preferences for band music showed the least variation from group to group, with

about 23 per cent of the respondents indicating their liking for such music programs. Preference for old-time and religious music was most characteristic of the rural groups, of the oldest age group and of those with only a grade school education.

### HOW VARIED ARE BROADCASTS OF POPULAR MUSIC?

#### *The Overall Picture*

Variety, rather than the eternal repetition of only a few songs, is characteristic of popular music broadcasts heard in New York City over network and independent stations.

This was found by a study of the different songs broadcast between 5 P.M. and 1 A.M. over New York stations. The data were obtained from the daily radio logs of the Office of Research—Radio Division and of the Accurate Reporting Service. In September 1941, two sample weeks were studied and again two weeks in July 1942. In the first year, 8 stations were covered, namely, WEAf, WJZ, WABC, WOR, WMCA, WHN, WOV and WNEW.<sup>20</sup> In 1942 the same stations were covered with the exception of WOV which was no longer being logged. (The detailed findings for both years are given in Appendix H, Tables 5 and 5-a.)

The average number of *different* songs broadcast *each evening* of the week between 5 P.M. and 1 A.M. was considerably more than 350 songs for the eight stations logged in 1941. In 1942, when seven stations were covered, the average was

<sup>20</sup> For 1941, WEAf, WJZ and WABC were grouped together and the other five stations taken as a separate group. This division was made because the daily logs of the Office of Research—Radio Division published for the use of the music industry were at that time differentiated into two such groups. In 1942, WOR was included with the other three network stations in the logs of the Accurate Reporting Service.

close to 300. And the average number of different songs *per station* each evening was around 45 in each year (47.4 in 1941 and 42.1 in 1942).

In contrast to the preceding averages for *different* songs broadcast, the *total* number of all song performances (including duplications) averaged about 500 per evening for the eight stations in 1941 and about 400 per evening for the seven stations studied in 1942. And the total number of all song performances *per station* each evening averaged about 60 in both years (64.7 in 1941 and 57.9 in 1942).

If it were the case that radio broadcasting of popular music consisted mainly of an endless repetition of the same songs, the ratio of total performances to the total number of different titles played should be very high. It is possible to estimate what such a ratio would be. Under a station three-hour rule, which prevents repetition of the same song within three hours, one song could be played over the same station a maximum of three times between 5 in the afternoon and 1 A.M. For eight stations, the maximum ratio of total performances for one song under a three-hour rule would be 24 (or 24 to one); under a two-hour rule, it would be even higher, namely, 32 (32 performances for the one song).

The actual figures are nowhere near these theoretical maxima. In 1942, for instance, the ratio of total performances to the number of different songs played was 1.40 for the four network stations studied and 1.14 for the independent stations. The average for all stations was 1.37, both in 1941 and 1942. This means that, on the average, there were 100 different songs played in every 137 performances.

*The "Plugging" of Current Songs*

Some of the currently "plugged" tunes, of course, received more performances per song than the average ratio of 1.37 for all songs would suggest. In order to get an estimate of the extent of such plugging, two indices were calculated. First, the number of songs which received three or more performances each evening: on an average, 3.3 different songs per station were played three or more times each evening in 1941, and 3.6 songs in 1942. Second, the percentage of those songs played three or more times in terms of the total number of different songs played: in 1941, 6.9 per cent of all different songs played were performed three or more times on the combined eight stations. For 1942, the percentage on seven stations was 8.6.

## THE SELLING POWER OF RADIO: SONG HITS OF THE DAY

*Radio and Song Hits*

Although radio plugging is not as extensive as is sometimes claimed, radio definitely has a tremendous selling power. The year 1941 proved the practical impossibility of a song's becoming a hit unless it has radio exploitation. During the first ten months of that year, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers withheld their music from three major networks. A more controlled, scientific experiment could not have been devised to test the selling power of radio. And as an experiment, such a test would have been financially prohibitive to any group of scientists. Costs ran into the millions.

With ASCAP music banned from the networks and many independent stations, Broadcast Music, Incorporated provided

the songs. Mushroomed into existence by the radio companies, BMI had 704 members by September 1941. It had half a million song titles then, as against only 10,000 a year earlier. Of the hundred million phonograph records sold in the six months preceding September 1941, 30 million were BMI tunes and these constituted two-thirds of all popular music recorded.<sup>21</sup>

Ten months of no ASCAP music on most of the nation's radio stations meant that only BMI publishers had song "hits." A "song hit" is herein defined from the point of view of the music publisher, viz, a tune which sells about 100,000 or more copies of sheet music.<sup>22</sup>

*Variety*, in its thirty-sixth anniversary number of January 7, 1942, listed 15 songs as "best sellers of 1941." All the publishing houses of these best sellers were non-ASCAP firms with the exception of one, namely, Mayfair, publishers of "Shepherd's Serenade." However, this song was originally published by Shepard Music—a non-ASCAP firm—and was taken over by Mayfair in November 1941, after ASCAP music had returned to the networks. The song was broadcast over Your Hit Parade for the first time on November 8th, and enjoyed a run there of thirteen weeks.

Publishers' information on the sheet sales of 20 "hit" songs of 1941 (most of the songs on *Variety's* list and some others) shows that they sold anywhere from 120,000 ("You Walk By") to 461,000 ("Intermezzo") copies (see Appendix H, Table 6). All of the publishers of these 20 songs were non-ASCAP firms. Eight had not been in business prior to 1941. Thus, according to all available information, *no ASCAP firm*

<sup>21</sup> Report by Mr. Carl Haverlin, Station Relations Director of BMI, at a special convention of National Independent Broadcasters in Chicago. See *Broadcasting Magazine*, September 29, 1941.

<sup>22</sup> Some publishers consider the song "hit" class as beginning at 60,000 or 75,000 copies. All no doubt agree that a minimum of 100,000 copies definitely marks a "hit" song.

As indicated in Figure 6-A, the life span chart of songs on the Hit Parade has a bi-modal character. One peak is for songs which were on for only one week,—a total of 11 of the 66 different songs played during the period studied. The other peak is for songs which stayed on thirteen weeks.

It is relevant, however, to compare the life spans of all songs which were on the Hit Parade during the *first five months* of the twelve-month period with those of all songs which were on during the *last five months*. ASCAP music was off most radio stations during the first five, but had returned to the networks during the last five months. This comparison is shown in Figures 6-B and 6-C.<sup>27</sup>

While in the first five months the twenty different songs played on the Hit Parade lasted anywhere from one to 19 weeks with an average span of 11 weeks but with no one time interval being particularly characteristic of the group, the picture is quite different for the last five months. The average life span of songs on the Hit Parade for this period was only 7.5 weeks. The curve, however, was clearly bi-modal with one peak for songs which lasted only one week and another peak for songs lasting thirteen weeks on the Hit Parade. The last five months of the twelve-month period marked a greater competition among publishers. And this, no doubt, accounts partly for the bi-modal differentiation of Figure 6-C. Publishers, through their exploitation activities, were able to obtain sufficient radio performances, sheet and record sales, etc., to make one or two broadcasts on Your Hit Parade. However, as can be seen from Figure 6-C, half of the songs which made the Hit Parade quickly fell by the wayside, insofar as this weekly index of song popularity is concerned.

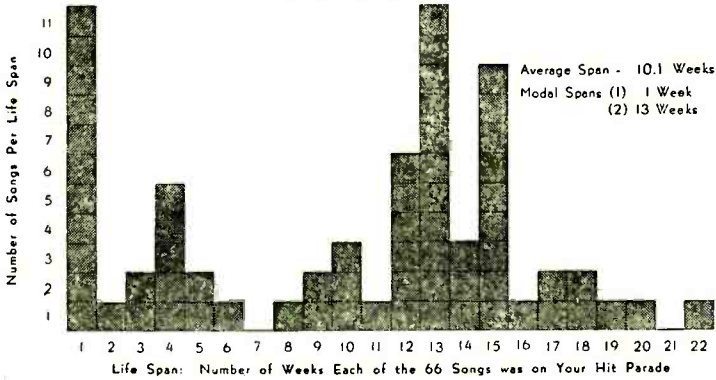
<sup>27</sup> The period between September and October 1941 is not presented separately in these charts because it marked a period of transition.

**THE LIFE SPAN OF ALL SONGS BROADCAST ON YOUR HIT PARADE DURING THE TWELVE MONTHS APRIL 5, 1941 THROUGH MARCH 28, 1942**

**A.**

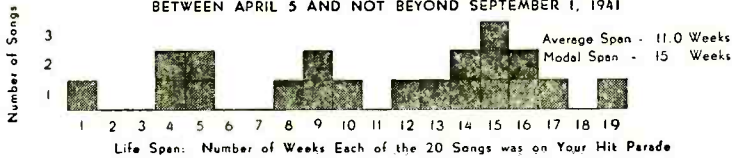
(Sixty-six different songs were broadcast. Eleven of these songs were on the Hit Parade also prior to April 5, 1941, four as early as January 11, 1941. Nine songs continued beyond March 28, 1942, one until June 27, 1942.)

Each box represents one song.



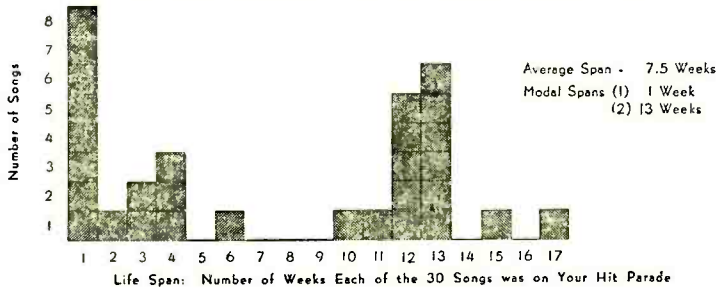
**B.**

**FIRST FIVE MONTHS: TWENTY DIFFERENT SONGS WERE BROADCAST BETWEEN APRIL 5 AND NOT BEYOND SEPTEMBER 1, 1941**



**C.**

**LAST FIVE MONTHS: THIRTY DIFFERENT SONGS WERE BROADCAST NOT BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 1941 AND THROUGH MARCH 28, 1942**



**FIG. 6.—THE LIFE OF A SONG ON YOUR HIT PARADE**

*When the Public Makes a Hit: Sheet Sales and Coin Machine Performances*

Publisher competition accounts for only part of the story of the short-lived songs on Your Hit Parade. The public's failure to take to such songs probably accounts for the rest of the story. When a song publisher says that it is the public which makes a "hit," he is on very solid grounds, provided we distinguish between the "hypoed" song, the pseudo-hit, which does not "take" with the public generally, and the song, whether "hypoed" or not, which does take hold and enjoys great popularity over the airways, in the coin machines, and sells sheets of music and recordings into the hundreds of thousands.

It is our hypothesis that songs broadcast ten or more weeks on Your Hit Parade are for the most part those songs which have made a hit with the public. And the public has in turn made them "hits" by buying sheet music, recordings, and putting nickels into the coin machines. What support, then, does an actual analysis of sheet sales and coin machine performances of such songs give to this hypothesis?

As far as could be ascertained, none of the songs which were on the Hit Parade six weeks or less in the year between April 1941 and 1942, were in the publisher's "hit" class, that is, none sold as many as 90,000 or 100,000 sheets in the United States and Canada. On the other hand, all but five of 36 songs which were on the Hit Parade more than ten weeks in that year, were "hits" in terms of net sheet sales. Three of the five songs which did not quite reach the "hit" class sold more than 75,000 ("High on a Windy Hill," "Perfidia," "Do I Worry"). This can be seen from the first four columns of Table 3, which presents the sheet sales of all songs but five which were on the Hit Parade for ten weeks or more. Thus,



song "hits" from the *publisher's* point of view are *usually* on the Hit Parade *ten weeks* or more.<sup>28</sup> And since it is the public which buys the music, these are the songs which made a "hit" with the public. Songs with a shorter life or none at all on the Hit Parade are rarely a song "hit" for either the publisher or the public.

Similar results with respect to the public's interest are found in comparing the life span of these 36 "hit" songs with their *coin machine performances*—where the public pays a nickel to hear a choice of a score of recordings. The fifth column in Table 3 shows for each of the "hit" songs the number of weeks they were included in *Billboard's* weekly listing of "Going Strong Recordings."

Only six of these song "hits" did not appear in *Billboard's* listing of coin machine favorites. The remainder were coin machine favorites for from five to twenty weeks, with an average of 11 weeks. "Chattanooga Choo Choo" was the biggest "hit" on the machines, having been on the "Going Strong" list of *Billboard* for the last eleven weeks of 1941, and the first nine weeks of 1942; incidentally, Glenn Miller's recording of this song sold over one million copies.

It is to be observed, furthermore, that during the period under consideration there were no big "hits" in the coin machines of songs not already included in the list of those songs on Your Hit Parade ten or more weeks. Sheet music is fairly

<sup>28</sup> One definite exception to this rule among songs published in 1941 was "You Are My Sunshine." This "hillbilly" song sold about 235,000 copies of sheet music, but was never on the Hit Parade nor did it appear on *Billboard's* coin machine listing of "Going Strong" or "Coming Up" songs. The song was popular especially in the South and West and used extensively on local stations. It points to the great popularity of a type of American "folk-music" which is somewhat different in melodic and lyric character from the usual "popular" song. One or two current patriotic songs, such as "There Is a Star-spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," may prove to be similar exceptions to the "radio rule."

expensive for the average citizen, and hence sheet sales perhaps do not give as broad a sample of the public's interest in the current "hit" songs as do coin machine performances. It is therefore to the point to note that the public's "hit" songs on the latter also were *generally* the "hit" songs of the day.

Finally, we wish to point out that there is a further very select class of *hit* songs. These are the "big hits." They are the songs which are whistled, hummed and sung by all kinds of people, whether or not they dance, buy sheet music or recordings. As this goes to press, "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" promises to enter this group.

#### *How Quickly They Die*

With but a few exceptions, it is safe to predict that the song "hits" of Table 3 will rarely be heard from again. How quickly they die is indicated by a study of the number of radio performances the 1941 song "hits" received about a year later. (They were no longer available in most coin machines.)

As shown in Table 4, 26 songs which were on the Hit Parade ten or more times between April and October 1941 received a total of 216 radio performances over the four network and three independent stations in New York for the two months of June and July 1942. The median number of performances per song over all seven stations in two months was 3. This may be compared with performances of "current" hits. A current hit song tends to average 7 to 10 times as many performances *weekly* over the four network stations alone.

Whereas before the machine age of radio and coin machines, a big song hit would have a popularity run of 18 to 24 months, today its life cycle is contracted to 6 or 9 months. The extensive "plugging" of a song is both its birth cry and its death pang. The public hears, catches on, and becomes satiated. Even Bach,

TABLE 3.—“HITS” ON YOUR HIT PARADE AND SHEET SALES FIGURES (ALL SONGS ON YOUR HIT PARADE MORE THAN TEN WEEKS FOR WHICH NET SALES FIGURES WERE MADE AVAILABLE.<sup>d</sup>) APRIL 1, 1941, TO APRIL 1, 1942

| <i>No. weeks on<br/>Hit Parade<br/>broadcasts</i> | <i>Song</i>                              | <i>Publisher</i>                  | <i>Net sheet<br/>sales in<br/>U. S. &amp;<br/>Canada<sup>b</sup></i> | <i>No. weeks<br/>Coin<br/>Machine<br/>Favorite<sup>c</sup></i> |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 22  | Maria Elena                              | Peer International Corp.          | 372,593  | 14   |
| 20  | Intermezzo                               | Edw. Schuberth & Co.              | 461,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 9  |
| 19  | Amapola                                  | E. B. Marks Music Corp.           | 365,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 11   |
| 19  | You and I                                | Meredith Willson                  | 271,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 16   |
| 18  | Things I Love                            | Campbell Music Co.                | 225,000 <sup>d</sup>   | ..   |
| 17  | White Cliffs of Dover                    | Shapiro, Bernstein &<br>Co., Inc. | 600,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 11   |
| 17  | Yours                                    | E. B. Marks Music Corp.           | 345,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 8  |
| 17  | Perfidia                                 | Peer International Corp.          | 77,086   | ..   |
| 16  | I Hear a Rhapsody                        | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 197,479  | 11   |
| 16  | You Walk By                              | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 120,460  | ..   |
| 15  | Elmer's Tune                             | Robbins Music Corp.               | 350,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 15   |
| 15  | I Don't Want to Set<br>the World on Fire | Cherio Music Publishers           | 323,012  | 14   |
| 15  | Tonight We Love                          | Maestro Music Co.                 | 294,862  | 11   |
| 15  | 'Til Reveille                            | Melody Lane Pub., Inc.            | 212,209  | 13   |
| 15  | Daddy                                    | Republic Music Corp.              | 175,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 16   |
| 15  | Frenesi                                  | Peer International Corp.          | 165,097  | 11   |
| 15  | There'll Be Some<br>Changes Made         | E. B. Marks Music Corp.           | 140,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 9  |
| 15  | It All Comes Back<br>to Me Now           | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 64,009   | 7  |
| 14  | My Sister and I                          | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 220,051  | 9  |
| 14  | Jim                                      | Kaycee Music Co.                  | 150,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 11   |
| 14  | Do I Worry                               | Melody Lane Pub., Inc.            | 81,176   | ..   |
| 13  | Chattanooga Choo Choo                    | Robbins Music Corp.               | 250,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 20   |
| 13  | Blues in the Night                       | Remick Music Corp.                | 214,478  | 11   |
| 13  | Tangerine                                | Famous Music Corp.                | 152,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 12   |
| 13  | Do You Care?                             | Campbell Music Co.                | 150,000 <sup>d</sup>   | ..   |
| 13  | This Love of Mine                        | Embassy Music Corp.               | 150,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 10   |
| 13  | Green Eyes                               | Peer International Corp.          | 127,511  | 13   |
| 13  | I Guess I'll Have to<br>Dream the Rest   | Martin Block                      | 95,000 <sup>d</sup>  | 8  |
| 13  | High on a Windy<br>Hill                  | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 76,019   | 7  |
| 12  | Deep in the Heart of<br>Texas            | Melody Lane Pub., Inc.            | 292,990  | 9  |
| 12  | Rose O'Day                               | Tobias & Lewis Music<br>Pub.      | 290,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 9  |
| 12  | I Don't Want to Walk<br>Without You      | Paramount Music Corp.             | 221,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 10   |
| 12  | Hut-Sut Song                             | Schumann Music Co.                | 181,915  | 11   |
| 10  | Shrine of St. Cecilia                    | Braun Music Co.                   | 275,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 7  |
| 10  | Wise Old Owl                             | Broadcast Music, Inc.             | 89,548   | 5  |
| 10  | Time Was                                 | Southern Music Pub. Co.           | 62,848   | ..   |
|   |  | Median                            | 200,000 <sup>d</sup>   | 10 weeks   |

Beethoven and Brahms might experience survival difficulties under similar conditions of exploitation.

### CONCERNING THE LYRICS OF SONG HITS

#### *Lyrics of 1941-1942*

The music of many songs is subjected to different arrangements by various orchestras: the symphonic strains of Kostelanetz or Whiteman, the "Sweetest Music This Side of Heaven" of Lombardo, the novelty arrangements of Kyser or Kaye, the solos of a Tommy Dorsey trombone or a Harry James trumpet, the "hot licks" of Benny Goodman and the hot-jazz artists. But regardless of the particular arrangement of a song—varied to the tastes of different groups—there remains the lyric. The lyric may, or may not, be an integral part of a particular song, but at least it is a rather constant aspect of a song. To date, varied "arrangements" for lyrics have been generally confined to night clubs and to an occasional parody of an extremely popular song over the airways.

It is an over-simplified and misleading statement to claim that popular music develops in novel ways the simple thesis "I love you." True enough, the bulk of "hit" songs are love

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<sup>a</sup> Sales data for "You and I" through the courtesy of the Music Dealers Service; "Things I Love" and "Do You Care?" through the courtesy of Campbell, Loft & Porgie, Inc.; "Hut-Sut Song" through the courtesy of Pacific Music Sales; "Jim" through the courtesy of Leeds Music, Inc.; all other songs of the list through the courtesy of the publishers named. Sales data were not available for the five following songs: "Moonlight Cocktail"—13 weeks on the Hit Parade; "Shepherd's Serenade"—13 weeks; "Everything I Love"—12 weeks; "Somebody Else Is Taking My Place"—12 weeks; "Miss You"—11 weeks.

<sup>b</sup> Sales figures for 1941 songs, through December 31st, 1941; for late 1941 and early 1942 songs, through June and July, 1942.

<sup>c</sup> Measured by the number of weeks the song was included in *The Billboard's* surveys of songs "Going Strong" on the coin machines.

<sup>d</sup> Equals round sales figures.

songs. Of 90 songs which were on the Hit Parade between January 1, 1941, and July 1, 1942, only 8 per cent were songs without sex interest, such as "My Sister and I," "Hi, Neighbor" and "There'll Be Bluebirds Over the White Cliffs of Dover."

TABLE 4.—1942 PERFORMANCES OF TWENTY-SIX SONGS WHICH WERE ON YOUR HIT PARADE TEN OR MORE WEEKS IN 1941.<sup>a</sup>

| Titles   | Four New York<br>network stations |      | Three New York<br>independent stations |      | Totals |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|--|------|--------|
|  | June                              | July | June                                   | July |        |
| Amapola . . . . .                                  | 1                                 | 4    | 1                                      | 3    | 9      |
| Daddy . . . . .                                    | 1                                 | 1    | 2                                      | 0    | 4      |
| Do I Worry . . . . .                               | 1                                 | 0    | 1                                      | 0    | 2      |
| Do You Care . . . . .                              | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| Frenesi . . . . .                                  | 4                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 4      |
| Green Eyes . . . . .                               | 10                                | 3    | 1                                      | 3    | 17     |
| High on a Windy Hill . . . . .                     | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| Hut-Sut Song . . . . .                             | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| I Don't Want to Set the World<br>on Fire . . . . . | 0                                 | 0    | 1                                      | 1    | 2      |
| I Guess I'll Have to Dream the<br>Rest . . . . .   | 0                                 | 0    | 2                                      | 0    | 2      |
| I Hear a Rhapsody . . . . .                        | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| Intermezzo . . . . .                               | 10                                | 7    | 10                                     | 3    | 30     |
| It All Comes Back to Me Now . .                    | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| Jim . . . . .                                      | 0                                 | 0    | 1                                      | 2    | 3      |
| Maria Elena . . . . .                              | 0                                 | 0    | 1                                      | 2    | 3      |
| My Sister and I . . . . .                          | 1                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 1      |
| Perfidia . . . . .                                 | 4                                 | 2    | 3                                      | 4    | 13     |
| There'll Be Some Changes Made .                    | 3                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 3      |
| Things I Love <sup>b</sup> . . . . .               | 25                                | 23   | 1                                      | 1    | 50     |
| 'Til Reveille . . . . .                            | 1                                 | 3    | 1                                      | 0    | 5      |
| Time Was . . . . .                                 | 4                                 | 0    | 3                                      | 4    | 11     |
| Tonight We Love . . . . .                          | 1                                 | 4    | 3                                      | 1    | 9      |
| You and I <sup>b</sup> . . . . .                   | 10                                | 8    | 3                                      | 0    | 21     |
| You Walk By . . . . .                              | 0                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 0      |
| Yours . . . . .                                    | 7                                 | 6    | 6                                      | 7    | 26     |
| Wise Old Owl . . . . .                             | 1                                 | 0    | 0                                      | 0    | 1      |
|  |                                   |      | Median                                 |      | 3      |

<sup>a</sup> Performances for each day of June and July 1942, between 8 A.M. and 1 A.M. for network stations; between 5 P.M. and 1 A.M. for independent stations.

<sup>b</sup> Used regularly as theme songs for particular programs.

Among those hit songs with sex interest which were on the Hit Parade,<sup>29</sup> a psychologically relevant distinction can be made. Nearly half of them were "*happy-in-love ballads*." With variation in the development of the theme they represent a standard approach of the lyricists of Tin Pan Alley. Here belongs, for instance, "I Hear a Rhapsody," singing the meaning of love. It stayed seventeen weeks on the Hit Parade, ten weeks in top position. The same theme was developed in "The Things I Love":

Oh, once I thought that life was just a winter thing  
 My heart was cold;  
 And then you came to me, and like a breath of spring  
 You turned the silver snow to gold.  
 A robin's serenade when day is through,  
 The babbling brook beside our rendezvous,  
 Your sweet voice whisp'ring, "Darling, I love you";  
 These are The Things I Love.

"Sleepy Lagoon," a waltz hit originally published in England in 1930, described the happiness of at least a brief interlude. Among less popular songs of this type were "Oh, Look at Me Now," describing "what our love did to me"; "Walking by the River," describing the joy of a lover's anticipation; and "Let's Dream This One Out," an invitation to love.

About as frequent, however, as songs of the happiness-in-love theme were songs of *frustration-in-love*. These themes are rather varied. The psychological frustration "having loved" is contrasted with that of "not having loved." There are the frustrating circumstances of separation, geographical rather than psychological. "Amapola," a 1924 song and one of the big hits of 1941, was a boy's love song. Having sailed away,

<sup>29</sup> A highly suggestive song like "I Said No" enjoyed some popularity on the coin machines and in night clubs but was banned from the networks and really never got very far otherwise because of the radio ban.

he croons "Amapola, Amapola, how I love to hear you say, 'I love you.'" The expression of frustration in this song was not intense, there being hope for a reunion "sometime." With "Maria Elena," however, the frustration veers in the direction of unrequited love and a pleading:

Maria Elena, can't you see how much I care? . . .  
Maria Elena, take me to your heart  
A love like mine is great enough for two  
To share this love is really all I ask of you.

This ballad was the most enduring song of Hit Parade history, staying on it for 22 weeks and selling nearly 375,000 copies of sheet music.

A song like "The Wise Old Owl" illustrated the frustration following a "brief interlude":

When we strolled through the moonlight you said 'I love you'  
But The Wise Old Owl in the old oak tree said, 'Whoo-Whoo-Whoo' . . .  
Tho' I never thought you'd say goodbye, that old bird must have  
known that tonight  
He and I would be under the moon alone.

"Do I Worry," "Perfidia" and "I Guess I'll Have to Dream the Rest" sang the frustration of rejection and "another lover." ". . . and now I know my love was not for you, And so I'll take it back with a sigh, perfidious one—goodbye." Interestingly enough, despite long careers for each of these three songs on the Hit Parade during 1941 (14, 17 and 13 weeks, respectively) each of them sold less than 100,000 copies of sheet music. The buyers of sheet music thus did not respond so well to this particular variation of the frustration theme.

Uncertainty was coupled with the absence of the loved one in "Miss You," singing "Darling, how I Miss You, Tell me, do you ever miss me as I Miss You." Published originally in

1929, it was banned by the British Broadcasting Corporation during the summer of 1942 as too "slushy."

A third major type of song with sex interest is the *novelty type* of song. "Daddy" was a thinly veiled song about a "lady of joy": "Here's 'n amazing revelation with a bit of stimulation I'd be a great sensation, I'd be your inspiration, Daddy!" "The Hut-Sut Song" was in the nursery motif of a few hit songs of recent years. The child-like gibberish left such love interest as was present (or absent) to the imagination:

The brawla is the boy and girl,  
The Hut-Sut is their dream,  
Hut-Sut Rawlson on the rillerah  
And a brawla, brawla soo-it.

Another "nursery song" was the "filla-ga-dusha" ballad of 1942 which Johnny McCarthy sang "ev'ry night in his sweet Irish way" to Rose O'Day: "You're my filla-ga-dusha, shin-ama-roo-sha bald-a-ralda, Boom-to-de-ay." *Falderal* in waltz time!

Other novelty song hits were "Elmer's Tune" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo," which jockeyed for top position on the Hit Parade during the Christmas season of 1941. The former had a lyric which extolled the virtues of "Elmer's Tune" as the *élan vital*:

What makes a lady of eighty go out on the loose?  
Why does a gander meander in search of a goose?  
What puts the kick in a chicken, the magic in June?  
It's just Elmer's Tune.

"Chattanooga Choo Choo" was a film song (Sun Valley Sere-nade) chugging along rhythmically for 56 measures, reciting the journey home where



There's gonna be a certain party at the station  
 Satin and lace, I used to call funny face.  
 She's gonna cry until I tell her that I'll never roam,  
 So Chattanooga Choo Choo won't you choo-choo me home.

A real *blues* song was "Blues in the Night," another film tune with the lyric by energetic and versatile Johnny Mercer, reciting in 58 measures the advice "My Mamma Done Tol' Me" about the fickleness of women.

*Types of Lyrics and Their Length of Life on "Your Hit Parade"*

Table 5 summarizes this analysis of lyrics for the ninety songs which were on the Hit Parade between January 1941

TABLE 5.—CLASSIFICATION OF THE LYRICS OF SONGS ON YOUR HIT PARADE BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 1941, AND JULY 1, 1942

| Type of lyric                           | Period first on Your Hit Parade          |   |  | Total period of eighteen months |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|
|   | First six months<br>1-1-1941 to 7-1-1941 | Second six months<br>7-1-1941 to 1-1-1942 | Third six months<br>1-1-1942 to 7-1-1942 |                                 |
| All Songs . . . . .                     | 31 (17)                                  | 26 (16)                                   | 33 (16)                                  | 90 (49) <sup>a</sup>            |
| A. Songs with no sex interest . . . . . | 1 (1)                                    | 3 (2)                                     | 3 (1)                                    | 7 (4)                           |
| B. Songs with sex interest . . . . .    | 30 (16)                                  | 23 (14)                                   | 30 (15)                                  | 83 (45)                         |
| B. Songs with Sex Interest              |  |   |  |                                 |
| 1. Novelty types                        | 2 (2)                                    | 2 (2)                                     | 7 (5)                                    | 11 (9)                          |
| 2. Happy-in-love ballads . . . . .      | 13 (5)                                   | 9 (6)                                     | 15 (5)                                   | 37 (16)                         |
| 3. Songs of frustration-in-love         | 14 (9)                                   | 11 (6)                                    | 6 (4)                                    | 31 (19)                         |
| 4. Miscellaneous                        | 1  | 1   | 2 (1)                                    | 4 (1)                           |

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in brackets indicate the number of songs in each group which were on the Hit Parade for ten or more weeks; "Idaho" (Mills) was the only song of the 1942 group which had not been on the Hit Parade ten weeks by the first of September 1942, but which gave active evidence of such a possibility before its final "demise." (Note: this song was on the Hit Parade 4 times in September and once in October, making a total of ten Hit Parade broadcasts by the end of October.)

and July 1942. The figures in brackets indicate for each group the number of songs which stayed on the Hit Parade ten or more weeks.

Among the various types of songs with sex interest, a greater proportion of the novelty types than any of the other types were in the real "hit" class. Nine out of the eleven novelty type songs, that is, more than three-fourths, were on the Hit Parade for ten or more weeks. Otherwise, the real "hits" are not found to be strikingly associated more with one type of lyric than another. However, the ratio of happy-in-love ballads and of songs of frustrated love is quite different for the first six months in 1942 as compared to the twelve months of 1941. While in 1941 both types were about equally frequent, happy-in-love songs were two and a half times as frequent as songs-of-frustration during the first half of 1942. Whether this shift in emphasis in the lyrics of "hit" songs is indicative of a real change in the public taste or more a reflection of the greater competition during 1942 in the music industry is difficult to say. It is also to be noted that there was an increase of novelty types of songs during the 1942 period as compared to 1941.

It is interesting to note that with but five exceptions, the standard sheet music arrangement of all 90 songs of the Hit Parade for this period was in 4/4 time. Of the five exceptions, three were waltzes<sup>30</sup> ("Maria Elena," "Rose O'Day" and "Sleepy Lagoon") and all were real "hits." The fourth, "Intermezzo," was the largest sheet seller of 1941, and it deviated considerably from the standard popular music form of 32 bars. It opened in waltz time, went into 4/4 time and closed in waltz time. Thus, all of the waltzes came off 100 per cent as real "hits," which perhaps means that a waltz has to be unusual

<sup>30</sup> However, orchestral arrangements of these songs often appeared in other than 3/4 time.

to make the Hit Parade. The fifth song was "Remember Pearl Harbor" which was in 6/8 march time.

THE AUDIENCE COVERAGE INDEX (ACI):<sup>31</sup> WEEKLY SURVEY  
OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCAST ON RADIO NETWORKS

*Why a New Index?*

For a number of years, now, the music industry has found its radio "exploitation" of new songs closely identified with the "sheet"—a tabulation of the number of times their songs have been heard during part of the week in New York City over local outlets of network stations.<sup>32</sup> Presumably, the "sheet" is a barometric survey of network activity; in point of fact, it presents a very inadequate picture of popular music broadcast over the networks.

On the "sheet," all song performances are given equal weight, that is, the number of performances for each song is simply totaled. This is inadequate, in the first place, because no distinction whatsoever is made in such totals between songs broadcast on only the local outlets of the four network stations and the songs broadcast over network hook-ups of scores of stations. Furthermore, no distinction is made, in compiling this total, between songs broadcast during the peak listening hours of the day and evening and songs broadcast after midnight when most radio sets are not in use. In this connection, it is to be noted that about 85 per cent of all radio homes are in the Eastern and Central time zones and that the Pacific Coast networks are at the peak of their commercial broadcasts between

<sup>31</sup> Published by the Office of Research—Radio Division and copyrighted by the writer.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Duncan MacDougald's account of the "sheet" and its role in the music industry—*Radio Research* 1941.

11 P.M. and 1 A.M., Eastern time. The total is also defective from a time-sampling point of view inasmuch as the "sheet" excludes all broadcasts prior to five o'clock in the afternoon, Mondays through Saturdays.

It was because of the fundamental shortcomings of the usual weekly compilation of total performances that the weekly Audience Coverage Index (ACI) was developed.

#### *How Is It Calculated?*

The *sample* used for this index is based on broadcasts heard over the local outlets of the four major networks in three key cities, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, as follows: (1) Network performances on NBC, BNC, CBS and MBS heard daily in New York, 8 A.M. to 1 A.M., EWT; (2) Performances purely *local* to New York during this same period; (3) Middle West performances heard in Chicago daily between 9 A.M. and 1 A.M., CWT, but not heard in New York; and (4) West Coast performances heard daily from 9:30 A.M. to 1 A.M., in Los Angeles, but not heard in Chicago or in New York.

The second aspect of radio activity considered in the ACI is the *extent of network broadcasts*. The number of station-uses of a program is defined by contract for commercial programs. For sustaining programs the problem of station acceptance has been handled empirically by obtaining successive samples of such acceptance for popular music programs after they are broadcast.

The simple summation of additional station-uses to performances in the key cities would give an erroneous picture of the potential effectiveness of network broadcasts because of the great differences in the audience areas of affiliated stations. A 50,000 watt station in Denver has a different potential audience compared to a station of equal power in Cincinnati or in

New York. An adjustment is therefore made in the Index by weighting for differences in the potential coverage of stations on network programs. In so doing, it works out that on the average, ten station-uses on some network programs have an audience area roughly equivalent to that of the one station-use in New York City. In such cases, each ten station-uses are given the same weight as the one station-use in New York City. On other network programs, each fifteen or twenty station-uses may be roughly equivalent to the station-use in New York City.

A further factor considered is the *relative size of listening audiences* per program. The empirical data used for this purpose are ratings from sets-in-use data obtained from samples reported regularly by C. E. Hooper, Inc., and The Pulse of New York, Inc.; as well as data of other national surveys made from time to time. It is obvious that programs such as the Lucky Strike Hit Parade, Chesterfield Time with Fred Waring or the Breakfast Club should receive considerably more weight in any index of radio activity than purely local broadcasts or than orchestras broadcasting their music late at night when most people are asleep.

In utilizing radio sets-in-use information for the Audience Coverage Index, the basic station coverage index is weighted by multiplying it with a listening audience index. The listening audience index employed needs, of course, to correlate perfectly with the sets-in-use rating reported by the most recent survey available. The higher the sets-in-use rating for a program, the greater the weight for its listening audience.

A per-program audience coverage index is computed in the light of the preceding information for each performance of a given song. A song's ACI for the week is simply the sum of its total per-program indices.

The weekly Audience Coverage Index Survey lists those fifty current songs with the highest ACI ratings. (For an example, see Appendix H, Table 7.) Favorite *standards* (old songs, still popular) of the week are also included with their ACI ratings. In both cases, the importance of repetition in radio popularity is taken into account by limiting the ACI analysis to songs with a minimum of seven *different* program performances heard in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Each week the performances of about 1,000 different song titles are analyzed on a per program basis for audience coverage. Signatures (theme songs) and partial choruses are not included. The quality of the song or its rendition is not taken into consideration. Desirable as it might be to attempt to do this, it has not been done because this would necessarily introduce subjective factors into an otherwise objective index of the relative extent to which a song has been heard by a nationwide sample of audiences during the week.

#### *Its Usefulness as a Barometer of Consumer Reaction*

An empirical indication of the value of the ACI to the music publishing industry is made possible through a comparison of the demand for sheet music with the Index. In view of the role of radio "plugging" in the popularity of songs, one would expect some positive correlation. It is, however, to be remembered that not all U. S. performances of a song are heard in the three key cities.

To give just an example, the weekly sheet sales figures of "Blues in the Night"<sup>88</sup> correlated .71 with the song's ACI ratings over a period of fourteen weeks—the total number of weeks it appeared on the weekly survey. Similarly, the correlation between the weekly sheet sales figures and the ACI ratings

<sup>88</sup> Data through the courtesy of the Music Publishers Holding Corporation.

of "Deep in the Heart of Texas"<sup>34</sup> was .72 for a fourteen-week period. In these comparisons, sheet sales are for weekly periods ending about one week after the corresponding ACI survey week.

The relation between the radio popularity of songs as measured by the ACI and Your Hit Parade listings of the nation's ten favorites of the week is also interestingly close. For the four months of June, July, August and September 1942, approximately 80 per cent of the top ten songs of the weekly ACI surveys were on the Hit Parade broadcasts of the second Saturday night following publication of the survey reports. For September alone, the average was 88 per cent.

## POPULAR MUSIC AND WAR MORALE

### *Music and the Armed Forces*

That music is an essential ingredient of morale, both for civilians and men in service, is not debatable. The questions that arise, therefore, are ones of how much, what kind and when.

As far as the second question goes, different statements have been made, for instance, about the type of music wanted by men in the service. Byron Darnton, the late *New York Times* correspondent, wired a dramatic testimonial on the morale value of "hot" jazz from "somewhere in Australia."<sup>35</sup> According to Darnton, what the American soldiers want is music—"hot jazz and more highly regarded items." He quoted a squadron commander of the American Air Force as saying: "Music is swell for these kids. They ought to have more of it. If some-

<sup>34</sup> Data through the courtesy of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>35</sup> *New York Times*, June 23, 1942

body at home wanted to do something for the boys who are fighting in this war they would see to it that every squadron had a first class phonograph and records so that there would always be available good hot jazz and classicals. There is no better morale builder.”

Station KFEL of Denver, Colorado, published during June 1942 results of a survey made at Lowry Field, a local service center in Denver and other gathering places of military personnel.<sup>36</sup> Although no figures are quoted in this report, it is quite emphatic in its summary of what the men in the Army listen to: Loud, fast, modern tunes in the morning to help them wake up, a little romance, solid bands, solid vocalists (preferably females), novelty tunes; their tastes vary for evening listening, but “good” music such as classical compositions, symphonic orchestras, or operas are a rare choice. “They want ‘gut-bucket’ swing by the masters.”

Phil Spitalny, commenting on his experiences after visiting many Army camps for his weekly Sunday broadcast, presented a somewhat different picture.<sup>37</sup> He stressed the soldiers’ interest in such standard hymns as “Abide with Me” and “Lead Kindly Light.” He also reported that “Celeste Aïda” from the opera “Aïda” was liked a lot better than “Daddy.”

Even though Mr. Spitalny’s writing refers to a somewhat earlier period in the recent history of our armed forces than that covered by the *Times* dispatch and the Denver survey, it is likely that any discrepancies in these three reports are partly due to the fact that the tastes of the man in the armed forces vary as do the tastes of civilians. It might also be pointed out that Mr. Spitalny refers, at least partly, to music the soldiers

<sup>36</sup> “Meet the Soldier. When and How Does He Listen . . . KFEL Asks the Man in the Barracks.” Through courtesy of Mr. Gene O’Fallon, Manager of KFEL—MBS.

<sup>37</sup> *Variety*, January 7, 1942.



liked to join in singing, while the two other reports refer to music listened to. Thirdly, impressions of what generally characterizes a group will vary from observer to observer.

Fortunately, there has also been made available a summer survey of the program likes and dislikes of a cross section of 3,286 white soldiers in the ground forces of fifteen camps from coast to coast.<sup>38</sup> This survey, made by the Research Branch of the Army's Special Service Division, reveals that popular music (sweet or dance music—tunes of today) ranked first in the radio program preferences, with 87 per cent indicating that they like such programs and only 3 per cent indicating "Dislike." News, comedy programs, sports and variety programs are next in order of preference, followed by a second class of popular music (swing music—hot, scat, jive) which ranked sixth, with 62 per cent indicating "Like" and 16 per cent "Dislike." Old familiar music ranked seventh, with 57 per cent "Likes" and 15 per cent "Dislikes"; hillbilly and western music, tenth, with 42 per cent "Likes" and 33 per cent "Dislikes." Classical music (symphony orchestra, opera and "serious" music) ranked next to lowest, twelfth position, of the programs listed in the survey, with 35 per cent "Dislikes" and only 32 per cent "Likes."

Radio is at present attempting to meet service men's needs for relaxation by its short wave broadcasts of many of the most popular programs to our soldiers in all parts of the world as well as through special entertainment broadcasts for home and abroad.

Music in war may, however, serve three distinct psychological functions. First, music for relaxation and entertainment generally serves morale in providing a temporary means of escape from the physical and mental exertion of the day, thus

<sup>38</sup> *Broadcasting Magazine*, October 5, 1942.

helping to maintain an alert body and mind. Secondly, it also may be conducive to morale during work, whether that work be in a factory or in a military camp. Experiments over the past twenty years have definitely shown that the injection of appropriate music for a half-hour during the low output period in the morning and afternoon improves working morale in routine job situations. Clearly not all kinds of music are suitable for this purpose. Funereal dirges are out just as much as the rhythms of most jitterbug or "hot" jazz orchestrations. To sustain the working situation, music needs to be in rhythm with the work and to have an uplifting quality. Thirdly, music may serve the distinct purpose of patriotic inspiration. This leads to the question of current "war" songs.

#### *Current War Songs*

By Hit Parade standards, there had been only a few very popular war songs up to September 1, 1942. As shown in Table 6, ten of the thirteen war songs<sup>39</sup> which appeared on the Hit

TABLE 6.—CHRONOLOGY OF WAR SONGS ON "YOUR HIT PARADE"  
(JANUARY 1, 1941, TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1942)

| <i>Song and publisher</i>                          | <i>Type</i>                        | <i>Date of first<br/>Hit Parade<br/>broadcast</i> | <i>Total number<br/>of weeks on<br/>Hit Parade</i> |
|--|------------------------------------|---|--|
| My Sister and I<br>(Broadcast Music) . . . .       | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | May 3, 1941                                       | 14   |
| 'Til Reveille<br>(Melody Lane) . . . . .           | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Aug. 2, 1941                                      | 15   |
| Madeline<br>(Santly-Joy-Select) . . . .            | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Nov. 29, 1941                                     | 4  |
| White Cliffs of Dover<br>(Shapiro-Bernstein) . . . | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Dec. 13, 1941                                     | 17   |

<sup>39</sup> All those songs were classified as "war songs" in which the lyrics make a reference to the war or the war situation. Thus, songs with only a slight war flavor such as "Madeline" and "The Shrine of St. Cecilia" were included.

| <i>Song and publisher</i>  | <i>Type</i>                        | <i>Date of first Hit Parade broadcast</i> | <i>Total number of weeks on Hit Parade</i> |
|--|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Shrine of St. Cecilia<br>(Braun Music) . . . . .                         | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Jan. 10, 1942                             | 10   |
| Remember Pearl Harbor<br>(Republic Music) . . . . .                      | A March<br>"With Spirit"           | Feb. 14, 1942                             | 4  |
| She'll Always Remember<br>(M. Witmark & Sons) ..                         | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Apr. 4, 1942                              | 2  |
| Don't Sit Under the Apple<br>Tree<br>(Robbins Music) . . . . .           | Non-militant<br>Novelty Song       | Apr. 25, 1942                             | 12   |
| Johnny Doughboy Found a<br>Rose in Ireland<br>(Crawford Music) . . . . . | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | May 9, 1942                               | 15   |
| Three Little Sisters<br>(Santly-Joy-Select) . . . . .                    | Non-militant<br>Novelty Song       | June 6, 1942                              | 9  |
| This Is Worth Fighting For<br>(Harms) . . . . .                          | A Militant<br>Inspirational Song   | June 27, 1942                             | 3  |
| He Wears a Pair of Silver<br>Wings<br>(Shapiro-Bernstein) . . . . .      | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | July 18, 1942                             | 7 <sup>a</sup>                             |
| I Left My Heart at the<br>Stagedoor Canteen<br>(Army) . . . . .          | Non-militant<br>Sentimental Ballad | Aug. 8, 1942                              | 4 <sup>b</sup>                             |

<sup>a</sup> Still on Hit Parade, Sept. 1, 1942, in top position Aug. 29th broadcast.

<sup>b</sup> Still on Hit Parade, Sept. 1, 1942, in third position Aug. 29th broadcast.

Parade between January 1, 1941, and September 1, 1942, came on after Pearl Harbor. One was played first on the Hit Parade in November 1941, and was still on in January 1942. Thus, eleven of a total of 54 songs broadcast in the first eight months of 1942, or 20 per cent of the *different* songs on the Hit Parade, were war songs. There were, of course, a few additional

songs topical, by suggestion, to the war situation such as "I'll Pray for You" and "I'll Keep the Lovelight Burning."

Psychologically, most of the war songs up to September 1942 were non-militant songs of "romantic escape." "There'll Be Bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover," for instance, came to the Hit Parade on December 13, 1941—the week-end after Pearl Harbor. It was a sentimental ballad for "the peace ever after, tomorrow when the world is free" and proved to be the biggest "hit" of the season with sales of more than a half million copies of sheet music. A song like "My Sister and I"—a non-militant war ballad—was nostalgic for a "tulip garden by an old Dutch mill." "'Til Reveille" was the first of the "sweetheart" type of war songs to get on the Hit Parade. "She'll Always Remember" described the love of a mother for her son now in the Army. Up to August 24th, four and a half months after its first appearance on the Hit Parade, it had sold only 34,685 (net) copies of sheet music.

Only two of the total of thirteen war songs could be classified as songs of "patriotic inspiration." "Remember Pearl Harbor" was pseudo-militant, but "This Is Worth Fighting For"—still popular in September 1942 despite its brief initial career on the Hit Parade—was a war song of the inspirational, non-escape type. Although it was in ballad tempo and the lyric developed a sentimental theme, the final message was nevertheless clear-cut and to the point:

Didn't I build that cabin?  
Didn't I plant that corn?  
Didn't my folks before me  
Fight for this country before I was born?  
I gathered my loved ones around me  
And I gazed at each face I adore  
Then I heard that voice within me thunder  
This Is Worth Fighting For.

More recent songs of patriotic inspiration such as "Any Bonds Today," "Arms for the Love of America" and "The Army Air Corps" as well as old favorites such as "The Marines' Hymn," "Anchors Aweigh," "Caissons Go Rolling Along" and "Over There" have enjoyed some popularity. However, these kinds of songs are definitely songs for singing and not for dancing. And when we recall that the average band broadcasts dance music, and not in 2/4 time as during the last war, it is perhaps not so amazing that we have not had more "hit" songs of the patriotic "inspirational" type.

Of course, no one can force a spontaneous war hit like the late George Cohan's "Over There" of 1917. A "business-as-usual" attitude is blamed by some for the scarcity of successful war songs. Publishers and band leaders are reluctant, it is said, to try out anything new "when they've already got a system which rings the bell every time."<sup>40</sup> However, publisher Jack Robbins, head of the Feist-Miller-Robbins group, points to patriotic songs his firms have published and asserts his willingness to publish "any ten songs selected by the OWI or by a committee of the top ten dance maestros and outstanding vocalists . . . and donate everything to the USO."<sup>41</sup> Some of the publishing houses blame the band leaders, claiming that they are afraid to play a good fighting song because of unpleasant incidents which have occurred, as, for example, the comment from a dancer to a band leader after the playing of "This Is Worth Fighting For": "Well, why don't you get into uniform and fight then?" Band leaders in turn point out that the public is not ready for the blood and thunder type of songs, that the tempo of stirring fighting songs is no good for dancing

<sup>40</sup> *The Billboard*, August 8, 1942.

<sup>41</sup> *Variety*, August 19, 1942.

and that the ballroom generally seems a poor atmosphere for arousing patriotism.<sup>42</sup>

The Office of War Information's ideas on the matter, as voiced by some of its representatives, are two-fold: "To get, if possible, the desired kind of lyrical support for the war and failing that, to at least check the kind of drivel that might handicap the fighting and winning of the war."<sup>43</sup> Songs of regretfulness, of homesickness, about a happy return, about sitting tight, are considered neither desirable for home consumption nor for our soldiers. This is also the point of view taken by the British government.<sup>44</sup>

In analyzing the reasons for the scarcity of successful war songs, it is relevant to point out that the American background for and participation in World War II present a psychological picture different from that of World War I. The younger generation today grew up during the washing of the 1917 and 1918 linen: many were educated in the skepticism of the 20's and 30's. Also, World War I was a war with thousands of marching men. This time there are few parades and, so far, fewer psychological signs at home of a burning zeal "to do or to die." There is a *grim* determination to see a nasty business through to completion but this is not the psychological spirit which gives voice to song. This is an attitude which finds, not inspiration, but escape in the relaxation and entertainment of words and music. The purveyors of music have met this entertainment type of need. Psychologically, however, there is a real question whether music alone can also inspire a burning faith and fighting zeal. Given the seeds of these things in the souls of men, there is no question that they can be cultivated

<sup>42</sup> *Billboard*, August 8, 1942.

<sup>43</sup> Mr. Abel Green, Editor, *Variety*, July 22, 1942.

<sup>44</sup> "Tin Pan Alley Upset at BBC Ban on Slush," *New York Herald Tribune*, July 25, 1942.

with word and song. As Mr. Olin Downes, music editor of the *New York Times*, so aptly states it: "We have not only to win a war, but as a people, to win back a faith. When men have a faith they sing. Lacking it, living music has never yet been fabricated."<sup>45</sup>

*Music and Psychological Warfare*<sup>46</sup>

"Music as a weapon conquered Oslo's quarter of a million Norwegians."<sup>47</sup> It is asserted that the Nazis put up a twelve-man band in front of the Norwegian Parliament which played such tunes as "Roll Out the Barrel" while their troops were landed without resistance from the thus distracted Norwegians. According to the same source, when Hitler's troops invaded Poland, the Warsaw radio played Chopin twenty-four hours a day, between dramatic appeals by public officials, as a means of bolstering the morale of the Poles. The Nazis' reaction was the death penalty for any performance of Chopin's music, just as they threatened death to the Czechs for playing Smetana and Dvořák. The Nazis evidently recognize the power of music. Their ban on non-Axis music in Germany and the occupied countries indicates their alertness to the threat of enemy music while at the same time they apparently are masters in its exploitation for their own ends.

What works well as propaganda for the enemy can also serve our own psychological warfare. Short wave broadcasts of well-chosen American music to the countries of Nazi-dominated

<sup>45</sup> Also see Mr. Downes, *New York Times*, August 23, 1942.

<sup>46</sup> The writer is especially indebted to Dr. T. W. Adorno of the Institute of Social Research, New York, for his aid on the subject of this section. Dr. Albert Sirmay of Chappell & Co., Inc., and Dr. Rudolf Arnheim, author of *Radio*, Faber & Faber, Ltd., have also contributed much valuable information on this topic.

<sup>47</sup> Carl Cons, *Music and Rhythm*, August 1942. Although we have not been able independently to verify these episodes, they are to the point in suggesting the Nazis' recognition of the importance of music in psychological warfare.

Europe should be an effective means of propaganda, appealing to basic wants and needs now denied fulfillment and giving rise to personal identification with American culture. For this purpose, popular music no doubt has a greater potential value than does classical music. First, whereas classical music is not generally American in its identification for European listeners, popular music is known to be American. Second, a great deal of classical music can ordinarily be heard anyway in Nazi-Europe, whereas American popular music is generally prohibited.

According to Dr. Arnheim, "Under the Hitler regime, an offensive was launched against the 'Negro music' which was considered an insult to the Germanic race—an opinion possibly shared by elderly, conservative people of the middle and lower middle class, but certainly not by those more open-minded and progressive people to whom anti-Hitler propaganda would be directed mainly. . . . American jazz music, almost a synonym of American culture for many people in Europe, would be welcomed as the voice of America and as the return of a good old friend connected with pleasant memories of the past and now greatly missed."

Dr. T. W. Adorno makes the point that under the condition of isolation from the outer world now existing in Nazi-dominated Europe, every sound is capable of assuming a political significance quite out of proportion to its actual content and political bearing. For people overfed with politics, the indirect stimulus of popular music might have more propaganda value than a direct political message. This seems particularly likely in view of the fact that the Nazis, while banning foreign music, have not themselves succeeded in providing substitutes.

Because of the rapid conquest of the European continent made by American popular music after World War I, that



area of the globe has the most fruitful possibilities for musical warfare. Although American music had made inroads into Japan prior to the outbreak of the present hostilities, few people in Japan, excepting the authorities, are likely to have a short wave broadcast receiver, due to a prohibition in effect for the past twenty years, having been established shortly after the advent of Communistic propaganda from Russia. It is also the case that very few short wave sets are to be found among the peasants of Europe. However, it was in the cities rather than among the peasants that American popular music was so well received after World War I. Although we do not know the availability of short wave sets in these cities, there is no question that many of the broadcasts get through (either directly or via re-broadcast from England). This has been testified to by some of Dr. Goebbels' own propaganda.

#### SOME RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Something of the socio-psychological significance of popular music in American culture is no doubt suggested by the foregoing sections. Its morale value for many people, in peace or war, reveals it to be an instrument of psychological influence which strikes directly at the pulsation of the human heart. And it is a form of social stimulus for which, in its production, the music, advertising and radio industries spend millions of dollars each year. However, despite these vast expenditures and the psychological effect on people of what is produced, this whole sphere of social dynamics has been but barely touched by social scientists. It is a field which presents a direct avenue towards an increased understanding of many people's needs, their hopes and their frustrations. We have here a natural

laboratory for the study of these facets of human nature, and their expression in the fads and fashions of the day. The development of our current vernacular is expressed in song. And of course there are such things as a sheer biopsychological urge for rhythmic activity and the emotional satisfaction which comes through identification with an environment which is harmonious. A somewhat enthusiastic statement of some of the possibilities for the social scientist is voiced by Mr. Sigmund Spaeth: "The musical and literary output of Tinpan Alley has acquired a national and social significance that makes it worth some fairly serious study, quite apart from the derision which it so patently invites. The popular song has become a most revealing index to American life in general. It sums up the ethics, the habits, the slang, the intimate character of every generation. . . ." <sup>48</sup>

There is no question that contemporary popular music clearly outlines the tempo and many of the cultural emphases of our modern civilization. At the same time it is sufficiently varied (from "hot" jazz to sentimental waltz ballads) to help mitigate the frustrations from which a society usually attempts to escape by reminiscing about that "golden age" of yesteryears.

*Music easy to sing* makes for the social cohesion of a group. This is a *first principle* for workers with children in camps, clubs and schools. It is a first principle for building up the morale and psycho-sociological unity of a group of erstwhile strangers from all walks of life assembled together for military training and activity. Why hasn't radio made more use of this fundamental principle? It well knows, in some program areas, the value of audience participation. Give the studio audiences souvenir leaflets with the words of a few songs of patriotic

<sup>48</sup> *The Facts of Life in Popular Song*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1934.

inspiration. Let their voices go out over the airways. Under the leadership of an enthusiastic and judicious master of ceremonies, they could stir the hearts of a nation.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Acknowledgments have been made at appropriate places in the text of this article for specific research information obtained through the co-operation of individuals in the music, radio and allied industries. The writer also wishes to acknowledge with thanks the many suggestions received in conversations with persons in these fields,—especially to Mr. Robert Burton, Mr. Irving Caesar and Mr. Lawrence Richmond. Finally we are very grateful to Dr. Allan Fromme, colleague, and to Lillie Burling Peatman, consulting psychologist, for their invaluable assistance.



*IV. PROGRESS IN LISTENER RESEARCH*



## THE STUDY OF ADJACENT LISTENING

by Sidney Fishman and Sydney Roslow

THE first measurement used in radio, and the one still most widely in use, is the so-called rating. This rating indicates the proportion of radio-owners listening to a certain program. Although the techniques used to ascertain listening, and the base for the computation of the ratings, are controversial issues, all ratings have one thing in common: they deal only with numbers of listeners. Later the question of analyzing the social stratification of the radio audience was considered; starting with a study done by H. M. Beville, for the Office of Radio Research,<sup>1</sup> further progress was made when the yearly Midwest Survey of Radio Audiences, conducted by H. B. Summers and F. L. Whan, took into consideration more of the characteristics of the listeners, such as age, education, motion picture attendance, etc. Progress in audience analysis consists in getting ever-refined and more numerous characteristics of listeners to different programs. In the present paper, one new index is suggested: adjacent listening.

A listener to a certain program can well be characterized by what he listens to before and after the program under investigation; this is what we mean by adjacent listening.

There are three major kinds of data we can get from such a study:

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Beville, *The Social Stratification of the Radio Audience*, 1939, mimeographed.

- (a) The proportion of the audience to a certain program which did not listen to the radio at all just before and just after this program.
- (b) The proportion which listened to a program on the same station.
- (c) The programs on other stations to which radios were tuned by people before and after they listened to the program to which our attention is directed.

Under certain conditions, the information under (a) gives us a measure of the specific interest which listeners have in a given program. If a program has a great proportion of tune-ins and tune-outs on both sides, we can infer that it has a very specific appeal and is not listened to just because people happen to have their radios turned on.

The information under (b) tells us something about what might be called station inertia. It is often useful to know whether at certain times of the day, or for certain sequences of programs, people have or do not have a tendency to leave the radio dial set where it is.

The information under (c) should tell us something about similarity of appeals between different programs. If a considerable proportion of people who listen to just one program turn to another station to get another program, we can be rather confident that the two programs have similar psychological meaning to the listeners who thus shift.

The purpose of the present paper is to illustrate this notion of adjacent listening, and give examples of the kind of information which can be derived from such a characteristic of the audience. The standard procedure consists in taking the listeners to a given program as a base of 100 per cent, and studying the distribution of their listening just prior and just after



this program was on. Such tracing of the radio audience is made possible where a roster method is used. The roster is a listing of each station's programs by quarter-hours for a given period of time. This listing is shown to the respondent during the interview as an aid in identifying programs heard.<sup>2</sup> For the time period covered by a roster it is possible to cross-tabulate what people who listen to one program at a specific time, had listened to at other times.

There are a number of problems involved in such procedures which we shall point out as we present our examples. One difficulty has to be stated from the beginning. In most of the audience surveys being done now, we know only to what program the radio was tuned. We do not know which member of the family actually listened to the program. If the dial is turned from one program to another, it might be that at the same time the listener to the first program stopped listening, and another member of the family came in as a new listener. For an adequate use of the notion of adjacent listening, it would therefore be necessary to get information not only on the radio dial, but also on who did the listening. From general experience we know that the same people in the family listen to programs to which the radio is tuned within a sequence of one-half or three-quarters of an hour. Still, as we have no exact data on this point, the following illustrations have to be understood as pointing toward a promising method, rather than giving a conclusive result.

For the first example we select two daytime serials. The first is *Against the Storm*, which can be heard over WEAF from 11:30 to 11:45 A.M. Figure 1 shows that three-fourths of its audience comes from a daytime serial on the same station, and 84 per cent again go to another daytime serial on WEAF.

<sup>2</sup> This method is being used by The Pulse of New York Inc.

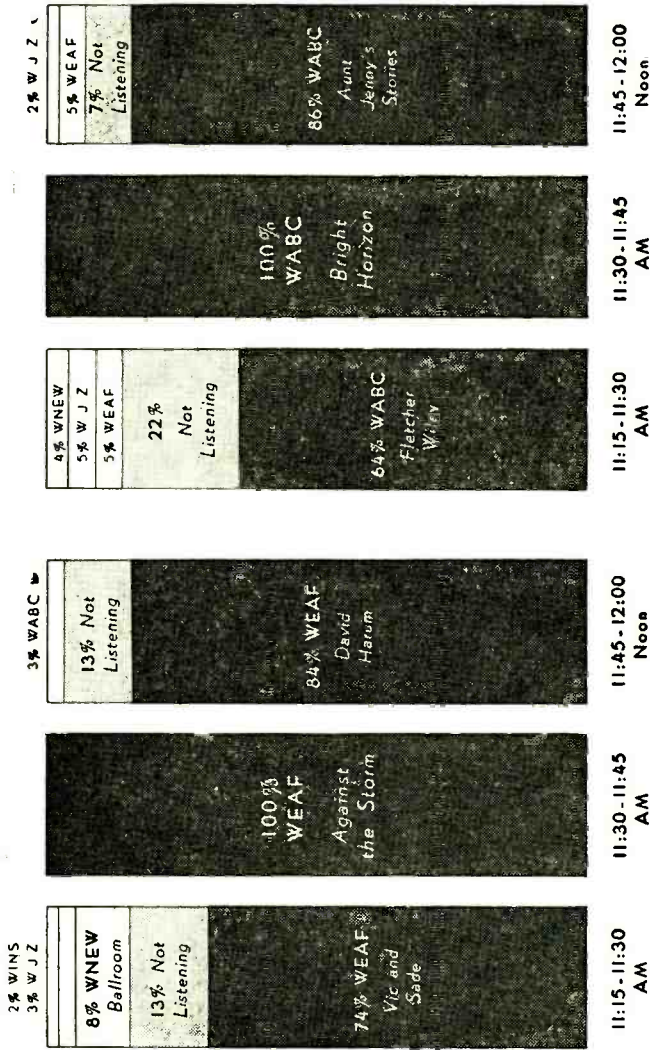


FIG. 1.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO  
 “AGAINST THE STORM”  
 (PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RAT-  
 ING 2.5%, JULY 1942)

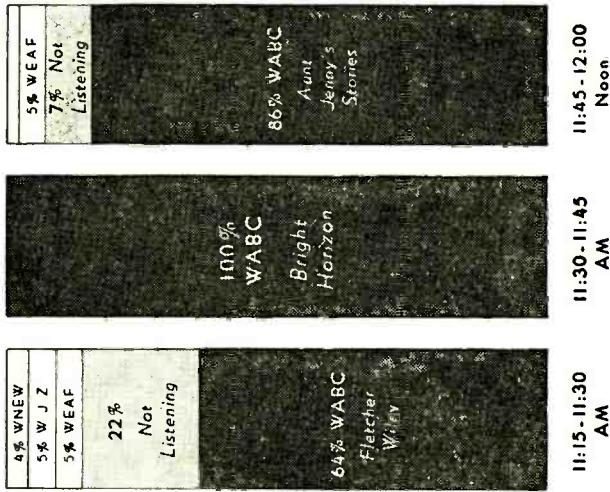


FIG. 2.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO  
 “BRIGHT HORIZON”  
 (PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RAT-  
 ING 3.9%, JULY 1942)

Only 13 per cent are new tune-ins, and only 13 per cent tune out after *Against the Storm* is over. Practically negligible is the number of people who listen to one of the other network stations before or after this program.

For a moment one might think that this shows a special loyalty to one network; but if we look at the daytime serial which is on WABC at the same time, the picture is practically the same. (See Figure 2). Of the people who listen to *Bright Horizon*, 11:30 to 11:45 A.M., 86 per cent remain tuned in and listen to the next daytime serial on the same station. Only 7 per cent tune out after it is over; and again the proportion of people who go to other network stations is negligible. There is one difference between Figure 1 and Figure 2, inasmuch as we have 22 per cent new tune-ins for *Bright Horizon*. This is obviously due to the fact that the preceding program on WABC is not strictly a daytime serial, but a commentator with a homey appeal.

The study of adjacent listening thus has given us immediately an interesting characteristic of daytime serial listeners: they are not selective; they keep on listening to strings of radio stories; no one feels that it is worth while to try another station because any daytime serial apparently is equally satisfying.

Apparently, this staying with the same station is not restricted to daytime serial listeners. The audience of a station which carries a uniform program during the daytime also shows a uniform listening behavior. Figure 2A gives data on adjacent listening to the *Make Believe Ballroom*, broadcast by Station WNEW week days from 10:00 to 11:30 A.M. Using the audience for the period from 10:30 to 10:45 A.M. as a base of 100 per cent, we see that 70 per cent of the listeners come from Station WNEW, and 93 per cent stay with that station in the following quarter-hour.

Quite different is the behavior of news listeners. As indicated in Figure 3, the people who listen to *Frank Singiser* on WOR from 6:30 to 6:45 P.M. are characterized by great specificity. Sixty-seven per cent have not listened before, and it seems clear that they tune in specifically to this program. Thirty-six

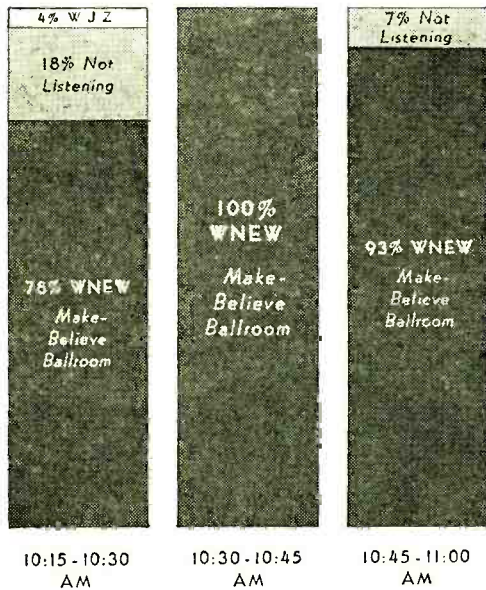


FIG. 2A.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO “MAKE BELIEVE BALLROOM” (PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RATING 5.4%, JANUARY 1943)

per cent tune out after the program is over, and what is more interesting is the fact that they do not stick to the same station at all. The majority of those who go on listening, turn to WJZ to get some more news from *Lowell Thomas*.

To be sure of our case we then repeated the same test for all *Lowell Thomas* listeners (see Figure 4). A third of them come from *Frank Singiser* as we could expect from the previous chart; but again we find that 41 per cent did not listen at all before, and tuned in specifically for *Lowell Thomas*. Thirty-

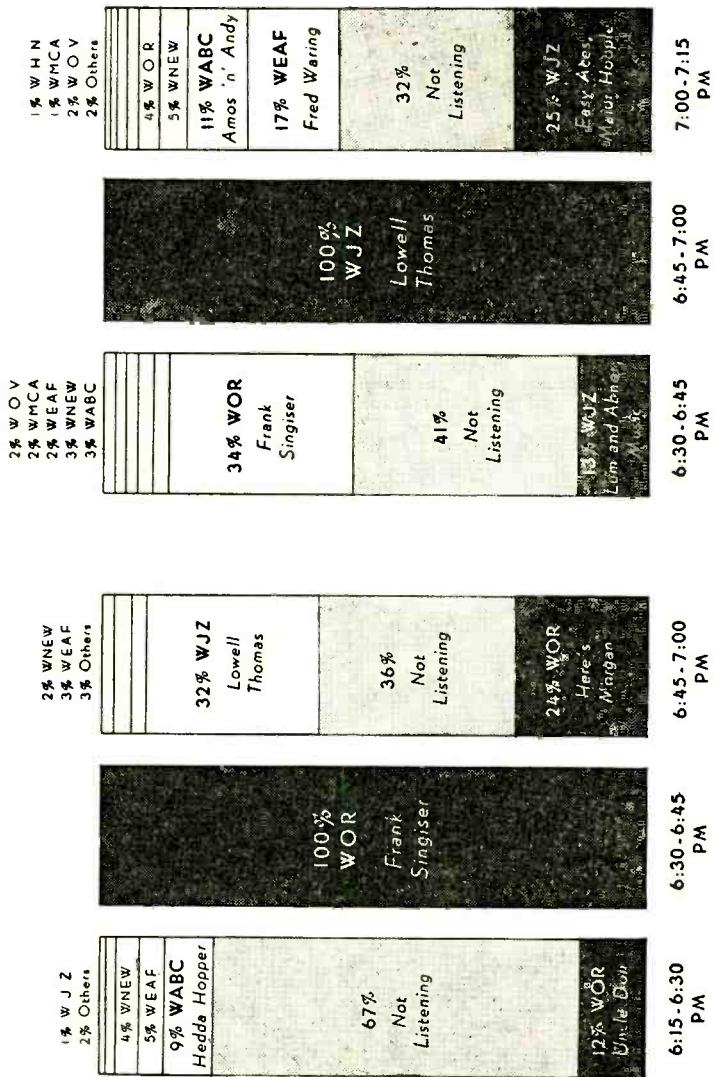


FIG. 3.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO FRANK SINGISER (PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RATING 8.3%, JULY 1942)

FIG. 4.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO LOWELL THOMAS (PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RATING 8.1%, JULY 1942)

two per cent of his audience turned away from the radio after his program was over. We do not find any station inertia here either. Only one-fourth of the *Lowell Thomas* listeners stay with WJZ.

As far as specificity of listening goes, this notion of adjacent listening cannot be utilized successfully unless we know more about the role the time factor plays in this whole picture. At certain times of the day, probably especially during the morning hours, people have a rather regular living schedule. Therefore, if the radio is tuned in or turned off, it is because people want to listen to it, and probably listen to a specific program. At other times it's the dinner hour, or the children come home from school, and the beginning and ending of a listening period might be less related to the available program fare and more to the variations in people's activities schedule.

The importance of this time factor can be determined from Figure 5 where we deal with a daytime serial which comes on at 1:45. Once more there is indication of a great station inertia, inasmuch as there is hardly any listening either before or after this program with listeners turning to other stations. But the number of adjacent tune-ins and tune-outs is much larger than for the daytime serials which come on in the morning. This is due, obviously, to the fact that around 2 o'clock the time schedule for many listeners is a much more irregular one.

This suggests that we should build up a store of data on average turnover at different times of the day, just as the radio industry has collected figures on the average amount of listening at various points of the clock. Only against a background of such average turnover figures can we then appraise the data pertaining to a single program.

As a final example we refer to Figure 6 which contains an analysis of the *Hit Parade* audience. This radio mecca of all

1% WMCA  
 1% WNEW  
 2% Others  
 2% WEAF  
 2% WJZ  
 2% WOR

1% Others  
 1% WEAF



1:30-1:45  
 PM

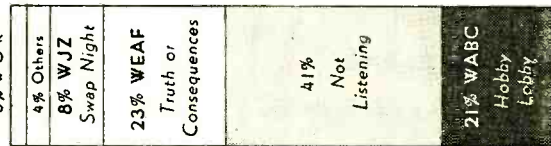


1:45-2:00  
 PM



2:00-2:15  
 PM

3% WOR



8:45-9:00  
 PM



9:00-9:45  
 PM

2% WEAF



9:45-10:00  
 PM

FIG. 5.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO  
 “THE GOLDBERGS”

(PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RAT-  
 ING 5.8%, JULY 1942)

FIG. 6.—ADJACENT LISTENING TO  
 “YOUR HIT PARADE”

(PULSE OF NEW YORK AVERAGE RAT-  
 ING 17.4%, MAY-JUNE 1942)

swing fans seems to have listeners who, according to the adjacent listening analysis, have rather specific tastes. Figure 6 shows that 41 per cent had not listened before, and 29 per cent stopped listening afterwards. This is most surprising as there are three music programs following *Your Hit Parade*. Only the one on WABC, favored by station inertia, inherits a considerable audience from the *Hit Parade*. It might also be noted that more listeners to the *Hit Parade* come from WEAf's *Truth or Consequences*, as compared with WABC's *Hobby Lobby*; this in spite of the fact that *Hobby Lobby* should be favored as being on the same station and consisting of music to a greater extent. In the *Hit Parade* program there are two appeals—the musical one and the contest element. Obviously this latter appeal, which also prevails in *Truth or Consequences*, is quite strong and provides a psychological bridge between the two programs. This again could only be found by a study of adjacent listening. It is hoped that as more such studies are being done, the value of this new approach will become more and more obvious.



## A STUDY OF NON-LISTENERS

by Boyd R. McCandless

THE conventional type of audience survey is of limited usefulness to the broadcaster of serious or of service programs. It is likely to show him that his audience is small and that it reaches the educated rather than the uneducated.<sup>1</sup> For the successful handling of his program he will want a more thorough investigation of the audience in terms of the *factors which motivate listening*. He will want to know not only who listens to his program but why he or she does so. He will also want to know whom his program does *not* reach and why not. The data reported below illustrate such an attempt at an audience survey which includes the listener as well as the non-listener.

The program studied was a child guidance program. It was broadcast over two college stations in Iowa and had been on the air, at the time of the study, for eight years. The material was collected from 600 women whose names were picked at random from the telephone directory of two towns in Iowa.

In a *first* step of the study these women were sent a brief mailed questionnaire. Aside from a few background data, it ascertained whether they knew of the program and if so, whether they were listening to it, since when, how regularly, and whether they belonged to a PTA or other organization sponsoring the program; if they had stopped listening, they were asked to state why they had done so. Those women who did

<sup>1</sup> See P. F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1940, pp. 15 ff.

not answer the first questionnaire were mailed another empty blank and were asked to fill it in. A follow-up was made by telephone for every second woman who had not mailed her questionnaire in either of the two waves. By considering this sampling of the residual group as representative for the whole group who did not reply to the mailed questionnaires and weighing each telephoned return at twice its weight (only every second woman of the residual group had been telephoned), it was possible to recover 90.8 per cent of the original random sample.<sup>2</sup>

In a *second* step, a small sample of 83 women was selected, who, according to their answers to the questionnaires, represented different types of attitude toward the program. This small group was submitted to a detailed personal interview ascertaining the reasons for their behavior.

#### *Who Knows About the Program?*

From the crude information obtained in the questionnaire, the sample can be divided into two groups of respondents: those who knew about the program and those who did not know of it. As the program studied is a child guidance program designed for parents, the obvious question arises to what extent knowledge of the program correlates with whether the respondent has any children, and particularly, any children in the age group to which the program applies mainly. In Table 1 informedness about the program is studied for childless respondents and for mothers whose youngest child is under or over fifteen years of age, this being about the upper age limit at which the kind of information to be obtained from the program would cease to be directly applicable.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E. A. Suchman-B. R. McCandless, "Who Answers Questionnaires," *Journal of Appl. Psychol.*, Dec., 1940.

TABLE 1.—INFORMEDNESS ABOUT PROGRAM BY AGE OF RESPONDENT'S YOUNGEST CHILD <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Age of youngest child</i> | <i>Knows of program</i> |             | <i>Total per cent</i> | <i>Total number of cases</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
|                              | <i>Yes %</i>            | <i>No %</i> |                       |                              |
| Under 15 years . . . . .     | 57.4                    | 42.6        | 100.0                 | 162                          |
| 15 years and over . . . . .  | 40.0                    | 60.0        | 100.0                 | 168                          |
| No children . . . . .        | 20.3                    | 79.7        | 100.0                 | 172                          |
| All groups . . . . .         | 38.9                    | 61.1        | 100.0                 | 502                          |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of no-answers for age of youngest child.

As indicated in this table, knowledge of the program seems to depend upon the direct applicability of the type of information conveyed in it. While about 58 per cent of mothers who have at least one child in the age group to which the program refers know about it, only 40 per cent of mothers of older children and only 20 per cent of childless respondents do so.

Previous studies have shown that the educated are more likely to listen to serious programs as compared to the uneducated. Whether this is also true for the audience of the program studied is tested in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—INFORMEDNESS ABOUT PROGRAM BY EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Education <sup>b</sup></i> | <i>Knows of program</i> |             | <i>Total per cent</i> | <i>Total number of cases</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
|                               | <i>Yes %</i>            | <i>No %</i> |                       |                              |
| High . . . . .                | 62.8                    | 37.2        | 100.0                 | 43                           |
| Middle . . . . .              | 40.6                    | 59.4        | 100.0                 | 315                          |
| Low . . . . .                 | 26.7                    | 73.3        | 100.0                 | 135                          |
| All groups . . . . .          | 38.7                    | 61.3        | 100.0                 | 493                          |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of no-answers on education.

<sup>b</sup> Low education comprises women with not more than three years of high school; middle education refers to those who have completed high school as well as to college graduates. High education includes those who did post-graduate work.

The better educated the respondent, the more she is likely to know about the program. The number of respondents who have done post-graduate work is of course very small: the re-

actions of this group are shown separately to indicate the sensitivity of the education factor to knowledge of the program. The educational differences hold true even if we compare mothers of children of comparable age. Considering only mothers whose youngest child is under 15 years, we find that among the better educated (at least some college) only 20 per cent do not know about the program as against 60.6 per cent uninformed among those who did not have any college education.

#### *Four Types of Behavior*

A closer analysis of the "informed" respondents shows that not all of them are active listeners to the program. Some of them have listened before but stopped doing so. Others have heard about the program but remained inert as far as listening is concerned. Thus, altogether four types of behavior may be distinguished: *active* listeners, *ex-listeners*, *inert* respondents and those entirely *uninformed* about the program. Through the short mailed questionnaire, we can establish to which of these four types each respondent belongs. The statistical distribution of these types in a random sample gives the broadcaster some clue as to the nature of his audience problem. Moreover, the typological classification of the questionnaire returns can be utilized to select a small number of members of the various types and obtain from them, in a more detailed interview, the reasons for their behavior.

In the particular case studied, only 6.1 per cent of the sample were active listeners; 13.6 per cent were ex-listeners; 16.2 per cent were inert respondents and 64.1 per cent were uninformed. Two-thirds of the total sample do not even know about the program. However, as shown previously, their status as mothers is such that the service of the program would be less often applicable than among the informed respondents. An

attempt to reach them would not only have to sell this particular program but create an interest in the topic. To see whether this can be done and how it might be done most successfully, it seems worthwhile to study first the great number of those women who, although they know of the program, do not listen to it. Only about a fifth of the informed women actually listen to the program. Twice as many have stopped listening and almost three times as many have never listened at all. What differentiates the active from the informed non-listeners (the ex-listeners and the inert)?

As we found that the informed are better educated than the uninformed, we might first investigate educational differences between the informed listeners and non-listeners. Table 3 deals with this question.

TABLE 3.—DISTRIBUTION OF FOUR TYPES OF BEHAVIOR AMONG RESPONDENTS OF DIFFERENT EDUCATION <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Education</i> <sup>b</sup> | <i>Per cent active</i> | <i>Per cent ex-listeners</i> | <i>Per cent inert</i> | <i>Per cent uninformed</i> | <i>Total per cent</i> | <i>Total number of cases</i> |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| High . . . . .                | 11.6                   | 30.3                         | 20.9                  | 37.2                       | 100.0                 | 43                           |
| Middle . . . . .              | 7.0                    | 13.9                         | 19.7                  | 59.4                       | 100.0                 | 315                          |
| Low . . . . .                 | 3.7                    | 11.2                         | 11.8                  | 73.3                       | 100.0                 | 135                          |
| All groups . . . . .          | 6.4                    | 14.8                         | 17.5                  | 61.3                       | 100.0                 | 493                          |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of no-answers on education.

<sup>b</sup> Educational classification same as in Table 2.

The informed non-listeners (ex-listeners and inert) are somewhat less educated than the active listeners. However, educational differences are more marked between informed and uninformed, than between the active and inactive but informed listener. We thus turn to the other factor which we discovered previously as important for the knowledge of the program, i.e., the age of the respondent's youngest child. This is shown in Table 4.

Both the ex-listeners and the inert seem to have less often

a direct need for the service of the program as compared to the active listeners. These inactive groups have relatively more often children 15 years or over, they also are more often childless. However, both the ex-listeners and the inert have in a considerable number of cases children in the "right" age group. It is at this point that the detailed interview material collected from a small sample of members of the three "informed" types becomes valuable.

TABLE 4.—DISTRIBUTION OF FOUR TYPES OF BEHAVIOR ACCORDING TO AGE OF RESPONDENT'S YOUNGEST CHILD <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Age of youngest child</i>                   | <i>Per cent active</i> | <i>Per cent ex-listeners</i> | <i>Per cent inert</i> | <i>Per cent uninformed</i> | <i>Total per cent</i> | <i>Total number of cases</i> |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Under 15 years and 15 years and over . . . . . | 13.6                   | 21.0                         | 22.8                  | 42.6                       | 100.0                 | 162                          |
| No children . .                                | 3.5                    | 5.8                          | 11.0                  | 79.7                       | 100.0                 | 172                          |
| All groups .                                   | 6.6                    | 14.8                         | 17.5                  | 61.1                       | 100.0                 | 502                          |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of no-answers for age of youngest child.

Aside from a number of questions measuring general interest in child guidance and in radio which were asked of all of them, each of these three types was asked questions specifically fitting its behavior. Thus, in addition to questions pointed at finding out why the ex-listener had stopped listening and why the inert had never started it, emphasis was given to ascertain which broadcasts the active listener had particularly liked, what criticisms the ex-listener had to make and what kind of topics the inert would like to have treated in a program.

### *The Ex-Listeners*

Due to the small number of cases submitted to detailed interviews, even marked differences between the various types may not be statistically reliable. Figures quoted in this and

the following paragraphs may be looked upon merely as indicating trends which tend to corroborate our assumptions.

There are two major reasons why the ex-listener might have stopped tuning in the program. She might have been dissatisfied with what she was getting, or she might have had less reason to want the services of a program such as the *Child Study Club*. If the latter is the case, we would expect to find such a lesser "need" indicated in the extent of the ex-listener's participation in other child-centered activities or organizations as compared to the active listener's behavior. And indeed, while 42.2 per cent of the active listeners are members of a PTA organization, there are only 25.7 per cent members among the ex-listeners. While the average number of any child-centered organization or activity in which the active listeners participate is 2.2, it drops to 1.0 among the ex-listeners.

On the other hand, a lack of satisfaction with the program ought to be reflected in a greater amount of criticism voiced by the ex-listeners as compared to the active listeners. This expectation seems again corroborated in the trends indicated by our figures: while none of the present listeners stated that they were disappointed with the program, only 61 per cent of the ex-listeners said they had been satisfied with it.

A reduced need for listening and lack of satisfaction with the program are also the main arguments brought forward by the ex-listeners in response to a direct question as to why they stopped listening. Furthermore, their answers indicate the relative weight of these two factors. Forty per cent of the ex-listeners said there was no need to listen any longer, most of them stating that their children were grown up, a few only saying they were less concerned about them now as compared to the times they first started listening. Sixty per cent of the ex-listeners, however, were still interested in other child-centered activi-

ties but had stopped listening to the *Child Study Club* because they were not satisfied with it. Disappointment with the program is thus more often mentioned as a reason for discontinued listening than an outgrown need. This seems to confirm the statistical findings of Table 4 which showed that a considerable proportion of ex-listeners has children under fifteen years of age.

What accounts for the ex-listeners' lack of satisfaction with a program which, after all, satisfies the active listeners? It could be that these two types originally started listening for a different purpose. This, however, does not seem to be the case. When asked why they started listening, three-fourths of the active listeners and the same proportion among the ex-listeners said that they did so for personal guidance in the rearing of their own young children. Only about a fourth in each group mentioned a professional, intellectual interest in the topic or stated that their concern with matters of child guidance provided a compensation for the lack or loss of an own child. While thus the purpose of listening seems to be alike for the active and the ex-listeners, they appear to differ in terms of the influence which first started them listening. Sixty-four per cent of the active listeners said they had started listening because their PTA or a similar organization sponsored the program. Only 39 per cent were started this way among the ex-listeners. It will be remembered that we also found a smaller proportion of PTA members among the ex-listeners as compared to the active listeners. This might be due not only to the growing up of their children, but also to an initially weaker participation in PTA and similar organizations among the ex-listeners. This in turn meant the lack of an organized impetus to start listening and the lack of an influence perpetuating the interest in the topic of the program. Whether the seemingly



weaker participation in PTA and similar organizations among the ex-listeners as compared to the active listeners is due to a smaller concern with their children or less interest in the approach of modern child guidance, we cannot tell from the material available.

This hypothesis could have been tested by two sets of data which were not obtained. One would have been an attitude test on the usefulness and importance of modern theories of education and child guidance. Possibly the ex-listeners would have ranked less favorably on that score than the active listeners. Another set might have referred to the question how much of a problem the respondent feels her children to be and how she felt about it at the time she first started listening. This would have shown the extent of the respondents' concern when she first tuned in the program, and any changes since that time. It would also have indicated whether there was any difference in the educational problems encountered by the two groups. The ex-listeners might originally have looked for guidance in other problems than the active listeners. A comparison of the content of the program and the problems of the ex-listeners would also have shown to which extent their lack of satisfaction with the program was objectively justified and to which extent it was due to a lack of pedagogical interest or ability on their part.

### *The Inert Respondents*

As shown before, the inert respondents are somewhat less educated and have children in the "right" age group less often than the active listeners. However, on both these scores they are similar to the ex-listeners who, at one time at least, have listened to the program. Why did the inert type never get around to listening?

One factor on which the inert appear to be slightly different

from the ex-listeners and more strongly distinguished from the active listeners, is the extent of their membership in PTA and their participation in other child-centered activities. While the proportion of members of PTA is 42 per cent for the active, it is 26 per cent for the ex-listeners and 19 per cent for the inert; while the average number of all child-centered organizations and activities with which the respondent is concerned is 2.2 for the active, it is 1.0 for the ex-listeners and 0.6 for the inert. As pointed out in the previous paragraph, our material does not permit an interpretation of these figures; we do not know whether they indicate fewer educational problems, less educational interest, or less interest in these particular forms of satisfying an educational interest. It is plausible, however, that a slighter participation in PTA and similar organizations should correlate with less interest in the program studied which after all, emanates from a child guidance clinic and is sponsored by PTA and similar organizations.

There is, however, still another track to be followed. So far we have neglected entirely the fact that we are studying reactions to a radio program. What about the radio-mindedness of the various types of informed listeners? We compare in Table 5 the three types for the mean number of hours spent reading and listening a day.

TABLE 5.—MEAN NUMBER OF HOURS SPENT READING AND LISTENING BY THREE TYPES OF INFORMED RESPONDENTS

| <i>Type of respondent</i>  | <i>Mean hours spent</i> |                  | <i>Number of cases</i> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
|                            | <i>Reading</i>          | <i>Listening</i> |                        |
| Active listeners . . . . . | 1.7                     | 3.8              | 13                     |
| Ex-listeners . . . . .     | 1.9                     | 3.1              | 42                     |
| Inert . . . . .            | 2.2                     | 2.4              | 28                     |

Although the number of cases for which this information is available is very small, the trends seem to be worth while mentioning. The inert respondents, while obviously mentally quite

alert as indicated in the extent of their reading, seem less interested in radio as a means of communication compared with those who have listened at one time or other. They spend about as much time reading as listening while the active listen twice as much as they read. If asked specifically why they had never started listening although they knew of the program, dislike of radio or the feeling that reading is a more efficient way of obtaining information was mentioned by almost half of the inert respondents.

The reading and listening figures for the various types of informed respondents now show us the active listener from quite a new angle. We know that these active listeners tend to be better educated than the other types. Table 5 seems also to indicate that they are intensive radio listeners. How does this fit in with other studies showing that increasing education makes for increased reading but for decreased listening? These same trends also hold true for our *total* sample. The mean daily listening time is 2.7 hours for the higher educated (at least some college) as compared to 3.6 hours for the lower educated, non-college woman. Conversely, the mean daily reading time of the lower educated is 1.2 hours as against 2.4 hours for the college educated.

The active listeners seem thus a-typical members of their group: although well educated, they are extensive listeners while being moderate readers. We are now in a better position to understand the results of Table 3 which showed that education differentiated strongly between the informed and uninformed while there were only relatively small educational differences between the informed who listened and the informed who did not listen. Education makes for informedness; but within the educated, the new factor of the degree of radio-mindedness has to be introduced as a differentiating element

between those who know of the program and listen to it and those who remain inert despite the knowledge of its existence.

### *Summary*

The study was based on a small number of cases. Thus its statistical results must be considered tentative ones. It seemed worth while reporting, however, as an example of a technique which might be usefully applied in other audience investigations.

We started with the assumption that the non-listener is just as important as the listener in an inquiry concerned with the factors which determine listening to a program. A brief questionnaire mailed to a random sample permitted a classification of the respondents according to four types of behavior. We distinguished between active listeners, ex-listeners, inert and uninformed respondents. This typological classification proved useful in three ways. We learned from a larger random sample (a) the frequency of the different types and (b) some of their characteristics. Moreover, it permitted us (c) to proceed in an economical manner to the second step of our study. A small group of the original sample, already identified as to listening type, was asked in great detail the kind of questions which best fitted their experience. Thus, criticisms of the program were studied particularly from those women who had stopped listening while we compared the active listeners and those who knew of the program but had never listened to it (the inert) mainly for differences in listening stimuli (personal interests and external influences).

## THE CBS FORECAST PANELS

by Charles Harriman Smith

IN proportion to the number of quantitative measurements made of radio audiences, very few studies of a qualitative nature are undertaken. Numerous methods for gathering opinions and attitudes toward specific programs have been used and one of the most successful in the work of the CBS Research Department has been the Listener Panel technique.

The largest projects for such qualitative analysis have been the panels used to evaluate the two series of experimental programs called *Forecast*, which have been broadcast during the summer months of 1940 and '41. These programs were intended to give the opportunity to various writers and production men to put into concrete form some of their abstract ideas.

### OPERATION OF THE 1941 FORECAST PANEL

#### *The Setup*

Reduced to its barest essentials, the Panel technique involves the selection of a group of people who agree to listen to a series of broadcasts and then report their reactions to the various programs in formal questionnaires. A demonstration of some of the aspects of the Panel technique is to be found in the 1941 Panel which CBS had set up to study the *Forecast* programs of that summer. Three cities, Syracuse, Indianapolis and

Memphis, were chosen in order to include representation of urban radio listeners in three major areas of the U.S.—the East, Mid-West and South. No claim is made that these cities are necessarily representative of these areas but they did appear logical selections for the overall purposes of this study. In each of these cities co-operation of 100 families, carefully chosen as a cross section of the radio homes in these cities, was obtained. The entire sample comprised 305 families with a total of 900 individual members twelve years of age or over. All field work was carried on for CBS by Industrial Surveys Company and the Panel was never informed, beyond what they could conjecture, as to Columbia's interest in the work.

Anticipating criticisms of bias, the instructions to the Forecast Panel emphasized the need for honest opinions and instructed the members to have no compunctions about scoring poorly those things they did not like and scoring favorably those things which pleased them. Panel members were told that their opinions about other people were valuable and would be *clearly* sought from time to time but on all other questions their own, and only their own, reactions were important. Nearly all questionnaires included a question which enabled the respondent to sit in judgment of his neighbors' tastes on some phase of the program but such questions were obviously never tabulated.<sup>1</sup>

A Preliminary Questionnaire for each individual was used in the personal interview made at the time the family's co-operation was enlisted. This questionnaire sought to develop data about favorite programs, reading habits, movie attendance, various movie stars who, unknown to the respondents, would later appear in the *Forecast* series, etc. Only after the

<sup>1</sup> Later in this report will be shown the findings of an experiment set up to measure certain aspects of this question of bias.

Preliminary Questionnaires had been answered were the families instructed as to the time and station of the programs to which they were to listen. This precaution was taken in order to preclude the possibility of bias toward CBS programs in those questions which dealt with "favorite" programs of various types.

Weekly reminders to listen were mailed locally and the questionnaires covering the individual broadcasts were mailed to arrive the morning after the program was heard. This precaution is obvious. Were the respondents to have the questionnaires on hand at the time of their listening, their attention would be directed toward certain aspects of the programs about which it was desirable to learn the degree of impression which those parts may have made.

#### *"Mortality" in the Panel*

The eight weeks experience with this Panel showed a nearly constant decrease in the number of cases answering each program questionnaire. While the original Panel comprised 900 cases the eighth program questionnaire was answered by 689 cases. It should be borne in mind that the Panel represented a rotating membership and that the 689 cases at the end were not only those people who had answered *every* program questionnaire. The remuneration for co-operating in this project was on a family basis. Consequently it is not surprising that only 60 per cent of the *individuals* answered all eight of the program questionnaires. The average person answered 6.6 out of eight possible questionnaires used.<sup>2</sup>

Since the number of people in any sample is primarily a

<sup>2</sup> The rate of return was somewhat better among Women than Men and was higher as education and age increased. Considered by Income groups, better return was found from the two middle groups with the wealthiest group making the poorest showing.

measure of adequacy, the 689 cases at the end of the series were still sufficient to provide data in even the smaller breakdowns which were of interest. Furthermore, while the size of the samples changed considerably the internal characteristics of each sample remained virtually unchanged from those of the original Panel. Examined by characteristics of sex, income and age and education no major change or trend was discernible in any of the samples in comparison with the original group. The experience in terms of "mortality" and stability of the panel is demonstrated in Figure 1.

#### *Basis of Questionnaire Design*

Much of the success of any panel operation depends upon the skill and care that is used in designing the questionnaires. As was pointed out earlier, it is often very important to establish data on certain subjects before the actual panel operation begins. Second, when dealing with such things as radio programs it is necessary to anticipate some group of common questions relating to the basic elements of the shows to be asked about every program in order to provide grounds for comparison of one program with another.

The first such question asked an overall evaluation of the program by means of a "rating scale," marked off in units of ten from 0 to 100. Respondents were told to place a check mark on the bar to represent their best judgment of the program, considering 0 as the poorest program they had ever heard and 100 as the best they had heard. Since in the Preliminary Questionnaire the respondents had been asked to designate and to rate their "favorite" programs of the principal types now on the air it was possible to use the rating of the individual show in conjunction with the rating of the "favor-



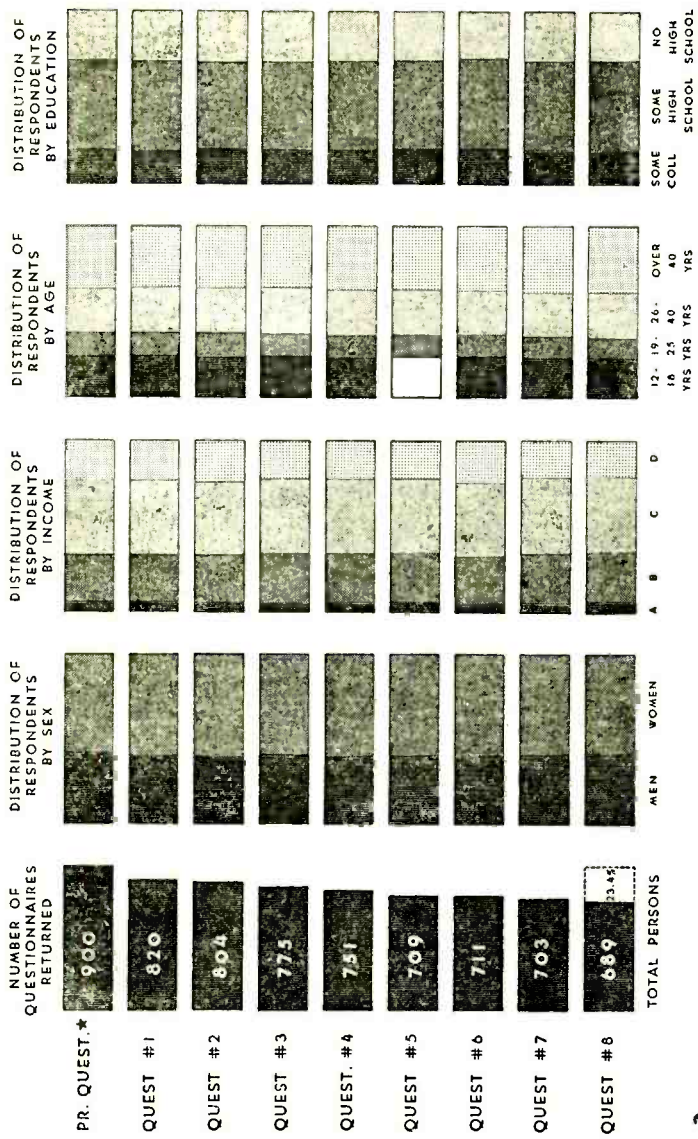


FIG. I.—STABILITY OF QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE  
(EIGHT WEEKS' OPERATION)

\* Preliminary Questionnaire

ite" to evaluate the listener's opinion of the *Forecast* show in terms of "How good is this program of its kind."

The second common question sought some measure of the "tolerance" of the Panel members of the general presentation of the *Forecast* show by asking, "If you had tuned to this program, *by accident* (at the beginning), do you feel that you would have listened to all of it." (Of those who answered "No" to this question the request was made to name the particular point at which interest waned but the replies were not satisfactory since most listeners found it difficult to be sufficiently specific.)

The third question sought to discover the possible future appeal of the program: "Considering this program as a sample of a series of programs to be broadcast next winter, do you feel you would (a) add this program to the list you listen to regularly or (b) listen to only occasional broadcasts or (c) never listen." Here the Panel members could indicate that the program idea was appealing even if they had felt that the particular broadcast might not have held their interest (preceding question). It should be pointed out that the answers to this question, like nearly all the data gathered in panel research, have only a relative value and cannot be taken as numeric prophecies of future audience size.

In addition to these common questions, each program questionnaire sought information on the various component parts of the show, principally by the use of an attitude scale (Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor). Such evaluations were sought on talent, plot, script, music (if it was an important item), etc.

## SOME FINDINGS

*Analyses of a Specific Program*

The findings for the "Hopalong Cassidy" program serve as a good example of the type of data gathered in the individual program questionnaires. This program, the eighth of the series, was a radio adaptation of the currently popular Western stories and movie serials about this character. The program had no "name" talent and relied almost exclusively on the appeal of Western stories and familiarity with the central character.

In Figure 2 are the findings for all breakdowns of the Panel of the Average Rating given this program. Since it was known that men tended to rate these programs lower than women the difference found here (Men 78.8, Women 75.3) indicates definitely greater liking for "Hopalong" by men. Greater appeal to the lower-income and less-educated groups is apparent. The indication of greater appeal to the younger groups while not quite so consistent is still significant.

Since it was felt that this program could not validly be compared with the "favorite dramatic show" because of its rather specialized subject, it was deemed advisable to ask for the naming and rating of the program which each member felt was "most similar." The principal programs named were the rather obvious ones—*The Lone Ranger*, *Gene Autry*, *Death Valley Days*, etc. In terms of the rating given to the "most similar" program, "Hopalong Cassidy" fared rather well with an average rating approximately 97 per cent as high.

Turning to the component parts of the program quite favorable scores are found. The plot of the show attained a score of 3.02, the second highest plot score of any of the six dramatic

shows appearing earlier in the series.<sup>3</sup> The talent scored rather well also, particularly when it is remembered that no "name" talent was used. Although the comparison is somewhat unfair it is interesting to see how this cast was scored in comparison with the scores for the big name "stars" of the five earlier dramatic shows. The highest score for any of these big name

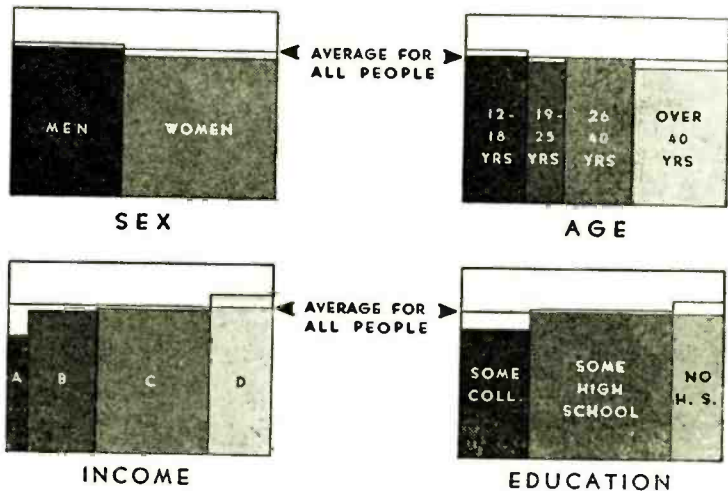


FIG. 2.—ANALYSIS OF AVERAGE RATINGS OF TEST PROGRAM

programs was 3.44, the talent score for "Hopalong Cassidy" was 3.19.

Asked if they thought that had they tuned to "Hopalong" by accident they would have listened to the entire program, more than three-fourths replied they would have heard the program through. In terms of future listening to a series similar to this "sample" broadcast, slightly more than half felt that they would listen each week to the adventures of "Hopalong," about one-fourth felt such shows would warrant only occasional

<sup>3</sup> The scores referred to are based on the answers to a simple attitude scale of "excellent, good, fair, poor," with the answers weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1.

hearings and less than one out of five of the Panel signified no future interest in such a program.

The Panel members were asked whether or not they had read the stories of Hopalong Cassidy or had seen the movies. Dividing the Panel into those people who had both seen the

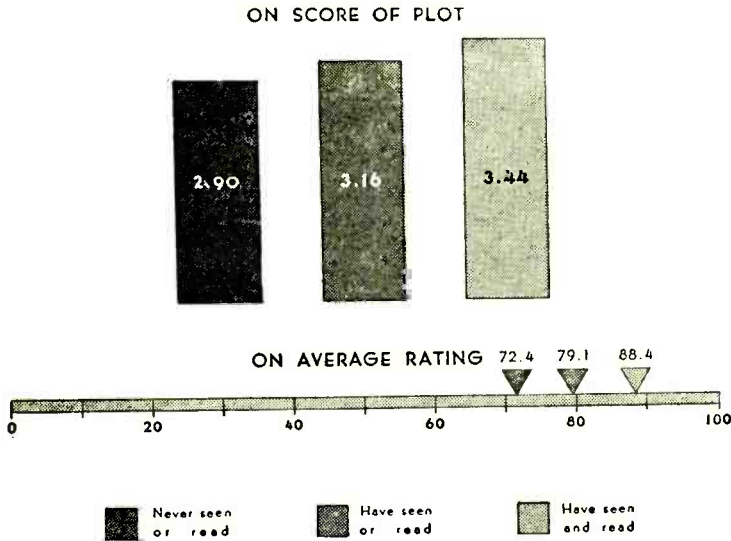


FIG. 3.—INFLUENCE OF MOVIES AND STORIES

movies and read the stories, those who had either seen or read, and those who had neither seen nor read, the question on average rating and score for the plot was analyzed. Definite trends of a more favorable attitude toward the program as a whole and the plot as an item were found as the degree of familiarity with the material increased. This is shown in Figure 3.

#### *Utilizing Data from the Preliminary Questionnaire*

One of the programs, "Song Without End," was a dramatization of the life of Claude Debussy played against a rather heavy background of music drawn from his works. Since the

program was biographical in nature a tabulation was made of the average rating given this show in terms of the importance of biography as a type of reading to the various Panel members.

TABLE I.—AVERAGE RATING IN TERMS OF READING HABITS

|   |      |
|---|------|
| All people .....  | 74.0 |
| Those <i>not</i> listing Biography as a type of book read ....            | 68.0 |
| Those listing Biography as a type of book read .....                      | 80.0 |
| Those listing Biography and ranking it as 1st, 2nd or<br>3rd choice ..... | 82.6 |
| Those listing Biography but ranking it 4th or lower ...                   | 78.6 |

Differences in the ratings given by Readers and Non-Readers of biography were considerable but while the appearance of biography in the reading diet appears to correlate with a better acceptance of this program, the degree of "liking" of biography by those who read it appears to have relatively little effect on the rating.

One further example of this type of analysis is to be found in the comedy-mystery show—"Deductions DeLuxe." Several weeks before hearing this program the Panel had been asked if they had ever seen Adolphe Menjou, who played the lead in this show, and if they had seen him to give an estimate of his performances by checking a rating scale. It was found in this case that the difference in rating between those who had and those who had not seen Mr. Menjou was not significant.

### *Summarizing the Series*

As an additional means to evaluate the series, the Panel was given a series of paired comparison questions on the twelve programs heard. Thus at the conclusion of the series five types of data offered the main bases for comparison. The programs were arranged in rank order on each of these items.

1. *Average Rating*—Basically an overall evaluation of the program made at the time it was heard.

TABLE 2.—RANK OF 12 FORECAST SHOWS  
(BASED ON AVERAGE RANK OBTAINED FROM 5 SETS OF DATA)

| All<br>People           | By sex |                | By income |                |                | By age         |                |                |       | By education   |                |                       |
|-------------------------|--------|----------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                         | Men    | Women          | A         | B              | C              | D              | 12-18          | 19-25          | 26-40 | 40+            | No<br>h.s.     | Some<br>h.s., college |
| Country Lawyer          | 1      | 1              | 1         | 1              | 1              | 3              | 1              | 1              | 1     | 1              | 1              | 1                     |
| Hopalong Cassidy        | 2      | 5              | 7         | 3 <sup>a</sup> | 3              | 1              | 2              | 4              | 2     | 4 <sup>a</sup> | 2              | 2                     |
| Deductions DeLuxe       | 3      | 4              | 3         | 3 <sup>a</sup> | 2              | 5              | 3              | 2              | 3     | 3              | 3 <sup>a</sup> | 3                     |
| Hollywood Tour          | 4      | 2              | 8         | 8              | 4              | 2              | 4              | 5              | 4     | 8 <sup>a</sup> | 3 <sup>a</sup> | 4                     |
| Jubilee                 | 5      | 6 <sup>a</sup> | 6         | 6              | 6              | 6              | 7 <sup>a</sup> | 6 <sup>a</sup> | 5     | 2              | 7 <sup>a</sup> | 5                     |
| Arabian Nights          | 6      | 6 <sup>a</sup> | 4         | 5              | 5              | 7              | 7 <sup>a</sup> | 3              | 6     | 4 <sup>a</sup> | 7 <sup>a</sup> | 6                     |
| Mischa the Magnificent  | 7      | 5              | 9         | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 7              | 4              | 5              | 9              | 7     | 8 <sup>a</sup> | 5 <sup>a</sup> | 7                     |
| Song Without End        | 8      | 10             | 2         | 2              | 10             | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 10             | 8              | 8     | 6              | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 10                    |
| Three Wishes            | 9      | 9              | 5         | 7              | 8              | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 9              | 6 <sup>a</sup> | 9     | 7              | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 8 <sup>a</sup>        |
| Pibby and the Hoolihans | 10     | 8              | 10        | 10             | 9 <sup>a</sup> | 8              | 6              | 10             | 10    | 10             | 5 <sup>a</sup> | 8 <sup>a</sup>        |
| 51 East 51              | 11     | 11             | 11        | 11             | 12             | 11             | 11             | 12             | 11    | 11             | 11             | 11                    |
| Class of '41            | 12     | 12             | 12        | 12             | 11             | 12             | 12             | 11             | 12    | 12             | 12             | 12                    |

<sup>a</sup> Tied ranks.

2. *Paired Comparisons*—A more detailed evaluation of the program when all had been heard.
3. *Ratio of Program Rating to "Favorite Program" Rating*—A measure of "How good is this show of its kind."
4. *The Proportion Who Would Voluntarily Have Listened to the Entire Program*—A measure of tolerance with the presentation of the specific episode.
5. *Percentage Who Would Listen Regularly in the Future*—A gauge of the value of each program as a series.

As a very rough gauge, the average rank for each program in these five analyses was used as a "series index." Breakdowns of these various analyses by sex, income, age, education, etc., provided valuable data in considering the series as a whole. These are shown in Table 2.

#### *A Measure of Tolerance*

It will be recalled that each program questionnaire included a question asking, "If you had tuned to this program (in the beginning) *by accident*, do you feel you would have listened to the entire program?" An interesting by-product of this question is to be found in the average for all twelve shows of the percentage giving "Yes" answers. Assuming the programs included a fair variety of potential evening entertainment, the average for the shows in this question might be considered a measure of "tolerance" of the various subdivisions of the Panel.

Table 3 appears to indicate greater willingness to grant a hearing to a new program on the part of women than men, while a clear trend toward greater "tolerance" is found in the Income analysis where about 25 per cent more of the D's than the A's would have listened to the entire broadcast of the average show. Considered by Age groups "tolerance" appears to be a diminishing virtue as age increases, while a higher degree



TABLE 3.—AVERAGE PER CENT OF "YES" ANSWERS IN 12 PROGRAMS TO THE QUESTION "IF YOU HAD TUNED TO THIS PROGRAM AT THE BEGINNING, BY ACCIDENT, DO YOU FEEL YOU WOULD HAVE LISTENED TO ALL OF IT?"

|                        | <i>Per cent</i> |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| All people .....       | 71.1            |
| <i>By sex</i>          |                 |
| Men .....              | 69.5            |
| Women .....            | 72.1            |
| <i>By income</i>       |                 |
| A .....                | 61.5            |
| B .....                | 67.6            |
| C .....                | 71.8            |
| D .....                | 76.6            |
| <i>By age</i>          |                 |
| 12-18 years .....      | 77.1            |
| 19-25 years .....      | 70.8            |
| 26-40 years .....      | 68.0            |
| Over 40 years .....    | 69.5            |
| <i>By education</i>    |                 |
| No high school .....   | 75.9            |
| Some high school ..... | 72.6            |
| Some college .....     | 65.0            |

of education similarly leads toward impatience with the *Forecast* shows.

#### *What About "Bias"?*

Somewhat earlier mention was made of measurement of bias in Panel operation. To determine if bias existed and if it exists did it change, a group of "voluntary listeners" was developed by telephone calls on radio families during the course of the first program of the series. Those people found listening to the *Forecast* show in the telephone work were interviewed in person and given the same program questionnaire that the Panel had answered.

To measure comparability of results it was necessary to match cases in the Panel and "voluntary" group on the basis

of city, age, sex, income and the answers to the question "Would you (or did you) listen to all of the program."

The findings for the first program of the series revealed a somewhat more favorable attitude to be held by the "volun-

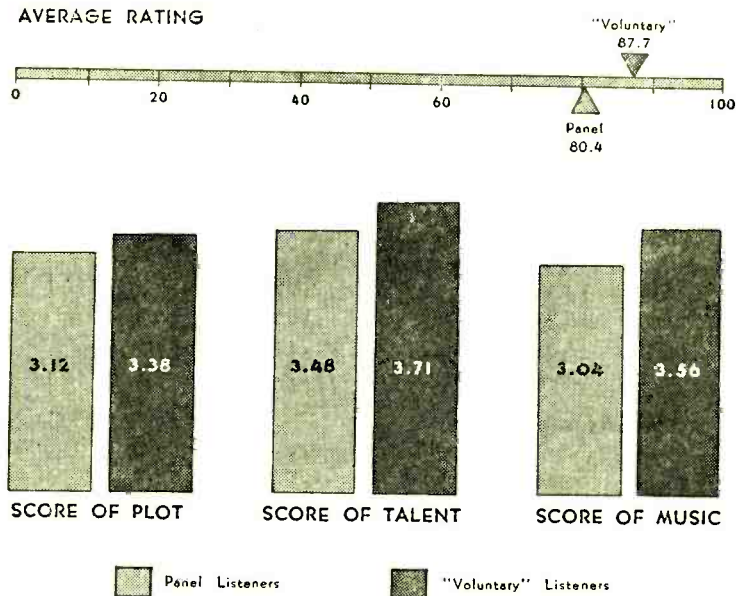


FIG. 4.—COMPARISON OF MATCHED SAMPLES OF PANEL AND VOLUNTARY LISTENERS

tary" group whose scores<sup>4</sup> and ratings ran roughly 10 per cent higher than those of the Panel. This is shown in Figure 4.

In order to see whether or not continued operation of a Panel for as many as eight weeks would bring about any change in these results the identical procedure was followed in the case of the last program of the series. Substantially the same results were found. Again the "voluntary" group showed a more favorable attitude but the span between the scores and ratings of the two groups was somewhat smaller. They ran

<sup>4</sup> For explanation of scores see footnote 3.

about 5 per cent higher than those of the Panel. Thus it appears that this Panel was somewhat more critical in its judgments than were random listeners to the first program but no really significant differences were found in this trend when a similar analysis was made after eight weeks of Panel operation.

### *Bringing Some Data Up-to-Date*

Another demonstration of the value of the Panel technique is to be found in the re-survey of this group on certain questions in September 1942. With the advent of the war, considerable interest was shown in the question of whether or not people's tastes in radio entertainment, reading fare, attitudes toward news, etc., had changed. Consequently the 1941 group was re-established as a Panel and questions identical with those used last year on these subjects were again asked.

After a lapse of more than a year and in spite of the many disruptions obviously brought about within that year, it was still possible to re-enlist 543 of the 900 original Panel members. A comparison of the characteristics of these samples showed little difference between the years excepting for a somewhat smaller proportion of men, the upper Income groups and the 19-25 Age Group.

*Have tastes in radio listening changed?* In 1941 the Panel members were asked to designate their preferences for thirteen major types of programs at several different times of the day and week. This was accomplished by giving to the respondents a set of cards on each of which appeared the name and a brief description of a program type. Considering their current listening habits during the daytime on weekdays they were to separate the cards into those types they *do* listen to and those they *do not* listen to. Those cards representing types now being heard were to be sorted into 1st choice, 2nd choice, etc., and

the answers recorded. After shuffling the cards the procedure was to be repeated for each of the other times inquired about. The same procedure was repeated for 1942.

Considering the total cases in each year we find very high correlation in all four periods of time studied. This can be seen from Appendix I, Table 1. The most dramatic (and obvious) change is the shift of News Commentators to first place in the Evening in 1942 from fourth place in 1941. Otherwise no change of note is found in the preferences for Evening radio entertainment.

During all Daytime periods Variety programs have a slightly better standing in 1942 (in 3rd place). Old Familiar Music fell from 3rd place in 1941 to 5th place for 1942 while Classical Music improved its rank somewhat. No other significant change is found for Weekday listening.

Saturday Daytime preferences show almost perfect agreement in the two years. On Sunday we find a considerable decline in the rank of Classical Music and a lesser decline in the case of Talks and Lectures. Only Old Familiar Music improved as many as two ranks during Sunday Daytime.

*Have attitudes toward radio news changed?* As a gauge of trends in attitude toward radio news the Panel was again asked in 1942—

From which source do you get the most of the daily news—newspapers or radio?

Considering the total cases each year, it appears that radio in 1942 has a clear majority with roughly 59 per cent relying on radio as opposed to 40 per cent naming newspapers. This represents a reversal of position against 1941 when radio gathered only about 45 per cent of the votes to the newspaper's 51 per cent. At the same time a decrease in the number naming "both"

has occurred. The identical cases analysis shows virtually the same results. Data for the total cases are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4.—“FROM WHICH SOURCE DO YOU GET THE MOST OF THE DAILY NEWS—”  
(TOTAL CASES EACH YEAR)

|                          | 1942<br>% | 1941<br>% |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Radio . . . . .          | 58.7      | 45.1      |
| Newspapers . . . . .     | 39.6      | 50.8      |
| Both equally . . . . .   | 1.7       | 4.1       |
| Total per cent . . . . . | 100.0     | 100.0     |

A second question asked dealt with an evaluation of four types of news broadcasts, (1) Radio Bulletins, (2) Radio Commentators, (3) News Round-Ups and (4) News Round Tables. Respondents were asked to designate which of these types they deemed “Most Interesting,” which “Most Informative” and which “Most Accurate.” The results are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5.—“WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF RADIO NEWS DO YOU THINK IS—”  
(TOTAL CASES EACH YEAR)

|                         | “MOST INTERESTING” |           | “MOST INFORMATIVE” |           | “MOST ACCURATE” |           |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|                         | 1942<br>%          | 1941<br>% | 1942<br>%          | 1941<br>% | 1942<br>%       | 1941<br>% |
| Radio Bulletins . . . . | 17.1               | 14.8      | 25.2               | 27.9      | 44.9            | 42.5      |
| Radio Commentators      | 55.3               | 52.9      | 35.0               | 36.9      | 19.5            | 20.4      |
| News Round-Ups . . .    | 17.0               | 18.5      | 24.6               | 20.4      | 25.0            | 21.9      |
| News Round Tables .     | 10.6               | 13.8      | 15.2               | 14.8      | 10.6            | 15.2      |
| Total per cent . . .    | 100.0              | 100.0     | 100.0              | 100.0     | 100.0           | 100.0     |

The principal changes in the annual comparison of Total Cases are not to be found in trends but in degree. As for 1941, Commentators are the choice in terms of Interest and Information with Bulletins scoring best for Accuracy. In terms of Interest the Radio Bulletin is voted for more heavily in 1942 principally at the expense of the Round Tables. Only Round-Ups showed any considerable advance in terms of Information

while Bulletins and Commentators lost some ground in terms of this attribute. Both Bulletins and Round-Ups fared better in 1942 in terms of Accuracy. This may be a reflection of the preponderance of Allied sources of news in these two types of broadcast. The Round Table experts appear to have lost about 50 per cent of the believers in their Accuracy.

*Changes in movie attendance and reading habits:* Information was also secured on trends with respect to other media of communication. The question dealing with movie attendance showed virtually no change between the two years.

In comparing the reading habits of the Panel members in these two years it appears (see Appendix I, Table 2) that reading volume has remained the same and that there is only a slight trend of an increased diversity. Little difference in rank of types is found between the years. Biography, History, and Humor and Comedy each moved up one rank. The greatest increase in terms of the number of people choosing each type is found in the case of Biography, named by 22 per cent more people in 1942 as a type of reading. History, Humor and Comedy, and Science each were mentioned as a type read by about 12 per cent more people in 1942.

### *Summary*

The Listener Panel technique possesses certain definite advantages for qualitative measurement of radio programs. Foremost among these is the fact that a virtually constant and identical group is available for the examination of a series of programs. Experience in the 1941 CBS Panel indicated that about 60 per cent of the original group enlisted co-operated in the study for eight consecutive weeks and no program was commented upon by fewer than three-fourths of the Panel membership.

Since mail questionnaires can be used in such an operation, it is possible to survey rather larger and more diverse groups of people than would be economically feasible using personal interviewers. On the other hand, the fact that a panel is best selected at the outset by personal interview, gives to this technique advantages peculiar to the use of personal calls. It is possible to make a very careful, i.e., representative selection of panel members. Second, in the first personal contact, rather elaborate preliminary questionnaires can be used. This way information on the Panel members can be selected in advance of and not influenced by the respondents' actual participation in the listening to programs. These programs are heard in normal conditions at home; the questionnaires are answered in the same familiar surroundings.

Questionnaires designed to measure certain aspects of every program permit detailed comparisons of one program with another in evaluating a series. In addition, smaller units and more specific aspects of each program can be examined by questionnaire for analysis of the individual program structure.

Obviously many other phases of radio can be studied with such a group. Data on such factors as reading habits, program preferences, movie attendance, etc., serve as valuable aids in analyses of radio programs.

The charge of "bias" leveled at Panel operations had little weight in our case. When groups were matched with the Panel on factors of age, sex, income, etc., and varied only in that one group had agreed to listen while the other group had voluntarily chosen to listen to the program, only slight differences are found in their attitudes toward the show. Actually the "voluntary" group was the more favorably inclined. This procedure was used on the first and last programs of the series and

no real differences were found between the groups at either time.

As a means of deriving qualitative information on radio programs the listener Panel technique has proven useful at a reasonable cost.



## THE INTERVIEWER BIAS

by Alfred Udow and Rena Ross

MOST of the data upon which we base results in radio research are gained from personal interviewing. The question of the interviewer, himself, introducing a bias into his findings, plays the same role in the social sciences as the accuracy of measuring instruments plays in the physical sciences.<sup>1</sup> How can we come out with statements about people's program or station preferences, if we do not know the extent to which such results are influenced by the interviewer's own listening habits or other characteristics?

There are two ways to study this interviewer bias. Either we can make controlled experiments: for this purpose we must find ways by which interviewers with different characteristics are distinguished; we must assign, by a careful use of procedures of randomization, the kinds of respondents which the different kinds of interviewers shall get. This procedure gives us the interviewer bias *in vitro*, but it has two drawbacks. The expense involved, and the time it takes to set up a well controlled experiment, are considerable and make such efforts rather rare occurrences.

The other way is to "let nature take its course." After all, there are thousands of interviews performed every month, and nothing is simpler than to ascertain the attitudes and charac-

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of previous studies on the interviewer bias, *cf.* the bibliography in A. Udow, "The Interviewer Effect," *Archives of Psychology*, No. 277, 1942.

teristics of the interviewers in order to see how they are related to the returns they bring in from the field. But this approach brings up its own difficulties. Not having set the stage ourselves, we never know what other factors enter into the situation, and rather subtle treatment of the data is necessary to make sure that we really are dealing with interviewer-effect. The experiments and results here reported will, we hope, contribute to the clarification of the whole problem.

### AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECT OF EXPERIMENTALLY INTRODUCED BIAS <sup>2</sup>

#### *Outline of Procedure*

The general procedure adopted was that of conducting a controlled poll which had features of both a public opinion study and a market research survey. The answers of the interviewers to the questions they were to ask were determined in advance. The questionnaire used consisted of 8 questions, the last 4 of which were used for this aspect of the study. These questions are as follows:

5. What brand of toothpaste or toothpowder or liquid dentifrice have you seen or heard advertised lately?  
Brands .....
6. What brand of dentifrice advertises "For the smile of beauty . . ." .....
- What brand of dentifrice advertises "Do as your dentist does . . ." .....
- What brand of dentifrice advertises ". . . 4 out of 5 may get it . . ." .....
7. What brand of dentifrice do you use? .....
8. If your favorite brand of dentifrice were all sold out, what brand would you buy instead? .....

<sup>2</sup> This and the following experiment were conducted by Udow.

At the bottom of the questionnaire forms blanks were provided for the interviewer to record the following facts about the respondents: socio-economic level, estimated age, sex, marital status, and specific occupation. (If the respondent was not working, the interviewer was instructed to record the occupation of the head of the family.) Finally, the interviewer was to name the place of the interview and sign his own name.

The interviewers completed two surveys, identical in every respect except that in the first survey they had no instructions whatever as to commercial sponsorship, while in the second survey they were supplied with definite (false) information concerning the sponsor. These sponsorship instructions applied only to the four questions given above.

Question 5 was intended to be a record of the brand names that had impressed themselves upon the respondents. In such a question, concerned with partial memory, interviewer-effect would have minimal difficulty in manifesting itself. The first advertising slogan of Question 6 is that of Ipana Toothpaste, the second, of Dr. Lyons' Tooth Powder and the third, of Forhan's Toothpaste. The first and third are the brand names used critically in this study. These particular dentifrices were chosen because of the fact that their names and slogans have long been heavily advertised. Furthermore, Ipana is representative of the most popular dentifrices, while Forhan's is one of the least popular nationally used toothpastes. The Dr. Lyons' slogan was used as a form of control. Questions 7 and 8 were intended to supplement one another. If no interviewer-effect were found in Question 7 (and it was not expected that many respondents would report *using* a dentifrice for which the interviewer had a bias), it was considered that the bias might exhibit itself in the answer to Question 8. The answer to Question 7, however, had to be known in order to permit

the interpretation of the results obtained for Question 8, in the event that an interviewer-effect appeared.

*The Interviewers and Their Instructions*

Since the primary subjects of this study were not the respondents and their opinions, but the interviewers, the selection of these interviewers was of utmost importance.

On the basis of the experience of individuals who have long worked in this field, it was predicted that inexperienced interviewers would provide results of doubtful significance in a study of this type. If the interviewer-effect is observed in the case of untrained interviewers, it could be argued that this was simply a function of their lack of training. Hence it was deemed necessary for the purpose of this investigation to use people who were typical, experienced, trained, professional interviewers. It was advisable to have them typical in order to duplicate actual field conditions as closely as possible; experienced, so that problems of self-confidence, rapport, and so on, would not arise; trained, so that each interviewer's approach to the mechanics of interviewing would be as uniform as possible; professional, so that the job on hand would be taken seriously, and not merely as a means of earning pin-money with a minimum of effort.

The interviewers used were obtained from the carefully trained and supervised interviewer staff of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Denver. Many of those interviewers devote their full time to public opinion surveys. Some also work for the *Fortune* surveys, some also for the Princeton Office of Public Opinion Research. The fact that these people were accustomed to working for more than one organization was a definite advantage in this study.

All the interviewers reported for themselves all the infor-

mation they were to ask of their respondents. The group of interviewers who completed the study is almost evenly distributed in respect to economic status between B- and C-class. In their instructions they were told to obtain half of their interviews from each of these two economic groups, thus eliminating the problem which could occur in a study where the interviewers were of a different economic level from the respondents. Furthermore, all but one of the interviewers were female, and thus no question as to sex differences can be raised; all but four were married.

Since part of the plan of this study involved misleading the interviewers to the extent of naming false sponsors, it is obvious that no existent commercial or research organization could have been named. Therefore some neutral organization had to be set up for this study which could, conceivably, engage in commercial surveys; HENRY BLAKE & ASSOCIATES, *American Surveys* was used as firm name, and stationery was prepared.

The National Opinion Research Center provided the names of 47 interviewers. On May 1, 1942, a carefully mimeographed letter, on letterhead, was sent to each person on the list, requesting co-operation in a survey.<sup>3</sup> One of the paragraphs read:

You will find enclosed a sample of the questionnaire. If you are willing to undertake the work, will you please fill out your own answers to this questionnaire and mail it back to me, as soon as possible, in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope? As soon as I get this from you, I shall send specifications and a supply of blank questionnaires.

Of the 47 individuals contacted, 28 immediately indicated their willingness to do the work, enclosing a copy of the questionnaire with their own answers. To these 28 were mailed envelopes containing, among others, the following items:

<sup>3</sup> The customary NORC remuneration was offered to the interviewers.

1. A stamped, addressed return envelope. A rubber stamp bearing the name and address of the "organization" had been prepared for this purpose.

2. 35 copies of the questionnaire blank numbered for positive identification with the interviewer.

3. A quota sheet, modeled after the one used currently by the NORC. The policy of that organization in regard to assignment of quotas permits almost complete control of the makeup of the respondent group. The instructions to interviewers contained on this sheet were that  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 30 interviews required should be obtained from respondents in the B socio-economic level and the remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  in the C level. In addition 20 of the respondents should be under 40 years of age, and 10 should be over 40 years of age. This particular proportion of ages was settled upon as being simplest for the interviewers to obtain; it remained constant for all interviewers throughout the entire study. Finally, instructions called for half of the respondents to be male, and half female. The quota sheet as designed, greatly simplified the interviewer's task in keeping a record of this three-way classification.

4. A "specification" sheet. This, too, was modeled after that used by the NORC. It provided detailed instructions on asking and recording the answers to each question.

#### *Introducing the Experimental Bias*

After a period of about two weeks, 27 interviewers returned their assignments properly completed. When the completed assignment had been received, another letter was sent to each of these interviewers. This letter was individually typed in order to encourage the belief that these extra interviews were on an individual basis, whereas, actually, an identical letter was sent to each interviewer who had co-operated up to this point.

Dear Miss Jones:

Your completed questionnaires have been received and we are pleased to say that your work is entirely satisfactory.

After a conference with representatives of XXXXX Toothpaste people, who are sponsoring the dentifrice questions, we have come to the conclusion that additional interviews are desirable. I, therefore, would like you to undertake an assignment similar to the previous one. You will find enclosed, another copy of the questionnaire. If you are able to accept the assignment, please fill it out and return it in the stamped self-addressed envelope, as soon as possible. . . .

The XXXXX in this letter was filled in with "Ipana" in the case of 14 of the interviewers and "Forhan's" in the case of the other 13. The decision as to which of the two sponsors was to be named for each interviewer was determined as follows: 2 of the interviewers reported themselves using Forhan's toothpaste, 2 others reported using Ipana, while the remaining 23 interviewers used some other dentifrice. In order to provide a proper balance, one of the Ipana users was put in the "Ipana-sponsored" category, while the other Ipana user was put in the "Forhan's" group; similarly, one Forhan's user was put in the "Ipana-sponsored" category, and the other Forhan's user, in the "Forhan's" group.

The next basis for grouping was the community in which the interviewers lived. In 9 instances 2 interviewers lived in the same community, and it was thought advisable to place each pair of interviewers in the same experimental group. This was done to maintain the confidence of the interviewers in the integrity of the organization in the event that the 2 interviewers living in the same community were to meet, or to communicate with one another and discuss the survey on which they were working.

The third basis for grouping was that of sex, but inasmuch as in the group of 27 there were but 3 men, it was possible

merely to arrange to have 2 men in the Ipana group, and one in the Forhan's group.

The fourth determining factor was that of age. For the Ipana group the range was 22 to 50, with a mean of 32.08; for the Forhan's group the range was 25 to 46, with a mean of 32.83.

Of the 27 interviewers, 5 were unable or unwilling for various reasons to undertake the second survey, but the other 22 answered favorably and sent in their own completed questionnaires. By a stroke of fortune, exactly half of this group fell into each sponsorship category. When these replies were in, the assignment for the second (interviewing) survey was sent to each interviewer, identical in every respect with the first assignment.

#### *Determining the Effect*

The data were analyzed in terms of the hypothesis that interviewers in market research surveys tend to bring in results which are favorable to the organization by which they are employed. The bias is assumed to be one in which the interviewer reports results that tend to place the sponsor in a favorable light. Such a bias may be called "interviewer's sponsorship bias." In this study it was experimentally introduced.

Two possible sponsorship biases were provided: for Ipana Toothpaste (contained in the instructions to 11 of the interviewers) and Forhan's Toothpaste (contained in the instructions to the remaining 11 interviewers). If this kind of interviewer-effect does play a part in such a survey, it would be expected that two things could happen: (a) an interviewer who knew who his sponsor was, would report more responses favoring that sponsor than he would if he knew nothing of his sponsor, and (b) two groups of interviewers working on the



same study under the same conditions but with different instructions as to the name of their sponsor would bring back different results because of those instructions. In these terms, first, the "Ipana" responses brought in on the first survey by the 11 interviewers who, unknown to themselves, were later to be "Ipana-instructed," were compared with the "Ipana" responses brought in on the second survey by the same interviewers, after they had received their Ipana-instructions. A similar procedure was adopted for the "Forhan's-interviewers." (In Question 6, the only parts susceptible to this analysis were the first and third.) Second, a comparison was made on the second survey between the findings reported by the two groups of interviewers with different sponsorship information.

*Result: Experimental Bias Does Not Affect Survey*

The comparison of the number of "Ipana" responses brought back by "Ipana-interviewers" and of "Forhan's" responses brought back by "Forhan's-interviewers" on the two surveys is shown in Table 1.<sup>4</sup>

For example, in Question 5 the 11 "Ipana-interviewers" reported 124 "Ipana responses" in the first survey, when they had no sponsorship instructions, as compared with 120 "Ipana" mentions on the second survey. This difference is obviously not significant. Similarly in the case of Forhan's, we find that there are 7 answers of "Forhan's" in the first survey, as compared with 12 in the second survey. A similar procedure was followed for Questions 7 and 8 with no comparison more striking than the ones indicated above.

In order to determine the significance of the differences found, it was necessary to use a statistical test for two situa-

<sup>4</sup> Since the nature of these questions was such that the respondent was required to answer with one or more brand name(s), the total number of responses for any given question may be different from the total number of respondents.

TABLE I.—EFFECT OF INTERVIEWER'S "KNOWLEDGE" OF SPONSOR  
(NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING:)

|                                 | <u>Question 5</u>             |                     | <u>Question 7</u>             |                     | <u>Question 8</u>             |                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
|                                 | <i>Without</i>                | <i>With</i>         | <i>Without</i>                | <i>With</i>         | <i>Without</i>                | <i>With</i>         |
|                                 | <i>"knowledge" of sponsor</i> |                     | <i>"knowledge" of sponsor</i> |                     | <i>"knowledge" of sponsor</i> |                     |
|                                 | <i>(1st survey)</i>           | <i>(2nd survey)</i> | <i>(1st survey)</i>           | <i>(2nd survey)</i> | <i>(1st survey)</i>           | <i>(2nd survey)</i> |
| <i>"Ipana-interviewers":</i>    |                               |                     |                               |                     |                               |                     |
| Ipana . . . . .                 | 124                           | 120                 | 73                            | 85                  | 61                            | 55                  |
| Forhan's . . . . .              | 3                             | 2                   | 5                             | 2                   | 2                             | 3                   |
| (Total answers)                 | (512)                         | (525)               | (328)                         | (342)               | (321)                         | (335)               |
| <i>"Forhan's-interviewers":</i> |                               |                     |                               |                     |                               |                     |
| Ipana . . . . .                 | 90                            | 83                  | 37                            | 38                  | 44                            | 35                  |
| Forhan's . . . . .              | 7                             | 12                  | 6                             | 8                   | 2                             | 6                   |
| (Total answers)                 | (542)                         | (509)               | (335)                         | (371)               | (328)                         | (322)               |

tions: (a) Differences between "Ipana" responses brought in by "Ipana-interviewers" on the first survey and "Ipana" responses brought in by the same interviewers on the second survey, and (b) differences between "Forhan's" responses brought in by "Forhan's-interviewers" on the first survey and "Forhan's" responses brought back by "Forhan's-interviewers" on the second survey. The "t" test was used for the determination of statistical significance. (This technique is discussed in most standard statistical texts.) None of the "t's" meet even the 10 per cent level and this leaves no doubt that the differences are not significant. We can safely say, then, that the interviewer's knowledge of sponsorship did not affect the results.

### TESTING THE ROLE OF "ORIGINAL" BIAS

#### *Procedure*

This study was designed to investigate public opinion situations. For this reason four "public opinion" questions were asked:

1. Have you gone to the movies this week? Yes . . . . No . . . .  
(If yes) How often? . . . .  
(If no) Would you have gone if you had the time? Yes . . . .  
No . . . . DK . . . .
2. Do you enjoy war stories in the movies? Yes . . . . No . . . .  
DK . . . .  
(If yes) Would you like to see more of them? Yes . . . . No . . . .  
DK . . . .  
(If no) Do you like to see news reels dealing with the war?  
Yes . . . . No . . . . DK . . . .
3. Do you feel that half a pound of sugar a week is sufficient for  
your needs? Yes . . . . No . . . . DK . . . .  
Do you think that rationing is a satisfactory method of controlling  
sugar distribution? Yes . . . . No . . . . DK . . . .
4. Do you feel that turning in old toothpaste tubes when you buy  
toothpaste is an important contribution to wartime metal salvage?  
Yes . . . . No . . . . DK . . . .

Question 1 was included as a "buffer," in accordance with the usual practice in this work. Question 2 was intended to continue the trend of thought established in Question 1, but in addition to deal with a problem of current significance. This led quite naturally to a question (Number 3) dealing with another aspect of war-time America, namely the sugar-rationing situation which had just confronted the residents of this country. A question concerning rationing suggested immediately one relating to metal salvage (Number 4).

These public opinion type questions were asked of the same respondents as the market research type questions already discussed. Indeed, the instructions and all other conditions affecting the interviewers were alike for both types of questions. Sponsorship instructions, of course, applied only to the dentifrice questions. In this sense no bias was experimentally introduced in connection with the public opinion type questions. However, it is assumed that a bias on those questions was present—the opinion that the interviewer brings ready made to

the study. This may be called an interviewer's "original" bias, and for the purposes of this study it is considered to be simply in the direction of the interviewer's own answer to a particular item given before starting the survey.<sup>5</sup> An interviewer who himself answers a question with "Yes" is called a "Yes-interviewer." If the hypothesis is true, "Yes-interviewers" report more "Yes" answers than do "No-interviewers." This treatment was applicable to questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. Question 6, it will be remembered, asked the respondent to name the dentifrice using each of three advertising slogans. Such a question could be treated both as a public opinion and a market research type question. However, when considered as a public opinion type question, a distinction ought to be made since it deals with a matter of fact rather than of opinion alone. For this reason, the interviewer's bias was considered in the direction of the correctness or incorrectness of his own response.

An interviewer who himself answered "Ipana" to the first slogan of Question 6 was considered a "Right-interviewer." A response of either "Don't Know" or some other dentifrice name caused the interviewer to be classified as either a "Don't Know" or a "Wrong" interviewer, respectively. Similar treatment was accorded, independently, to each of the other two parts of the question, with "Dr. Lyons'" being the correct answer for the second part of the question and "Forhan's" being the correct answer for the third part.

The "interviewer's original bias" has often been assumed to manifest itself in public opinion polls. This bias was not experimentally modified in this investigation, but was taken as it was found, thus conforming to the usual situation in public opinion

<sup>5</sup> It should be remembered that an interviewer's "original" bias may be modified to fall in line with the answers he receives while engaged in the survey. This "majority opinion" bias is not investigated here. The interviewer's opinion was determined only twice—once before each of the surveys.

polls where the interviewers bring ready-made opinions with them.

*Result: "Original" Bias Has No Effect*

Analysis of the interviewers' own answers to the "public opinion" type questions on both surveys shows that, for the most part, they were consistent in their responses. Most changes took place in the answers to the three parts of Question 6 in which, either as a result of the knowledge of the majority opinion ("climbing on the band-wagon") or because of additional information as to the correct answer, the responses were changed. Of a total of 27 changes in the answers to Question 6, 19 were made from either a "Don't Know," or a "Wrong" response to a "Right" response.

The question as to whether the answers obtained from the respondents were affected by the interviewer's original opinion was determined by comparing the proportions of "Yes" answers obtained by "Yes-interviewers" with the corresponding proportion obtained by "No-interviewers." In the first survey almost without exception an interviewer who answered "Yes" to a question reported the same proportion of "Yes" responses as an interviewer who answered "No" to the same questions. (See Table 2 for first and Table 3 for second survey.)

In no case was the difference brought back by "Yes" and "No" (and "Right" and "Wrong") interviewers greater than 5.5 per cent, with the average difference between corresponding items on the two surveys being about 2 per cent.

As described in the preceding section, it is necessary to determine the significance of the differences between (a) the "Yes" responses of "Yes-interviewers" and the "Yes" responses of "No-interviewers" and (b) the differences between "Right"

TABLE 2.—EFFECT OF INTERVIEWER'S ORIGINAL OPINION ON RESPONDENT'S ANSWER  
(FIRST SURVEY)

| Question # | Interviewer's response | Number of interviewers | Per cent of respondents answering |       | Total number of respondents = 100% |
|------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
|            |                        |                        | Yes                               | No    |                                    |
| 1.         | Yes                    | 5                      | 34                                | 66    | 150                                |
|            | No                     | 17                     | 34                                | 66    | 510                                |
| 2.         | Yes                    | 12                     | 52                                | 43    | 360                                |
|            | No                     | 9                      | 48                                | 47    | 270                                |
| 3a.        | D.K.                   | 1                      | (37)                              | (63)  | 30                                 |
|            | Yes                    | 19                     | 78                                | 18    | 570                                |
| 3b.        | No                     | 3                      | 78                                | 18    | 90                                 |
|            | D.K.                   | ..                     | ..                                | ..    | ..                                 |
| 4.         | Yes                    | 21                     | 86                                | 6     | 630                                |
|            | No                     | 1                      | (77)                              | (17)  | 30                                 |
| 4.         | D.K.                   | ..                     | ..                                | ..    | ..                                 |
|            | Yes                    | 17                     | 79                                | 11    | 510                                |
| 4.         | No                     | 1                      | 83                                | 7     | 30                                 |
|            | D.K.                   | 4                      | 80                                | 13    | 120                                |
| 6a.        | Right                  | 15                     | Right                             | Wrong | 450                                |
|            | Wrong                  | 1                      | 54                                | 13    | 33                                 |
| 6b.        | D.K.                   | 6                      | (67)                              | (6)   | 30                                 |
|            | Right                  | 13                     | 38                                | 19    | 180                                |
| 6c.        | Wrong                  | 1                      | 44                                | 9     | 390                                |
|            | D.K.                   | 8                      | 27                                | 13    | 60                                 |
| 6c.        | Right                  | 1                      | 24                                | 18    | 30                                 |
|            | Wrong                  | 9                      | (17)                              | (10)  | 58                                 |
| 6c.        | D.K.                   | 12                     | 5                                 | 24    | 30                                 |
|            |                        |                        | 5                                 | 20    | 270                                |
|            |                        |                        | 5                                 | 20    | 360                                |

TABLE 3.—EFFECT OF INTERVIEWER'S ORIGINAL OPINION ON RESPONDENT'S ANSWER  
(SECOND SURVEY)

| Question # | Interviewer's response | Number of interviewers | Per cent of respondents answering |       | Total number of respondents = 100% |
|------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
|            |                        |                        | Yes                               | No    |                                    |
| 1.         | Yes                    | 7                      | 50                                | 50    | 210                                |
|            | No                     | 15                     | 35                                | 65    | 450                                |
| 2.         | Yes                    | 8                      | 58                                | 38    | 240                                |
|            | No                     | 13                     | 53                                | 42    | 390                                |
| 3a.        | D.K.                   | 1                      | (37)                              | (40)  | 30                                 |
|            | Yes                    | 20                     | 84                                | 14    | 600                                |
|            | No                     | 2                      | 72                                | 28    | 60                                 |
|            | D.K.                   | ..                     | ..                                | ..    | ..                                 |
| 3b.        | Yes                    | 21                     | 85                                | 7     | 630                                |
|            | No                     | 1                      | (77)                              | (10)  | 30                                 |
| 4.         | Yes                    | 19                     | 81                                | 6     | 570                                |
|            | No                     | 2                      | 75                                | 10    | 60                                 |
|            | D.K.                   | 1                      | (60)                              | (30)  | 30                                 |
|            |                        |                        | Right                             | Wrong | Don't Know                         |
| 6a.        | Right                  | 21                     | 51                                | 13    | 630                                |
|            | Wrong                  | 1                      | (40)                              | (23)  | 30                                 |
| 6b.        | D.K.                   | ..                     | ..                                | ..    | ..                                 |
|            | Right                  | 19                     | 34                                | 14    | 570                                |
|            | Wrong                  | 1                      | (37)                              | (23)  | 30                                 |
|            | D.K.                   | 2                      | 25                                | 28    | 60                                 |
| 6c.        | Right                  | 7                      | 10                                | 17    | 210                                |
|            | Wrong                  | 5                      | 3                                 | 29    | 150                                |
|            | D.K.                   | 10                     | 4                                 | 22    | 300                                |
|            |                        |                        |                                   |       |                                    |

responses of "Right-interviewers" and the "Right" responses of "Wrong-interviewers."

Again the "t" test was used for the determination. In all cases where the test was applicable the differences are shown to be not significant, again with none of the "t's" meeting even the 10 per cent level.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it can be said that application of the test leaves no question that in this part of the experiment, as in the controlled part, no interviewer-effect appears.

Although no interviewer-effect was found upon individual treatment of the questions, there was the possibility that some overall effect might be found in which those interviewers whose opinions were those of the majority, brought back more majority responses than did those interviewers whose opinions coincided with those of the minority. With this in mind, the majority responses reported by interviewers who held majority opinions were compared with the majority responses reported by interviewers who themselves had minority opinions, after lumping all of the public opinion type questions. This treatment, too, did not indicate any significant differences and in no way altered conclusions otherwise derived. It would seem, then, that the result shows that interviewers do not affect their data in ways favorable to the opinions they themselves hold, or which they think are favorable to the individuals or organization sponsoring this study.

### *Limitations*

In these two studies the interviewers were thoroughly trained in the best-known techniques of interviewing. Before being placed on the staff of the organization which had provided their

<sup>6</sup> The test is not applicable for two of the differences. In Question 1 on the second survey almost all of the difference is the product of a single interviewer's work. In the case of Question 3, the groups being compared consist of 20 members against 2.



names, they were required to read a comprehensive manual describing the public opinion process and the best methods of handling the exacting task of interviewing. In addition, the interviewers were individually trained by supervisors, and were constantly being refreshed and brought up-to-date by pamphlets which were mailed to them regularly. There is general agreement that the interviewers used are among the best in the country, and in this sense are not representative of the run-of-the-mill interviewers.

Another limitation of the studies is the probable fact that there was but little personal involvement of the interviewers in any of the questions. (It is unfortunate that in some questions there was an unequal division of opinion among the interviewers, resulting in a comparison of a large group with a small group.) While it is true that the interviewers had opinions, and that they knew who the "sponsor" was, there is no evidence to show that they regarded the questions as important, or that the sponsor was of great significance to them. We do not yet know whether questions with greater personal involvement would result in an interviewer-effect. Similarly, the kind of training, and the minimum amount of training needed to result in a poll free from interviewer-effect, remain to be determined. The conclusion from these studies is limited to the demonstration that, contrary to popular belief, it is possible to conduct a poll or survey in which the interviewer-effect is not an important uncontrolled variable.

SOME FACTORS INVOLVED IN "ORIGINAL" BIAS<sup>7</sup>*The Problem*

There is an important technical difference between the two results reported so far. If bias is experimentally induced, any effect we find can be attributed to this bias. But if we just correlate the "original" bias of the interviewer with the reports he brings from the field, we do not know whether the interviewer's bias caused differences in his findings, or whether a more complex relationship exists. To study this further problem we chose questions related to politics, which were more likely to provide the ego-involvement just discussed; and we worked with data as they daily flow over the desks of a leading American polling organization.

Two studies were used, which we shall hereafter distinguish by these letters:

Study A. February 1942: 115 interviewers, 1,758 cases.

Study B. April 1942: 126 interviewers, 1,450 cases.

The basic procedure was to have the interviewers themselves fill in the questionnaire which they were to use in the field. If an interviewer was selected in a community, no other interviewer in the same community was chosen for the same study.

The problem is to see whether the opinions of the interviewer and of his respondents are related, and if so how. The actual wording of the questions we intend to use in this report can be seen from a table to be given later (Table 7).

Picking one of the questions for simplification, Table 4 seems at first glance to contradict the results of the previous section: interviewers who approve of Roosevelt's home policies return

<sup>7</sup> This study was done by Ross.

TABLE 4.—INTERVIEWERS' AND RESPONDENTS' OPINION AS TO THE APPROVAL OF ROOSEVELT'S HOME POLICY

| <i>Respondents</i>            | <i>Interviewers</i>   |                          |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|                               | <i>Approving</i><br>% | <i>Disapproving</i><br>% |
| Approving . . . . .           | 71                    | 62                       |
| Disapproving . . . . .        | 29                    | 38                       |
| Total per cent . . . . .      | 100                   | 100                      |
| Total number of cases . . . . | 785                   | 493                      |

more approval of their respondents than those who do not approve. However, we have to consider the difference between such a cross-tabulation of two sets of data on the one hand, and the logic of a controlled experiment, on the other hand. For the purpose of a controlled experiment it would have been necessary for us to have assigned at random to the approving and the disapproving interviewers, what respondents they should interview. This, however, has not been done; the interviewers selected their own respondents.

It might be, therefore, that the people interviewed by approving interviewers were different, to begin with, as compared with those interviewed by disapproving interviewers. In this case we would not have *opinion bias*, but *selection bias*. In a controlled experiment, no selection bias is possible. The only thing we catch there is whether the attitude of the interviewer is reflected in the attitude of his respondents. The selection bias is therefore the new topic we have to investigate now.

The obvious factor to investigate in this study was the political affiliation of interviewer and respondent. It was known from other studies that people's attitude toward the war issues is affected, to a certain degree, by their political affiliation, as expressed in the candidate for whom they voted in the 1940 presidential election.<sup>8</sup> People who voted for Roosevelt in 1940

<sup>8</sup> P. F. Lazarsfeld and R. Durant, "National Morale, Social Cleavage, and Political Allegiance," *Journ. Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1942.

were more likely to approve of his war policy abroad and at home, after the beginning of the war in 1941, than were those people who in 1940 had voted for Willkie. If, then, Roosevelt interviewers are more likely to pick Roosevelt respondents for their interviews, the results of Table 4 could be explained by the following considerations:

- (a) The opinion of interviewers on war problems is related to their political affiliation.
- (b) Interviewers with political affiliations are likely to select respondents who have the same political affiliation.
- (c) For the respondents, too, opinion on war matters and political affiliation are related.
- (d) Therefore the relationship between interviewers' and respondents' opinions, as expressed in Table 4, is not due to the effect of interviewer's opinion upon respondent's opinion, but due to the selection-bias formulated in point (b).

#### *The Existence of Selection Bias*

Since proof of (a) and (c) has been established in the previous study just quoted, we can concentrate here on point (b), the question of selection bias. That this bias exists is easily established. Table 5 gives the proportion of Roosevelt respondents reported by the interviewers in both studies. We are not including those respondents who, according to their reports, did not vote in 1940.

TABLE 5.—PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO VOTED FOR ROOSEVELT AS REPORTED BY TWO KINDS OF INTERVIEWERS IN TWO STUDIES

| <i>Vote of<br/>interviewer</i> | <i>Proportion of Roosevelt respondents</i> |                                |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|                                | <i>Reported in<br/>Study A</i>             | <i>Reported in<br/>Study B</i> |
| Roosevelt .....                | 53.4                                       | 50.8                           |
| Willkie .....                  | 41.7                                       | 39.5                           |

We see that in both studies Roosevelt interviewers reported more Roosevelt respondents than did Willkie interviewers. The differences are statistically significant on the .01 level in both studies.

Even this result, however, is not quite final because it still must be strengthened in the face of the following objection. What if this so-called selection bias turned out to be the effect of a very normal situation: namely, that the Democratic interviewer in the South could not avoid a high proportion of Roosevelt voters, and, in the same way, a Republican interviewer in upper New York State could not help interviewing a high proportion of Republican respondents? Since relatively more Democratic interviewers in the South may be expected, and conversely, fewer may be expected in the Republican states, the "bias" may dissolve.

In order to examine this point, the 1940 Presidential election returns were obtained for each town in which interviewing in Studies A and B took place, and the towns divided into four groups, ranging from Extremely Republican to Extremely Democratic. The first group consisted of predominantly Republican communities, in which the election results were less than 40 per cent for Roosevelt and correspondingly 60 per cent, or higher for Willkie. Groups 2 and 3 were the more evenly divided communities, group 2 including all towns that were 41-50 per cent Democratic, and group 3 of towns that were 51-60 per cent Democratic. The fourth group was predominantly Democratic, consisting of towns that had polled 61 per cent or more Roosevelt votes. This matching technique enables us to control regional political variations, and to repeat, within each group, the selection bias analysis with the community factor held fairly constant (see Table 6).

TABLE 6.—PROPORTION OF ROOSEVELT RESPONDENTS REPORTED BY ROOSEVELT AND WILLKIE INTERVIEWERS IN AREAS OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL STRUCTURE

| <i>Selected by:</i>              | <i>Proportion of Roosevelt respondents in areas where:</i> |                               |                               |                               |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                  | <i>Dem. votes<br/>40% or less</i>                          | <i>Dem. votes<br/>41%-50%</i> | <i>Dem. votes<br/>51%-60%</i> | <i>Dem. votes<br/>61%-70%</i> |
| <i>Study A</i>                   |  |                               |                               |                               |
| Roosevelt interviewers . . . . . | 39.6   | 47.0                          | 58.9                          | 61.0                          |
| Willkie interviewers . . . . .   | 33.3   | 38.9                          | 49.4                          | 52.0                          |
| Total number of towns . . . . .  | 15   | 31                            | 22                            | 25                            |
| <i>Study B</i>                   |  |                               |                               |                               |
| Roosevelt interviewers . . . . . | 40.3   | 43.0                          | 45.3                          | 66.0                          |
| Willkie interviewers . . . . .   | 22.4   | 40.2                          | 43.7                          | 36.3                          |
| Total number of towns . . . . .  | 16   | 29                            | 20                            | 20                            |

The preceding table shows that the Roosevelt interviewers consistently selected a higher average proportion of Roosevelt respondents than did the Willkie interviewers in the same group. The figures in the first line are invariably larger than the corresponding figures in the second line. Table 6, incidentally, also shows, as would be expected, that the proportion of Roosevelt respondents reported is practically proportional to the number of people who have actually voted for Roosevelt in the different towns. The figures go up strongly from left to right.<sup>9</sup>

This discounts the objection that the selection bias could be explained by differences in the political structure of various areas. The bias has been confirmed within each politically homogeneous group: Roosevelt interviewers consistently select a higher proportion of Roosevelt respondents than do Willkie interviewers; and conversely, Willkie interviewers select a higher proportion of Willkie voters than do Roosevelt interviewers.

This clearly established selection bias may be caused by an

<sup>9</sup> A statistically more refined presentation of this result is on file at the Office of Radio Research.

interviewer's tendency to seek his respondents in sections and groups of the town he is familiar with. And since equal nationality, religion, etc. (factors rarely considered in sampling procedures) may in themselves account for similar political attitudes, selection bias is understandable.<sup>10</sup>

*Is There a Remaining Opinion Bias?*

There is this question still to be answered: Does the established selection bias explain all of the inter-relationship indicated in Table 4 and similar tables? To answer this question we must repeat our analysis with such groups for which no political selection bias can exist because to begin with, we make them politically homogeneous. The appropriate procedure consists in dividing our material into four groups. This has been done for both studies. The groups are:

1. Roosevelt-respondents interviewed by Roosevelt-interviewers.
2. Willkie-respondents interviewed by Roosevelt-interviewers.
3. Roosevelt-respondents interviewed by Willkie-interviewers.
4. Willkie-respondents interviewed by Willkie-interviewers.

Under these changed conditions, we consider an opinion bias as established if the correlation between interviewers' and respondents' opinions, as revealed for the total sample in Table 4, holds true *within* one or more of these groups. Do we find that interviewers who happen to approve of a specific issue, such as Roosevelt's home policy, return more approvals for this

<sup>10</sup> This interpretation is corroborated by results found in a community study made during the last Presidential campaign in Sandusky, Ohio. There it was found that people who were acquainted with each other, and especially people belonging to the same family, are likely to vote for the same candidate. The average American citizen lives, so to speak, in a politically homogeneous environment.

policy from their respondents than interviewers who do not happen to approve of this issue if both types of interviewers have asked respondents who voted for the same man as they did, or conversely, if both types of interviewers asked respondents who voted for a different man than the interviewers?

In order to determine the existence of opinion bias, we will present the proportion of approving respondents in the indicated way for all questions under consideration. (See Table 7.)

The way to read Table 7 is as follows: the first column quotes the wording of the question. To each question the table indicates two groups of answers: those reported by approving interviewers and those reported by disapproving interviewers. The answers are tabulated separately for the four homogeneous groups outlined above. For example, the first question was answered approvingly by 90 per cent of those who were interviewed by approving interviewers, and by 80.7 per cent of those who were interviewed by disapproving interviewers; this result pertains to a politically homogeneous group of Roosevelt respondents interviewed by Roosevelt interviewers.

The whole table consists, as it were, of 20 parallel results, each result consisting of two figures. If the upper figure in a pair is higher than the lower, then we have an indication of opinion bias: the approving interviewers get more approving returns. Now it is possible to appraise the findings implied in Table 7.

First it will be seen that in Column 1 and in Column 4, each question yields a positive result: the approving interviewers always report more approving answers than do the disapproving interviewers. Although the differences, and although the base figures are somewhat small, there is no exception anywhere in the first and in the fourth column.

The second and the third columns, on the other hand, yield



TABLE 7.—PROPORTION<sup>a</sup> OF APPROVING RESPONSES BROUGHT BACK BY APPROVING AND DISAPPROVING INTERVIEWERS ACCORDING TO POLITICAL ATTITUDE OF INTERVIEWERS AND RESPONDENTS

| Question   | Roosevelt interviewers |                        | Willkie interviewers |                        | Roosevelt interviewers |                        | Willkie interviewers |                        |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|  | %<br>(base)            | No. of cases<br>(base) | %<br>(base)          | No. of cases<br>(base) | %<br>(base)            | No. of cases<br>(base) | %<br>(base)          | No. of cases<br>(base) |
| 1. Do you approve or disapprove of Pres. Roosevelt's policies here at home? (Study A)                            | 90.0                   | (330)                  | 41.4                 | (157)                  | 91.5                   | (166)                  | 46.7                 | (107)                  |
| Disapproving interviewer   | 80.7                   | (57)                   | 55.2                 | (39)                   | 82.5                   | (222)                  | 39.0                 | (210)                  |
| 2. Do you approve or disapprove of Pres. Roosevelt's policies here at home? (Study B)                            | 90.7                   | (238)                  | 36.2                 | (105)                  | 85.0                   | (82)                   | 53.6                 | (82)                   |
| Disapproving interviewer   | 89.0                   | (46)                   | 44.7                 | (38)                   | 86.0                   | (190)                  | 33.5                 | (197)                  |
| 3. So far, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the government's conduct of the war against Japan? (Study A)   | 82.6                   | (249)                  | 53.5                 | (99)                   | 79.8                   | (241)                  | 65.6                 | (177)                  |
| Disapproving interviewer   | 70.0                   | (14)                   | 61.5                 | (83)                   | 78.6                   | (154)                  | 58.0                 | (148)                  |
| 4. So far, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the government's conduct of the war against Japan? (Study B)   | 88.7                   | (266)                  | 74.5                 | (134)                  | 81.0                   | (192)                  | 78.0                 | (197)                  |
| Disapproving interviewer   | 65.0                   | (17)                   | 55.5                 | (9)                    | 85.5                   | (96)                   | 65.0                 | (92)                   |
| 5. So far, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the government's conduct of the war against Germany? (Study B) | 91.0                   | (225)                  | 70.7                 | (99)                   | 84.6                   | (214)                  | 75.5                 | (208)                  |
| Disapproving interviewer   | 86.5                   | (59)                   | 75.0                 | (44)                   | 90.3                   | (72)                   | 69.7                 | (76)                   |

<sup>a</sup> Percentages showing significant differences are underscored.

no consistent result. Out of the ten pairs of figures, the approving interviewer brings back more approving answers three times, and he brings back fewer approving answers seven times. For the whole table, 13 pairs are favorable to the idea of an interviewer bias and seven pairs are unfavorable.<sup>11</sup>

We can therefore say that for the study as a whole there is no safe indication of opinion bias. Although the respondents' opinions follow the interviewers' opinion somewhat more frequently than not, the ratio is no proof of the existence of an opinion bias. In this sense, then, this experiment corroborates the result of the preceding sections in this paper.

On the other hand, it cannot be overlooked that if interviewer and respondent agree in their political opinion, our results show a completely consistent, although sometimes small interviewer bias on specific questions pertaining to current affairs. This suggests the interesting possibility that opinion bias is more likely to exist if there is a general background of agreement between interviewer and respondent. But our data are too scarce to permit a further investigation of this point.

<sup>11</sup> Of the 13 groups where the approving interviewer gets more approving answers, five are statistically significant. As we do not make use of this result, however, it is unnecessary to go into the details of this computation.

## ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RADIO COMMERCIALS

by Ernest Dichter

IN some research projects it is relatively easy to determine which factors and categories are relevant and important in the problem to be studied. Thorough research experience will usually be sufficient guarantee that no major factors have been left out of the questionnaire or the experimental setup, and that no incorrect or irrelevant factors have been included. This is especially true when the research problem permits the off-hand assumption of such obvious influencing factors as age, sex, income, marital status, etc.

But there are many research tasks which make it highly desirable to precede the final systematic research by a special qualitative analysis. Such an analysis is not just a pre-test of a questionnaire, but a scientific procedure in itself. It is undertaken not so much to arrive at final conclusions, but rather first to arrive at an understanding of the meaning of the questions to be asked. Many times when we are dealing with a more complicated research problem that involves psychological mechanisms, such an extensive qualitative analysis may become a necessity. These psychological studies of commodities and services aim to set up hypotheses, explanations, and descriptions of psychological processes that might have a possible bearing on the problem to be investigated. They therefore present work-models of the structure and mechanism of the problem in ques-

tion. The job of testing quantitatively the frequency and relative importance of these findings is, then, the task of larger and more detailed projects. The following report is an example of such a preliminary qualitative analysis on radio commercials.<sup>1</sup>

The method we used consisted of detailed and intensive interviews with 100 radio listeners in all walks of life, in rural and urban communities. In addition, we made observations of radio listeners in their homes. We studied and analyzed all the reliable facts discovered in other studies on the same subject and tried to arrive at a basic understanding of the psychological significance of commercials through a combination and integration of all data thus assembled. Throughout the study, we sought to understand the psychological requirements for good commercials as they stem from the basic functions of radio.

We realize that, in the end, the *selling power* of one specific commercial as against another is the vital question for every radio advertiser. However, it seems a necessary preliminary step toward answering this question to try to understand the psychological requirements for getting a radio sales message accepted and believed. A commercial must succeed in breaking through the defensive barrier most listeners have erected against an attempt of "being sold." It must be listened to rather than just being heard. This study is concerned with some of the factors which might prevent or achieve attentive listening.

### *Commercials Isolate the Listeners*

Whenever we turn on the radio, we establish a contact with the outside world. In a sense, a home without a radio can be compared to a house with closed shutters. This function of

<sup>1</sup> This writer has made such qualitative studies his special interest. The study reported here is one of about 20 such qualitative studies on different subjects undertaken for J. Stirling Getchell, Inc., an advertising agency.

radio is felt very strongly in our time. For instance, it was reported to us that hundreds of letters were sent in to the radio stations on the West Coast after the first air raid alarms at the beginning of this war, describing the weird feeling people had when they turned their dials from one end to the other and not a single radio station was on.

How far does the commercial take this contact-function of radio into consideration? While the main program keeps up the contact with the listener to a more or less strong degree, the commercial is, in most cases, an interruption of this contact. Most people complain that they feel shut off from the program for the length of the commercial:

If you are listening to a program, a mystery story for instance, and then the guy interrupts, and he talks and talks about the same old tooth-paste . . . it's so boring because it's the same old windy stuff . . . After all, you're only interested to hear how the mystery story goes on, and you just can't get on with it . . . and you don't want to turn him off, because you don't want to miss the rest of the story. It's not like reading a book; you can go on with that as fast as you like. . . .

The average commercial has no depth dimension. There are a series of acoustical and psychological characteristics that create the atmosphere of an audience, like applause, whispers, laughter, oh's and ah's and so forth. In many programs and shows the commercial is deprived of this audience background. This isolation of the commercial from the rest of the program results in an isolation of the listener. It results often in impatience and an exaggerated idea of the length of the commercial:

The stories are too short . . . you're eager to hear the rest and just then they interrupt, and just when something is about to happen the 15-minute program is all over, half of which is taken up by advertising.

The listener is also afraid of missing something. This is especially strong during broadcasts of sport events:

One of them, Bill Corman or Corwin, he was formerly sportswriter for the *Journal American* . . . he went into the Gillette Cavalcade of Sports. At least he does his advertising talk between rounds, but some of the others cut right in, and it's maddening. You can hear the crowd yelling and cheering, and you know something has just happened, but they keep on talking and talking and won't let you know.

Our analysis indicates the possibility and advisability of constructing the commercial in such a manner that the studio audience can be asked and expected to react to it, to laugh, to give expression to their satisfaction or to show any other audible reaction that might help to convey favorable psychological resonance.

### *Commercials Should "Take Their Coats Off"*

The radio plays an important role in the organization of the home. Usually the most comfortable easy chair stands near the radio, and whenever there is some serious matter to discuss or the members of the family just want to be together, it is near the radio set. In former times, the old kerosene lamp or the fireplace invited family gatherings. Radio fulfills the same function today. Much listening is done in family groups and almost all listening in a family atmosphere, and we all behave differently at home than we do in other surroundings. In a sense, we are different people.

Does the average commercial take cognizance of this home atmosphere? It is accepted that selling in the surroundings of a store is different from selling in the atmosphere of a home. No good salesman would use the same tactics or the same language when he has a chance to be admitted to the privacy of a home. What holds true for a salesman will hold true for a commercial. There are general characteristics of the home atmosphere that are common to all homes. We all "take our coats off," figuratively speaking. We are relaxed, more natural. We

are slower in our tempo, less businesslike; we want to be at ease. We are more talkative. The good commercial will adopt some or all characteristics of the home.

### *Commercials as News*

The speed with which news happens these days reflects on the medium used to transmit it. Radio has become the symbol of immediateness and up-to-the-minute timeliness.

I feel so completely in touch with what's going on all over the world if I read how many weeks it took until the news of defeat or victory reached you in former times. How much it must have lost of its zest. I can almost recall a description of the battle of the Graf Spee, Kaltenborn's report from a dugout in Spain, and another broadcast I recall so vividly was during the Munich crisis, Maurice Hindus broadcasting from Prague, the hopelessness of the world situation, and the next day hearing Hitler speak himself. We don't need historians nowadays; we can make our own analysis.

Radio serves many people as a sort of standard clock with which they compare their own individual time. When people do not listen to news for several hours, they have the feeling of being slow and behind. By listening to the latest news they readjust their speed and bring themselves up-to-date. People want the latest news, possibly before anybody else gets them. News is like a continuous drama. Every day brings new developments and new suspense.

If we compare this up-to-the-minute, dynamic function of radio as expressed in its news programs to the static tone and feeling of the average commercial, a strong discrepancy becomes apparent. "Commercials say the same thing over and over again" is one of the chief criticisms raised by people:

. . . "Home Diathermy, and I mean 'Short Wave' Home Diathermy, something new." . . . that's what that fellow advertises. Yeah, something New. That fellow has been telling that same story

for the last ten years it seems. And then he brings up that darned telephone number of his, and he invites you: "Call me up, give me a ring," and he repeats that number, half a dozen times. . . .

Although repetition is an important device in producing retention, it is not necessarily always an aid in recall. The material presented can become uninteresting, and this results in a psychological short circuit. As soon as the commercial is recognized, the listener stops listening. For the length of the commercial there exists an auditory gap and psychological deafness in the listener. If the commercial could provide the same gratifications as news reports do, it would have gone a long way towards producing an interested and attentive audience. To achieve this, the commercials, especially those on news programs, could be:

1. A day-by-day or week-by-week, continuously developing news report. Production news, personal items from the factory, human interest stories, and so forth, would be means to imitate the character of news stories.
2. Exclusive news items, with the thrill and psychology of the "First Night" introduced into commercials, would give the listener the gratification of being the first to know the facts or of getting an inside story. Any company can probably produce enough items of this nature.

*Announcer Personality Should Correspond to Product Psychology*

Every product has a specific psychology. Soap is psychologically different from a car. A car salesman is not necessarily a good salesman of cosmetics. Similarly, announcers differ.

Raymond Gram Swing, the news commentator, pronounces the word "owl" almost as if he himself were an owl, and thereby gives the name



of the product a very individual ring. I myself cannot see a White Owl cigar in any store or window without hearing the sound of Gram Swing's voice in my ears. . . .

Because announcers are associated with the product they advertise, they should be chosen according to their psychological qualification as well as their voice training. Experiments have shown that an individual voice will suggest the *same* stereotype idea as to profession, temperament, age, etc., to a large majority of people. From a practical viewpoint, it is uninteresting whether the announcer actually is the type of person his voice suggests him to be. All that matters is that his voice creates a specific impression in a majority of cases. The relationship between personality of announcer as suggested by his voice and the psychology of the product is important enough to deserve at least as much attention as the selection of a salesman.

Another point, resulting from experiments on voice and personality, should be considered in this psychological selection of announcers: The more personal details are known about the speaker, the more people will interpret these data into his voice. Accordingly, it might be good to plug an announcer in such a way that a well-rounded picture of him is created, supporting naturally his relation with the product he advertises.

#### *Announcers as Friends*

The radio has in some way taken the place of the family friend, who knows everything and gives advice.

If I am tired of the voices around me, I turn on the radio. There I hear a new voice . . . it is as if a friend had entered the room. . . .

To housewives who cannot talk about their kitchen chores to the husband because he wouldn't be interested, the commercial

announcer who discusses their problems seriously is, in a way, a necessary completion of their lives.

When the radio is on, most people feel less lonely. The degree to which radio offers companionship depends, of course, on the degree of need the listener has for it. To some people, radio is a temporary companion when they are alone. To people who are in greater need of outside support, radio personalities can often take on an all-important role in their life:

I listened once . . . now I listen every time. It's Monsignore Sheean, my dear young man, you ought to listen to that man. I come dashing home to hear his words. I think that man has more to say on this war than anyone else, and mind you, I am not a Catholic. But I do think he is a great man. . . . He says there is no victory, no victor and no vanquished in this war, unless we conquer ourselves. He says, even if our armed forces should bring defeat to Hitler, it will not be a victory if we fall back into our same selfish ways of thinking and living.

The commercial can put itself into the service of the task of the radio to be a helpful friend. It can do it by:

1. Giving helpful hints and advice tied up with the sales message, in the same way a good salesman would give expert advice. The announcer could demonstrate his interest in the buyer and listener whether he buys the product or not. The easiest way to be accepted as a friend is to act as a friend.

2. By making the listener feel he is considered a friend, making the listener the accomplice of the announcer, appealing to him directly, asking him to go out and tell other people to buy the product too. (Many small theaters use this practice. The manager steps in front of the curtain at the end of the show and asks for the recommendation of the theater, appealing to the audience as the theater's patrons and friends.)

*Steering Clear of Inferiority Feelings*

Sometimes commercials are resented because they create inferiority feelings in the listener.

Violent reactions in conversation or everyday relations are produced when we let the other fellow get the idea that we think he is *unintelligent*. The same thing happens if the commercial is handled in such a way that the listener feels he is being talked down to. One of our respondents, talking in a very annoyed manner, said the following:

I can't remember any of the commercials. I am really a very bad subject for you because I don't approve of the advertising at all; I hate it. I don't mind it so much when it's really short, but I always turn to another station the moment it comes on, except when it's news. The advertising makes me so darned mad. They talk to you as if you were a child of six.

Another respondent, a woman, said the following:

. . . Chipso, Ivory, Duz and all the others are just too ridiculous for words. They all come on, one after the other, in the morning. They all claim exactly the same things, and yet they do it as if you were too stupid to remember that five minutes ago someone else was claiming the same thing for another product . . . just as if it were the only one that existed. That's what makes me so mad about it. All they ought to do is give a straight-forward account of the product, because everyone knows anyway that they are all the same. I often wonder whether they're trying to kid me, or whether they're trying to kid themselves. . . .

It might be a basic mistake for the radio advertiser to rely on the general assumption that the average intelligence of the masses is very low. It is very doubtful whether this has ever been reliably established. Even if this conclusion was drawn correctly many years ago (Army Alpha Test), it is very unlikely that this still holds true. All Gallup polls show that a relatively small number of people are undecided in important

issues. Most of them have very definite opinions. Radio itself may have had a lot to do with the change of the intelligence level of the masses. Also, we have to realize that less intelligent people are even more sensitive to being treated in a superior manner.

People's feeling of inferiority also expresses itself in cases where they have the feeling that they are being *outsmarted* by the announcer of the commercial:

What annoys me most is when Gabriel Heatter starts talking about something and then suddenly, in the same voice, he advertises. . . . I don't think that's fair. . . .

Two other resentments brought forward are those of false, i.e., *unfounded authority* and of *affectation* in language and voice. Most people are sensitive to the slightest attempt of unqualified advice given with an air of infallibility. They tend to feel humiliated by being expected to accept such advice. They also resent an affected, unnatural manner of delivery. It seems that most writers of commercials, and the announcers who render them, have a stereotyped concept of "The Public" in mind, rather than the individual listener with his personal worries, moods and interests. A good test for naturalness of language and voice in a commercial might be to imagine it as part of a sales talk, as used by a salesman. Many of the current commercials would evoke ridiculous reception if used, unchanged, by a salesman.

It might be an interesting experiment to purposely deliver sales messages that provoke either one of the four resentments and to compare people's reactions to them with their reactions to commercials that carefully avoid these mistakes.

The four types of resentment mentioned above, which are not an exhaustive list, seem of major interest to us because they

can be traced back to inferiority feelings. This is of practical importance because when a person feels inferior, he is likely to try to compensate for it. These compensations can be detrimental to the acceptance of commercials for several reasons.

One way to combat inferiority feeling and to feel superior is to lower the value of the program or commercial responsible for this inferiority feeling. This process might be labeled *Devaluation*. The result is that people are not listening.

Just as dangerous to the intended effect of commercials is the tendency of people to overcome inferiority feelings by considering themselves not addressed by the commercials, the *Pharisee attitude*.

. . . Personally, I think the commercials are an insult to your intelligence, but I understand, or rather have been told by a friend in the advertising business, that for the people in the street, they have to do it that way. . . .

Another respondent said:

Of course you have to remember that all the commercials are aimed at the type of people who have to have it all drummed into them like that for months and months. . . .

This Pharisee attitude often prevents people from reacting to the commercials at all. To act as an *expert* and judge commercials from a superior platform is also a good way to avoid feelings of inferiority and insufficiency. Emotional reaction to commercials is blocked and an over-critical attitude substituted:

(Respondent talks in a very sober, unemotional, critical manner.) I suppose, when you come right down to it, there are two types of guys who listen to the radio. One is the kind like myself, who feels like turning the radio off the moment the program of music he has been listening to has come to an end. He doesn't want to hear any of the loud, exaggerated advertising, or any of the other incredibly silly stuff that comes over the air. The other guy belongs to the large public. He will swallow

almost anything. It is unbelievable but true what kind of stuff that kind of guy will swallow. . . .

These are some of the mistakes committed in making people feel inferior. Conversely, a good commercial will give the listener the opportunity to feel at ease and to react emotionally without resistance. It might also flatter the listener in a subtle manner. It has been demonstrated in the success of quiz programs, that people like the chance to show off and that witnessing other people's mistakes makes them feel at ease personally. Many of us are afraid of the too-perfect personality. The announcer can avoid such feelings by the manner of his delivery.

### *Commercials Are "Inartistic"*

While the printed magazine advertisement ranks as art substitute with many people and has contributed considerably to the development of public taste, radio commercials often do not seem to play the same role. Many people criticize commercials as "overloud," "inartistic," "cheap," and "dull."

We find in our interviews that most people have a very strong appreciation and sensitivity for artistic effort in advertisements and commercials. It would seem advisable, therefore, to put as much thought and originality into each individual commercial as into the building of the program. It cannot be argued that this is done generally. If it were done, there could not be so many comments on the cheapness and uninteresting nature of commercials. To demonstrate how the artistically effective commercial should be built goes beyond the scope of this analysis. But, obviously, a good commercial should set in motion our imagination and force us to visualize what is being said.

*Commercials Are a "Waste of Time"*

Most commercials run contrary to the principle of "psychological return." Thus they are considered a waste of time by many people and a necessary evil. They are the price one has to pay for listening to a program, very much like an admission ticket.

. . . The advertising is sort of boring, but you've got to expect it. They're not going to give you something for nothing. . . .

The commercial is often the signal for the listener to use this minute for something more important. Even if one family member would want to listen to the commercial, he would have to overcome the social opprobrium attached to such an attitude. He would have to defend his interest in the commercial against the annoying and ridiculing remarks of his family or guests. We must bear in mind, however, that many people do not consider commercials a waste of time out of ill will against the practice of running commercials. On the contrary, they seem often eager to get gratifications out of the commercials that would act as a sort of premium in addition to the pleasure the program gives them. This is indicated in the positive acceptance of commercials which are set up in a manner to provide fun, education, entertainment, or other forms of psychological rewards:

. . . In my particular instance, I think if more commercials were done in the type Bing Crosby does it, you'd get more enjoyment out of them, because they are very cleverly done . . . they're very humorous. . . .

*The Dangerous Moment for the Commercial*

Seventy-five per cent of our communicative behavior is of an auditory nature. But not all we hear do we really perceive

and take in. Only what we listen to actively enters our consciousness. When listening to the radio we behave similarly. Instead of rushing around the sitting room to turn the radio on and off, most people let the radio go and stop listening. This is especially true of commercials.

. . . When the advertising comes, sometimes I turn it off. (Respondent said this boastfully.) I turn it off if I can . . . it depends. If it's a short talk I'll leave it running; I might as well. I just don't listen until it's over. But if he keeps talking and talking . . . then I just turn it off. . . .

One important problem in radio advertising is the avoidance of the *dangerous moment* when the commercial is recognized as such and the listener's attention is switched off. Usually we listen through a filter which lets through only those things in which we are interested. The rest is shut out. Every time something is mentioned in the conversation that interests us, it slips through that filter into our consciousness. Since, as we have shown, the commercial is mostly considered uninteresting, it usually does not penetrate through the filter.

Different methods, used to get the attention of the listener, like shocking him through a loud voice or unusual sound, etc., do not represent the correct solution, although they might reach the ear of the listener for the moment. The problem should be attacked differently. Actually, we *have* the attention of the listener anyway, since he is listening to the program. Our task is, therefore, not to *get* the listener's attention, but to make the best use of the attentive attitude he is in. This attitude is different at different parts of the program.

In the *beginning*, the listener is eagerly waiting for the show; he expects a certain gratification and has tuned his mind to it. Why not make use of this expectant attitude in the commercial? A toastmaster, a master of ceremonies, the announcers



in small theaters—they all show how the psychology of anticipation can be put to use for commercials, and thus create a unity between announcement and program. In the *middle* of the program, the listener is completely absorbed in the mood and tone of the whole program. Any shock, through an out-of-place commercial, cruelly tears the listener out of his mood. Even if the listener were willing to listen to the commercial, he would take quite a while to adapt himself to the new voice, tempo and mood of such a commercial. This period of adaptation usually is so long as to make the listener psychologically deaf for the greater part of the commercial. At the *end* of the program, the listener has the feeling of completion. He is grateful; he has had a good time. The commercial seldom makes use of this favorable attitude. Instead, it is too often just hooked on as a disconnected and foreign element.

#### *How to Remember Commercials*

One of the chief tasks a commercial has to fulfill is to create a long-lasting imprint on people's minds and to be well remembered. Although we could not make psychological experiments on memory for commercials in the frame of this study, we unearthed several principles of memory from more general psychological studies and our own interview material that could serve as hunches for detailed tests.

(1) *Meaning helps memory*: It is much more effective to make the sense of a statement clear to a listener than to purely repeat it several times.

(2) *Memory is a system of traces in our mind*: The individual message is often forgotten, but it leaves a trace that will form, together with all other traces, a composite trace system, which is really the remembered fact. Commercials can and should be individually different, but all should contribute to

the final development of a trace system about the specific product and brand.

(3) *Recitation helps memory*: Experiments have shown that we remember best when four-fifths of the time we spend on memorizing a fact is used for reciting this fact, and one-fifth for actually reading or listening to it. Commercials might, therefore, try to get the listener to recite the message. This could be done in the form of a quiz, an intelligence test, a dialogue, or any other method, as long as the listener is incited to recite the message in his mind.

(4) *Structured material is better remembered*: Even when we want to remember a telephone number, we divide it into units, we structure it. The commercial could repeat at the end in an organized form what its main points were. (1, 2, 3, etc.) The commercial should be structured in the same way as an advertisement is. An auditory headline, an acoustical illustration, and a good acoustical layout are necessary. This layout is more than a pure verbal and logical sequence.

(5) *Rhythm helps memory*: Rhythm is a biological principle of efficiency. (Work songs.) Rhythm is widely used in all the ditties like Pepsi-Cola, etc. But it can also be applied to words and sentences. Laws of poetry and verse technique could be helpfully applied.

(6) *Right associations help to remember*: It is a psychological law that facts that are tied to each other by associative chains, are always remembered together. It is sufficient to think of one fact to conjure up the other. If the commercial would bring the sales situation in all its dramatic details into the sales message, it might establish a firm association between the two. The listener, when later entering a store or deciding on a purchase, would evoke, almost as if through a conditioned reflex, the associated brand name and claims.

*In Conclusion*

In this study, we tried to get at the problem of radio advertising in a broad and general way, in order to prepare the ground for large scale specific studies which would be keyed to the individual needs and requirements of a radio advertiser. We think that, while our findings might give valuable hints to the copywriter, they should not be considered as "cure-all" recipes. The intuition, quality, and artistic skill of the man and agency who put these ideas into practice will always remain essential elements for success.



*V. THE GOOD NEIGHBORS*



# *PROGRAM ANALYZER TESTS OF TWO EDUCATIONAL FILMS*

by Adolf Sturmthal and Alberta Curtis

## INTRODUCTION

MOST studies of audience reactions to non-theatrical films have been designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the film in teaching children. Moreover, little attention has been given to the problem of improving the film. The study reported here was an attempt to get the reaction of typical adult audiences in such a form that methods of making better educational films might be suggested.

The films were tested by means of the program analyzer method described fully in another paper in this volume.<sup>1</sup> The audiences were able to express by this device their likes and dislikes for the films while they were viewing them, and then to explain their reactions during a second running of the film, interrupted at those points to which they had shown favor or disfavor. The recording of their reactions, to explain it very briefly, was done by pens activated along a moving tape by a pair of buttons held by each respondent. The exact time of the reactions could be synchronized with the film at three-second intervals by precise checking of the timed script with the tape as it moved through the machine.

Two films were submitted to this testing procedure by the Institute for Economic Education at Bard College, Columbia

<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. Suchman and T. Hollonquist, this volume, p. 265 ff.

University.<sup>2</sup> These were *Valley Town* produced by the Educational Film Institute of New York University and *What So Proudly We Hail*, produced by General Motors.

The briefer testing of two March of Time films and two Government defense shorts contributed also to the conclusions on what the audiences like and dislike about non-theatrical films. The use of a new testing technique, and on so few films, does not permit the writers to make any sweeping generalizations. Our results are suggestive rather of the sort of thing which might be learned by further testing.

The selection of the groups to be tested raised a problem. Little is known about the typical audiences for such films. However, a study of the audiences of four educational films was going on at the same time as this testing of audience reactions. It enabled us to make a selection which was somewhat less arbitrary than might be supposed. It should be explained, first of all, that the films were taken "to the people" for judgment, for the reason that the expert is unable to predict what the audience reactions will be even though he is positive of the technical or conceptual value of the film he has made. He may even think that he sees an inverse relation between the quality of his production and its favorable reception. Whether he is correct in this counsel of despair is a moot question, but the popular acceptance of a few excellent documentaries seems to give him the lie. In any case, if the audience is not won the producer has failed even though he is right.

Thirteen groups, totaling 190 respondents, were used in testing *Valley Town* and twelve groups, including 160 people,

<sup>2</sup> The study was made possible by a grant of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in New York City. It was directed by A. Sturmthal. The experiments were made by J. N. Peterman and the present analysis of the data by A. Curtis. The full report can be obtained in mimeographed form from the Institute for Economic Education, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N. Y., 43 pp.



on *What So Proudly We Hail*. These groups consisted of college and high school students, members of businessmen's associations, unions, participants in YWCA and YMCA gatherings, church groups and housewives.

While this was not intended as a comparative study of the two films, there are contrasts between them as films which point up audience reactions. *What So Proudly We Hail* is an example of a public relations film, designed as institutional advertising for General Motors. It shows how happily one of the company's employees is able to follow the American way of life. The atmosphere is optimistic and cheerful, family happiness being the main motif. The film shows, in a straightforward fashion, the average round of activities of the family—their working, playing, eating, visiting their new home, marketing, church-going. There is practically no striving for novel or artistic photographic effects.

*Valley Town* is concerned with the problem of technological unemployment and, as a "problem" film, is more typically an American documentary than *What So Proudly We Hail*. It shows a community in two different periods—in prosperity, and then in depression aggravated by technological unemployment, and brings in a single family as an illustration of the latter condition. This production is much more self-conscious in its artistry than *What So Proudly We Hail*.

The investigators found the program analyzer a surprisingly sensitive instrument for registering audience response and for eliciting the recall of part-by-part responses in interviewing. Probably the greatest contribution of the program analyzer in audience research is that it does facilitate the selection of minute sections of the program stimulus for re-showing and interviewing. For this purpose, the scripts were broken down

into sequences and the reactions studied along them. To exemplify the procedure, we shall give in the following a detailed description of the sequences and the audience reactions for one of the films studied, *Valley Town*. Likes and dislikes will be discussed more briefly for the other film, *What So Proudly We Hail*.

For both films, the reactions were studied separately for various groups among the subjects. Group breakdowns by sex and education were made for both films. For *Valley Town*, Program Analyzer reactions were also studied separately for those who had experienced unemployment for at least three months and those who had not had such experience. The very interesting group differences can be touched upon only briefly in this paper.

## VALLEY TOWN

### *Likes and Dislikes*

For *Valley Town*, an average of 27 per cent of the subjects registered "liking" per time-unit of the film; an average of 10.3 per cent registered "disliking." It should be kept in mind, however, that it is not the average figures which matter. They are useful mainly in spotting the major deviations in reactions. The detailed film-profile, showing the reactions per three-second intervals, is given in Figure 1.

To facilitate the analysis of reactions, the script of *Valley Town* can be divided into 15 sequences. It is mainly the extremes, that is the peaks of the like and dislike reactions, which are described here. The percentages given show the proportion of people who registered "like" or "dislike" for a given section of the film.

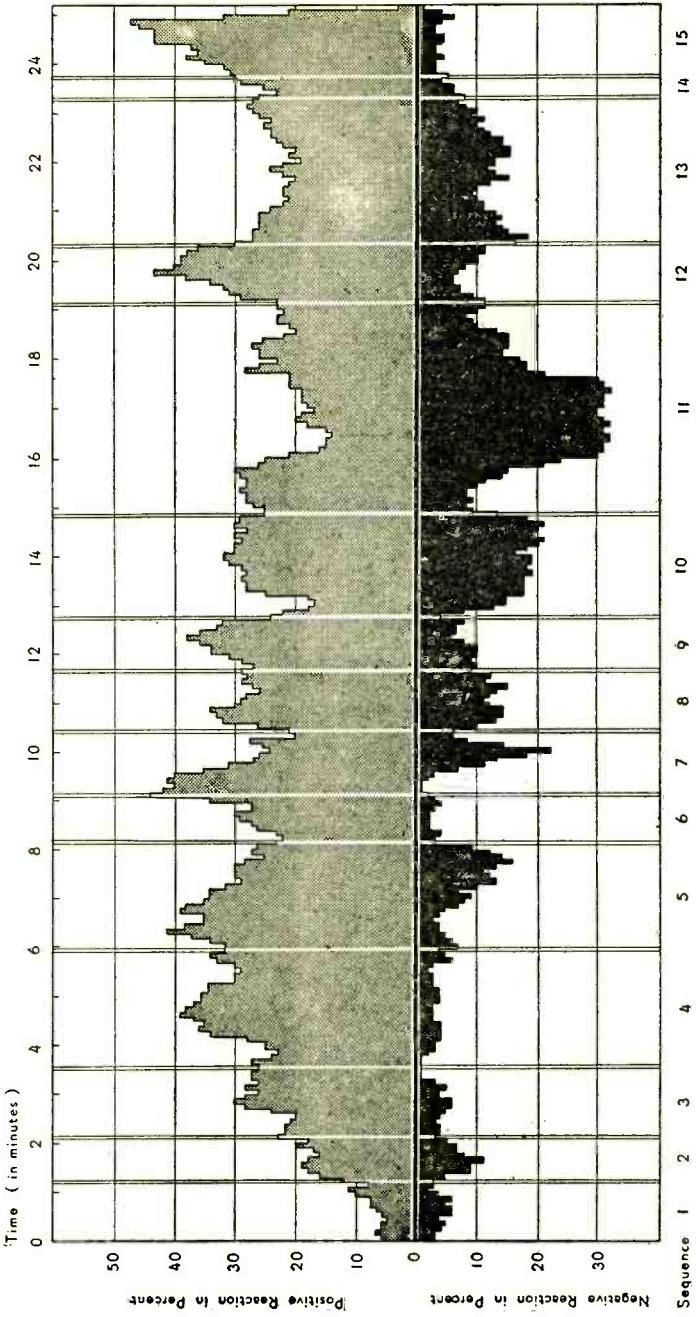


FIG. I.—LIKE AND DISLIKE PROGRAM ANALYZER REACTIONS TO THE FILM "VALLEY TOWN"

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| Sequence no.  | Time               | <i>Subjects' reactions on the program analyzer</i>   |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 11. The unemployed man's wife prepares a meager dinner and serves it. A mournful song describes her thoughts and fears.   | 14:51-19:03        | Likes and dislikes about average till <i>song begins</i> , then liking drops and <i>dislikes go to highest point</i> , over 30 per cent. More normal when song ends.   |
| 12. The mill smokestacks are cut down; a group of unemployed men watching as the smokestacks fall.  | 19:03-20:12        | Likes work up through shots of torch-operator cutting smokestacks and men watching operation to <i>third highest liking of 43 per cent at 19:42—close-ups of two men watching</i> . Liking declines but stays above average as stacks fall. Dislikes low throughout. |
| 13. The men leave the scene and crouch around a bonfire in the ruins of a building, to mull over their problem. The commentator talks of their need for learning new skills, the need for retraining and what it has cost the country in the man-years-of-work-experience lost. | 20:12-23:27        | Likes below average for this part and dislikes above average, especially between 21:39 and 22:39 as men sit around talking in own voices.  |
| 14. Help wanted once more. The war emergency creates jobs.  | 23:27-23:50        | Drop in liking for want ad, then a rise to 30 per cent as retraining plea goes on. Dislikes few.   |
| 15. Retraining for new jobs and new skills. Men at work again on machines. Shots of men at work on machines and airplanes are accompanied by an exhortation to keep our workers up to date—to remember the lesson we have learned.  | 23:50-25:03<br>end | Increase in liking fairly regularly to <i>highest point in film for very last shot—close-up of man with hair blocking in propeller wash</i> .  |

The reasons given during the interviewing period aided greatly in the interpretation of the program analyzer reactions (see Figure 1). The most frequent comments of like referred to the *action* or *process* shown in the film. Such references were made particularly for the machine sequence 4 and the train sequence 7. The subjects enjoyed these sequences either because they "liked machines" or because they found their rhythmic motion esthetically or emotionally appealing.

I liked the machines, the rhythm and the movement. I just enjoyed watching it. Especially later on, the rhythm as a whole and in the man's footwork.

The excellency of *photography* was a second major reason for enjoyment. It was mentioned particularly for the train sequence 7, also for sequences 5 (old style steel mill) and 12 (cutting down of smokestacks). If the train sequence 7 was criticized, it was mainly for its *length*, the subjects explaining that "too many machines turning" became monotonous.

Sequence 8, which showed the stopped wheels and the deserted streets, was liked for the *contrast* to the preceding sequences of motion.

I liked the contrast between the tempo of the train, first going so fast, then faster, then the sudden stopping. It was dramatic, you realized something drastic had happened.

Similar comments on the contrast, and also references to an *expected action* were made for sequence 10, the unemployed man walking home through streets with poverty stricken, idle neighbors and for sequence 11, showing him in his own depressing home.

I liked his walk home, because a sort of plot was coming up. It was beginning to get you wondering what was going to happen.

On the other hand, for both these scenes with the unemployed man, dislike reactions increased. The comments show the reason for it. Many of the subjects did not care for the *deprivational* character implied in these scenes.—“It showed that there was nothing left to do. Left a feeling of despair.” Comments of this type were the most frequent criticisms.

Conversely, the machine sequence 4 and the train sequence 7, both showing the activity preceding the depression and later on, sequence 14, showing the availability of jobs created through the war emergency, were liked for their *indulgent* character.<sup>4</sup>

I remember definitely when this started I was still enjoying the pictures of the machinery, and then I think I changed when they showed the working conditions that weren't too good, and then they led you back to the feeling of prosperity. I liked it then. The people were getting by and the young people were getting jobs in stores and so on. It was definitely good.

Comments referring to the *music* were rather contradictory. It was liked in sequence 7, where it underlined the activity of the trains, the machines and the town.

I liked the music. It fitted in with the wheels turning.

The music was disliked, however, in sequence 11, where the unemployed man's wife was singing a mournful song describing her fears and thoughts.

I don't think it was appropriate to have the girl sing that part. It would have been more impressive if she had spoken in a simple manner.

This song was the most-disliked part of the whole production.

<sup>4</sup> The terms “indulgence” and “deprivation” are derived from an unpublished classification system for content symbols in films, by Dr. Harold Lasswell and Dorothy Jones. “Indulgent” qualifies those scenes which convey pleasant, hopeful, optimistic feelings and ideas; “deprivation” those which express hopelessness, depression, loss of status or ability to function.

*Group Differences in Reactions*

The charting of reactions according to personal characteristics of the subjects tested gave some interesting results.

The film was liked consistently more by males, particularly the sequence of the lathe, both those of the old and the new steel-rolling processes, the destruction of the mill smokestacks, and the last, retraining sequence. Males also showed more numerous dislike reactions, particularly for the woman's song. Some exceptional parts more disliked by females were the more "disgusting" shots of poverty on the unemployed man's walk home, the depression street scene, the lathe and power loom. The males' likes predominate over the females' more than their dislikes. Women are more indifferent throughout, fewer of them registering either likes or dislikes.

Differences by education are less clearcut than those by sex. In general, the chart for the less-educated indicates more frequent liking by them, and the line of the higher-educated shows more frequent dislikes. Exceptional parts more liked by the higher-educated are the lathe shots, the first part of the old style steel-rolling mill, the automatic strip processes, and most markedly the help wanted and retraining sequence. The higher-educated dislike more strongly the unemployed family sequence, particularly the song, the walk home of the unemployed man, the first part of the sequence showing the men leaving the scene of the cut-down smokestacks. This would indicate a particular liking of the higher-educated for the gaining, "indulgent" aspects of the film and particular dislike of the deprivational. Does this come from greater conservatism, or greater previous realization that these facts and conditions exist and therefore greater impatience with having them driven home in this way?

A distinction was made between those people who had had at least three months' experience in being unemployed, and those who had not although they work for a living. A most interesting result comes out of the comparison of their reactions. Those who have been unemployed like the film more on the whole, and dislike it less, than others. But they do not begin to express stronger liking until after the first four sequences, or six minutes. At the beginning of each new sequence, they drop in their liking below the others, and recover their majority liking only after some delay, varying in length with the material shown. It looks as if they are more wary about committing themselves to positive responses until they know what the slant of the picture is, as a whole, and of each new sequence. When they know, they go ahead of the others in their liking. Their liking stands above that of others most clearly in those sequences which show the effect of unemployment upon *people*.

### WHAT SO PROUDLY WE HAIL

#### *Likes and Dislikes*

The foregoing section on *Valley Town* will stand as the main example of program analyzer testing of films, and the reactions of *What So Proudly We Hail* are sketched much more briefly.

Results check very closely with what has been learned in copy-testing of advertising. The appeal of children and dog, of symbols of everyday life, and of characters shown in a beautiful and indulgent atmosphere have all contributed to a high degree of liking and few dislikes for this film.



A synopsis of the script will illustrate the appeals inherent in this film.

*Titles and credits.* Printed commentary on the common symbols of the American way of life. An early morning street scene, milk bottles and newspaper on the steps. An alarm clock, its hands pointing to 6:15, and a shot of feet getting out of bed symbolize the early morning more intimately, and then Stanley Case, shaving in his bathroom, introduces himself, Mrs. Case getting breakfast in the kitchen, and the children in bed.

The parents greet their children affectionately in the kitchen, and then breakfast. Mr. Case leaves for work, after an equally affectionate leave-taking, and walks along feeling like a millionaire, though he makes about \$1,600 a year. Mrs. Case dresses the children. Mr. Case joins some of his fellow-workers, and they drive to the Cadillac plant, where they work. He is seen at the time clock, and then at his bench where he checks and inspects tools. His foreman comes along to supervise briefly.

Mr. and Mrs. Case, thanks to this same foreman's advice, are shown signing the papers and examining the plans for their new house, which they have dreamed of for so long.

Back to Mrs. Case, to find her ironing, the children playing with their dog, a most important member of the family. She dresses them per schedule, and sends them outdoors while she makes out her shopping list. The children fill a tub of water, and plunge Skippy, the dog, into it, chase him and fall into the mud. Running home, they are dressed again by their mother, and then she takes the girl to school and the boy with her while she markets.

Their dinner, and their kind of fun—a baseball game with the children—are shown, their Sunday church-going, followed by a picnic in the country.

The family meets Mr. Case as he leaves the factory at 4:30, and they go for the daily inspection of their new house which is nearing completion. They furnish it in their imaginations as they go through it, and as they leave see the exterior as it will be when landscaped.

The family in the evening, he at the radio with his newspaper, she knitting, listen with reverence to the voice of the radio commentator

quoting the words of Lincoln, followed by an exhortation by the radio voice, "Ours is a way of life we must carry on. Ours is a heritage of glory."

The children are carried to bed, and say their prayers accompanied by the dog, and the lights go out on the Case family.

*Commentary:* "The American way of living, whatever may be its short-comings, is still the happiest existence on earth."

The summary chart <sup>5</sup> for *What So Proudly We Hail* showed an average liking of 32.6 per cent, and an average disliking of 3.7 per cent. Twelve of the 18 most-liked shots were of the children or with the children as the center of attention. Six of these included the dog. The children and dog figured in no part which was said to be disliked, if any part may be said to have been disliked. They seemed to be a fine soporific to criticism.

Liking mounted more swiftly at the beginning of this film than for *Valley Town*. The beauty of the setting, the harmonious blending of the music, the common symbols of American life listed in the printed commentary at the beginning and shown on the screen—milk bottles and newspapers on porches—all contributed to an early peak in liking.

This film, like *Valley Town*, built up to the highest point of liking at the very end with the children and dog saying their prayers. The part just preceding this in which Mr. and Mrs. Case have listened to the radio speaker quoting Lincoln and then saying, "Ours is a way of life we must carry on; ours is a heritage of glory," had begun to have climactic value and approval, for a good many respondents spoke of this as the end. There was a considerable decline in liking from this, as the parents carried the children off to bed; then followed the peak of liking for the prayer scene.

<sup>5</sup> This chart and those showing group differences, are given only in the mimeographed report, cited in footnote 2.

Other much liked parts included a machine montage in the factory sequence, with the preceding shots of men at work on machines building up to it. The reasons for liking these shots were precisely like those on the appeals of the machine sequence in *Valley Town*: own experience with machine predisposing respondent to like them, the esthetic appeal of rhythmic motion, photographic cleverness.

Mr. Case walking off to his work thinking, "If they paid off in happiness, I'd be a millionaire" was liked at first by a more than average number. This shot, however, evidently lasted too long, for liking declined before it ended. It is a good example of an "indulgent" sequence, for we have a smiling character describing his own happiness against a background of a bright day and lilting music.

There were no extreme dislikes for this film, 10 per cent being about the limit of those registered for any one part. Shots disliked at least twice as much as the average were, in order of degree, the alarm clock with its hands pointing to 6:15; an unmoved Mrs. Case being kissed good-by; a close-up of feet getting out of bed; Mr. Case beginning to speak as he shaves; the whole breakfast sequence. Mrs. Case figures as the central character in 4 of the 14 most-disliked parts and Mr. Case in another 4. There is decline in liking if not increase in dislike in almost every scene where they are shown together or individually. None of the dislikes were marked enough to be taken as harsh criticisms, however.

A type of scene shifting seen with marked *indifference* is that used several times in this film—people getting into a car and driving from one place to another. No reasons were given for this lack of interest, but it seems probable that such transitions are considered superfluous and therefore do not get a response.

In the interviewing on this film the appeals which were

listed most often were *self-identification* and the *bolstering up of personal preconceptions*. Self-identification has always been considered one of the main appeals of all kinds of stories in all media, but this film is a striking piece of evidence of its importance. Examples of self-identification statements are:

That's the way my kids act in the morning.

It reminds me of the average husband getting ready to go to work, getting up. It reminds me of myself shaving. It is typical of the American way.

An example of the type of appeal classified as the bolstering up of own preconceptions is:

Well, I own my own home and I like the idea of people being interested in theirs, making plans and building.

Such statements make up more than a third of all the appeals classified in the interviews on this film.

Another important group of appeals were again those dealing with the *indulgent* aspects of the presentation; for example:

I like the way the fellow started off as though he enjoyed his life, his home, and his job.

The indulgent aspects mentioned here were almost entirely indulgence of people rather than the kind of economic or social gain which made up about half the comments of this type for *Valley Town*. Also, indulgence, when given as an appeal for the latter film, was sometimes in terms of relief from depression, or regaining of status which implied change from deprivation. For *What So Proudly We Hail*, indulgence was almost entirely positive. The "typical Americanism" of this film was another outstanding appeal.

*Group Differences in Reactions*

Females liked this film more than the males in almost all the peak points, which, it will be remembered were mostly shots featuring children. Also more liked by females were the inspection tour of the new house and the wife planning and buying and serving the food.

Men showed more liking than women for the unpersonalized opening shots of the symbols of American life, and for those parts where Mr. Case is shown walking to work, walking and riding with his fellows, and at work in the factory—especially the montage shots. There was a clear relationship between likes registered and major interests in life; the preference of women for children and domestic activity, of men for men at work in a factory, confirms our earlier findings about the importance of self-identification. How this would have been altered if Mrs. Case had been a woman with more sex appeal, or Mr. Case a more striking man, is a question that could not be solved with this film. The differences by sex were so clearly classifiable that it was possible to predict which sex would show predominant liking for each part after the first five minutes on the chart had been studied.

The differences by educational level did not lend themselves to prediction so readily as did those by sex. The less-educated seem to have been more attracted by the domestic, sentimental scenes and by the more propagandistic appeals in the script—the “plain folks” appeals and “the way of life which must be maintained.” These same parts were more strongly rejected in terms of dislikes by the higher-educated.

## SOME GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The tests of audience reactions to *Valley Town* and *What So Proudly We Hail* do not afford enough material to make any conclusive statements about how a film script should be written or the film directed. But the work done so far does allow certain general remarks to be made. There are responses in terms of *technical presentation*, of *content*, and of *personal predispositions* which seem, even with so limited data, to be typical. To verify their typicalness would require further research.

*Technical Presentation*

(1) The visual part of the film presentation seems to be by far the most important element in determining the trend of likes and dislikes as the film is seen. The variations in the charts of reactions seem to depend much more upon changes in visual than auditory stimuli. And the reasons given during interviews on the likes and dislikes recorded are much more concerned with visual elements than anything in the commentary or sound. Music, when it is mentioned, is judged favorably for the way it sustains and provides a background for what is on the screen, and unfavorably if it is considered incongruous or unsuitable to what is seen. Film music is evidently regarded as a background element mainly.

(2) There is much evidence in this material to support the simple proposition that a most essential requirement of a motion picture is that it move. In both films, there is marked liking for sequences which embody a fairly quick succession of action shots, particularly shots of machinery in rhythmic motion. The importance of action can be shown too by the many

examples of relatively greater liking for shots embodying action in a sequence which is seen with dislike.

(3) There are numerous examples, particularly in *Valley Town*, of decline in liking for certain sequences which were liked considerably at first. The respondents' reasons indicate that the decline is due to the sequences' lasting too long. Some of the much-liked machine sequences are cases. Nothing can be said about how long a sequence ought to be, since it depends entirely upon how it is done, and how the interest is sustained, but the slump in liking for some of the *Valley Town* sequences should be studied. It hardly occurs in *What So Proudly We Hail*, for in that film the sequences which get an indifferent response get it throughout an entire part.

(4) The transitions between sequences in both films meet with indifference—a decline in both likes and dislikes. This may not necessarily be an adverse criticism, because interest cannot be held at equal pitch all the way through, and it may be advisable to give mental breathing spells in an educational film. It might be that the subjects simply get tired of reacting except at the most climactic shots. But two small studies of March of Time films, *The TVA* and *Our America at War*, resulted in charts which do not have these characteristic dips between sequences. Long, slow fades between sequences are particularly apt to create such indifference.

(5) Unnecessary material or completely familiar material introduced into the film meets with indifference. For instance, in *What So Proudly We Hail*, there are several examples of the Case family getting into a car and driving from one place to another. A film does not require any such literal showing of change from one place to another.

On the other hand, common actions and symbols of everyday, typical life can be shown with favorable reaction if given

the right build-up as *symbols* in the commentary. Milk bottles on the steps in early morning, Mr. Case shaving in the bathroom, were liked as symbols of the "American Way" because of the stress on this symbolic value in the script.

(6) Close-ups of expressive faces are well-liked in general, but especially in conjunction with certain actions or ideas of which they clearly reflect the significance. Often, when a person appears after a series in which there is no human element, there is indication of liking.

(7) The *mood* of the presentation is of considerable importance in determining reactions. The depressing mood of *Valley Town*, and the cheerful one of *What So Proudly We Hail* are referred to very often as causes for dislike and like respectively. This comes mainly under the content aspect, but beauty and pleasantness of setting as opposed to ugliness and squalor, lilt-ing music as opposed to slow, clear lighting as opposed to cloudy, are presentation aspects chosen to carry certain types of content.

### *Content*

(1) To continue the last point above: The response to people gaining in happiness and possessions, managing well, machines producing, goods getting into use—all these gainful aspects termed "indulgent" in a classification for content analysis suggested by Dr. Harold Lasswell, is on the whole favorable.<sup>6</sup> Response to "deprivational" aspects—people suffering, production cut off, communities deserted—is generally one of dislike. This may be due in part to the difference in action, depression being portrayed in *Valley Town* mainly in slow-moving, rather long sequences. But there seems to be definite dislike of the deprivational which goes beyond dislike of the way it is presented.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote on page 494.



Among scenes most frequently recalled, from *Valley Town*, immediately after seeing it, those with a strong deprivational element prevail, but this is not at all conclusive evidence that the deprivational is more impressive, in general. More study would have to be made of this point to understand the relationship between enjoyment and impressiveness. *It should not necessarily be concluded that the depressing aspects should be cut out of an educational film even if they are disliked.* This data indicates, however, that the film director should handle such material with consciousness of this type of reaction. Excessive use of "grim realism" may contribute more to feelings of insecurity than it does to the driving home of a necessary point.

(2) The audiences would like to have the film tell a story. Not only do they like action within a sequence, but they build up at many points an attitude of expectancy that action is going to occur, "Something is going to happen." The expectancy of developments which is so strong a part of the enjoyment of a theatrical film gets built up also for documentaries, and in terms of considerable pleasure. Presenting people under emotional stress seems to create this demand for a story-denouement.

### *Personal Responses*

(1) There were many individual and group predispositions traceable in the responses to the film presentation and content—mainly content. For one example, the role of self-identification among the respondents' reasons for liking *What So Proudly We Hail* was amazingly high, amounting to half of all the reasons given in the interviews on the program analyzer reactions. "Well, I have children of my own, and so . . ." the children in the film create a peak in liking every time they appear, particularly in the chart of reactions of women. "I've

worked with machines and so . . ." the machines in *Valley Town* are fascinating.

(2) Another form of identification was on a less emotional plane. When the film expressed views or showed behavior which bolstered up or agreed with what the respondents thought already, it made a strong appeal. This was particularly strong for *What So Proudly We Hail*, making up another fifth of the reasons for liking in the program analyzer interviews. A home owner believes that a man should own his own home, a church member likes to see the Cases go to church, etc. This kind of identification must certainly form a powerful entering wedge for any propagandistic point which a film wants to make.

(3) The many breakdowns of the responses by personal characteristics in the detailed report of the research are too numerous to summarize. Some of them were so clearcut as to allow predictions even with the limited amount of material. In tracing the differences in reactions of males and females to *What So Proudly We Hail*, in the program analyzer charts, it was found that the sex which would predominate in liking any given part could be predicted with a high degree of accuracy after studying the first third of the script. Certain typical responses by educational level became apparent also. The higher-educated tended to like better than the lower-educated the less personalized sequences, the mechanical processes and skills, the shots with marked symbolic value, the more unusual photographic effects, such as a montage. The less-educated were more appealed to by domestic scenes, by portrayals of relations between people, the more sentimental scenes generally.

## BIOGRAPHIES IN POPULAR MAGAZINES

by Leo Lowenthal

### RISE OF BIOGRAPHY AS A POPULAR LITERARY TYPE

THE following study is concerned with the content analysis of biographies, a literary topic which has inundated the book market for the last three decades, and has for some time been a regular feature of popular magazines. Surprisingly enough, not very much attention has been paid to this phenomenon, none whatever to biographies appearing in magazines, and little to those published in book form.<sup>1</sup>

It started before the first World War, but the main onrush came shortly afterwards. The popular biography was one of the most conspicuous newcomers in the realm of print since the introduction of the short story. The circulation of books by Emil Ludwig,<sup>2</sup> André Maurois, Lytton Strachey, Stefan Zweig,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Edward H. O'Neill, *A History of American Biography*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935. His remarks on pp. 179 ff. on the period since 1919 as the "most prolific one in American history for biographical writing," are quoted by Helen McGill Hughes, *News and the Human Interest Story*, University of Chicago Press, 1940, p. 285 f. The book by William S. Gray and Ruth Munroe, *The Reading Interests and Habits of Adults*, Macmillan, New York, 1930, which analyzes readers' figures for books and magazines, does not even introduce the category of biographies in its tables on the contents of magazines, and applies it only once for books in a sample analysis of readers in Hyde Park, Chicago. The only comment the authors have to offer is: "There is some tendency to prefer biographies and poetry, especially in moderate doses to other types of reading except fiction" (p. 154). Finally, I want to quote as a witness in this case of scientific negligence, Donald A. Stouffer, *The Art of Biography in Eighteenth Century England*, Princeton University Press, 1941, who in his excellent and very thorough study says: "Biography as a branch of literature has been too long neglected" (p. 3).

<sup>2</sup> Up to the spring of 1939, 3.1 million copies of his books were sold: 1.2 million in Germany, 1.1 million in the U.S., 0.8 million elsewhere. (Cf. Emil Ludwig, *Traduction des Œuvres*, Moscia, 1939, p. 2.)

etc., reached a figure in the millions, and with each new publication, the number of languages into which they were translated grew. Even if it were only a passing literary fad, one would still have to explain why this fashion has had such longevity and is more and more becoming a regular feature in the most diversified media of publications.

*Who's Who*, once known as a title of a specialized dictionary for editors and advertisers, has nowadays become the outspoken or implied question in innumerable popular contexts. The interest in individuals has become a kind of mass gossip. The majority of weeklies and monthlies, and many dailies too, publish at least one life story or a fragment of one in each issue; theater programs present abridged biographies of all the actors; the more sophisticated periodicals, such as *The New Republic* or *Harper's*, offer short accounts of the main intellectual achievements of their contributors; and a glance into the popular corners of the book trade, including drug store counters, will invariably fall on biographies. All this forces the conclusion that there must be a social need seeking gratification by this type of literature.

One way to find out would be to study the readers' reactions, to explore by means of various interviewing techniques what they are looking for, what they think about the biographical jungle. But it seems to be rather premature to collect and to evaluate such solicited response until more is known about the content structure itself.

As an experiment in content analysis, a year's publication of *The Saturday Evening Post* (SEP) and of *Collier's* for the period from April 1940 to March 1941 was covered.<sup>3</sup> It is regret-

<sup>3</sup> It should not be inferred that the results as presented here are without much change applicable to all other magazines which present general and diversified topics. From a few selections taken from less widely circulated and more expensive magazines, ranging from *The New Yorker* to the dollar-a-copy *Fortune*,

table that a complete investigation could not be made for the most recent material, but samples taken at random from magazines under investigation showed that no basic change in the selection or content structure has occurred since this country's entry into the war.<sup>4</sup>

### BIOGRAPHERS' IDOLS

Before entering into a discussion of our material we shall briefly look into the fate of the biographical feature during the past decades.

#### *Production—Yesterday*

Biographical sections have not always been a standing feature in these periodicals. If we turn back the pages we find distinct differences in the number of articles as well as in the selection of people treated.

Table 1 gives a survey of the professional distribution of the "heroes" in biographies between 1901 and 1941.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1 indicates clearly a tremendous increase in biographies as time goes on. The average figure of biographies in 1941 is almost four times as high as at the beginning of the century. The biography has nowadays become a regular weekly feature. Just to illustrate how relatively small the number of biographies was forty years ago: in 52 issues of the *SEP* of 1901-02 we find altogether twenty-one biographies as compared with not less than fifty-seven in 1940-41. The small-

it seems very likely that the biographies presented there differ in their average content structure and therefore in their social and psychological implications from these lower-priced popular periodicals. The difference in contents corresponds to a difference in readership.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. footnote 12 of this article.

<sup>5</sup> For the collection of data prior to 1940 the writer is indebted to Miss Miriam Wexner.

TABLE I.—DISTRIBUTION OF BIOGRAPHIES ACCORDING TO PROFESSIONS IN "SATURDAY EVENING POST" AND "COLLIER'S" FOR SELECTED YEARS BETWEEN 1901-1941

|  | 1901-1914<br>(5 sample yrs.) |     | 1922-1930<br>(6 sample yrs.) |     | 1930-1934<br>(4 years) |     | 1940-1941<br>(1 year) |     |
|--|------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
|  | No.                          | %   | No.                          | %   | No.                    | %   | No.                   | %   |
| Political life . . . . .                   | 81                           | 46  | 112                          | 28  | 95                     | 31  | 31                    | 25  |
| Business and profes-<br>sional . . . . .   | 49                           | 28  | 72                           | 18  | 42                     | 14  | 25                    | 20  |
| Entertainment . . . . .                    | 47                           | 26  | 211                          | 54  | 169                    | 55  | 69                    | 55  |
| Total number . . . . .                     | 177                          | 100 | 395                          | 100 | 306                    | 100 | 125                   | 100 |
| Yearly average of<br>biographies . . . . . | 36                           |     | 66                           |     | 77                     |     | 125                   |     |

ness of the earlier figure in comparison to the present day is emphasized by the fact that non-fictional contributions at that time far outnumbered the fictional material. A fair average of distribution in the past would be about three fictional and eight non-fictional contributions; today we never find more than twice as many non-fictional as fictional contributions and in the majority of cases even fewer.

We put the subjects of the biographies in three groups: the spheres of political life, of business and professions, and of entertainment (the latter in the broadest sense of the word). Looking at our table we find for the time before World War I very high interest in political figures and an almost equal distribution of business and professional men, on the one hand, and of entertainers on the other. This picture changes completely after the war. The figures from political life have been cut by 40 per cent; the business and professional men have lost 30 per cent of their personnel while the entertainers have gained 50 per cent. This numerical relation seems to be rather constant from 1922 up to the present day. If we re-formulate our professional distribution by leaving out the figures from political life we see even more clearly the considerable decrease of people from the serious and important professions and a cor-

responding increase of entertainers. The social impact of this change comes to the fore strikingly if we analyze the composition of the entertainers. This can be seen from Table 2.

TABLE 2.—PROPORTION OF BIOGRAPHIES OF ENTERTAINERS FROM THE REALM OF SERIOUS ARTS <sup>a</sup> IN "SEP" AND "COLLIER'S" FOR SELECTED YEARS BETWEEN 1901-1941

(IN PER CENT OF TOTAL BIOGRAPHIES OF ENTERTAINERS IN EACH PERIOD)

| <i>Period</i>                       | <i>Proportion<br/>entertainers from<br/>serious arts</i> | <i>Total no.<br/>entertainers</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1901-1914 (5 sample yrs.) . . . . . | 77   | 47                                |
| 1922-1930 (6 sample yrs.) . . . . . | 38   | 211                               |
| 1930-1934 (4 yrs.) . . . . .        | 29   | 169                               |
| 1940-1941 (1 yr.) . . . . .         | 9  | 69                                |

<sup>a</sup> This group includes literature, fine arts, music, dance, theater.

While at the beginning of the century three quarters of the entertainers were serious artists and writers, we find that this class of people is reduced by half twenty years later and tends to disappear almost completely at present.

As an instance of the selection of biographies typical of the first decade of the century, it is notable that out of the twenty-one biographies of the *SEP* 1901-02, eleven came from the political sphere, seven from the business and professions, and three from entertainment and sport. The people in the political group are numerically prominent until before Election Day in the various years: candidates for high office, i.e., the President or senators; the Secretary of the Treasury; an eminent State governor. In the business world, we are introduced to J. P. Morgan, the banker; his partner, George W. Perkins; James J. Hill, the railroad president. In the professions, we find one of the pioneers in aviation; the inventor of the torpedo; a famous Negro educator; an immigrant scientist. Among the entertainers there is an opera singer, Emma Calvé;

a poet, Eugene Field; a popular fiction writer, F. Marion Crawford.

If we look at such a selection of people we find that it represents a fair cross-section of socially important occupations. Still, in 1922 the picture is more similar to the professional distribution quoted above than to the one which is characteristic of the present day magazines. If we take, for example, *Collier's* of 1922 we find in a total of 20 biographies only two entertainers, but eight business and professional men and ten politicians. Leaving out the latter ones, we find among others: Clarence C. Little, the progressive President of the University of Maine; Leonard P. Ayres, the very-outspoken Vice-President of the Cleveland Trust Company; Director-General of the United States Railroad Administration, James C. Davis; President of the New York Central Railroad, A. H. Smith; and the City Planner, John Nolen. From the entertainment field, we have a short résumé of the stage comedian, Joe Cook (incidentally, by Franklin P. Adams), and an autobiographical sketch by Charlie Chaplin.

We might say that a large proportion of the heroes in both samples are idols of production, that they stem from the productive life, from industry, business, and natural sciences. There is not a single hero from the world of sports and the few artists and entertainers either do not belong to the sphere of cheap or mass entertainment or represent a serious attitude toward their art as in the case of Chaplin.<sup>6</sup> The first quarter of the century cherishes biography in terms of an open-minded liberal society which really wants to know something about its own

<sup>6</sup> We have omitted from our discussion and our figures a number of very short biographical features which amounted to little more than anecdotes. These were published fairly regularly by the *SEP* until the late Twenties under the headings "Unknown Captains of Industry," "Wall Street Men," sometimes called "Bulls and Bears," "Who's Who and Why," "Workingman's Wife," "Literary Folk."



leading figures on the decisive social, commercial, and cultural fronts. Even in the late Twenties, when jazz composers and the sports people are admitted to the inner circle of biographical heroes, their biographies are written almost exclusively to supplement the reader's knowledge of the technical requirements and accomplishments of their respective fields.<sup>7</sup> These people, then, are treated as an embellishment of the national scene, not yet as something that in itself represents a special phenomenon which demands almost undivided attention.

We should like to quote from two stories which seem to be characteristic of this past epoch. In a sketch of Theodore Roosevelt, the following comment is made in connection with the assassination of McKinley: "We, who give such chances of success to all that it is possible for a young man to go as a laborer into the steel business and before he has reached his mature prime become, through his own industry and talent, the president of a vast steel association—we, who make this possible as no country has ever made it possible, have been stabbed in the back by anarchy."<sup>8</sup>

This unbroken confidence in the opportunities open to every individual serves as the *leitmotiv* of the biographies. To a very great extent they are to be looked upon as examples of success which can be imitated. These life stories are really intended to be educational models. They are written—at least ideologically—for someone who the next day may try to emulate the man whom he has just envied.

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, the *SEP*, September 19, 1925, where the auto-racer, Barney Oldfield, tells a reporter details of his racing experiences and of the mechanics of racing and automobiles; September 26, 1925, in which the vaudeville actress, Elsie Janis, comments on her imitation acts and also gives details of her techniques. The same holds true for the biography of the band leader, Sousa, in the *SEP*, October 31, 1925, and of the radio announcer, Graham McNamee, May 1, 1926; after a few remarks about his own life and career, McNamee goes on to discuss the technical aspects of radio and his experiences in radio with famous people.

<sup>8</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, October 12, 1901.

A biography seems to be the means by which an average person is able to reconcile his interest in the important trends of history and in the personal lives of other people. In the past, and especially before the first World War, the popular biography lived in an optimistic atmosphere where understanding of historical processes and interest in successful people seemed to integrate pleasantly into one harmonious endeavor: "We know now that the men of trade and commerce and finance are the real builders of freedom, science, and art—and we watch them and study them accordingly. . . . Of course, Mr. Perkins is a 'self-made man.' Who that has ever made a career was not?"<sup>9</sup> This may be taken as a classical formulation for a period of "rugged individualism" in which there is neither the time nor the desire to stimulate a closer interest in the organizers and organization of leisure time, but which is characterized by eagerness and confidence that the social ladder may be scaled on a mass basis.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, June 28, 1902.

<sup>10</sup> Here and there we find a casual remark on the function of biographies as models for individual imitation. Cf., for instance, Mandel Sherman, "Book Selection and Self Therapy," in *The Practice of Book Selection*, edited by Louis R. Wilson, University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 172. "In 1890 a book appeared entitled *Acres of Diamonds*, by Russell H. Conwell. This book dealt especially with the problems of attaining success in life. The author attempted to encourage the reader by giving examples of the struggles and triumphs of noted successful men and women. This pattern of encouraging the reader by citing examples of great men has continued, and in recent years a number of books have appeared in which most of the content dealt with case histories of noted individuals. Some psychologists have suggested that interest in autobiographies and biographies has arisen in part from the attempts of the readers to compare their own lives with those about whom they read, and thus to seek encouragement from the evidence of the struggles of successful people."

Helen M. Hughes in her suggestive study has not avoided the tendency to settle the problem of biographies by rather simplified psychological formulae. By quoting generously O'Neill, Bernarr MacFadden, and André Maurois, she points to the differences of the more commemorative and eulogistic elements in earlier biographies and the "anxious groping for certainty of people who live in times of rapid change," which is supposed to be connected with the present interest in biography (see especially p. 285).

*Consumption—Today*

When we turn to our present day sample we face an assortment of people which is both qualitatively and quantitatively removed from the standards of the past.

Only two decades ago people from the realm of entertainment played a very negligible role in the biographical material. They form now, numerically, the first group. While we have not found a single figure from the world of sports in our earlier samples given above, we find them now close to the top of favorite selections. The proportion of people from political life and from business and professions, both representing the "serious side," has declined from 74 to 45 per cent of the total.

Let us examine the group of people representing non-political aspects of life. 69 are from the world of entertainment and sport; 25 from that which we called before the "serious side." Almost half of the 25 belong to some kind of communications professions: there are ten newspapermen and radio commentators. Of the remaining 15 business and professional people, there are a pair of munitions traders, Athanasiades (118)<sup>11</sup> and Juan March (134); Dr. Brinkley (3), a quack doctor; and Mr. Angas (20), judged by many as a dubious financial expert; Pittsburgh Phil (23), a horse race gambler in the "grand style"; Mrs. D'Arcy Grant (25), a woman sailor, and Jo Carstairs (54), the owner of an island resort; the Varian brothers (52), inventors of gadgets, and Mr. Taylor (167), an inventor of fool-proof sports devices; Howard Johnson (37), a roadside restaurant genius; Jinx Falkenburg (137), at that time a professional model; and finally, Dr. Peabody (29), a retired rector of a swanky society prep school.

<sup>11</sup> The figures in parentheses refer to the bibliography of stories studied, Appendix J. Figures 1 to 57 refer to the *SEP* and 101 to 168 to *Collier's*. On the difference between the *SEP* and *Collier's*, see Appendix J, Tables 1, 2.

The "serious" people are not so serious after all. In fact there are only nine who might be looked upon as rather important or characteristic figures of the industrial, commercial, or professional activities, and six of these are newspapermen or radio commentators.

We called the heroes of the past "idols of production": we feel entitled to call the present day magazine heroes "idols of consumption." Indeed, almost every one of them is directly, or indirectly, related to the sphere of leisure time: either he does not belong to vocations which serve society's basic needs (e.g., the heroes of the world of entertainment and sport), or he amounts, more or less, to a caricature of a socially productive agent. If we add to the group of the 69 people from the entertainment and sports world the ten newspaper and radio men, the professional model, the inventor of sports devices, the quack doctor, the horse race gambler, the inventors of gadgets, the owner of the island resort, and the restaurant chain owner, we see 87 of all 94 non-political heroes directly active in the consumers' world.

Of the eight figures who cannot exactly be classified as connected with consumption, not more than three—namely, the automobile producer, Sloan; the engineer and industrialist, Stout; and the air line czar, Smith—are important or characteristic functionaries in the world of production. The two armament magnates, the female freight boat skipper, the prep school head, and the doubtful market prophet remind us of the standardized protagonists in mystery novels and related fictional merchandise: people with a more or less normal and typical personal and vocational background who would bore us to death if we did not discover that behind the "average" front lurks a "human interest" situation.

By substituting such a classification according to spheres of activity for the cruder one according to professions, we are now prepared to present the vocational stratifications of our heroes in a new form. It is shown in Table 3 for the *SEP* and *Collier's* of 1940-1941.

TABLE 3.—THE HEROES AND THEIR SPHERES

|                                       | <i>Number of<br/>stories</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Sphere of production .....            | 3                            | 2               |
| Sphere of consumption .....           | 91                           | 73              |
| Entertainers and sports figures ..... | 69                           | 55              |
| Newspaper and radio figures .....     | 10                           | 8               |
| Agents of consumers' goods .....      | 5                            | 4               |
| Topics of light fiction .....         | 7                            | 6               |
| Sphere of politics .....              | 31                           | 25              |
| Total .....                           | 125                          | 100             |

If a student in some very distant future should use popular magazines of 1941 as a source of information as to what figures the American public looked to in the first stages of the greatest crisis since the birth of the Union, he would come to a grotesque result. While the industrial and professional endeavors are geared to a maximum of speed and efficiency, the idols of the masses are not, as they were in the past, the leading names in the battle of production, but the headliners of the movies, the ball parks, and the night clubs. While we found that around 1900 and even around 1920 the vocational distribution of magazine heroes was a rather accurate reflection of the nation's living trends, we observe that today the hero-selection corresponds to needs quite different from those of genuine information. They seem to lead to a dream world of the masses who no longer are capable or willing to conceive of biographies primarily as a means of orientation and education. They receive information not about the agents and methods of social production but about the agents and methods of social and individual

consumption. During the leisure in which they read, they read almost exclusively about people who are directly, or indirectly, providing for the reader's leisure time. The vocational set-up of the dramatis personae is organized as if the social production process were either completely exterminated or tacitly understood, and needed no further interpretation. Instead, the leisure time period seems to be the new social riddle on which extensive reading and studying has to be done.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> It will be very important to check later how far the present war situation has confirmed, changed, or even reversed the trend. A few casual observations on the present-day situation may be mentioned.

The *New York Times* "Magazine" on July 12, 1942, published an article "Wallace Warns Against 'New Isolationism.'" The Vice-President of the United States is photographed playing tennis. The caption for the picture reads "Mr. Wallace's Serve." This picture and its caption are a very revealing symbol. The word "serve" does not refer to social usefulness, but to a feature in the Vice-President's private life.

This remark can be supplemented by quoting a few issues of the *SEP* and *Collier's*, picked at random from their publications during the summer of 1942. While everywhere else in this study we have limited ourselves to the analysis of strictly biographical contributions, we should like, by quoting some of the topics of the entire issues which we have chosen for this year, to emphasize the overall importance of the spheres of consumption. Not only has the selection of heroes for biographies not changed since America's active participation in the war, but many other of the non-fictional articles are also still concerned with consumers' interests.

Of the ten non-fictional articles in the *SEP*, August 8, 1942, five are connected with the consumers' world: a serial on Hollywood agents; a report on a hometown circus; a report on roadside restaurants; an analysis of women as book readers; and an essay on the horse and buggy. In an issue one week later, August 15, 1942, there is a report on the International Correspondence School; the continuation of the serial on the Hollywood agents; and a biography on the radio idol, Kate Smith. Or let us look at *Collier's*, which as a whole, devotes a much higher percentage of articles to war topics than the *SEP*. Out of nine articles in the issue of July 4, 1942, five belong to the consumers' world. There is again one on the horse and buggy, another one on a baseball hero, a third one on an Army comedian, a fourth one on a Broadway producer, and finally, one on budget buffets. Three weeks later, on July 25, out of ten articles, again five belong to the same category.

In other words, out of 37 articles found in four issues of two leading popular magazines during the present crisis, not less than 17 treat the gustatory and entertainment features of the average citizen.

There appears to be some cause for concern in the fact that so much of the fare presented to the reading public during the times immediately preceding the war and during the war itself is almost completely divorced from important social issues.

The human incorporation of all the social agencies taking care of society as a unity of consumers represents a literary type which is turned out as a standardized article, marketed by a tremendous business, and consumed by another mass institution, the nation's magazine reading public. Thus biography lives as a mass element among the other elements of mass literature.

Our discovery of a common professional physiognomy in all of these portraits encouraged us to guess that what is true of the selection of people will also be true of the selection of what is said about these people. This hypothesis has been quite justified, as we propose to demonstrate in the following pages. Our content analysis not only revealed impressive regularities in the occurrence, omission, and treatment of certain topics, but also showed that these regularities may be interpreted in terms of the very same category of consumption which was the key to the selection of the biographical subjects. Consumption is a thread running through every aspect of these stories. The characteristics which we have observed in the literary style of the author, in his presentation of personal relations, of professions and personalities, can all be integrated around the concept of the consumer.

For classification of the stories' contents, we decided on a four-fold scheme. First there are what one might call the sociological aspects of the man: his relations to other people, the pattern of his daily life, his relation to the world in which he lives. Second, his psychology: what the nature of his development has been and the structure of his personality. Third, his history: what his encounter with the world has been like—the object world which he has mastered or failed to master. Fourth, the evaluation of these data which the author more or less consciously conveys by his choice of language. Granted that this

scheme is somewhat arbitrary, we think that our division of subject matter has resulted in a fairly efficient worksheet, especially when we consider the backward state of content analysis of this type.

As we studied our stories,<sup>13</sup> we looked almost in vain for such vital subjects as the man's relations to politics or to social problems in general. Our category of sociology reduces itself to the *private lives* of the heroes. Similarly, our category of psychology was found to contain mainly a static image of a human being to whom a number of things happen, culminating in a success which seems to be none of his doing. This whole section becomes merged with our category of history which is primarily concerned with success data, too, and then takes on the character of a catalogue of "*just Facts.*" When we survey the material on how authors evaluate their subjects, what stands out most clearly is the biographers' preoccupation with justifying their hero by means of undiscriminating *superlatives* while still interpreting him in terms which bring him as close as possible to the level of the average man.

#### PRIVATE LIVES

The reader may have noticed in public conveyances a poster called "Private Lives" depicting the peculiarities of more or less famous people in the world of science, sports, business, and politics. The title of this feature is a fitting symbol for all our biographies. It would be an over-statement, but not too far from the truth, to say that these stories are exclusively reports

<sup>13</sup> We proceeded to collect all the passages in the 125 stories pertaining to our four categories. It is not intended here to analyze the 2,400 quotations exhaustively, but merely to present in the following chapters a few observations or hypotheses which their study suggested to us and which we hope may be stimulating to further research in content analysis.



on the heroes' private lives. While it once was rather contemptible to give much room to the private affairs and habits of public figures this topic is now the focus of interest. The reason for viewing this as an over-statement is in a way surprising: we learn something, although not very much, about the man's professional career and its requirements, but we are kept very uninformed about important segments of his private life.

*Inheritance and Parents—Friends and Teachers*

The personal relations of our heroes, on which we are enlightened, are, as a whole, limited to two groups, the parents and the friends. Both groups are taken in a specific sense: the parents comprising other older relations or forebears of former generations, the friends being more or less limited to people who were valuable in the hero's career. In more than half of the stories the father or the mother or the general family background is at least mentioned. Clark Gable's "stubborn determination" seems derived from his "Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors" (6); the very efficient State Department official, Mrs. Shipley, is the "daughter of a Methodist minister" (8); Senator Taft is a "middle-of-the-roader like his father" besides being "an aristocrat by birth and training" (101). We are let in a little bit on the family situation of Brenda Joyce because "somewhere there was a break-up between mamma and papa" (110). The general pattern of the parental home, however, is more on the Joan Carroll side, where we find the "young, quietly dignified mother . . . the successful engineer father . . . a star scout brother six years her senior" (143); we hear in a very sympathetic way about the old Fadimans, "the father a struggling Russian immigrant and pharmacist, the mother a nurse" (47); we learn a good deal about ancestors as in the case of Clark Gable cited above. Of the Secretary

of Labor, Frances Perkins, we are told that her "forebears had settled all over New England between 1630-1680" (22); the female freighter skipper, D'Arcy Grant, has "an ancestral mixture of strong-headed swashbuckling Irish and pioneer Americans" (25); Raymond Gram Swing is the "heir of a severe New England tradition" (42); the Varian brothers have "Celtic blood" (52); in the woman matador, Conchita Cintron, we find "Spanish, Connecticut Irish, and Chilean elements" (116).

The curious fact here is not that the authors mention parentage, but that they have so much to say about it and so little to say about other human relations. It is a good deal as if the author wants to impress on the reader that his hero, to a very considerable extent, must be understood in terms of his biological and regional inheritance. It is a kind of primitive Darwinian concept of social facts: the tendency to place the burden of explanation and of responsibility on the shoulders of the past generations. The individual himself appears as a mere product of his past.

The element of passivity is also found in the second most frequently mentioned group of personal relationships: friends and teachers. Let us look again into some of the material. We hear that the woman diplomat, Mrs. Harriman, was made "Minister to Norway because of her many powerful and loyal friends" (14); of the friendship between the hard-hit restaurateur, Johnson, and his wealthy doctor-friend (37); the movie actress, Brenda Marshall, was somehow saved in her career "by the friendship of a script girl" (161); Senator Byrnes got a good start because "a disillusioned old Charlestonian . . . showed him the ropes" (18); while Miss Perkins is "'protected' by her personal secretary . . . (who) worships her" (22).

There is very rarely an episode which shows our heroes as

active partners of friendship. In most cases their friends are their helpers. Very often they are teachers who later on become friends. Perhaps it is stretching a point to say that a vulgarian Darwinism is supplemented at this point by a vulgarian distortion of the "milieu" theory: the hero is a product of ancestry and friendship. But even if this may be somewhat exaggerated, it nevertheless helps to clarify the point, namely, that the hero appears in his human relationships as the one who takes, not as the one who gives.

We can supplement this statement by going back to our remark that decisive human relationships, and even those which are decisive for private lives, are missing. The whole sphere of the relations with the opposite sex is almost entirely missing. This is indeed a very strange phenomenon. We should assume that the predilection for such people as actors and actresses from stage and screen, night club entertainers, etc., would be tied up with a special curiosity in such people's love affairs, but this is not the case at all. The realm of love, passion, even marriage, seem worth mentioning only in terms of vital statistics. It is quite a lot to be informed that Dorothy Thompson "got tangled up in love"; very soon Lewis "asked point blank whether she would marry him" (9); Senator Byrnes "married the charming wife who still watches over him" (18); the industrial tycoon, Sloan, remarks, "Mrs. Sloan and I were married that summer . . . she was of Roxbury, Mass." (24); Mrs. Peabody married the Rector "at the close of the school's first year" (29). We are told about Raymond Gram Swing only that he was married twice (42); as far as Lyons', the baseball player's bachelor situation goes we hear that he "almost married his campus sweetheart" (53); while his colleague, Rizzuto, is "not even going steady" (57). In the high life of politics we are glad to know that Ambassador

Lothian "gets on well with women" (115); and that Thomas Dewey is "a man's man, but women go for him" (117); we are briefly informed that Chris Martin "married, raised a family" (121); and that "one girl was sufficiently impressed to marry" Michael Todd, a producer, at the tender age of 17 (131).

These statements of fact, in a matter of fact way, as, for instance, the mention of a marriage or a divorce, is all that we hear of that side of human relations which we were used to look upon as the most important ones. If we again imagine that these popular biographies should at a very distant historical moment serve as the sole source of information, the historian of the future would almost be forced to the conclusion that in our times the institution of marriage, and most certainly the phenomena of sexual passions, had become a very negligible factor. It seems that the fifth-rate role to which these phenomena are relegated fits very well with the emphasis on parentage and friendship. Love and passion require generosity, a display of productive mental and emotional forces which are neither primarily explained nor restrained by inheritance and advice.

A rather amusing observation: we found that the eyes of the hero were mentioned in almost one-third of the stories. It is quite surprising that of all possible physiognomic and bodily features just this one should be so very popular. We take delight in the baseball umpire Bill Klem's "bright blue eyes," in his "even supernaturally good eyes" (104); or in the "modest brown eyes" of General Weygand (107). Miss Cintron, the matador, is "blue-eyed" (116); the night club singer, Moffett, has "very bright blue eyes" (119).

We are not quite certain how to explain our biographers' bodily preferences. The eyes are commonly spoken of as "the

windows of the soul." Perhaps it gratifies the more inarticulate reader if the authors let him try to understand the heroes in the same language in which he believes he understands his neighbor's soul. It is just another example of a cliché served up in lieu of a genuine attempt at psychological insight.

*Home and Social Life—Hobbies and Food Preferences*

The heroes, as we have seen, stem predominantly from the sphere of consumption and organized leisure time. It is fascinating to see how in the course of the presentation the producers and agents of consumer goods change into their own customers. Personal habits, from smoking to poker playing, from stamp collecting to cocktail parties, are faithfully noted in between 30 and 40 per cent of all stories under investigation. In fact, as soon as it comes to habits, pleasures and distractions after and outside of working hours, the magazine biographer turns out to be just a snoopy reporter.

The politicians seem to be an especially ascetic lot—Taft "doesn't smoke" (101); neither does General Weygand (107); the former British Ambassador, Lothian, "hasn't taken a drink in 25 years" (115). There is also the movie actor, Chris Martin, who "doesn't smoke cigars or cigarettes" (121); the German Field Marshal Milch whose "big black Brazilian cigars are his favored addiction" (146). To quote some of the favorite habits or dishes of the crowd: Dorothy Thompson is all out for "making Viennese dishes" while her "pet hates . . . are bungled broth and clumsily buttered tea bread" (9). We are invited to rejoice in Art Fletcher's "excellent digestion" (7). We hope that Major Angas is equally fortunate, for: "Eating well is his secondary career"; he is "perpetually hungry" (20). The circus magnate, North, also seems to have a highly developed sense for food and what goes with it: "His

cut-cutters for a three-pound steak are a Martini, a Manhattan, and a beer, in that invariable order, tamped down with a hatful of radishes" (26).

As for the innocent hobbies of our heroes: Art Fletcher likes "the early evening movies" and also "to drive about the country" (7); Senator Byrnes finds recreation in "telling of the long saltily humorous anecdotes which all Southerners love" (18). The pitcher, Paige, is "an expert dancer and singer" (19); Westbrook Pegler "plays poker" (28); and his special pet foe, Mayor Hague, also "likes gambling" (36); his colleague, the London *Times* correspondent, Sir Willmott Lewis, also "plays poker" (49), while Swing takes to badminton (42). More on the serious side is Greer Garson who "reads a great deal and studies the theater every minute she is free" (113). The hobby of golf unites Senator Taft (101), the Fascist, Muti (114), the "Blondie" cartoonist, Chic Young (165), the baseball player, Lyons (53), and Ambassador Lothian (115).

We are furthermore told who likes to be "the life of the party," and who does not; and also how the daily routine in the apartment or private house is fixed. The Fletchers, for instance, "retire early and rise early" (7); while Hank Greenberg "lives modestly with his parents" but also "likes night clubs, bright lights, and pretty girls" (56). We hear of the actress Stickney's charming "town house" (145), of the "fifteen rooms and five baths and the private elevator to the street" of political Boss Flynn (138); of the way in which the Ballet Director Balanchine is "snugly installed in an elaborate Long Island home, and a sleek New York apartment" (152).

As to social gatherings: Nancy Hamilton's parties "aren't glittering at all, but they are fun" (103). The newspaperman, Silliman Evans, "has introduced the Texas-size of large scale outdoor entertainment" (39); while his colleague, Clifton

Fadiman, has "very little social life, seldom goes to dinner parties" (47). His habits seem related to those of the private island queen, Jo Carstairs: ". . . A few friends of long standing make up one of the world's shortest guest lists" (54).

And so it goes, through over 200 quotations, changing a study in social relations into consumers' research. It is neither a world of "doers" nor a world of "doing" for which the biographical curiosity of a mass public is evoked. The whole trend goes toward acceptance: the biological and educational heritage; the helpful friends and teachers; the physical protection of the house, and the physiological one of eating and drinking; the security of social standing and prestige, through social entertaining; the complete resting of mind and work-wise energy through the gamut of hobbies. Here we come very close to decisive trends to which the modern individual seems subjected. He appears no longer as a center of outwardly bound energies and actions; as an inexhaustible reservoir of initiative and enterprise; no longer as an integral unity on whose work and efficiency might depend not only his kin's future and happiness, but at the same time, mankind's progress in general. Instead of the "givers" we are faced with the "takers." These new heroes represent a craving for having and taking things for granted. They seem to stand for a phantasmagoria of worldwide social security; for an attitude which asks for no more than to be served with the things needed for reproduction and recreation; for an attitude which has lost any primary interest in how to invent, shape or apply the tools leading to such purposes of mass satisfaction.

We cannot avoid getting something of a distorted picture of society if we look at it exclusively through the personal lives of a few individuals. But in the past an effort was made to show the link between the hero and the nation's recent history. As

one of those earlier biographers put it: "Each era, conscious of the mighty works that could be wrought, conscious that we are all under sentence of speedy death, eagerly seeks out the younger man, the obscure man. It has need of all powers and all talents. Especially of the talents for creating, organizing, and directing."<sup>14</sup>

Today the emphasis is on the routine functions of nourishment and leisure time and not on "the talents for creating, organizing, and directing." The real battlefield of history recedes from view or becomes a stock backdrop while society disintegrates into an amorphous crowd of consumers. Greer Garson and Mahatma Gandhi meet on common ground: the one "likes potatoes and stew and never tires of a breakfast of porridge and haddock" (113); the other's "evening meal is simple—a few dates, a little rice, goat's milk" (124); Hitler and Chris Martin "don't smoke . . ."

#### JUST FACTS

The 41-year-old quotation above may serve as a transition from the sociology of our heroes to their psychology. With its emphasis on the independence and leadership awaiting the exercise of personal initiative, it expresses the ideal character type of private capitalism.

There are at least two elements in this quotation, the presence of which characterizes the psychological concept of former biographies, and the absence of which is very meaningful for the present situation: development and solitude.

"The young, obscure man" has something of the heritage, however trivial in this case, of the personality as it was con-

<sup>14</sup> D. G. Phillips, "The Right Hand to Pierpont Morgan," *Saturday Evening Post*, June 28, 1902.



ceived during the rise of the middle class culture: the individual as a totality of potentialities, mental, moral, and emotional, which have to be developed in a given social framework. Development, as the essence of human life, was connected with the idea that the individual has to find himself in the soliloquy of the mind. Human existence seemed to be made up of the loneliness of the creature and of his emergence into the outer world by displaying his own gifts. Our quotation is one of the late forms of this concept: the self-developing and fighting individual with all the chances in the world for creation and conquest.

### *Souls Without History*

In an essay on present-day man, Max Horkheimer states: "Development has ceased to exist."<sup>15</sup> His remarks on the immediate transition from childhood to adult life, his observation that "the child is grown up as soon as he can walk, and the grown-up in principle always remains the same,"<sup>16</sup> sound as if they were a comment on our biographical heroes. Among our quotations we have a collection of passages which try to tie up the childhood of the hero with his later life. Almost every second story brings some report on the road from childhood to maturity. Does this not seem to contradict our general remark, is this not a variation of the classical concept of the emerging personality? Before answering, let us examine a few representative passages: At the age of twelve "wrestling . . . was the answer to my problem," says the wrestler, Allman (13). The king of horse race betting, Pittsburgh Phil, "began betting when he was fourteen—on his own game chickens" (23). Of the inventor, Stout, it is remarked: "Wherever his

<sup>15</sup> Max Horkheimer, "The End of Reason," in: *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Vol. IX (1941), #3, p. 381.

<sup>16</sup> *Loc. cit.*

family lived, he would rig up a crude shop and try to make things" (41). At twelve, the future actor, Ezra Stone, ran a kid's radio program "directing the actors and paying them off at the end of the week" (108). For the Ringling-Barnum head, J. R. North: "a real circus was his toy" (26). The future film star, Greer Garson, "wanted to be an actress from the time she could walk" (113). The night club singer Hildegard's parents "weren't surprised when Hildegard . . . aged eighteen months, hummed a whole aria of an opera they had carried her to" (135).

Childhood appears neither as prehistory and key to the character of an individual nor as a stage of transition to the growth and formation of the abundant diversity of an adult. Childhood is nothing but a midget edition, a predated publication of a man's profession and career. A man is an actor, a doctor, a dancer, an entrepreneur, and he always was. He was not born the tender and unknown potentiality of a human life, of an intellectual, mental, emotional creativeness, effective for himself and for society, rather he came into the world and stayed in it, rubber stamped with and for a certain function. The individual has become a trademark.

In more than a third of the stories an attempt at a "theory of success" seems to be made but no magic formula is offered which an average individual might follow for his own good. The bulk of the answers consists of more or less trivial suggestions that the key may be found in "instinct" or other vague qualities. The golf player, Bobby Jones, "must have been born with the deep love for the game" (11). As to the Senator: "Leadership is Byrnes' real genius" (18). Pittsburgh Phil was "a good horse player by instinct" (23). The businessman, Durand N. Briscoe, "seemed to have an instinct for promotion and speculation" (24). The achievements of the football coach,

Kendrigan, are a mystery even to him: "how he did it he never figured" (50). The airline tycoon, Cyrus R. Smith, may count on "an unerring gambler's instinct" (51). This key formula of instinct is supplemented by a collection of almost tautological truisms: The Fascist, Muti, "loves his danger highly spiced" (114). The sociable ambassador, Lothian, "likes newspapermen" (115). Howard Johnson knows what makes a restaurant successful: "A man that is properly supervised never goes haywire" (37). And as far as Clark Gable's success is concerned (and this could be applied to all the 125) "The answer . . . is personality" (6).

We venture to interpret this pseudo-psychology of success as another aspect of the timeless and passive image of modern man. Just as childhood is an abbreviation of the adult's professional career, so is the explanation of this career nothing but an abstract, rather inarticulate, reiteration that a career is a career and a success is a success.

The psychological atmosphere breathes behaviorism on a very primitive level. Childhood as well as that vague realm of instincts represent, so to speak, the biological background from which a variety of human qualities emerge. It is a psychology which shows no need of asking why and, precisely in the same sense in which we tried to show it for sociology, testifies to the transformation from the worship of a spontaneous personality to the adoration of an existence shaped and molded by outside forces. These people live in a limbo of children and victims. The way leads to what we are inclined to call "a command psychology" because people are not conceived as the responsible agents of their fate in all phases of their lives, but as the bearers of certain useful or not so useful character traits which are pasted on them like decorations or stigmas of shame.

There are a few traits which seem to have some bearing on

a man's ability to manipulate his environment. We mean the columnist who is a "spotlight stealer" (9); the playwright and actress who never overlooks "good spots for herself" (103); the producer who is "his own ballyhoo artist" (131). We mean the baseball manager who is "chemically opposed to being on the sucker end of a ball game" (2); the smart night club star who sees "no point in disclosing that King Gustave's favorite singer had been born over her father's delicatessen store" (135); the actress who has real "talent for meeting people" (103); the person who shows up "at the right place at the right time" (109); who is a "great man in flying, handshaking and backslapping trips" (21).

The majority of such attitudes are likely to evoke a slyly understanding smile on the part of the observer and reader. These are the "sure-fire" tricks on the road to success, a little doubtful, but not too bad; these are the equipment of the shrewd man and the smart woman. But these psychological gadgets exhaust the list of qualities pertaining to creative and productive abilities. They generate an atmosphere of pseudo-creativity in an attempt to convince us that a man has contributed his personal, individual share to the general cause of progress. "Something new has been added," insists the advertisement, but beware of inquiring too closely into the nature of the novelty. Thus, the good-natured statements of a certain lack of meticulous innocence on the road to success, become for the sociological interpreter a sad revelation of a lack of originality in productive strength.

This is brought out even more clearly when we turn to the presentation of the actual history of success. Here success is not even attributed to some happy instinct—it merely happens. Success has lost the seductive charm which once seemed to be a promise and a prize for everybody who was strong, clever,

flexible, sober enough to try. It has become a rigid matter on which we look with awe or envy as we look at the priceless pictures in our galleries or the fabulous palaces of the rich. The success of our heroes of consumption is in itself goods of consumption. It does not serve as an instigator for more activity, it is introduced as something we have to accept just like the food and drink and the parties; it is nourishment for curiosity and entertainment.

The mythology of success in the biographies consists of two elements, hardship and breaks. The troubles and difficulties with which the road to success is paved are discussed in the form of stereotypes. Over and over again we hear that the going is rough and hard. The baseball umpire goes "the long, rough road up to that night of triumph" (104); the lightweight champion "came up the hard way" (123); a Senator knew in his youth the "long hours of hard work" (149); and the ballet director "worked hard" (152). In identical words we hear that the baseball manager (2) and the great film star (6) "came up the hard way." The "hard way" it was for Dorothy Thompson (9) and for Billy Rose (43). We are reminded of official military communiqués, reporting a defeat or stalemate in a matter-of-fact tone, rather than descriptions of life processes.

The same applies to the reverse side of hardship: to the so-called breaks. All our stories refer to successes and it is fair enough that somehow we must be informed when and how the failures stopped. Here the tendency to commute life data into facts to be accepted rather than understood becomes intensified. Usually, the beginning of the peak is merely stated as an event: A high civil servant was "fortunate in her first assignment" (8); a cartoonist merely gets a "telegram offering him a job on the paper" which later leads to his fame (34); a columnist

“bursts into certain popularity” (42); an actor “got a break” (112); another “got the job and it turned out well” (121); for a middleweight champion “the turning point of his career had arrived” (142). If any explanation is offered at all, we are told that the turn occurred in some freakish way: the night club singer gets started by “a king’s whim” (135); Clark Gable’s appointment as a timekeeper with a telephone company appears as the turning point in his career (6); a baseball player goes on a fishing trip, loses his old job and thereby gets another one which leads to his success (133a).

These episodes of repetition and freakishness seem to demonstrate that there is no longer a social pattern for the way up. Success has become an accidental and irrational event. The dangers of competition were tied up with the idea of definite chances and there was a sound balance between ambition and possibilities. Appropriately enough, our heroes are almost without ambition, a tacit admission that those dangers of the past have been replaced by the cruelties of the present. It is cruel, indeed, that the ridiculous game of chance should open the doors to success for a handful, while all the others who were not present when it happened are failures. The “facts” of a career are a reflection of the lack of spontaneity. Behind the amusing, fortuitous episode lurks a terrible truth.<sup>17</sup> Hardships and breaks are standard articles for the reader. They are just a better brand of what everyone uses. The outstanding has become the proved specimen of the average. By impressing on

<sup>17</sup> The spectacle of success, hardships and accidents is attended in the biographies by an assortment of numbers and figures which purport to bestow glamour and exactness to the narration. Calculability is the ideal language of modern biographies. They belong to the scientific mentality which sees its ideal in the transformation from quality into quantity. Life’s riddle is solved if caught in a numeric constellation. The majority of figures refer to income, to which may be added relatively few data on capital. The other figures pertain to the spectators of a ball game, to the budget of a city, to the votes of an election, etc.

the reading masses the idols of our civilization, any criticism or even reasoning about the validity of such standards is suppressed. As a social scientist the biographer represents a pitiless, almost sadistic trend in science, for he demonstrates the recurring nature of such phenomena as hardships and breaks, but he does not attempt to reveal the laws of such recurrence. For him knowledge is not the source of power but merely the key to adjustment.

### *Catalogue of Adjustment*

When we turn to a study of the approval and disapproval which our authors attach to the various character traits they describe, we find a striking and simple pattern.

In tone the catalogue of these traits, like the mythology of success, resembles a digest of military orders of the day: brusque laudations and reprimands. There is no room for nuances or ambiguity. In content it is on a very simple level and the criterion of approval or disapproval is also very simple. The yardstick is social adjustment. Once we realize the subconscious and conscious opinions of present-day society on what an adjusted person should and should not be, we are thoroughly familiar with the evaluation of character traits and their owners. The yardstick has three scales: behavior toward material tasks; behavior toward fellow men; and behavior in relation to one's own emotions. The one who is efficient scores in the first sphere; the one who is sociable, in the second; the one who is always restrained, in the third.

In a separate study of all passages mentioning character traits, we found that of a total of 76 quotations referring to a hero's commendable behavior toward "things to be done," not fewer than 70, or over 90 per cent, mentioned competence, efficiency, and energy; the remaining six referred to ambition.

The majority read: "very capable" (154); "no sacrifice of time, effort, or my own convenience was too great" (24); "an inordinately hard worker" (48); "was never fired for inefficiency" (167); "thorough and accurate" (16); "being idle is her idea of complete torture" (140).

Out of a total of 48 quotations mentioning commendable behavior in relation to people, all 48 quote "co-operation," "sociability," and "good sportsmanship." There is a constant repetition of such adjectives as "co-operative," "generous," and "sociable." A baseball manager is "easy to meet, sociable, unsparing in his time with interviewers" (27). The "sociable" Chief of the Passport Division (8); the Secretary of Labor, "a delightful hostess" (22); the Republican candidate for the presidency with his "liking for and interest in people" (133); the matador, "genial, friendly, hospitable" (116); a smart actress, "amiable and friendly" (140)—they all belong to one big happy family which knows no limits in being pleasant and agreeable to each other. Like Don James, the barker for side-shows, they all seem to have "hearts so huge and overflowing" (127).

The number of quotations pertaining to disapproved character traits is very small, but conspicuous among them are criticisms of the unrestrained expression of emotion. It is virtually horrible that one of our baseball heroes "is no man for a jest when losing a game" (53); that a movie actress "cannot bear to be teased" (105); or that our Secretary of Labor's "public relations are unfortunate" (22). Unrestrained behavior traits like being "irritable and harsh" (32), "swift, often furious testiness" (117), being "unbalanced" (56), or even possessing a "somewhat difficult personality" (117) are really most unpleasant. Such faults can be tolerated only if they are ex-



ceptional—like the man who “for once got his feelings beyond control” (23).

The catalogue of normalcy leaves no room for individuality. This catalogue levels human behavior by the rejection of emotional eruptions; the bad marks given to the poor “joiners” and the temperamental people; the complete lack of creative and passionate behavior among the commendable qualities. The absence of love and passion in our catalogue of human relations finds its counterpart in this catalogue of human qualities. It is a world of dependency. The social implications of such atmosphere seem to be considerable because in their social status the majority of our heroes are either their “own boss” or they have climbed to such a high step in the social ladder that whole worlds separate them from the average employee. Yet the few “big ones” don’t differ basically from the many little ones. They demonstrate, taken as a group, not the exception, but the typical cross-section of the socio-psychological condition of modern society.

The foregoing examples from our catalogue of character traits should make clear why we emphasize the double feature of the absence of development and solitude. The average man is never alone and never wants to be alone. His social and his psychological birth is the community, the masses. His human destiny seems to be a life of continuous adjustment: adjustment to the world through efficiency and industriousness; and adjustment to people by exhibiting amiable and sociable qualities and by repressing all other traits. There is no religious or philosophical framework according to which the character traits are classified and evaluated. The concepts of good and bad, of kindness and sin, of truth and falsehood, of sacrifice and selfishness, of love and hate are not the beacons which illuminate our human landscape. The character image on which

an affirmative judgment is passed in the biographies is that of a well-trained employee from a well-disciplined lower middle-class family. Our people could occupy an imaginary world of technocracy; everybody seems to reflect a rigid code of flexible qualities: the rigid and mechanized set-up of a variety of useful mechanical institutions. Behind the polished mask of training and adjustment lurks the concept of a human robot who, without having done anything himself, moves just such parts and in just such directions as the makers wished him to do.

Formerly it was only the sick who needed handling because it was known that their symptoms were similar to many others. Now everyone is reduced to the same dependency. The pride of being an individual with his own very personal ways and interests becomes the stigma of abnormality. Interest in the consumption of others is an expression of lack of interest in genuine consumption. The detailed character description is dominated by the same acceptance and passivity which came to the foreground in the concept of souls without development.

## LANGUAGE

### *Superlatives*

Our analysis would not be complete without some discussion of our stories' language which has several characteristic features. The most obvious one is the superlative.<sup>18</sup> Once we are made aware of this stylistic device, it cannot be overlooked. The heroes themselves, their accomplishments and experiences,

<sup>18</sup> An unpublished study of this writer on popular German biographies in book form shows that the use of superlatives also characterizes them. These books by Emil Ludwig, Stefan Zweig and others, are on a different intellectual level, yet it seems probable that similar sociological implications hold for them as for magazine biographies.

their friends and acquaintances, are characterized as unique beings and events. The superlative gives a good conscience to the biographer—by applying a rhetorical gadget, he achieves the transformation of the average into the extraordinary. Mr. Muti is “the toughest Fascist of them all” (114); Dr. Brinkley is the “best advertised doctor in the United States” (3); our hero is the “luckiest man in the movies today” (121); another is “not only the greatest, but the first real showman in the Ringling family” (26). There is a general who is “one of the best mathematicians this side of Einstein” (107). There is a columnist with “one of the strangest of courtships” (9); another statesman with “the world’s most exciting job” (144). There are also the downward-pointed superlatives. Some sportsman was once “the loudest and by all odds the most abusive of the lot” (2); a newspaper man is “one of the most consistently resentful men in the country” (28); another person is “one of the unhappiest women that ever lived” (154).

As if the biographer had to convince himself and his public that he is really selling an excellent human specimen, he sometimes is not satisfied with the ratio of one superlative per sentence but has to pack a lot of them into a single passage. Pittsburgh Phil is “the most famous and the most feared horse player in America” (23). The German Labor Front is “the best led, most enlightened and most powerful labor organization in Europe” (21). The producer, Lorentz, “demands the best writing, the best music and the best technical equipment available” (126). The baseball manager, Clark Griffith, “was the most colorful star on the most colorful team in baseball” (2). Tilden is “. . . the greatest tennis player in the world and the greatest guy in the world” (111).

This wholesale distribution of highest ratings defeats its own purpose. Everything is presented as something unique, un-

heard of, outstanding. Thus nothing is unique, unheard of, outstanding. Totality of the superlative means totality of the mediocre. It levels the presentation of human life to the presentation of merchandise. The most vivacious girl corresponds to the best tooth paste, the highest endurance in sportsmanship corresponds to the most efficient vitamins; the unique performance of the politician corresponds to the unsurpassed efficiency of the automobile. There is a pre-established harmony between the objects of mass production in the advertising columns and the objects of biography in the editorial comment. The language of promotion has replaced the language of evaluation. Only the price tag is missing.

The superlative pushes the reader between two extremes. He is graciously attempting to become conversant with people who are paragons of human accomplishment. He may be proud that to a great extent these wonderful people do nothing but entertain him. He has, at least in his leisure time, the best crowd at his fingertips. But there is no road left to him for an identification with the great, or for an attempt to emulate their success. Thus the superlative, like the story of success itself, brings out the absence of those educational features and other optimistic implications which were characteristic of biographies during the era of liberalism. What on first sight seems to be the rather harmless atmosphere of entertainment and consumption is, on closer examination, revealed as a reign of psychic terror, where the masses have to realize the pettiness and insignificance of their everyday life. The already weakened consciousness of being an individual is struck another heavy blow by the pseudo-individualizing forces of the superlative. Advertisement and terror, invitation to entertainment and summons to humility form their unity in the world of superlatives. The

biographer performs the functions of a side show barker for living attractions and of a preacher of human insignificance.

### *High and Low Language*

The use of the superlative is reinforced by frequent references to an assortment of mythical and historical associations, in order, it would seem, to confer pseudo-sanctity and pseudo-safety to the futile affairs of modern mass culture. Clark Gable does not just make a career—he lives the “Gable saga” (6), and the movie actress, Joyce, experiences at least a “little saga” (110). “Historic” is the word for Ilka Chase (140) as well as for Hildegarde (135). What happens to the soft ball player Novikoff is “fabulous” (158); the fate of the actress Morison is “history” (162); of the movie producer Wallis (166) as well as of the baseball player Allen (45) “a miracle”; the baseball manager Griffith experiences “baseball destiny,” he accomplishes “a historic piece of strategy” (2). Greek mythology is a favorite; Clark Gable lives in “Olympian regions” (6); the passport administrator Shipley (8) as well as the gadget inventor Taylor (167) have an “Herculean task”; the producer Todd is called an “Archon” (131) and our Taylor “Orpheus” (167). Of course Christianity and the middle ages have to help Dorothy Thompson “like a knight with a righteous sword” (9); the Nazi Ley is the “Jacob of German labor” with “labor itself the Esau” (21). Vice-President Wallace is “Joseph, a dreamer of dreams” (38); Casals is a “good samaritan” (106). There are no limits. Ruth Hussey sometimes “looked a bit like a Buddha” (151); the showman Rose like a “priest of Osiris” (43). And so it goes on with myths, legends, sagas, destinies, miracles.<sup>19</sup> And yet, in the

<sup>19</sup> Helen McGill Hughes, *loc. cit.*, p. 183, is aware of the fact that the association of “classical” names has a stimulating effect on what she calls “the city demos”: “Stated in terms of his popular literature, the mind of modern man

same breath which bestows the blessings of venerable symbols on our heroes, they and we are brought together on the easy level of slang and colloquial speech. McCutcheon, the cartoonist, might be called the "king" of his island possession, but we hear that "kingship is a safe investment" (1); Fletcher, who made history, is also "the soul—or the heel—of honesty" (7); Swing, called "an apostle," has also "radio's best bedside manner" (42). When Taft's father was president, the "crown of Roosevelt I fitted him like a five and ten toupee" (101). There is a boxer who finds it "good business to be brave" (12); there is "gossip—a dime a gross" (23); there is talk of a "personal blitzkrieg" (29); of "votes enough to elect a bee to a beehive" (109); of the "moguls of celluloid" (137); of "that genius business" (152). The historizing hymns of praise and transfiguration correspond to movie "palaces" and the sport "stadiums." It is a colossal façade, a "make-believe ballroom," as one radio station announces its swing program. Behind the façade of language there rules, just as behind the architectural outside make-up, a versatility of techniques, gadgets and tricks, for which nothing is too expensive or too cheap that may serve the purpose of entertaining or being entertained.

These substitutes and successors of creative production require a language which substitutes for elucidating, revealing, stimulating words a linguistic confusion that strives to produce the illusion of rooted tradition and all-around alertness. Thus this new literary phenomenon complies with the highest

lives in the present. And as the present changes, so his news is voluminous and rapidly succeeded by more news. But what fascinates him is the news story—the true story—even though it may duplicate *Bluebeard* or *Romeo and Juliet* so exactly that the headline tells the news just by mentioning the familiar names. The human interest of the common man in the modern world will, and does, ensnare him into reading folktales or even the classics, dull and unreal as he finds them in themselves, if they are paraphrased as the careers of twentieth century Electras, Macbeths and Moll Flanders, for he is pre-occupied with the things that depart from the expected and make news."

artistic criteria: inner, necessary, inseparable connection between form and content, between expression and the expressed—in short, a linguistic creation which will not permit an anatomic clear-cut separation between words and their intentions! These biographies as a literary species are “true.”

*Especially for You*

In an unpublished analysis of songs T. W. Adorno interprets the pseudo-directness with which every one of the millions of girls for whose consumption the hit is manufactured, seems to be addressed. The pseudo-individualization of the heroes corresponds to the pseudo-individualization of the readers. Although the selection of heroes and what is reported about them are as thoroughly standardized as the language of these reports, there is the superlative functioning as the specifying agent for the chosen hero and there is also, as crown and conclusion, the direct speech as the bearer of a personal message to the reader. Affably or condescendingly, everyone is personally invited to attend the spectacle of an outstanding life. Individual meets individual; the biographer takes care of the introduction.

Coach Fletcher and his wife “can be reached only by telegram provided you know the address” (7). Should you happen to be a Brenda Joyce fan: “If you come at the right time, you will see her second-hand car” (110). Watching our election campaign: “If Hull and Mr. Taft are the candidates, your emotion will not be fired, nor will your sleep be disturbed by them” (109). For those interested in film stars: “Let’s sit down with Bill Powell and listen to his story” (112); “perhaps, girls, you would like to know how Clark Gable got that way” (6). Reporting McCutcheon’s acquisition of an island, the author teases the reader: “so, you want to be a

king" (1). For the car owner: "You can't help seeing Johnson's restaurants if you drive along main highways" (37). There is the London *Times* representative Sir Willmott Lewis: "Meet him on Pennsylvania Avenue. He will stop and talk to you as if you were a five hundred audience" (49). Umpire Klem "knows the multitudinous rules of baseball better than you know the alphabet" (104). Let there be no mistake: the night club singer Moffett "went to the very best schools, my dear" (119). But let's not neglect her colleague Hildegarde: "If you haven't heard her or seen her, don't stand there—go, do something about it" (135). Casals' biographer is a little less imperative: "Meet the blond bowman from Spain" (106). Dependability is the word for Miss Fitzgerald: ". . . you can bank on her for the truth" (105).

The direct apostrophe is similar in function to the superlative: it creates elation and humiliation. The reader, besides being admitted to the intimate details of the hero's habits in eating, spending, playing, has the pleasure of personal contact. There is nothing of the measured distance and veneration which a reader in the classics in biography had to observe before the statesman of the past, or the poet or the scientist. The aristocracy of a gallery of isolated bearers of unusual achievements seems to be replaced by a democratic meeting which requires no special honors and genuflection before the great.

But the ease of admission is not devoid of menacing features. The "You" means not only the friendly gesture of introduction but also the admonishing, calling voice of a superior agency, proclaiming that one has to observe, has to comply. The language of directness betrays the total coverage planned by all modern institutions of mass communication. "Especially for You" means all of you.



## THE READER

Magazine biographies have undergone a process of expansion as well as of atrophy. They have become a standard institution in magazines which count their audience by the millions. It is significant that during the present emergency the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's* have been able to double their sales price without incurring any serious setback in circulation. But the scope of this expanding world of biographies has been narrowed down to the highly specialized field of entertainment. If we ask again what social need they serve, we might find the answer in this combination of quantitative increase and qualitative deterioration.

An hypothesis on the pseudo-educational and pseudo-scientific function of the popular biography can be formulated as follows: the task of the social scientist is, in very broad terms, the clarification of the hidden processes and inter-connections of social phenomena. The average reader who, like an earnest and independent student, is not satisfied with a mere conglomeration of facts or concepts, but wants to know what it is all about, seems to gain insight from these biographies, and an understanding of the human or social secret of the historical process. But this is only a trick, because these individuals whose lives he studies are neither characteristic of this process, nor are they presented in such a way that they appear in the full light of it. A rather satisfactory understanding of the reader is possible if we look upon the biography as an agent of make-believe adult education. A certain social prestige, the roots of which are planted during one's school days, constantly drives one toward higher values in life, and specifically, toward more complete knowledge. But these biographies corrupt the educa-

pleasures and discomforts of the great. The large confusing issues in the political and economic realm and the antagonisms and controversies in the social realm—all these are submerged in the experience of being at one with the lofty and great in the sphere of consumption.

*APPENDIX*



## A. WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS?

### A COMMENT ON LISTENING INDICES

Foremost among the technical problems confronting a study of this type is the question who should be called a daytime serial listener. Throughout the text two indices have been used interchangeably: one is whether a woman mentions a daytime serial among her favorite programs; and the other is whether she claims, by mentioning specific titles, that she "listens (or tries to listen) regularly" to daytime serials.

A special analysis was done in the Iowa study, which covered a cross-section of 5,325 women. Table 1 shows that 70.5 per cent of all the women are classified the same way by the two indices. Almost one-quarter say that they listen regularly but do not mention serials among their five favorite programs. This is all the more interesting since in this study each respondent had to give five favorite program types.

TABLE 1.—DISTRIBUTION OF IOWA RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THE REGULARITY OF THEIR SERIAL LISTENING AND THEIR FAVORITE PROGRAM TYPES

| <i>Type of listener</i>  | <i>Per cent of<br/>listener type<br/>in sample</i> | <i>Symbols to be<br/>used to designate<br/>each group</i> |
|--|--|---|
| Listens regularly; serials among five favorite program types . . . . .                       | 23.5   | ++  |
| Listens regularly; serials not among five favorite program types . . . . .                   | 24.4   | +-  |
| Does not listen regularly; serials among five favorite program types . . . . .               | 5.1  | -+  |
| Does not listen regularly; serials not mentioned among five favorite program types . . . . . | 47.0   | --  |

Changes in the wording of the questions would probably bring about corresponding changes in the distribution of the respondents although we can always count on a large majority being classified in the same way by a number of reasonable indices. General experience shows that usually such indices are interchangeable. This means that, for rough comparisons between listeners and non-listeners, we will, by and large, get the same result, no matter which index we use.

The characteristics used in the text to distinguish between listeners and non-listeners have been retabulated for the Iowa study; thus we have the pertinent information for the four groups of respondents indicated in Table 1. The results are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—ACTIVITIES TESTED AS INDICES IN IOWA STUDY FOR FOUR LISTENING TYPES OF WOMEN

| <i>Activity tested</i>  | <i>Type of listener</i> |       |       |       |
|---|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|   | ++                      | +-    | -+    | --    |
| Average number of church affairs attended in last two weeks . .               | 1.3                     | 1.7   | 1.5   | 1.6   |
| Number of meetings and social gatherings attended in last two weeks . . . . . | 0.5                     | 0.8   | 0.8   | 0.7   |
| Number of movies attended in last four weeks . . . . .                        | 0.5                     | 0.6   | 0.7   | 0.5   |
| Number of magazines read regularly . . . . .                                  | 2.5                     | 2.7   | 2.6   | 2.6   |
| Proportion mentioning news among five favorite program types . . . .          | 75.7%                   | 82.2% | 74.0% | 81.7% |
| Proportion worrying more than other women . . . . .                           | 15.4%                   | 15.1% | 14.8% | 14.4% |

We see that by comparing only the two extreme groups—those who are listeners or non-listeners on both indices—we get differences scarcely larger than the ones mentioned in the text. This is due mainly to the fact that the two middle groups sometimes behave more like the “pure” listeners, sometimes like the “pure” non-listeners, and sometimes have small devia-

tions of their own from the average common to the two extreme groups. The implications of this summary refer to the crude listener characteristics discussed in the present text. If more refined indices of behavior are studied, then probably more refined listening indices should also be applied.

That we are not far off in our classification of listeners, according to slightly different indices, can be seen from another piece of evidence, as well. In two studies, the nationwide non-farm study and the Iowa cross-section, the following two questions were asked:

1. Do you listen regularly to any serial stories?

Daytime: Yes . . . . No . . . . After 6:00 P.M.: Yes . . . .  
No . . . .

(a) *If listens daytime:* Which daytime serials did you hear last week? (Follows alphabetical checklist of programs)

2. To what DAYTIME serial stories do you TRY to listen REGULARLY? (Follows alphabetical checklist of programs; First line provided for "none regularly")

If the answers in the two studies are roughly classified by size of town to make them comparable, we get Table 3.

TABLE 3.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF RESIDENCE

| Source                        | <i>Proportion of listeners to daytime serials</i> |                                       |                                |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                               | <i>Large cities</i><br>%                          | <i>Small cities</i> <sup>a</sup><br>% | <i>Rural</i> <sup>b</sup><br>% |
| Nationwide non-farm . . . . . | 34.7  | 43.2                                  | *                              |
| Iowa cross-section . . . . .  | *   | 43.5                                  | 51.6                           |

<sup>a</sup> Small cities refers to cities with a population of less than 100,000, with the exception of Des Moines in the Iowa survey. However, as the majority of the urban Iowa interviews was done in towns under 100,000, we feel justified in including the small proportion of Des Moines interviews with this group.

<sup>b</sup> Rural includes incorporated places with a population of less than 2,500 and farms.

\* No data available.

There were no rural interviews in the nationwide study and no metropolitan interviews in the Iowa cross-section. Therefore only small cities could be compared. The two studies give practically identical results: 43 per cent of each sample are listeners. Table 3, incidentally, also shows the fact pointed out in the text, that listening increases as we come to settlements with less population.

Still to be explained is the way we estimated that there are somewhat more than twenty million regular listeners to daytime serials among American women. There are about 65 million females in this country, of whom about 49 million are over 15 years of age. Twenty million listeners, therefore, is rather a conservative estimate in view of the fact that about 45 per cent of a cross-section of all women consider themselves regular listeners.

Staying on the conservative side, and summarizing all information available, an easily remembered summary would be: 30 per cent of all women are not available during the day, 30 per cent do not listen to daytime serials, and 40 per cent are regular listeners.

#### SOME FURTHER DATA ON LISTENER CHARACTERISTICS

We now come to a series of tables which indicate the role of formal education. In the text, the fact that less-educated women listen more to daytime serials was referred to quite extensively. It is therefore important to show that it is really formal training which matters in this connection, and not other factors which are usually related to low education, such as low income or advanced age. Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 give the evidence which again is very consistent for both studies.



TABLE 4.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND INCOME (NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF NON-FARM WOMEN)

| <i>Income</i> | <i>Proportion of listeners to daytime serials</i> |                    |                |
|---------------|---|--------------------|----------------|
|               | <i>Grade school</i>                               | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|               | <i>%</i>  | <i>%</i>           | <i>%</i>       |
| Low .....     | 45.5  | 41.0               | 29.9           |
| Medium .....  | 38.9  | 37.8               | 27.2           |
| High .....    | 50.0 <sup>a</sup>                                 | 36.8               | 22.0           |

<sup>a</sup> Note small number of cases, Table 4a.

BASE TABLE 4A.—DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN NATIONWIDE SURVEY ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND INCOME<sup>b</sup>

| <i>Income<sup>c</sup></i> | <i>Grade school</i> | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Low .....                 | 1,197               | 1,384              | 117            |
| Medium .....              | 257                 | 841                | 191            |
| High .....                | 84                  | 462                | 377            |

<sup>b</sup> Exclusive of no-answers on education or income.

<sup>c</sup> High income comprises the conventional groups A and B, Medium refers to C and Low to D and E.

TABLE 5.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND AGE (NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF NON-FARM WOMEN)

| <i>Age</i>        | <i>Proportion of listeners to daytime serials</i> |                    |                |
|-------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|
|                   | <i>Grade school</i>                               | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|                   | <i>%</i>  | <i>%</i>           | <i>%</i>       |
| -29 .....         | 48.2  | 34.6               | 20.0           |
| 30-49 .....       | 46.0  | 42.2               | 24.2           |
| 50 and over ..... | 43.0  | 41.0               | 35.5           |

BASE TABLE 5A.—DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN NATIONWIDE SURVEY ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND AGE<sup>a</sup>

| <i>Age</i>        | <i>Grade school</i> | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| -29 .....         | 247                 | 1,004              | 225            |
| 30-49 .....       | 724                 | 1,187              | 343            |
| 50 and over ..... | 570                 | 500                | 118            |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of no-answers on education or age.

TABLE 6.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND INCOME (IOWA CROSS-SECTION)

| <i>Income</i> | <i>Proportion of listeners to daytime serials</i> |                    |                |
|---------------|---|--------------------|----------------|
|               | <i>Grade school</i>                               | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|               | <i>%</i>  | <i>%</i>           | <i>%</i>       |
| Low .....     | 51.6  | 50.6               | 34.5           |
| Medium .....  | 50.5  | 49.5               | 42.0           |
| High .....    | 46.1  | 43.9               | 33.4           |

BASE TABLE 6A.—DISTRIBUTION OF IOWA RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND INCOME <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Income</i> <sup>b</sup> | <i>Grade school</i> | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Low .....                  | 613                 | 521                | 84             |
| Medium .....               | 992                 | 1,815              | 430            |
| High .....                 | 169                 | 421                | 273            |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of the no-answers on income or education.

<sup>b</sup> Income expresses interviewer's rating of the economic status of each respondent.

TABLE 7.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND AGE (IOWA CROSS-SECTION)

| <i>Age</i>        | <i>Proportion of listeners to daytime serials</i> |                         |                     |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------------|
|                   | <i>Grade school</i><br>%                          | <i>High school</i><br>% | <i>College</i><br>% |
| 15-20 .....       | 40.4  | 31.0                    | 25.0                |
| 21-35 .....       | 53.5  | 54.5                    | 40.2                |
| 36-50 .....       | 50.8  | 48.4                    | 37.3                |
| 51 and over ..... | 49.2  | 44.6                    | 38.2                |

BASE TABLE 7A.—DISTRIBUTION OF IOWA RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION AND AGE <sup>a</sup>

| <i>Age</i>        | <i>Grade school</i> | <i>High school</i> | <i>College</i> |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 15-20 .....       | 42                  | 197                | 28             |
| 21-35 .....       | 256                 | 999                | 353            |
| 36-50 .....       | 835                 | 1,190              | 316            |
| 51 and over ..... | 641                 | 372                | 90             |

<sup>a</sup> Exclusive of the no-answers on age or education.

At several points we mentioned that all our results have been tested to eliminate education as a spurious factor wherever necessary. Here is a concrete example of such a test. We wanted to show that the readers of the "True Story" type and of household magazines are more likely to listen to daytime serials, and the readers of "sophisticated" magazines are less likely to do so. Is that true regardless of the educational status of respondents? We find that the readers of the first group of four magazines in Table 8 report to listen to daytime serials more often than the general average in each educational group. On the other hand, the infrequent listening to daytime serials

by readers of sophisticated magazines is also brought out by Table 8 for the better-educated women separately. There were not enough readers of these magazines in the less-educated groups to make a statistical analysis possible.

TABLE 8.—PROPORTION OF LISTENERS TO DAYTIME SERIALS AMONG BETTER- AND LESS-EDUCATED READERS OF 10 MAGAZINES (IOWA CROSS-SECTION)

|                                    | <i>Better-educated</i> <sup>a</sup> |                                      | <i>Less-educated</i> <sup>b</sup> |                                      |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                    | <i>Number cases</i>                 | <i>Proportion serial listeners %</i> | <i>Number cases</i>               | <i>Proportion serial listeners %</i> |
| Total sample . . . . .             | 3,547                               | 46                                   | 1,776                             | 51                                   |
| <i>True Confessions</i> . . . . .  | 51                                  | 53                                   | 34                                | 82                                   |
| <i>True Story</i> . . . . .        | 130                                 | 65                                   | 71                                | 68                                   |
| <i>Household</i> . . . . .         | 265                                 | 55                                   | 147                               | 62                                   |
| <i>Parents' Magazine</i> . . . . . | 98                                  | 51                                   | 20                                | 75                                   |
| <i>Time</i> . . . . .              | 151                                 | 29                                   |                                   |                                      |
| <i>Vogue</i> . . . . .             | 28                                  | 29                                   |                                   |                                      |
| <i>Harper's Magazine</i> . . . . . | 44                                  | 25                                   |                                   |                                      |
| <i>Mademoiselle</i> . . . . .      | 69                                  | 27                                   |                                   |                                      |
| <i>New Yorker</i> . . . . .        | 18                                  | 17                                   |                                   |                                      |

<sup>a</sup> Better-educated includes women with high school education or more; less-educated refers to women with grade school education. Readers who did not mention their education are excluded.

<sup>b</sup> Number of less-educated readers for five magazines listed in lower part of table was below 10 with exception of *Time*, which was mentioned by 26 readers.

Finally, we give a more detailed tabulation of the people who state they worry more or less than other women. This is a rather unusual type of information, and the reader will be

TABLE 9.—EXTENT OF "WORRYING" ACCORDING TO INCOME AND AGE OF RESPONDENTS (IOWA CROSS-SECTION)<sup>a</sup>

|                         | <i>Worries in comparison to other women</i> |               |               |  | <i>Total Number Cases</i> |     |
|-------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|--|---------------------------|-----|
|                         | <i>More %</i>                               | <i>Same %</i> | <i>Less %</i> | <i>D. K., refused to answer per cent</i> |                           |     |
| 15-20 yrs. . . . .      | 6   | 39            | 38            | 17                                       | 100                       | 267 |
| Low income . . . . .    | 6   | 33            | 46            | 15                                       | 100                       | 80  |
| Medium income . . . . . | 7   | 42            | 33            | 18                                       | 100                       | 154 |
| High income . . . . .   | 3   | 39            | 37            | 21                                       | 100                       | 33  |

|                       | <i>Worries in comparison<br/>to other women</i> |                   |                   |   | <i>Total<br/>per cent</i> | <i>Total<br/>Number<br/>Cases</i> |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                       | <i>More<br/>%</i>                               | <i>Same<br/>%</i> | <i>Less<br/>%</i> | <i>D. K.,<br/>refused to<br/>answer<br/>%</i> |                           |                                   |
| 21-35 yrs. ....       | 11  | 50                | 25                | 14  | 100                       | 1,608                             |
| Low income .....      | 11  | 50                | 25                | 14  | 100                       | 377                               |
| Medium income ..      | 11  | 51                | 24                | 14  | 100                       | 982                               |
| High income .....     | 10  | 50                | 27                | 13  | 100                       | 249                               |
| 36-50 yrs. ....       | 16  | 47                | 18                | 19  | 100                       | 2,341                             |
| Low income .....      | 21  | 45                | 16                | 18  | 100                       | 447                               |
| Medium income ..      | 15  | 47                | 17                | 21  | 100                       | 1,483                             |
| High income .....     | 13  | 50                | 23                | 14  | 100                       | 411                               |
| 51 years and over ... | 19  | 44                | 20                | 17  | 100                       | 1,103                             |
| Low income .....      | 24  | 42                | 18                | 16  | 100                       | 318                               |
| Medium income ..      | 16  | 45                | 20                | 19  | 100                       | 615                               |
| High income .....     | 19  | 41                | 27                | 13  | 100                       | 170                               |

\* Exclusive of the no-answers on age and income.

interested in studying the self-explanatory Table 9 in more detail.

## B. THE WORLD OF THE DAYTIME SERIAL

### THE SOLUTIONS OF THE PROBLEMS

The listener-reports on the three-week test period did not contain many data on the way in which trouble-situations are solved in radio-serials. Serial authors are deliberately slow in bringing conflicts to an end. In order to get more solutions than those yielded by the reports, additional listening was carried out for several weeks on about 20 serials, for which data on solutions had been particularly fragmentary. This furnished solutions for 73 of the total 142 problems. An indication of the representativeness of this sample for the total of the problems started within the test period was obtained by comparing the moral evaluation of the troublemakers in both sets. The problems for which solutions were obtained were created by

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Good people .....         | in 11 cases |
| Bad people .....          | in 20 cases |
| Weak people .....         | in 28 cases |
| Non-personal forces ..... | in 14 cases |
|                           | 73          |

which is not too far from the distribution of the total causes in Table 6 of the main text (p. 51).

### *Are Obnoxious Plans Carried Through?*

Hardly any troublemaker is allowed to carry through what he undertakes. This can be seen from Table I.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE I.—ARE PROBLEM-CREATING PLANS CARRIED THROUGH?

| <i>Moral evaluation<br/>of creator of<br/>problem</i> | <i>Plan<br/>accomplished</i> | <i>Plan<br/>thwarted</i> | <i>No<br/>deeds<sup>a</sup></i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Good .....  | 4                            | 6                        | 1                               | 11           |
| Bad .....   | 0 (+3?)                      | 17                       | 0                               | 20           |
| Weak .....  | 1                            | 16                       | 11                              | 28           |
| Non-personal forces .....                             | 2 (+1?)                      | 11                       | 0                               | 14           |
| Total .....   | 7 (+4?) <sup>b</sup>         | 50                       | 12                              | 73           |

<sup>a</sup> "No deeds" refers to problems created by an unsuitable attitude.

<sup>b</sup> Doubtful, see footnote page 559.

The best chance of success is with the good people, who fulfill their disturbing but virtuous intentions in 4 out of 10 cases. The 12 cases recorded in the column "No deeds" cannot be considered because they deal with problems created by an unsuitable attitude (e.g., neglecting his wife) rather than by an attempt to accomplish an unwholesome aim. This happens almost exclusively among the "weak" troublemakers, not among the much more active bad and good ones.

<sup>1</sup> The three cases of bad troublemakers are marked as doubtful in accomplishment because in two the damage caused by a political gangster is likely to have been undone during the further proceedings of the serial, as some hints indicated. In the third case, the serial was dropped by its commercial sponsor, so that any possible attempt of the authors to wipe out the disgrace done to their heroine was thwarted by a major force which even in serials is more powerful than justice.

*Are Troublemakers Punished?*

The bottom column of Table 2 indicates that creators of trouble are about as often punished as not. However, the breakdown shows that there is a definite relationship between the moral evaluation of the troublemakers and what happens to them.

TABLE 2.—ARE TROUBLEMAKERS PUNISHED?

| <i>Moral evaluation<br/>of creator of<br/>problem</i> | <i>Punished</i>       | <i>Not punished</i>   | <i>Undecided</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Good . . . . .  | 0 (+1?)               | 10                    | 0                | 11           |
| Bad . . . . .   | 15                    | 0 (+3?)               | 2                | 20           |
| Weak . . . . .  | 12                    | 16                    | 0                | 28           |
| Total . . . . .                                       | 27 (+1?) <sup>a</sup> | 26 (+3?) <sup>a</sup> | 2                | 59           |

<sup>a</sup> Doubtful, see footnote 1.

Setting aside 4 doubtful cases, it appears that no good troublemaker is punished whereas all the bad ones are. The position of the weak people between the two poles of good and bad is reflected in the fact that they are sometimes punished and sometimes not.

How were the bad people punished? Of two men who had relations with another woman, one was killed, probably by his wicked girl friend; the other was divorced by his wife, suffered a paralytic stroke and was deserted in that helpless condition by his "glamour girl." Four people who had accused innocents were convicted themselves. Slander was avenged by shameful exposure. A woman who tried to run over her rival in her car was badly injured herself. Losing a job or a husband and a professional defeat were other punishments of the bad people. As we said above, there was no punishment for the "good" troublemakers. Generally the trouble-situation was merely ironed out and the stage cleared for something new to happen. "Weak" people were left by a wife, fiancé, or lover in six cases;

lost a job in two cases; lost a father; became ill; died; were imprisoned in one case each. Weak people who were not punished either simply did not succeed in their plans or had to reform from the behavior which had led to trouble.

### *What Happens to the Sufferers?*

With the exception of the few doubtful cases mentioned before, no definitive damage was done to the "sufferers," because most of the trouble-creating projects were not allowed to succeed. The victims were either simply freed from trouble or even obtained premiums like an honest new lover, a husband, a son's affection, health, or a good job. Only in two cases in which a "weak" person had created trouble for himself or herself, was death and the loss of a job the outcome.

### *Who Solves the Problems?*

Individuals (57 cases) rather than non-personal forces (13 cases) are shown as instrumental in the solutions. This result confirms for the solutions what we stated for the causes of

TABLE 3.—WHO SOLVES THE PROBLEMS?

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Creator of trouble .....  | 11  |
| Sufferer .....            | 12  |
| Third person .....        | 34  |
| Non-personal forces ..... | 13  |
| Others .....              | 5   |
| Total .....               | 75* |

\*Two cases in which a combination of non-personal factors and a third person brought about the solution were attributed to both columns thus increasing the total number of cases from 73 to 75.

problems: radio serials present an individualistic world. The helplessness and passivity of the listener seem to be reflected by the scarcity of cases in which victims are shown as capable of helping themselves. Equally rare is the dramatic solution

proper which is caused by the initiative of the creator of the trouble himself. (See page 59, footnote.) The individuals who bring about solutions are three times more often a third person than either the victim or the troublemaker.

The plots show that such help was mostly from the "leaders" (cf. page 42). Energetic intelligent friends or relatives interfere in other people's conflicts, thus taking over the job of the administration of justice instituted for this purpose by the community. The district attorneys and tribunals sometimes undertake to convict and punish the guilty persons, who however have been traced by private individuals authorized not by office but by personal efficiency and altruism.

The relatively large number of 13 cases in which non-personal factors are instrumental in the solutions is not due to economic or political forces. These are excluded for the solutions even more radically than they were for the causes of the problems. Rather do these cases refer to instances of physical illness ended by death (in one case) or by recovery.

### C. THE APPEAL OF SPECIFIC DAYTIME SERIALS

TABLE I.—LIST OF SERIALS STUDIED FOR OVERLAPPING IN THEIR AUDIENCES

| <i>Serials</i>                    | <i>Nationwide survey</i> |                            |                           |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                   | <i>Net-work</i>          | <i>Number of listeners</i> | <i>Rating<sup>a</sup></i> |
| Life Can Be Beautiful . . . . .   | CBS                      | 454                        | 9.0                       |
| Woman in White . . . . .          | CBS                      | 362                        | 7.8                       |
| Big Sister . . . . .              | CBS                      | 364                        | 7.7                       |
| Ma Perkins . . . . .              | NBC                      | 325                        | 6.6                       |
| Our Gal Sunday . . . . .          | CBS                      | 293                        | 6.3                       |
| Arnold Grimm's Daughter . . . . . | NBC                      | 208                        | 4.7                       |
| Light of the World . . . . .      | NBC                      | 197                        | 4.5                       |
| Valiant Lady . . . . .            | NBC                      | 184                        | 4.5                       |
| Right to Happiness . . . . .      | CBS                      | 207                        | 4.4                       |
| Guiding Light . . . . .           | NBC                      | 204                        | 4.4                       |
| Stella Dallas . . . . .           | NBC                      | 189                        | 4.3                       |



| <i>Serials</i>                | <i>Iowa survey</i>   |                                |               |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
|                               | <i>Net-<br/>work</i> | <i>Number of<br/>listeners</i> | <i>Rating</i> |
| Stella Dallas .....           | NBC                  | 687                            | 12.9          |
| Guiding Light .....           | NBC                  | 524                            | 9.6           |
| Pepper Young's Family .....   | NBC                  | 522                            | 9.6           |
| Backstage Wife .....          | NBC                  | 506                            | 9.3           |
| Young Widder Brown .....      | NBC                  | 506                            | 9.3           |
| Bachelor's Children .....     | NBC                  | 472                            | 8.7           |
| Lorenzo Jones .....           | NBC                  | 410                            | 7.5           |
| Against the Storm .....       | NBC                  | 340                            | 6.2           |
| When a Girl Marries .....     | NBC                  | 286                            | 5.3           |
| Arnold Grimm's Daughter ..... | NBC                  | 268                            | 4.9           |
| Bess Johnson .....            | NBC                  | 242                            | 4.4           |
| Portia Faces Life .....       | NBC                  | 241                            | 4.4           |
| Big Sister .....              | CBS                  | 201                            | 3.7           |
| Joyce Jordan .....            | CBS                  | 163                            | 3.1           |
| Myrt and Marge .....          | CBS                  | 154                            | 2.9           |

\* Not all programs were available to all sections of the country covered by this survey. Therefore a serial with a larger number of listeners than another may actually have a lower rating because it was available in more areas than the latter. The basis for the rating is always the proportion of listeners among the total number of respondents residing in the area covered by a given program.

In the nationwide survey, eleven serials when paired allowed for 57 combinations with time distances (measured from the beginning of one broadcast to the start of the next) varying from one-quarter hour to four hours. Twenty-six of these pairs were formed by serials broadcast on the same station; 31 were comparisons of serials heard over different stations.

In the Iowa survey, fifteen serials permitted 64 different combinations with time distances varying from one-quarter hour to four hours; 50 pairs were serials carried by the same network; 14 pairs were carried by different networks.

## D. AMERICAN RADIO IN WARTIME

## OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

FS-5

Radio Bureau

FACT SHEET

November 20, 1942

*DON'T TRAVEL AT XMAS*

*WHY?*—because America's railways and bus lines have all they can do as it is to haul the essential transportation upon which the fighting of this war depends. Existing equipment must not be subjected to additional wear simply for the accommodation of pleasure travelers.

Transportation experts foresee—unless the public co-operates—a demand for travel during the coming Christmas weeks that will tax facilities beyond all precedent. *It's a serious prospect.*

---

*WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?*—A straightforward appeal must be made to the patriotism of all American civilians. Unnecessary travel menaces the war effort.

Today a great many workers—in all salary brackets—who have not had the opportunity of traveling because of increased duties, and many other persons who previously lacked enough money, are anxious to take holiday excursions. Furthermore, mileage rationing has limited use of autos—and this burdens public carriers with further loads of civilian passengers.

*WE JUST DON'T HAVE ROOM FOR THEM ON OUR RAIL AND BUS LINES!*

The democratic answer is to ask their voluntary co-operation in curtailing all non-essential travel. It's a message for radio to carry with forceful persuasion. People are *not* being asked to stay at home over the holiday period merely to relieve the expected congestion. It's because *they have a patriotic duty not to hamper essential war travel by clogging transportation facilities to the point of extreme overloading!*

---

*HERE ARE INESCAPABLE FACTS!*

When we ask the public to give up its traditional holiday travel, we must have good reasons for doing so. We must express those reasons logically and well.

- (1) The tempo of the war has already loaded rail and bus lines to maximum capacity. Even the traffic on an average weekend causes extreme congestion. This year's Labor Day weekend was the all-time high in the history of American transportation.
- (2) Unnecessary wear on trains and buses is perilous waste. Equipment cannot be replaced for the duration. All facilities must be conserved for *essential travel only*. Yet a recent survey showed that 51% of all travel is still for personal reasons.
- (3) The armed forces have added enormously to the tasks of rail and bus lines. *Military travel is now averaging close to 1,200,000 passengers a month*. Soldiers and sailors who have been away from home for many months should not be kept from enjoying vacation furloughs because of selfish civilians.

### HOW DOES RADIO FACE THIS PROBLEM?

First, by putting it up to the civilian public in a frank, convincing fashion. The war angle must be emphasized and the strategic importance of moving troops and war materials first given full stress.

Then, tell every Christmas traveler to ask himself this question: "*IS MY TRIP NECESSARY?*" "*Is it important enough for me to deprive some soldier of a seat on a train or bus?*"

War service comes first. Make the thoughtless and selfish traveler feel conscience-stricken as he plans such a trip. "This man made a soldier miss his Christmas vacation!"

Furthermore, if civilians want to be sure they can make that important business visit or hurry sick call in the future, the best thing to do is to cut out pleasure trips now.

The success of radio's selling hinges on creating a strong contrast between the *essential* and the *non-essential* trip. Make listeners aware of this by dramatizing the difference between trivial enjoyment derived from a Christmas pleasure excursion and the real importance of a soldier's final visit at home before he goes overseas . . . or the movement of skilled experts to rush war projects. Sentiment as well as sense figures in this.

Punch it home hard. This is a Christmas gift from the civilians of America to the fighters and workers who are waging our war.

**"DON'T TRAVEL AT XMAS UNLESS YOU MUST!"**

## E. RADIO AUDIENCE RESEARCH IN GREAT BRITAIN

### POPULARITY OF TYPES OF PROGRAMS IN ENGLAND

In Table 1, in which a selection of the results of listener surveys are given, Group A represents those who are very en-

thusiastic, Group C those who are neutral about a program type, and Group E those who are hostile, with Groups B and D representing intermediate positions. All the inquiries were made during the year ended 30th June 1942.

TABLE I.—ATTITUDE OF THE LISTENING PUBLIC TOWARDS SEVENTEEN TYPES OF PROGRAM

|                              | <i>Proportion of the listening public classified as</i> |          |          |          |          | <i>Total</i> |
|------------------------------|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
|                              | <i>A</i>  | <i>B</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>E</i> |              |
|                              | <i>%</i>  | <i>%</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>%</i>     |
| Variety . . . . .            | 51  | 28       | 13       | 5        | 3        | 100          |
| Musical comedy . . . . .     | 30  | 24       | 23       | 14       | 9        | 100          |
| Parlor games . . . . .       | 27  | 20       | 22       | 18       | 13       | 100          |
| Plays . . . . .              | 20  | 27       | 25       | 19       | 9        | 100          |
| Cinema organs . . . . .      | 34  | 26       | 23       | 10       | 7        | 100          |
| Dance music . . . . .        | 28  | 25       | 22       | 14       | 11       | 100          |
| Military bands . . . . .     | 25  | 25       | 24       | 15       | 11       | 100          |
| Brass bands . . . . .        | 21  | 24       | 25       | 17       | 13       | 100          |
| Church organs . . . . .      | 13  | 17       | 23       | 23       | 24       | 100          |
| Grand opera . . . . .        | 11  | 15       | 24       | 25       | 25       | 100          |
| Symphony concerts . . . . .  | 10  | 13       | 17       | 20       | 40       | 100          |
| Chamber music . . . . .      | 5   | 8        | 17       | 24       | 46       | 100          |
| Talks . . . . .              | 26  | 20       | 24       | 17       | 13       | 100          |
| Discussions . . . . .        | 20  | 19       | 24       | 21       | 16       | 100          |
| Short stories . . . . .      | 17  | 22       | 30       | 19       | 12       | 100          |
| Poetry . . . . .             | 6   | 13       | 23       | 24       | 34       | 100          |
| Religious services . . . . . | 16  | 25       | 30       | 18       | 11       | 100          |

Analysis of these inquiries in terms of socio-economic groups, age groups and sexes is revealing. Taking first the analysis in terms of socio-economic groups we find in a number of cases a correlation between popularity and size of income. In respect of the five types in Table 2, popularity is least in the upper and greatest in the lower income groups:

TABLE 2.—TYPES OF PROGRAM WHERE POPULARITY LEAST IN THE UPPER AND GREATEST IN THE LOWER INCOME GROUPS

*Proportion of each socio-economic group classified as "A"*

|                          | <i>Upper<br/>middle</i> | <i>Lower<br/>middle</i> | <i>Working<br/>class</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | %                       | %                       | %                        |
| Variety . . . . .        | 29                      | 39                      | 56                       |
| Musical comedy . . . . . | 24                      | 27                      | 31                       |
| Cinema organs . . . . .  | 19                      | 26                      | 37                       |
| Dance music . . . . .    | 10                      | 18                      | 32                       |
| Military bands . . . . . | 20                      | 22                      | 27                       |

The reverse is true of the seven types in Table 3.

TABLE 3.—TYPES OF PROGRAM WHERE POPULARITY GREATEST IN THE UPPER AND LEAST IN THE LOWER INCOME GROUPS

*Proportion of each socio-economic group classified as "A"*

|                             | <i>Upper<br/>middle</i> | <i>Lower<br/>middle</i> | <i>Working<br/>class</i> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
|                             | %                       | %                       | %                        |
| Church organs . . . . .     | 18                      | 14                      | 12                       |
| Grand opera . . . . .       | 22                      | 17                      | 8                        |
| Symphony concerts . . . . . | 27                      | 16                      | 6                        |
| Chamber music . . . . .     | 12                      | 8                       | 3                        |
| Talks . . . . .             | 38                      | 34                      | 21                       |
| Discussions . . . . .       | 34                      | 28                      | 16                       |
| Short stories . . . . .     | 19                      | 22                      | 15                       |
| Poetry . . . . .            | 12                      | 11                      | 4                        |

The four types in Table 4 fall into neither of these categories:

TABLE 4.—TYPES OF PROGRAM WHERE POPULARITY VARIES NEITHER DIRECTLY NOR INVERSELY WITH INCOME

*Proportion of each socio-economic group classified as "A"*

|                              | <i>Upper<br/>middle</i> | <i>Lower<br/>middle</i> | <i>Working<br/>class</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
|                              | %                       | %                       | %                        |
| Parlor games . . . . .       | 26                      | 31                      | 25                       |
| Plays . . . . .              | 18                      | 26                      | 17                       |
| Brass bands . . . . .        | 19                      | 20                      | 21                       |
| Religious services . . . . . | 17                      | 18                      | 16                       |

Eight of the seventeen types are markedly more popular among women than among men, thus:

TABLE 5.—TYPES OF PROGRAM MORE POPULAR WITH WOMEN THAN WITH MEN

|                              | <i>Proportion of each sex<br/>classified as "A"</i> |                   |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
|                              | <i>Men</i><br>%                                     | <i>Women</i><br>% |
| Musical comedy . . . . .     | 25  | 35                |
| Cinema organs . . . . .      | 29  | 38                |
| Dance music . . . . .        | 23  | 31                |
| Parlor games . . . . .       | 24  | 28                |
| Plays . . . . .              | 14  | 24                |
| Short stories . . . . .      | 13  | 19                |
| Poetry . . . . .             | 5   | 8                 |
| Religious services . . . . . | 10  | 22                |

The reverse is true of four types:

TABLE 6.—TYPES OF PROGRAM MORE POPULAR WITH MEN THAN WITH WOMEN

|                          | <i>Proportion of each sex<br/>classified as "A"</i> |                   |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
|                          | <i>Men</i><br>%                                     | <i>Women</i><br>% |
| Military bands . . . . . | 31  | 20                |
| Brass bands . . . . .    | 26  | 15                |
| Talks . . . . .          | 27  | 23                |
| Discussions . . . . .    | 24  | 17                |

In the remaining five cases, Variety, Church organs, Grand opera, Symphony concerts and Chamber music, the difference between the tastes of men and women is immaterial.

The age groups employed for analysis were four in number, 16-19, 20-29, 30-49, and 50 and over. Correlation between tastes and age is very marked. In six cases the popularity of types increases with each step up the age scale; in three cases the reverse is true.

The remaining eight types of programs show no such clear age trends as these in Table 7.

TABLE 7.—TYPES OF PROGRAM WHERE POPULARITY IS CORRELATED WITH AGE OF LISTENER

|                              | <i>Proportion of each age group classified as "A"</i> |                   |                   |                         |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
|                              | <i>16-19</i><br>%                                     | <i>20-29</i><br>% | <i>30-49</i><br>% | <i>50 and over</i><br>% |
| I. Church organs . . . . .   | 7   | 9                 | 11                | 18                      |
| Grand opera . . . . .        | 6   | 10                | 12                | 13                      |
| Symphony concerts . . . . .  | 6   | 9                 | 10                | 11                      |
| Talks . . . . .              | 13  | 19                | 27                | 31                      |
| Discussions . . . . .        | 10  | 16                | 22                | 25                      |
| Religious services . . . . . | 4   | 11                | 17                | 25                      |
| II. Variety . . . . .        | 60  | 57                | 50                | 42                      |
| Dance music . . . . .        | 64  | 42                | 23                | 10                      |
| Cinema organs . . . . .      | 43  | 37                | 34                | 28                      |

## EXAMPLES OF RECENT TYPICAL AUDIENCE FIGURES IN ENGLAND

In the following table, a few examples of typical audience figures are given. H denotes Home Service Programs only; F, Forces Programs only; and SB refers to programs simultaneously broadcast over both services.

TABLE 8.—TYPICAL AUDIENCE FIGURES DURING SEPTEMBER 1942

| <i>Type of program</i>             | <i>Time</i>      | <i>Service</i> | <i>Per cent of</i>               |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
|                                    |                  |                | <i>adult civilian population</i> |
|                                    | <i>Weekdays</i>  |                |                                  |
| Light gramophone records . . . . . | 7.30- 8.00 A.M.  | F              | 5                                |
| Cookery talk . . . . .             | 8.15- 8.20       | H              | 11                               |
| Daily religious service . . . . .  | 10.15-10.30      | H              | 7                                |
| Light music . . . . .              | 10.30-11.00      | SB             | 12                               |
| Variety . . . . .                  | 12.30- 1.00 P.M. | SB             | 18                               |
| Light music . . . . .              | 3.00- 3.30       | SB             | 8                                |
| Serial play . . . . .              | 6.45- 7.00       | F              | 8                                |
| Serious talk . . . . .             | 7.45- 8.00       | H              | 6                                |
| Military band . . . . .            | 7.05- 7.30       | F              | 10                               |
| Dance music production . . . . .   | 8.00- 8.30       | F              | 20                               |
| Variety . . . . .                  | 8.30- 9.00       | H              | 23                               |
| Symphony concert . . . . .         | 8.00- 9.00       | H              | 7                                |
| Opera . . . . .                    | 8.00- 9.00       | H              | 13                               |

| <i>Type of program</i>                 | <i>Time</i>      | <i>Service</i> | <i>Per cent of</i>               |
|--|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
|  |                  |                | <i>adult civilian population</i> |
| <i>Weekdays</i>                        |                  |                |                                  |
| Cinema organ . . . . .                 | 8.30- 9.00       | F              | 19                               |
| War commentary . . . . .               | 9.20- 9.35       | H              | 15                               |
| Play . . . . .                         | 9.30-10.00       | H              | 10                               |
| Feature (March of Time type) . . . . . | 9.40-10.00       | SB             | 16                               |
| Dance music . . . . .                  | 11.00-12.00 MID. | H              | 5                                |
| <i>Sundays</i>                         |                  |                |                                  |
| Variety . . . . .                      | 8.30- 9.00 A.M.  | F              | 10                               |
| Religious service . . . . .            | 9.30-10.15       | H              | 12                               |
| Talk on music . . . . .                | 10.15-10.30      | H              | 4                                |
| Light music . . . . .                  | 10.30-11.00      | H              | 13                               |
| Talk for women . . . . .               | 12.00-12.10 P.M. | H              | 4                                |
| Variety . . . . .                      | 12.30- 1.00      | F              | 17                               |
| Gardening talk . . . . .               | 2.15- 2.30       | H              | 6                                |
| Symphony concert . . . . .             | 2.30- 3.30       | H              | 5                                |
| Popular concert . . . . .              | 3.30- 4.15       | F              | 7                                |
| Play . . . . .                         | 3.30- 4.30       | H              | 8                                |
| Dance music . . . . .                  | 6.30- 7.00       | F              | 11                               |
| Variety . . . . .                      | 6.30- 7.00       | F              | 15                               |
| Religious service . . . . .            | 8.00- 8.40       | H              | 9                                |
| Talk . . . . .                         | 9.15- 9.30       | SB             | 27                               |
| Play . . . . .                         | 9.30-10.15       | H              | 8                                |
| Dance music . . . . .                  | 9.30-10.00       | F              | 12                               |
| Light music . . . . .                  | 10.30-11.00      | F              | 10                               |

It must be understood that these figures are not records—they are merely samples. Cases could be found which differed materially from any of these. Examples of exceptionally high audience figures are discussed in the main text, p. 167.



## F. THE GERMAN RADIO HOME NEWS IN WARTIME

## PERIODIZATION USED IN STUDY OF GERMAN HOME NEWS

## BROADCASTS

| <i>Unit</i> | <i>Time period</i>                    | <i>Event</i>   |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1.          | March 1940                            | Stalemate  |
| 2.          | April 1-8                             | Pre-Norway   |
| 3.          | April 9-30                            | Norway   |
| 4.          | May 1-9                               | Pre-France   |
| 5.          | May 10-June 22                        | Low Countries and France                                   |
| 6.          | June 23-August 7                      | Inter-Crisis<br>(Compiègne to Battle of Britain)           |
| 7.          | August 8-October 31                   | Battle of Britain  |
| 8.          | November 1-December 8                 | Aftermath of Battle of Britain                             |
| 9.          | December 9, 1940-<br>Feb. 6, 1941     | First British Advance in Libya                             |
| 10.         | Feb. 7-March 11                       | Lease-Lend   |
| 11.         | March 12-April 3                      | Belgrade Revolution  |
| 12.         | April 4-27                            | Greek Campaign   |
| 13.         | April 28-May 19                       | Inter-Crisis   |
| 14.         | May 20-June 1                         | Crete  |
| 15.         | June 2-21                             | Pre-Russia   |
| 16.         | June 22-30                            | Minsk  |
| 17.         | July 1-12                             | Stalin Line  |
| 18.         | July 13-August 13                     | Smolensk to Atlantic Charter                               |
| 19.         | August 14-September 18                | Atlantic Charter to Kiev                                   |
| 20.         | September 19-October 2                | Kiev to Hitler speech                                      |
| 21.         | October 3-25                          | Hitler (annihilation) speech to<br>Kharkov                 |
| 22.         | October 26-November 22                | Kharkov-Rostov   |
| 23.         | November 23-December 6                | Rostov to Pearl Harbor                                     |
| 24.         | December 7-20                         | Pearl Harbor to Intuition Speech                           |
| 25.         | December 21, 1941-<br>January 2, 1942 | Intuition Speech to Manila                                 |
| 26.         | January 3-31                          | Malay Campaign   |
| 27.         | February 1-15                         | Singapore Campaign   |
| 28.         | February 16-March 9                   | Java to Burma  |
| 29.         | March 10-April 11                     | British Diplomatic Defeat                                  |
| 30.         | April 12-May 7                        | British Diplomatic Defeat to<br>Spring Offensive           |
| 31.         | May 8-30                              | Beginning of Spring Offensive to<br>Cologne Raid           |
| 32.         | May 31-June 21                        | Cologne Raid to Fall of Tobruk                             |
| 33.         | June 22-July 27                       | Fall of Tobruk to Evacuation of<br>Rostov                  |
| 34.         | July 28-August 31                     | Evacuation of Rostov to Begin-<br>ning of Stalingrad Siege |

### G. GERMAN RADIO PROPAGANDA TO FRANCE DURING THE BATTLE OF FRANCE

TABLE 1.—DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF AGITATION (IN PER CENT OF ALL REFERENCES TO THE ALLIED SIDE, EXCEPT REFERENCES TO NEUTRAL COUNTRIES)

| <i>Types of agitation</i>  | <i>Period</i> |              |          |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
|                            | <i>I</i>      | <i>II-IV</i> | <i>V</i> |
| 1. Submission . . . . .    | 0             | 4            | 0        |
| 2. Subversion . . . . .    | 0             | 3            | 2        |
| 3. Co-operation . . . . .  | 0             | 1            | 1        |
| 4. Privatization . . . . . | 0             | 1            | 0        |
| 5. Panic . . . . .         | 0             | 0            | 0        |
| Total per cent . . . . .   | 0             | 9            | 3        |

TABLE 2.—RATIO OF STATEMENTS ABOUT THE ENEMY TO STATEMENTS ABOUT THE SELF

|                                | <i>Period</i> |           |            |           |          | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
|                                | <i>I</i>      | <i>II</i> | <i>III</i> | <i>IV</i> | <i>V</i> |              |
| Non-moral statements . . . . . | 1.4           | 1.4       | 2.4        | 1         | 1        | 1.2          |
| Moral statements . . . . .     | 12.7          | 4         | 6.8        | 3.5       | 4.1      | 4.2          |
| All statements . . . . .       | 2.9           | 2.2       | 3.3        | 1.9       | 2.3      | 3.4          |

TABLE 3.—NON-MORAL ATTRIBUTES (DISTRIBUTION OF MEANINGS IN PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MEANINGS IN EACH GROUP FOR ALL PERIODS)

|  | <i>Non-moral</i> |                 |             | <i>Moral</i>                 |                            |             |                              |                            |             |   | <i>Residual</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|-----------------|--------------|
|  | <i>Weakness</i>  | <i>Strength</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Strength)</i> | <i>Morality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Morality (Strength)</i> | <i>Both</i> |   |                 |              |
|  | <i>a</i>         | <i>b</i>        |             | <i>c</i>                     | <i>d</i>                   |             | <i>e</i>                     | <i>f</i>                   |             |   |                 |              |
|  | %                | %               | %           | %                            | %                          | %           | %                            | %                          | %           | % | %               | %            |
| Successful—unsuccessful                          | 40               | 48              | 88          | 4                            | 0                          | 4           | 4                            | 0                          | 4           | 4 | 4               | 100          |
| Affected by war—un-<br>affected by war . . . . . | 68               | 9               | 77          | 13                           | 0                          | 13          | 1                            | 0                          | 1           | 9 | 100             |              |
| Confident—not confident                          | 63               | 7               | 70          | 25                           | 2                          | 27          | 0                            | 2                          | 2           | 1 | 100             |              |
| <i>Average</i> . . . . .                         |                  |                 | 78          |                              |                            | 15          |                              |                            | 2           | 5 | 100             |              |

<sup>a</sup> For "a," "b," "c," "d," "e," and "f," see scheme on p. 241.

TABLE 4.—MORAL ATTRIBUTES  
(DISTRIBUTION OF MEANINGS IN PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MEANINGS IN EACH GROUP FOR ALL PERIODS)

|   | <i>Non-moral</i>           |                 |             | <i>Moral</i>                 |                            |             |                              |                            |   | <i>Residual</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------|
|   | <i>Weakness</i>            | <i>Strength</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Strength)</i> | <i>Morality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Morality (Strength)</i> |   |                 |              |
|   | <sup>a</sup> <i>a</i><br>% | <i>b</i><br>%   |             | <i>c</i><br>%                | <i>d</i><br>%              |             | <i>e</i><br>%                | <i>f</i><br>%              |   |                 |              |
| Unjust—not unjust . . . . .                   | 3                          | 3               | 6           | 79                           | 9                          | 88          | 3                            | 1                          | 4 | 2               | 100          |
| Belligerent—not belligerent . . . . .         | 3                          | 4               | 7           | 68                           | 17                         | 85          | 4                            | 1                          | 5 | 3               | 100          |
| Inflicting—not inflicting suffering . . . . . | 2                          | 10              | 12          | 71                           | 12                         | 83          | 2                            | 2                          | 4 | 1               | 100          |
| <i>Average</i> . . . . .                      |                            |                 | 8           |                              |                            | 86          |                              |                            | 4 | 2               | 100          |

<sup>a</sup> For “a,” “b,” “c,” “d,” “e,” and “f,” see scheme on p. 241.

TABLE 5.—AMBIVALENT ATTRIBUTES  
(DISTRIBUTION OF MEANINGS IN PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MEANINGS IN EACH GROUP FOR ALL PERIODS)

|   | <i>Non-moral</i>           |                 |             | <i>Moral</i>                 |                            |             |                              |                            |    | <i>Residual</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----|-----------------|--------------|
|   | <i>Weakness</i>            | <i>Strength</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Strength)</i> | <i>Morality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Both</i> | <i>Immorality (Weakness)</i> | <i>Morality (Strength)</i> |    |                 |              |
|   | <sup>a</sup> <i>a</i><br>% | <i>b</i><br>%   |             | <i>c</i><br>%                | <i>d</i><br>%              |             | <i>e</i><br>%                | <i>f</i><br>%              |    |                 |              |
| Effective—ineffective (Planning—not not planning) . . . . . | 27                         | 22              | 49          | 4                            | 1                          | 5           | 21                           | 0                          | 21 | 25              | 100          |
| Taking—not taking the initiative in war . . . . .           | 13                         | 17              | 30          | 43                           | 11                         | 54          | 7                            | 3                          | 10 | 6               | 100          |
| Young civilization—not young civilization . . . . .         | 6                          | 14              | 20          | 30                           | 10                         | 40          | 24                           | 6                          | 30 | 10              | 100          |
| <i>Average</i> . . . . .                                    |                            |                 | 33          |                              |                            | 33          |                              |                            | 20 | 14              | 100          |

<sup>a</sup> Letters “a” to “f” refer to 6 prevalent patterns of reasoning, see scheme on page 241.

## H. RADIO AND POPULAR MUSIC

TABLE 1.—PER CENT OF RADIO TIME GIVEN TO POPULAR MUSIC OVER NEW YORK NETWORK STATIONS WEAF (NBC), WABC (CBS), WJZ (BLUE) AND WOR (MBS)

8:00 A.M. TO 1:00 A.M. DAILY  
(BASED ON FOUR SAMPLE WEEKS, 1941-1942)

| Day                     | Time period            |                        |                         |                         | Total day |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
|                         | 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. | 1:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. | 6:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. | 11:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. |           |
| Mondays                 | 23.5                   | 20.4                   | 32.2                    | 68.4                    | 30.4      |
| Tuesdays                | 23.0                   | 20.8                   | 32.5                    | 65.4                    | 30.1      |
| Wednesdays              | 23.0                   | 17.6                   | 35.4                    | 71.1                    | 30.7      |
| Thursdays               | 21.4                   | 16.9                   | 36.6                    | 70.1                    | 30.3      |
| Fridays                 | 23.4                   | 16.2                   | 31.6                    | 62.1                    | 28.2      |
| Mondays through Fridays | 22.9                   | 18.4                   | 33.7                    | 67.4                    | 30.0      |
| Saturdays               | 39.4                   | 44.6                   | 38.7                    | 75.5                    | 45.0      |
| Sundays                 | 27.4                   | 27.4                   | 27.5                    | 70.0                    | 32.4      |
| Total week              | 25.9                   | 23.4                   | 33.5                    | 68.9                    | 32.5      |

TABLE 2.—PER CENT OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCASTING TIME OVER NEW YORK INDEPENDENT STATIONS WMCA, WHN AND WNEW

5:00 P.M. TO 1:00 A.M. DAILY  
(BASED ON FOUR SAMPLE WEEKS, 1941-1942)

| Day                     | Time period            |                        |                        | Total |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------|
|                         | 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. | 9:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. | 5:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. |       |
| Mondays                 | 50.7                   | 66.6                   | 58.6                   |       |
| Tuesdays                | 51.9                   | 54.2                   | 53.0                   |       |
| Wednesdays              | 48.0                   | 62.9                   | 55.4                   |       |
| Thursdays               | 52.0                   | 54.9                   | 53.4                   |       |
| Fridays                 | 50.6                   | 53.2                   | 51.9                   |       |
| Mondays through Fridays | 50.6                   | 58.4                   | 45.3                   |       |
| Saturdays               | 53.8                   | 64.1                   | 59.0                   |       |
| Sundays                 | 41.1                   | 48.6                   | 45.9                   |       |
| Total week              | 49.7                   | 57.8                   | 53.9                   |       |

TABLE 3.—NEW YORK LISTENING AUDIENCES TO POPULAR MUSIC PROGRAMS  
 AVERAGE STATION AVAILABILITY, SETS-IN-USE TO POPULAR MUSIC AND PER CENT  
 OF LISTENERS TO POPULAR MUSIC  
 (SAMPLE WEEK FOR JANUARY-APRIL, 1942)

| <i>Day</i>               | <i>Time period<br/>of day</i> | <i>Average<br/>station<br/>avail-<br/>ability</i> | <i>Average<br/>per cent<br/>of total<br/>sets-in-use</i> | <i>Average<br/>per cent<br/>sets-in-use<br/>to popular<br/>music</i> | <i>Average<br/>per cent of<br/>listeners to<br/>popular<br/>music</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Monday                   | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 4.0   | 17.2   | 6.3  | 36.6  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.7   | 15.4   | 3.4  | 22.1  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.3   | 26.4   | 5.9  | 22.3  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.6   | 19.8   | 5.1  | 25.8  |
| Tuesday                  | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 3.8   | 19.3   | 5.8  | 30.1  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.8   | 20.5   | 5.8  | 28.3  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.4   | 29.4   | 7.6  | 25.9  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.7   | 23.3   | 6.5  | 27.9  |
| Wednesday                | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 4.0   | 18.4   | 5.9  | 32.1  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.9   | 18.3   | 4.5  | 24.6  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.9   | 27.5   | 7.9  | 28.7  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.9   | 21.6   | 6.1  | 28.2  |
| Thursday                 | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 4.0   | 16.2   | 5.3  | 32.7  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.7   | 17.9   | 4.6  | 25.7  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 4.2   | 29.2   | 9.1  | 31.2  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 4.0   | 21.4   | 6.4  | 30.0  |
| Friday                   | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 3.8   | 16.7   | 4.9  | 29.3  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.8   | 16.7   | 4.0  | 24.0  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.9   | 25.6   | 10.2   | 39.8  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.8   | 20.1   | 6.5  | 32.3  |
| Monday through<br>Friday | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 3.8   | 17.6   | 5.6  | 32.2  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.8   | 17.8   | 4.5  | 24.9  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.7   | 27.6   | 8.1  | 29.6  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.7   | 21.2   | 6.1  | 28.7  |
| Saturday                 | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 4.8   | 16.3   | 7.7  | 47.2  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 5.1   | 19.5   | 8.4  | 43.1  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 4.2   | 24.7   | 10.0   | 40.5  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 4.7   | 20.4   | 8.7  | 42.6  |
| Sunday                   | 8 A.M.-12 Noon                | 3.4   | 12.6   | 5.1  | 40.5  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.2   | 19.2   | 5.8  | 30.2  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 2.8   | 32.7   | 6.2  | 19.0  |
| Total                    | 8 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.1   | 19.8   | 5.8  | 29.3  |
| Total week               | 7 A.M.-12 Noon                | 4.0   | 16.7   | 5.9  | 35.5  |
|                          | 12 Noon-6 P.M.                | 3.9   | 18.2   | 5.2  | 28.3  |
|                          | 6 P.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.7   | 27.9   | 8.1  | 29.6  |
| Total                    | 7 A.M.-12 A.M.                | 3.8   | 20.9   | 6.4  | 30.8  |

TABLE 4.—HOOPER RATINGS OF YOUR HIT PARADE FOR A THREE YEAR PERIOD

| Year                     | Average net-work program audience index | Your Hit Parade program rating | Your Hit Parade per cent of listeners |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1939—July-Dec. . . . .   | 9.6                                     | 11.5                           | 44.2                                  |
| 1940—Jan.-June . . . . . | 12.0                                    | 14.5                           | 45.2                                  |
| July-Dec. . . . .        | 9.4                                     | 12.2                           | 44.6                                  |
| 1941—Jan.-June . . . . . | 10.7                                    | 12.6                           | 40.7                                  |
| July-Dec. . . . .        | 8.2                                     | 10.3                           | 39.8                                  |
| 1942—Jan.-June . . . . . | 10.7                                    | 15.8                           | 49.0                                  |

TABLE 5.—THE VARIETY OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCAST IN NEW YORK OVER NETWORK AND INDEPENDENT STATIONS

A. TWO SAMPLE WEEKS—SEPTEMBER 1941: 5:00 P.M. TO 1:00 A.M. DAILY

|   | First week | Second week | Both weeks |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Average number of different songs broadcast each evening of the week                             |            |             |            |
| a. WEOF, WJZ and WABC . . . . .   | 135.6      | 129.1       | 132.4      |
| b. WMCA, WOR, WHN, WOV, WNEW . . . . .  | 287.9      | 301.6       | 294.8      |
| c. All eight stations . . . . .   | 374.3      | 384.0       | 379.2      |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 46.8       | 48.0        | 47.4       |
| 2. Average number of performances of all songs each evening of the week                             |            |             |            |
| a. WEOF, WJZ and WABC . . . . .   | 174.4      | 167.1       | 170.8      |
| b. WMCA, WOR, WHN, WOV, WNEW . . . . .  | 348.1      | 345.4       | 346.8      |
| c. All eight stations . . . . .   | 522.5      | 512.5       | 517.6      |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 65.3       | 64.1        | 64.7       |
| 3. Average number of different songs played three or more times each evening                        |            |             |            |
| a. WEOF, WJZ and WABC . . . . .   | 9.3        | 8.3         | 8.8        |
| b. WMCA, WOR, WHN, WOV, WNEW . . . . .  | 11.7       | 8.9         | 10.3       |
| c. All eight stations . . . . .   | 27.9       | 24.4        | 26.2       |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 3.5        | 3.1         | 3.3        |
| 4. Ratio of the average number of performances each evening to number of different songs            |            |             |            |
| a. WEOF, WJZ and WABC . . . . .   | 1.29       | 1.29        | 1.29       |
| b. WMCA, WOR, WHN, WOV, WNEW . . . . .  | 1.21       | 1.18        | 1.18       |
| c. All eight stations . . . . .   | 1.40       | 1.37        | 1.37       |
| 5. Per cent of number of songs played three or more times to total number of different songs played |            |             |            |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, and WABC . . . . .  | 6.9        | 6.4         | 6.6        |
| b. WMCA, WOR, WHN, WOV, WNEW . . . . .  | 4.1        | 3.0         | 3.5        |
| c. All eight stations . . . . .   | 7.5        | 6.4         | 6.9        |

TABLE 5A.—THE VARIETY OF POPULAR MUSIC BROADCAST IN NEW YORK OVER NETWORK AND INDEPENDENT STATIONS (*Continued*)

B. TWO SAMPLE WEEKS—JULY 1942: 5:00 P.M. TO 1:00 A.M. DAILY

|   | <i>First<br/>week</i> | <i>Second<br/>week</i> | <i>Both<br/>weeks</i> |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Average number of different songs broadcast each evening of the week                             |                       |                        |                       |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, WABC and WOR . . .  | 151.3                 | 152.3                  | 151.7                 |
| b. WMCA, WHN and WNEW . . . . .   | 173.1                 | 169.6                  | 171.4                 |
| c. All seven stations . . . . .   | 295.1                 | 294.7                  | 294.9                 |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 42.2                  | 42.1                   | 42.1                  |
| 2. Average number of performances of all songs each evening of the week                             |                       |                        |                       |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, WABC and WOR . . .  | 206.6                 | 217.0                  | 211.8                 |
| b. WMCA, WHN and WNEW . . . . .   | 201.0                 | 190.6                  | 195.8                 |
| c. All seven stations . . . . .   | 407.4                 | 402.6                  | 405.0                 |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 58.2                  | 57.5                   | 57.9                  |
| 3. Average number of different songs played three or more times each evening                        |                       |                        |                       |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, WABC and WOR . . .  | 14.4                  | 14.9                   | 14.7                  |
| b. WMCA, WHN and WNEW . . . . .   | 4.7                   | 2.9                    | 3.8                   |
| c. All seven stations . . . . .   | 26.0                  | 24.7                   | 25.4                  |
| Average per station . . . . .   | 3.7                   | 3.5                    | 3.6                   |
| 4. Ratio of the average number of performances each evening to number of different songs            |                       |                        |                       |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, WABC and WOR . . .  | 1.37                  | 1.42                   | 1.40                  |
| b. WMCA, WHN and WNEW . . . . .   | 1.16                  | 1.12                   | 1.14                  |
| c. All seven stations . . . . .   | 1.38                  | 1.37                   | 1.37                  |
| 5. Per cent of number of songs played three or more times to total number of different songs played |                       |                        |                       |
| a. WEOF, WJZ, WABC and WOR . . .  | 9.5                   | 9.8                    | 9.7                   |
| b. WMCA, WHN and WNEW . . . . .   | 2.7                   | 1.7                    | 2.2                   |
| c. All seven stations . . . . .   | 8.9                   | 8.4                    | 8.6                   |

TABLE 6.—SONG "HITS" OF 1941

| <i>Song Title</i>                              | <i>Publisher</i>                 | <i>Net sales of sheet music for 1941<sup>a</sup></i> |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Intermezzo .....                               | Edward Schuberth & Co.           | 461,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| Maria Elena .....                              | Peer International Corp.         | 372,593  |
| Amapola .....                                  | E. B. Marks Music Corp.          | 365,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| Yours .....                                    | E. B. Marks Music Corp.          | 345,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| I Don't Want to Set the World<br>on Fire ..... | Cherio Music Publishers          | 323,012  |
| You and I .....                                | Meredith Willson                 | 271,000  |
| Tonight We Love .....                          | Maestro Music Co.                | 265,645  |
| You Are My Sunshine .....                      | Peer International Corp.         | 238,686  |
| Things I Love .....                            | Campbell Music Co.               | 225,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| My Sister and I .....                          | Broadcast Music Inc.             | 220,051  |
| 'Til Reveille .....                            | Melody Lane Publications<br>Inc. | 212,209  |
| I Hear a Rhapsody .....                        | Broadcast Music Inc.             | 197,479  |
| Hut-Sut Song .....                             | Schumann Music Co.               | 181,915  |
| Daddy .....                                    | Republic Music Corp.             | 175,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| Frenesí .....                                  | Peer International Corp.         | 165,097  |
| Do You Care? .....                             | Campbell Music Co.               | 150,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| Jim .....                                      | Kaycee Music Co.                 | 150,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| There'll Be Some Changes Made                  | E. B. Marks Music Corp.          | 140,000 <sup>b</sup>                                 |
| Green Eyes .....                               | Peer International Corp.         | 127,511  |
| You Walk By .....                              | Broadcast Music Inc.             | 120,460  |

<sup>a</sup> Data on sales of the above songs were obtained through the kind co-operation of Broadcast Music Inc.; Campbell, Loft & Porgie, Inc. (for "Things I Love" and "Do You Care?"); Cherio Music Publishers; Leeds Music, Inc. (for "Jim"); Maestro Music Co.; E. B. Marks & Co.; Music Dealers Service (for "You and I"); Pacific Music Sales (for "Tonight We Love"); Peer International (also for "'Til Reveille"); Republic Music Corp. and Edward Schuberth & Co.

<sup>b</sup> Round figures.



TABLE 7.—AUDIENCE COVERAGE INDEX REPORT

| Audience coverage index | ACI (preceding week) | Song title                              | Publisher            | Key city station-uses and originations |                       |                      | Additional network station-uses NBC, BLUE, <sup>b</sup> CBS, MBS |                          |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------|
|                         |                      |   |                      | Local outlets of NBC, BLUE, CBS, MBS   |                       |                      |  |                          |
|                         |                      |   |                      | Total <sup>a</sup>                     | New York <sup>b</sup> | Chicago <sup>c</sup> |  | Los Angeles <sup>d</sup> |
| 1,222                   | (1,063)              | White Christmas                         | Bertlin              | 107                                    | 54 (34)               | 16 (25)              | 37 (32)  | 2,850                    |
| 1,036                   | (1,258)              | Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition | Famous               | 72                                     | 37 (24)               | 15 (20)              | 20 (17)  | 2,320                    |
| 855                     | (1,011)              | Dearly Beloved                          | Chappell             | 47                                     | 22 (15)               | 14 (16)              | 11 (11)  | 1,490                    |
| 706                     | (356)                | Master Five by Five                     | Leeds                | 48                                     | 28 (20)               | 3 (4)                | 17 (15)  | 1,800                    |
| 708                     | (564)                | Manhattan Serenade                      | Robbins              | 56                                     | 27 (19)               | 13 (16)              | 16 (18)  | 1,510                    |
| 700                     | (352)                | There Will Never Be Another You         | Mayfair              | 50                                     | 37 (19)               | 5 (14)               | 8 (8)  | 3,380                    |
| 689                     | (386)                | I'm Getting Tired So I Can Sleep        | Army                 | 39                                     | 25 (16)               | 9 (13)               | 5 (6)  | 1,330                    |
| 656                     | (364)                | When the Lights Go On Again             | Campbell-Loft-Porgie | 27                                     | 24 (19)               | 1 (2)                | 2 (3)  | 1,450                    |
| 636                     | (404)                | I Met Her on Monday                     | A B C                | 38                                     | 26 (13)               | 5 (8)                | 7 (9)  | 1,450                    |
| 534                     | (413)                | I Came Here to Talk for Joe             | Shapiro-Bernstein    | 50                                     | 29 (16)               | 10 (16)              | 11 (7)   | 1,810                    |
| 511                     | (487)                | I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo             | Bregman-Vocco-Conn   | 39                                     | 19 (14)               | 5 (8)                | 15 (11)  | 1,160                    |
| 501                     | (513)                | At Last                                 | Faist                | 42                                     | 15 (9)                | 9 (11)               | 18 (14)  | 1,020                    |
| 471                     | (598)                | Gobs of Love                            | Paramount            | 23                                     | 16 (11)               | 2 (4)                | 5 (2)  | 1,220                    |
| 460                     | (364)                | I Get the Neck of the Chicken           | Southern             | 32                                     | 16 (9)                | 4 (9)                | 12 (7)   | 1,080                    |
| 445                     | (599)                | Daybreak                                | Faist                | 67                                     | 34 (21)               | 15 (24)              | 18 (13)  | 1,660                    |
| 425                     | (279)                | Hip Hip Hooray                          | Robbins              | 36                                     | 21 (16)               | 9 (13)               | 6 (7)  | 1,230                    |
| 418                     | (223)                | Army Air Corps                          | Fischer              | 14                                     | 11 (4)                | 1 (3)                | 2 (4)  | 850                      |
| 418                     | (351)                | Be Careful, It's My Heart               | Bertlin              | 23                                     | 12 (8)                | 6 (8)                | 5 (3)  | 730                      |
| 395                     | (336)                | My Devotion                             | Santly-Joy-Select    | 36                                     | 14 (10)               | 12 (14)              | 10 (7)   | 970                      |
| 390                     | (227)                | Why Don't You Fall in Love with Me      | Harms                | 33                                     | 25 (17)               | 4 (7)                | 4 (3)  | 1,220                    |

<sup>a</sup> Total number of different program performances heard in the three key cities.  
<sup>b</sup> First figure—total performances heard in New York; second figure, in brackets,—total performances originating in the New York area.  
<sup>c</sup> First figure—total performances heard in Chicago, but not heard in New York—October 27 through November 2; second figure, in brackets,—total performances originating in Chicago area.  
<sup>d</sup> First figure—total performances heard in Los Angeles, but not heard in New York or Chicago—October 27 through November 2; second figure, in brackets,—total performances originating in Los Angeles area.

## I. THE CBS FORECAST PANELS

TABLE 1.—RE-SURVEY OF THE 1941 PANEL IN 1942: RANK ORDER OF PROGRAM TYPE PREFERENCES  
(TOTAL CASES EACH YEAR)

|                                   | <i>Average evening</i> |      | <i>Weekday daytime</i> |      | <i>Saturday daytime</i> |      | <i>Sunday daytime</i> |      |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|
|                                   | 1942                   | 1941 | 1942                   | 1941 | 1942                    | 1941 | 1942                  | 1941 |
| Children's programs . . . . .     | 12                     | 12   | 13                     | 13   | 8                       | 8    | 11                    | 11   |
| Classical music . . . . .         | 7                      | 8    | 6                      | 8    | 7                       | 6    | 6                     | 3    |
| Home-making programs . . . . .    | 13                     | 13   | 9                      | 9    | 11                      | 10   | 13                    | 13   |
| News commentators . . . . .       | 1                      | 4    | 1                      | 1    | 1                       | 1    | 1                     | 1    |
| Old familiar music . . . . .      | 6                      | 6    | 5                      | 3    | 5                       | 5    | 4                     | 6    |
| Popular and dance music . . . . . | 5                      | 5    | 2                      | 2    | 2                       | 2    | 7                     | 7    |
| Quiz programs . . . . .           | 2                      | 1    | 11                     | 11   | 10                      | 9    | 8                     | 9    |
| Radio plays . . . . .             | 3                      | 2    | 7 <sup>a</sup>         | 7    | 6                       | 7    | 5                     | 5    |
| Religious broadcasts . . . . .    | 11                     | 11   | 12                     | 12   | 13                      | 13   | 2                     | 2    |
| Serial dramas . . . . .           | 10                     | 10   | 4                      | 4    | 12                      | 12   | 12                    | 12   |
| Sports events . . . . .           | 8                      | 7    | 7 <sup>a</sup>         | 6    | 4                       | 3    | 9                     | 10   |
| Talks and lectures . . . . .      | 9                      | 9    | 10                     | 10   | 9                       | 10   | 10                    | 8    |
| Variety programs . . . . .        | 4                      | 3    | 3                      | 5    | 3                       | 4    | 3                     | 4    |

<sup>a</sup> Tied ranks.

TABLE 2.—“WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF BOOKS DO YOU READ?”

|  | 1942      |       | 1941      |       |
|--|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|  | % Reading | Rank  | % Reading | Rank  |
| Biography . . . . .                                | 60.8      | 6     | 49.9      | 7     |
| Current events . . . . .                           | 71.0      | 2     | 67.5      | 2     |
| Detective and mystery stories . . . . .            | 68.2      | 4     | 64.3      | 3     |
| History . . . . .                                  | 53.1      | 8     | 46.9      | 9     |
| Historical novels . . . . .                        | 62.2      | 5     | 56.7      | 5     |
| Humor and comedy . . . . .                         | 70.2      | 3     | 62.3      | 4     |
| Novels . . . . .                                   | 78.5      | 1     | 72.5      | 1     |
| Poetry . . . . .                                   | 49.3      | 10    | 45.4      | 10    |
| Scientific . . . . .                               | 52.9      | 9     | 47.4      | 8     |
| Travel . . . . .                                   | 58.5      | 7     | 53.9      | 6     |
| “Other” . . . . .                                  | 8.0       |       | 7.1       |       |
| Average number of types read . . . . .             |           | 6.3   |           | 5.7   |
| Read one or more books in the last month . . . . . |           | 56.0% |           | 54.3% |

## J. BIOGRAPHIES IN POPULAR MAGAZINES

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE "SATURDAY EVENING POST" AND  
"COLLIER'S"

If we study the professional distribution for the two magazines separately we find the following result:

TABLE 1.—DISTRIBUTION OF BIOGRAPHICAL SUBJECTS BY OCCUPATION IN THE "SATURDAY EVENING POST" AND "COLLIER'S" FROM APRIL 1940—APRIL 1941

| Occupations of<br>subjects     | <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> |     | <i>Collier's</i> |     |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
|                                | No.                          | %   | No.              | %   |
| Politics .....                 | 16                           | 28  | 15               | 22  |
| Business and professions ..... | 20                           | 35  | 5                | 7   |
| Entertainment, sports .....    | 20                           | 37  | 49               | 71  |
| Total .....                    | 56                           | 100 | 69               | 100 |

This table shows a considerable difference between *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's* in the occupational distribution of heroes. There are far more "serious" people and far fewer entertainers in the *Saturday Evening Post*. This corresponds to a difference in the audiences of the two magazines.<sup>1</sup> Surveys have shown that the average *Saturday Evening Post* reader is older, wealthier, and more attached to his home and more interested in social and economic problems than the average reader of *Collier's*.

However, the difference between the two magazines becomes negligible (see Table 2) when we re-classify the heroes according to the spheres of politics, production, and consumption. For our purpose this is a more meaningful classification. As the

<sup>1</sup> *A qualitative study of magazines: Who Reads Them and Why*. McCall Corporation, October 1939.

two magazines are rather alike under this classification we felt justified in treating them together in the main text.

TABLE 2.—COMPARISON OF "SATURDAY EVENING POST" AND "COLLIER'S" HEROES ACCORDING TO GENERAL SPHERES OF ACTIVITY

| <i>Spheres</i>    | <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> |          | <i>Collier's</i> |          |
|-------------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
|                   | 1940-1941                    |          | 1940-1941        |          |
|                   | <i>No.</i>                   | <i>%</i> | <i>No.</i>       | <i>%</i> |
| Politics .....    | 16                           | 28       | 15               | 22       |
| Production .....  | 3                            | 5        | ..               | ..       |
| Consumption ..... | 37                           | 67       | 54               | 78       |
| Total .....       | 56                           | 100      | 69               | 100      |

We give below the list of the biographies from *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's* appearing in the issues between April 1940 and April 1941.

#### LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES USED

##### *Saturday Evening Post*

| <i>Date</i>       | <i>"Hero"</i>        | <i>Profession</i>                          | <i>No.</i> |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|------------|
| 4-6-40 .....      | John T. McCutcheon   | Cartoonist                                 | 1          |
| 4-13, 20-40 ..... | Clark Griffith       | Baseball manager                           | 2          |
| 4-20-40 .....     | John R. Brinkley     | Physician                                  | 3          |
| 5-4-40 .....      | Robert Taft          | Senator                                    | 4          |
| 5-4-40 .....      | Jack Johnson         | Boxer                                      | 5          |
| 5-4-40 .....      | Clark Gable          | Movie actor                                | 6          |
| 5-11-40 .....     | Art Fletcher         | Baseball coach                             | 7          |
| 5-11-40 .....     | Mrs. Shipley         | Chief, Passport Division, State Department | 8          |
| 5-18, 25-40 ..... | Dorothy Thompson     | Columnist                                  | 9          |
| 5-25-40 .....     | Richard A. Ballinger | Former Secretary of Interior               | 10         |
| 6-8-40 .....      | Bobby Jones          | Golfer                                     | 11         |
| 6-22-40 .....     | Bob Donovan et al.   | Boxers                                     | 12         |
| 6-22-40 .....     | Bob Allman           | Wrestler                                   | 13         |
| 6-22-40 .....     | Daisy Harriman       | Ambassador                                 | 14         |
| 7-6-40 .....      | Oché Toné            | Slovenian immigrant                        | 15         |
| 7-13-40 .....     | Ullstein Corp.       | Publishing house                           | 16         |
| 7-20-40 .....     | Hitler               | Fuehrer of Third Reich                     | 17         |
| 7-20-40 .....     | Jimmy Byrnes         | Senator                                    | 18         |
| 7-27-40 .....     | Satchel Paige        | Baseball pitcher                           | 19         |
| 7-27-40 .....     | Angas                | Investment counselor                       | 20         |
| 7-27-40 .....     | Dr. Robert Ley       | Head of the German Labor Front             | 21         |
| 7-27-40 .....     | Frances Perkins      | Secretary of Labor                         | 22         |

| <i>Date</i>                   | <i>"Hero"</i>               | <i>Profession</i>                           | <i>No.</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------------|
| 8-3, 10, 17-40 . . . . .      | Pittsburgh Phil             | Professional gambler (horses)               | 23         |
| 8-17, 24-40 . . . . .         | } Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.      | Businessman                                 | 24         |
| 9-14, 21, 28-40 . . . . .     |                             | Woman sailor                                | 25         |
| 8-17-40 . . . . .             | D'Arcy Grant                | President of Ringling-Barnum & Bailey shows | 26         |
| 8-24-40 . . . . .             | John Ringling North         | Baseball manager                            | 27         |
| 9-14-40 . . . . .             | Bill McKechnie              | Columnist                                   | 28         |
| 9-14-40 . . . . .             | Westbrook Pegler            | Rector of Groton                            | 29         |
| 9-14-40 . . . . .             | Endicott Peabody            | } Will Rogers                               | Actor      |
| 10-5, 12, 19, 26-40 . . . . . | James C. Petrillo           |   |            |
| 10-12-40 . . . . .            | Louis McHenry Howe          | Presidential secretary                      | 33         |
| 10-12-40 . . . . .            | Jay Norwood Darling         | Cartoonist                                  | 34         |
| 10-19-40 . . . . .            | Sidney Hillman              | Labor leader                                | 35         |
| 10-19-40 . . . . .            | Frank Hague                 | Mayor of Jersey City                        | 36         |
| 10-26-40 . . . . .            | Howard Johnson              | Owner of a restaurant chain                 | 37         |
| 11-2-40 . . . . .             | Henry Wallace               | Vice-President                              | 38         |
| 11-2-40 . . . . .             | Silliman Evans              | Newspaperman                                | 39         |
| 11-23-40 . . . . .            | Jesse H. Jones              | Secretary of Commerce                       | 40         |
| 11-30-40 . . . . .            | William B. Stout            | Inventor                                    | 41         |
| 12-7-40 . . . . .             | Raymond Gram Swing          | Radio commentator                           | 42         |
| 12-14-40 . . . . .            | Billy Rose                  | Showman                                     | 43         |
| 12-21-40 . . . . .            | Charles A. Lindbergh        | Aviator, etc.                               | 44         |
| 12-28-40 . . . . .            | Bobby Allen                 | Basketball player                           | 45         |
| 1-4-41 . . . . .              | Mrs. E. K. Hoyt and<br>Toto | A gorilla                                   | 46         |
| 1-11-41 . . . . .             | Clifton Fadiman             | Book and radio critic                       | 47         |
| 1-18-41 . . . . .             | Sam Rayburn                 | Speaker, House of Representatives           | 48         |
| 1-25-41 . . . . .             | Sir Willmott Lewis          | London <i>Times</i> Emissary to U.S.        | 49         |
| 2-1-41 . . . . .              | J. H. Kendrigan             | Football coach                              | 50         |
| 2-1-41 . . . . .              | Cyrus R. Smith              | Pres. Amer. Airlines                        | 51         |
| 2-8-41 . . . . .              | Varian Brothers             | Inventors                                   | 52         |
| 2-15-41 . . . . .             | Theodore A. Lyons           | Baseball player                             | 53         |
| 2-22-41 . . . . .             | Jo Carstairs                | Island proprietress                         | 54         |
| 3-8, 15-41 . . . . .          | Preston Sturges             | Movie writer and director                   | 55         |
| 3-15-41 . . . . .             | Hank Greenberg              | Baseball player                             | 56         |
| 3-22-41 . . . . .             | Phil Rizzuto                | Baseball player                             | 57         |

*Collier's*

|                   |                      |                               |     |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----|
| 4-6-40 . . . . .  | Robert A. Taft       | Senator                       | 101 |
| 4-13-40 . . . . . | Mme. Chao Wu-Tang    | Chinese Partisan Chief        | 102 |
| 4-13-40 . . . . . | Nancy Hamilton       | Playwright, actress           | 103 |
| 4-13-40 . . . . . | Bill Klem            | Baseball umpire               | 104 |
| 4-20-40 . . . . . | Geraldine Fitzgerald | Movie actress                 | 105 |
| 4-20-40 . . . . . | Pablo Casals         | Cellist                       | 106 |
| 4-27-40 . . . . . | General Weygand      | General                       | 107 |
| 4-27-40 . . . . . | Ezra Stone           | Stage, radio and screen actor | 108 |
| 5-4-40 . . . . .  | Cordell Hull         | Secretary of State            | 109 |

| <i>Date</i> | <i>"Hero"</i>                       | <i>Profession</i>                   | <i>No.</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 5-4-40      | Brenda Joyce                        | Movie actress                       | 110        |
| 5-4-40      | Bill Tilden                         | Tennis champion                     | 111        |
| 5-11-40     | William Powell                      | Movie actor                         | 112        |
| 5-18-40     | Greer Garson                        | Movie actress                       | 113        |
| 5-25-40     | Ettore Muti                         | Fascist politician                  | 114        |
| 5-25-40     | Philip Kerr, Marquess<br>of Lothian | British Ambassador                  | 115        |
| 5-25-40     | Conchita Cintron                    | Woman matador                       | 116        |
| 6-8-40      | Thomas Dewey                        | Politician                          | 117        |
| 6-8-40      | Athanasiaides                       | Munitions merchant                  | 118        |
| 6-15-40     | Adelaide Moffett                    | Night club entertainer              | 119        |
| 6-22-40     | Dutch Leonard                       | Baseball player                     | 120        |
| 6-22-40     | Chris Martin                        | Movie actor                         | 121        |
| 6-29-40     | Gene Tierney                        | Movie actress                       | 122        |
| 7-20-40     | Lew Jenkins                         | Lightweight champion                | 123        |
| 7-20-40     | Mahatma Gandhi                      | Indian political leader             | 124        |
| 7-27-40     | Jean Arthur                         | Movie actress                       | 125        |
| 8-3-40      | Pare Lorentz                        | Movie producer                      | 126        |
| 8-10-40     | Don James                           | Sideshow barker                     | 127        |
| 8-24-40     | Larry Adler                         | Harmonica player                    | 128        |
| 8-31-40     | Ernest Bevin                        | British Minister of Labor           | 129        |
| 9-7-40      | Helen Bernhard                      | Tennis player                       | 130        |
| 9-7-40      | Mike Todd                           | Producer—show business              | 131        |
| 9-14-40     | Ingrid Bergman                      | Movie actress                       | 132        |
| 9-21-40     | Wendell Willkie                     | Politician                          | 133        |
| 9-28-40     | Walters and Derringer               | Baseball players                    | 133a       |
| 10-5-40     | Juan March                          | Industrialist                       | 134        |
| 10-5-40     | Hildegarde                          | Night club singer                   | 135        |
| 10-12-40    | Jack Grain                          | Football player                     | 136        |
| 10-12-40    | Jinx Falkenburg                     | Advertising model                   | 137        |
| 10-12-40    | Eddie Flynn                         | Democratic National Chairman        | 138        |
| 10-19-40    | John Latouche                       | Writer                              | 139        |
| 10-26-40    | Ilka Chase                          | Actress: movie, radio, film         | 140        |
| 11-2-40     | Winston Churchill                   | British Prime Minister              | 141        |
| 11-2-40     | Ken Overlin                         | Middleweight champion               | 142        |
| 11-9-40     | Joan Carroll                        | Child movie actress                 | 143        |
| 11-9-40     | Lord Woolton                        | Britain's Minister of Food          | 144        |
| 11-16-40    | Dorothy Stickney                    | Actress—theater                     | 145        |
| 11-30-40    | Field Marshal Erhard<br>Milch       | Organizer of German air force       | 146        |
| 11-30-40    | Barbara Ham                         | Musical writer—college girl         | 147        |
| 12-7-40     | Martha Scott                        | Movie actress                       | 148        |
| 12-7-40     | Joseph H. Ball                      | Senator                             | 149        |
| 12-14-40    | "Schnitz"                           | Producer—jitterbug leader           | 150        |
| 12-21-40    | Ruth Hussey                         | Movie actress                       | 151        |
| 12-28-40    | George Balanchine                   | Ballet director                     | 152        |
| 1-4-41      | Billy Soose                         | Boxing champion                     | 153        |
| 1-4-41      | Carol and Magda<br>Lupescu          | Ex-King of Roumania and<br>paramour | 154        |
| 1-4-41      | Annie Laurie Williams               | Hollywood literary agent            | 155        |

## APPENDIX

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| <i>Date</i> | <i>"Hero"</i>                                | <i>Profession</i>          | <i>No.</i> |
|-------------|--|----------------------------|------------|
| 1-11-41     | Katherine Dunham                             | Dancer                     | 156        |
| 1-18-41     | Dorothy Comingore                            | Actress: theater and films | 157        |
| 1-25-41     | Lou Novikoff                                 | Softball player            | 158        |
| 2-1-41      | Zivic Brothers                               | Boxers                     | 159        |
| 2-8-41      | Three Young actresses<br>in "Charley's Aunt" | Actresses                  | 160        |
| 2-15-41     | Brenda Marshall                              | Movie actress              | 161        |
| 2-24-41     | Patricia Morison                             | Movie actress              | 162        |
| 3-1-41      | Marilyn Shaw                                 | National ski champion      | 163        |
| 3-15-41     | Cliff Thompson                               | Hockey coach               | 164        |
| 3-15-41     | Chic Young                                   | Comic strip cartoonist     | 165        |
| 3-15-41     | Hal Wallis                                   | Movie producer             | 166        |
| 3-29-41     | James Taylor                                 | Inventor of gadgets        | 167        |
| 3-29-41     | Bob Riskin                                   | Scenario writer            | 168        |





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