MILESTONES IN NETWORK RADIO: SUGGESTIONS FOR A BASIC COLLECTION OF NETWORK RADIO PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

MILESTONES IN NETWORK RADIO: SUGGESTIONS FOR A BASIC COLLECTION OF NETWORK RADIO PROGRAMS

by John Edward Carl

To listen again to the programs of network radio would be enlightening for several reasons: the programs would provide a new view of network history, they would offer a direct study of various examples of sound and dramatic techniques used on radio, they would offer a fresh understanding of radio's popular art, they would reflect something of the life and times of that society which heard the broadcasts, and, most of all, the radio programs would vividly illustrate what the sound of network radio was really like.

And in order that people may have the opportunity to hear again the broadcasts of network radio, recordings of these broadcasts should be gathered and held in a sound library. This sound library, then, would be a central location where one could go to check-out certain broadcasts for study.

However, before a library can begin to accumulate its documents, an evaluation process should be undertaken to decide which broadcasts were the important contributions to radio's history. It is, then, the purpose of this study to compile a list of significant broadcasts for such a sound library.

More specifically, the purpose of this project is to both categorically list the important programs, voices, and events that were a part of the four major networks, and to give a brief explanation

of why each was important. This listing begins with the inception of each of the major networks, NBC--both Red and Blue, CBS, Mutual, and ABC (American Broadcasting Company), and continues through 1950, an arbitrary date that roughly coincides with the commencement of the television era.

The determination of which programs should be classified as important involves three general criteria: 1) the characteristic of a broadcast being a first in some significant manner, 2) the amount of impact that a program had on its audience, and 3) the critics' acceptance of a certain broadcast or series of programs.

The selection of programs is made in several categories. One chapter is devoted to "The Programs of Network Radio," with various sections involved with "Quiz Shows," "Children's and Youth's Programs," "Discussion and Public Affairs Programs," "Comedy Programs," "Mystery and Detective Programs," "Soap Operas," "Drama Programs," "Variety Programs," and "Music Shows." Another chapter is involved with "The Events and Voices of Network News," including such sections as "News Events," "Sports Events," "Newscasters," and "Sportscasters." Finally, one chapter is concerned with "Special Broadcasts of Network Radio."

Those programs selected as important are listed both at the end of each section in the text, and in the Conclusion.

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By

John Edward Carl

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

To listen again to the programs of network radio would be enlightening.

To listen again to those programs would provide a new view of network history, this time in terms of the very programs that the networks produced; this would be a living lesson in the growth and development of NBC, CBS, Mutual, and ABC taught by the broadcasts of the four big chains.

To listen again would offer a direct study of various examples of sound and dramatic techniques used on radio, as well as a direct study of announcing styles, and program development.

To listen again to such past favorites as "Amos and Andy," "The Romance of Helen Trent," or Kate Smith would offer a fresh understanding of those popular art forms which received the greatest patronage.

And because art, including popular art, does reflect the life and times of a society, to listen again to those broadcasts would reveal something about the people who listened to those programs, and even something about that span of time in which those people lived. The programs cannot tell everything, but they can tell something about the decades when network radio lived and flourished.

But most of all, to listen again would be to hear what radio was really like, and to hear it first hand. Network radio has a story

to tell, a story that it--best of all--can tell, a story that loses something when someone tries to interpret radio's message and report its meaning to a third person.

And in order that people may have the opportunity to hear again the broadcasts of network radio, recordings of those broadcasts should be gathered and held in a sound library.

This sound library would provide a central location for those many network broadcasts, and would have a classification system so that each of the documents could be readily located. Since most of the early broadcasts were originally recorded on electrical transcriptions which become poorer in quality with repeated playings, the broadcasts would be rerecorded on magnetic audio tape, or any other sound recording system that would allow a great number of playings with no loss in quality. Certainly some kind of a check out system would be devised so that students, teachers, and researchers may use the broadcasts at their convenience.

The idea of a sound library is not really new. Mr. Robert Vincent, curator of the National Voice Library at Michigan State University, has spent most of his life-time collecting for his sound depository; also, radio station KIRO in Seattle, Washington recorded nearly every news and special events program of the CBS network during World War II, and these documents are now in the KIRO-CBS Phonoarchive at the University of Washington.

However, none of the sound libraries already established have dealt specifically with general collection of important network broadcasts, and that is one of the reasons for starting a library of this kind.

Another reason for starting the library, and starting it very soon, is that most of the broadcasts of network radio were aired only a relatively few years ago which means that most of these broadcasts

are probably still available; since they are probably still available they should be collected before they are lost by age, fire, mishandling, or misuse, or before someone decides that the recordings have no use and thus discards them.

But, of course, the real value of establishing the library is in the knowledge that each of these broadcasts can impart to the listener. These living textbooks are a new source of teaching, of understanding, and of research; a new dimension in recalling what has gone before, a new link with the past. And because these broadcasts can vividly illustrate--among other things--what the network programmed, which techniques were the most effective in radio drama, and how radio produced its programs, there has to be a library where one can locate these network broadcasts from the radio era.

The programs in the library could be used in classroom instruction in radio and television courses as lessons in programming, production, announcing, and so on. They could also be used by radio and television students for classroom work as inserts in documentaries or other programs that need the sounds of network radio. Persons interested in studying American social development during the radio era might use the library to find out how radio reflected the times; and researchers studying network radio of the thirties and forties would have "live" documents with which to work. Finally, the programs could be used in the next few years as nostalgic entertainment for the people who lived during that particular span of time when network radio was radio.

However, before this library can begin to accumulate its documents, an evaluation process should be undertaken to decide which broadcasts were the important contributions to radio's story. This study is concerned with the compilation of a list of significant broadcasts which should be obtained for the library.

More specifically, the purpose of this project is to both categorically list the important programs, voices, and events that were a part of the four major radio networks, and to give a brief explanation of why each was important. This listing begins with the inception of each of the major networks, NBC--both Red and Blue, CBS, Mutual, and ABC (American Broadcasting Company), and continues through 1950, an arbitrary date that roughly coincides with the commencement of the television era.

Most sound libraries previous to this have not had a list of important documents from which to work, and have, instead, collected works at random. The advantage of working from a list, however, is that the collector knows in advance which programs are the most important to the library, and he can, therefore, expend a concentrated effort to obtain those programs. Also, a list tells the collector what programs were actually broadcast (whether or not electrical transcriptions of the broadcasts are available is another question) and alerts him to programs of which he may not have previously been aware. Then, too, a formal listing such as this one aids the collector by revealing the network, date, and time of broadcast of those programs that are selected for collection.

There are, however, several limitations to this study. To begin, the very idea of including only network programs in the listing excludes some non-network offerings that were important in radio's history. Still the limitation is imposed for two reasons: first, most of the important radio programs during these years were network programs; and second, there is a greater chance of finding recordings of network programs because of transcriptions often made by the networks for their own use in studying the program, or "cut" for the program's sponsor or advertising agency which may have wanted the program recorded for some reason.

Also, the fact that there was little recording done by the networks until around 1938 creates a limitation on the number of programs available for collection. For this reason, until 1938, only major events in radio history are enumerated in the hope that these more notable events did somehow find their way into recording apparatus.

Certainly, the scope of the project presents a limitation in itself. Only if all the information about network radio's impact during the thirties and forties were available and if time could be spent to analyze it all; and, only if every script of all the well-known programs could be read in order to select the best show or shows, could the listing approximate real definitiveness. Therefore it has to be understood that though the listing is intended to be complete, it is not final, nor will it ever be final until everything is known about network radio and its programs.

Determining which programs should be classified as important is no easy task. Theoretically speaking, the important broadcasts were those that were able to impinge on people's lives by introducing new ideas, by being so appealing that people felt compelled to listen, by selling the sponsor's product, and so on. Also, programs that radio critics considered good are listed as important broadcasts.

In greater detail, these are the criteria for selecting programs as important:

1) The characteristic of being a "first" in some significant manner is usually reason enough to define a broadcast as important. However, a first is even more valuable if it was a successful first. For instance Rudy Vallee's "The Fleischmann Yeast Hour" was a pioneer in variety programs;[1] in addition the program was very

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[1]Francis Chase, Jr., Sound and Fury (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), p. 217.

successful because of its large popular following; therefore it became even more important as a network broadcast.

Firsts are important broadcasts, not so much because of their impact on the radio audience, but rather because of their influence on other broadcasters. The firsts introduced new ways of doing things--new styles, new techniques--and the adoption of these new ideas by other broadcasters broadened the range of radio's offerings and its method of presenting those offerings.

2) The amount of impact a program possessed is another criterion for selection. Impact is defined by more than just the popularity of a program (in terms of ratings, phone calls, demand for tickets and loyalty of listeners); it also takes into consideration the success of the program in selling the sponsor's product, its power to launch new careers in radio, its ability to instill new phrases in the American language, such as "Amos and Andy's" "I'se regusted," its drawing power in making people leave what they're doing in order to listen; or, to the opposite extreme, its rejection or intense unpopularity, usually evidenced by listener feedback to the Federal Communications Commission.

This impact can also be illustrated in terms of how much of an impression the networks believed certain programs made on the public. A network's extensive allocation of time to certain kinds of programs, the decision whether to (or how often to) rebroadcast dramatic shows, the amount of money to lay out for unsponsored programs or to spend on talent and writers, and the number of years that a series was allowed to run are all indications of how the chain broadcasters felt about the impact of certain programs.

Impact qualifies as a criterion because it demonstrates how important a program was to the radio audience at the time of its original broadcast.

3) Then, too, a number of programs are included as important simply because the critics acknowledged them as being important. These broadcasts, as a group, tend to be drama productions that were performed on the "Columbia Workshop" and on other radio playhouses that aired quality work.

Critics' approval of a production is listed as a criterion despite the very real difficulty of deciding which critiques, written either when the program was first broadcast, or years later in retrospect, should provide the basis for selection. Not all programs now heralded as significant steps forward in radio's history met with any kind of approval during the time the program was originally broadcast, and to decide which point of view is correct is not easy, although surely contemporary critical acceptance is a valid criterion for a collection made now or in the future.

Critics' evaluation is listed as a criterion because many undertakings which did not have a vast popular audience and which were not, in any sense, firsts, were important because of their esthetic qualities.

Mechanics of the Listing

The body of the project is divided into sections, each dealing with a different kind of broadcast or separate type of program. Following the text in each of these sections comes a formal list of programs or broadcasts that are specifically included in the listing. For example, the following programs are a partial list that comes from the section dealing with comedy programs.

Fibber McGee and Molly, ---(NBC-R, 9:30-10:00 P.M. Tuesday)

The Fred Allen Show, October 14, 1945 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Each entry in the listing begins with the proper title of the program. Next comes the calendar date of the program, if a specific

dated program is asked for in the text; then comes the network and the time of broadcast. These latter two entries, the network and time of broadcast, may be absent for two reasons: first, and less likely, neither was known; second, and more likely, the program changed networks, or often changed time slots. Also, all times given are Eastern time, either Eastern Standard, Eastern Daylight, or Eastern War, depending upon the date of broadcast.

In addition to the formal list following the text in each section, there is an informal list, a kind of if-you-can-find-it-get-it list, that appears in the last paragraph(s) of each individual section. These programs, which are not as important as the entries formally specified at the end of each section, were better than the average network programs of that category, and would make welcome additions to a library.

Also, the formal listing is reproduced twice in the Conclusion, once based on chronology for specifically dated broadcasts, and once based on program types for simple convenience is using the list.

CHAPTER II

THE PROGRAMS OF NETWORK RADIO

Quiz Shows

Quiz programs got started with a CBS venture called "Professor Quiz" which, while not overwhelmingly popular, did prove that there was some degree of entertainment in the process of asking questions and having someone answer them.[1]

However, it was "Information Please" that was the real forerunner of the modern quiz program. With Clifton Fadiman as host, listeners wrote the questions that were used in an effort to stump the panel of Oscar Levant, pianist; John Kieran, sports columist of The New York Times (who seemed to possess complete recall), and Franklin P. Adams, whose column "The Conning Tower" appeared in the New York Post. In addition, one or more well-known guests joined the panel each week, depending on whether all three regulars were in attendance, to bring the panel's number to four. These guests ranged from Wendell Willkie to Rex Stout to Lillian Gish to Gracie Allen.[2]

The popularity of "Information Please" was a surprise to many broadcasters who felt that the program would be too intellectual and would therefore attract very few listeners. However, the Fadiman-Kieran-Levant-Adams team was a smooth working contingent that

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[1]Sam Slate and Joe Cook, It Sounds Impossible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 5.

[2]Max Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1939), p. 69.

amazed audiences with its knowledge, as well as entertained them with its light treatment of heavy subjects.

One incident that gave NBC Blue network officials a good indication of the rising popularity of the program occurred during Thomas Dewey's campaign for Governor of New York State in 1938. The Non-Partisan Citizenship Committee, which supported Dewey, decided to buy a half hour of network time for a Dewey speech, and it choose the 8:30-9:00 P.M. "Information Please" spot. Because the show was still unsponsored, there was no advertiser to worry about; yet the network chiefs urged the Committee to select another time segment, for NBC was beginning to realize that "Information Please" had a following, and they saw no reason to deprive the audience of the program. But the Dewey backers could not be swayed, so the network gave in and Dewey's speech usurped the "Information Please" half-hour.

By 9:00 P.M., when the speech was over, the NBC switchboard reported that approximately 1200 calls had been received from listeners (count was lost after 765 calls) either wondering what had happened to their program, or complaining about its absence.

A sample of the comments include:

"I won't vote for him."

"I ask you, which is more interesting: a political speech or 'Information Please?'"

"Nuts to Dewey! Nuts to NBC!" [3]

Besides being able to build an audience, the program could also sell products. It was one of the shows that Variety reported as "among the programs listed by advertising agencies as notably having what it takes to inspire paydirt loyalty." [4]

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[3]A. A. Schechter, I Live On Air (New York: Fredrick A. Stokes Company, 1941), pp. 380-381.

[4]Robert J. Landry, This Fascinating Radio Business (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1946), p. 156.

No doubt the program had many interesting sessions during its lifetime, any of which would be suitable to collect; however the show of April 14, 1939, chosen by Max Wylie as the best quiz program of that year, would be especially suitable.

The next quiz show that garnered a great deal of success was developed in Chicago by Lou Cowan who had a tough time ever getting the show on the air; Cowan had the agonizing experience of having eighteen sponsors turn down his "Quiz Kids" before it was finally accepted.[5]

"Quiz Kids," a kind of junior version of "Information Please," had Joe Kelly as quizmaster presiding over a panel of experts consisting of boys and girls fifteen years old or younger.

This quiz show, like "Information Please," enjoyed large audiences and a long run. It was also a highly imitated program; Cowan, in fact, had information at one time of at least fifty-two "carbon copies" of the show, including Cuban and Australian duplications. Another credit to the "Quiz Kids" was its effort in selling $125,000,000 worth of bonds over the radio in World War II.[6]

Again, there are no doubt many performances which would be suitable for collecting, yet, if possible, it would be interesting to try to obtain some of the earliest programs which had Gerald Darrow as a panel member. Darrow, one of the brightest children ever to be a panelist, was also one of the most popular. One incident that endeared him to the hearts of the listeners was an occasion when a question called for the words to the first verse of "Three Little Fishes." Gerald, in answering the question, sang not only the first, but all three stanzas of the song, despite the efforts of the studio crew to stop him;

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[5]Ibid., p. 152.

[6]Ibid.

he explained his actions after he finished the last verse--he wanted to assure everybody that the fishes got home safely.[7]

The program began in July of 1940, and was broadcast on the NBC Red network.

A show that barely meets the qualifications for being called a quiz program is Ralph Edward's "Truth or Consequences"; barely, because emcee Edwards asked questions that were intentionally so difficult that they could not be answered. This was done in order that the consequences, with which the show was really concerned, would have to be paid.

However, when the mystery personality feature was added to the show, "Truth or Consequences" did become more like the quiz-type of program. One of these mystery personality contests was the "Mrs. Hush" teaser in which listeners at home who wished to enter sent personal donations to the March of Dimes in care of "Truth or Consequences." These listeners then took the chance of having Edwards telephone them during the show to ask them to identify this mysterious lady who had, during the course of the contest, given some very vague clues as to her identity. The "Mrs. Hush" contest, in particular, netted $365,000 for the March of Dimes and deluged the program with 730,000 pieces of mail during the seven weeks of the contest. By the time Clara Bow was finally identified in March, 1947, as the mysterious "Mrs. Hush," "Truth or Consequences" was even more firmly implanted as a nationwide listening habit.[8]

Edwards explained the success of "Truth or Consequences" this way: "Our show has the keenest insight into the taste of America.

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[7]James Beatty, III, "Master Mind; Gerald Darrow," American Magazine, 131 (February, 1941), p. 56.

[8]"Mrs. Hush is Identified," Life, 22 (March 31, 1947), p. 117.

It's the kind of show that could easily go off key. To use a four bit word, it could have had its empathy destroyed if we didn't know exactly how far to go."[9]

But the show had more than keen insight into the taste of the stunts used for consequences; it was one of the first programs to give away large sums of money. "Professor Quiz" handed out only a few silver dollars, "Information Please" at first offered $15 as top prize for a question that would stump the panel, and "Quiz Kids" gave away a large de luxe model Zenith radio for problems that would stop the "Kids." However, the mystery personality segment of "Truth or Consequences" had a jackpot that grew everytime there was an incorrect answer given; and when "Mrs. Hush" was finally named, the prize had grown to $17,500 worth of merchandise.

That program of March 15, 1947 on which Mrs. Hush was identified is suggested for collection.

While "Truth or Consequences" was one of the first shows to give away more than just a few dollars, "Stop the Music" really took advantage of the idea. During the 1948-49 season alone, host Bert Parks gave away 150,000 dollars' worth of prizes a week, and in the process, built such a large audience that Fred Allen, who was on at the same time, had a very difficult time competing with the show.[10]

"Stop the Music" is important for another reason besides its popularity. It has the dubious distinction of being one of the few radio programs ever to be banned from the air lanes by federal law. According to Section 1304 of the U. S. Criminal Code, "Stop the Music" and

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[9]John Crosby, Out of the Blue (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), p. 74.

[10]Ben Gross, I Looked and I Listened (New York: Random House, 1954), p. 153.

other "give-away" programs were classified as lotteries, and were therefore illegal. However, in 1948, two of the national networks challenged the Federal Communications Commission's rules defining lottery programs, and took the case to the U. S. Supreme Court where they received a favorable decision.[11]

The "Stop the Music" program of Sunday, March 13, 1949, on which Mrs. Julia Hubert won $32,250 by correctly identifying the mystery melody "The Navy and the Army, the Army and the Navy" would be an interesting addition to the library.

There were other quiz programs that did gain some amount of fame through the years, but not as much as the aforementioned four. These other quiz programs include "Break the Bank," "Take It or Leave It," "Twenty Questions," "What's My Name?" (another give-away), and the already-mentioned "Professor Quiz."

The programs to be collected:

Information Please, April 14, 1939 (NBC-B, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Quiz Kids, ---(NBC-R, ---).

Truth or Consequences, March 15, 1947 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Stop the Music, March 13, 1949 (ABC, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)

Children's and Youth's Programs

Radio befriended children. Radio never scolded, never punished, never critized--it liked children and spent around two hours each day telling them stories specifically intended for their young ears.

One story children seemed to like best of all was about a masked rider who, with an Indian companion, kept law and order in the early West. The rider was called "The Lone Ranger," and his trademark was the thrilling "Hi-yo Silver" with which he closed each program.

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[11]Walter B. Emery, Broadcasting and Government (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1961), p. 226.

"The Lone Ranger" was created in 1933 by George W. Trendle of WXYZ, Detroit, and soon became so popular that Trendle and his associates decided other stations might also like to broadcast the series. By 1934, four stations, WLW-Cincinnatti, WOR-New York, WGN-Chicago, as well as WXYZ, were carrying "The Lone Ranger," and through their cooperative effort in carrying this program, the Mutual Broadcasting System came to be born.

Trendle explained what made his western super-hero so super-popular with the kids: "First of all, our man is a clean fighter. He never attacks from behind. Then, he is tolerant, completely without racial prejudice--just look at the way he treats Tonto. He is kind to animals--why, he'd give his life for Silver. He respects womanhood and he's also religious--but without indicating that he belongs to any special church. As for smoking, drinking, and using profanity, they're completely out. Of course it goes without saying that he never makes love, and certainly he doesn't even kiss a girl--not on radio. The kids, you see, don't go for that mushy stuff."[12]

The Ranger remained the same for every listening generation: there was always his amazing horse Silver, his faithful Indian friend Tonto, the showy silver bullets (which never killed anybody), and the mysterious mask which kept the lone rider's identity a secret. The only thing that ever did change was the network; the Blue Network Company out-bid Mutual for the show in April of 1942.[13]

Before the masked rider finally rode off the radio range and into television's greener pastures, he was playing to an audience of more than twelve million eager listeners.[14]

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[12]Gross, op. cit., pp. 315-316.

[13]"Hi-yo Silver, Plated," Time, 39 (June 8, 1942), p. 65.

[14]Gross, op. cit., p. 316.

There was no particular adventure of "The Lone Ranger" that was more noteworthy than another; any episode would be acceptable for the library.

Jack Armstrong was another hero possessing a Pied-Piper lure for young listeners. The show, which started in 1933, had a theme song that was sung like an anthem. It went (and with feeling):

> Wave the flag for Hudson High Boys
> Show them how we stand.
> Ever challenging we champions
> Known throughout the land!
> (Ra Ra Boola Boola Boola Boola
> Boola Boola Boola Boo Ra Ra Ra)
> Have you tried Wheaties?
> They're whole-wheat with all of the bran.
> Won't you try Wheaties?
> For wheat is the best food of man.
> They're crispy and crunchy the whole year through
> Jack Armstrong never tires of them
> And neither will you.
> So just buy Wheaties
> The best breakfast food in the land!

"Jack Armstrong" featured Jack as a high school lad who was the hero in some man-sized adventures. His stay in radio was fifteen-plus years, and like "The Lone Ranger's," his image did not vary through the years.

During World War II, Jack recruited more than a million youthful members to the Write-A-Fighter Corps; these members each pledged to send at least one letter per month to a member of the armed services overseas.[15]

Any broadcasts of Jack's exciting adventures would be suitable for collection.

The children's show which ran the longest on radio was NBC's "Let's Pretend." The program began in 1930 under the direction of

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[15]"Jack The Nazi Killer," Newsweek, 22 (August 23, 1943), p. 80.

Nila Mack, and concentrated on presenting classical fantasies such as "Snow White," "The Nuremberg Stove," "Rapunzel," and others.

"Let's Pretend" received more praise from parents than did most other children's programs such as "Superman," "Sky King," "Terry and the Pirates," or even "Jack Armstrong." The show also received awards and citations every year it was on the air in recognition of its educational as well as its entertainment value.[16]

Nila Mack's program produced four stories that were often repeated by popular request; these repeated shows were "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," "Beauty and the Beast,"[17] and "The Nuremberg Stove."[18] Any of these programs, or "The House of the World," the perennial Christmas program, would be especially appropriate for the collection.

Mutual's "Uncle Don" pitched his songs and patter to the six year olds and under. He played the piano, admonished youngsters to eat their spinich, wished Happy Birthdays, and did a splendid job of selling numerous products, including Maltex Cereal.

Uncle Don (Don Carney) began his program with:

> Hell-o nephews, nieces mine.
> I'm glad to see you look so fine.
> This is Uncle Don, your Uncle Don,
> Hell-o little friends, hell-o.[19]

The show had a young but loyal audience. One survey showed that twenty-five per cent of all radios in the New York area were

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[16]Max Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1939-40 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.), 1940, p. 282.

[17]"Mack and the Beanstalk," Newsweek, 21 (June 28, 1943), p. 108.

[18]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1939-40, p. 282.

[19]"Snork, Punk," Time, 34 (October 9, 1939), p. 64.

turned to WOR (Mutual) at 6:00 P.M., Uncle Don's broadcast time.[20]

"Uncle Don" was originated in 1928 when Carney hastily assembled a children's show on WOR. Carney's background as a carnival showman, trick pianist, gin mill entertainer, womanizer, and untiring whisky swigger somehow seemed to provide him with a personality that kids loved.

"Uncle Don" is credited with starting the craze for reading the funnies on the air, and with first using per-program participating sponsors on an across the board show. His most significant contribution may have been that "he was the first entertainer to accept loot night after night in exchange for favors and plugs for products"; he was not above trading an entire program for a case of whiskey.[21]

Any of Uncle Don's broadcasts would be adequate for the collection.

The programs to be collected:

The Lone Ranger, ---(Mutual, NBC-B, ABC, 7:30-8:00 P.M. M,W,F)

Jack Armstrong, ---(NBC-R, NBC-B, ABC, 5:30-5:45 P.M. M-F)

Let's Pretend, ---(CBS, ---)

Uncle Don, ---(Mutual, 6:00 P.M. M-F Also Saturday mornings in middle '40's.)

(Dr. Walter Damrosch's "Music Appreciation Hour" is listed under "Music Shows.")

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[20]Chase, op. cit., p. 93.

[21]Sydney W. Head, Review of Head, Heart, and Heel, by Bill Treadwell, Journal of Broadcasting, IV (Fall, 1960), pp. 371-372.

Discussion and Public Affairs Programs

Only a few programs endeavoring to use radio as a medium for debate and discussion ever talked anybody into listening. Two programs that did find an audience, though, were George V. Denny's "America's Town Meeting of the Air," and Lawrence Spivak and Martha Rountree's "Meet the Press."

"Town Meeting" first went on the air May 30, 1935, with Denny as moderator. This first program, which was aired without benefit of prior publicity, drew a response of three thousand letters, and gave NBC an early indication that people liked the New England town assemblage flavor.[22]

Denny's program presented two or more specialists on the topic under discussion who debated for part of the program. Then the audience took over to question the speakers during the forum portion of the broadcast. There was no winner declared, for Denny was more interested in provoking than in settling issues.

NBC spent roughly $50,000 yearly to carry the sustaining program,[23] but was repaid by the many awards that the show received, and by knowing that about ten million listeners were tuned to the broadcasts.[24]

The program of January 6, 1938, which featured Wendell Willkie debating Robert H. Jackson on the subject "How Can Business and Government Work Together?"--a broadcast that Denny mentioned as one which received a great deal of public reaction--,[25] is suggested

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[22]Chase, op. cit., p. 117.

[23]Robert West, The Rape of Radio (New York: Rodin Publishing Co.), 1941, p. 433.

[24]"Denny, George V., Jr.," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 236.

[25]"Denny, George V., Jr.," Current Biography Yearbook, 1950, p. 118.

for collection.

The Spivak-Rountree entry, "Meet the Press," made its debut on Mutual in 1945, but moved to NBC in 1948 where it was broadcast on both radio and television.[26]

On this press conference show, several noted newspaper reporters and/or columnists plus Spivak comprised a panel which questioned a prominent figure in the news. This show, like "Town Meeting," brought around ten million listeners to their radios, and was a frequent recipient of awards.[27]

However, "Meet the Press" is important, also, because several of its broadcasts actually made news, and had an influence on the national political scene. It was on "Meet the Press" that Whittaker Chambers without benefit of Congressional immunity charged that Alger Hiss had been a Communist, that Thomas E. Dewey took himself out of the 1952 presidential race and suggested that a World War II hero named Eisenhower be choosen to represent the Republican cause, that Walter Bedell Smith gave the first public hint that the Russians had the A-Bomb,[28] and that Senator Theordore Bilbo openly admitted he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, and admission which brought about an official investigation and Bilbo's absenting himself permanently from his Senate seat.[29]

It was by no accident, though, that a "Meet the Press" show often made Monday morning headlines. Spivak remarked that he was always careful not to select just "a man in the news, but a man whose appearance on the show will make news."[30]

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[26]"Spivak, Lawrence," Current Biography Yearbook, 1956, p. 597.

[27]Ibid., p. 597.

[28]Ibid., p. 598.

[29]Gross, op. cit., p. 242.

[30]"Spivak, Lawrence," Current Biography Yearbook, 1956, p. 597.

Because of the magnitude of the Hiss incident, it would be interesting to try to obtain a recording of Whittaker Chamber's August, 1948 visit to "Meet the Press" when Chambers pointed the accusing finger at Hiss.

Two other shows that deserve an honorable mention are Theodore Granik's "American Forum," and the "University of Chicago Round Table," both of which had long runs on network radio.

The programs to be collected:

America's Town Meeting of the Air, January 6, 1938 (NBC-B, 9:30-10:30 P.M.)

Meet the Press, August 27, 1948 (Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Comedy Programs

Comedy programs were no laughing matter to most other radio shows, for comedy sessions, on the whole, commanded prodigious audiences. For example, just in the thirties, one-half to one-third of all the programs in the Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting's "top-ten" were involved with the art of making people laugh.[31]

"The Cuckoo Hour" was radio's first comedy show that was designed especially and exclusively for radio instead of being merely a retread of vaudeville, movie, or night club material.[32] It was "The Cuckoo Hour, which demonstrated that radio had its own unique form, and that comedy programs could be structured to compliment this form.

Three early network comedy programs that all hit big in the thirties were "Amos and Andy," "The Jack Benny Program," and

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[31]Variety Radio Directory, 1939-1940 (New York: Variety, Inc.), 1940, pp. 92-98.

[32]Slate, Cook, op. cit., p. 125. This program should not be confused with "The Cuckoo Club."

Fred Allen's "Town Hall Tonight."

"Amos and Andy" was one of the first shows in radio to have a sizeable nationwide audience. At its peak of popularity during the thirties, the show had around forty million listeners, and the New York Telephone Company reported a sharp drop in phone calls during the Gosden-Correll daily fifteen minute broadcast. Their popularity was lasting too, for in October of 1947, eighteen years after joining the network, Hooper rated them in the number one spot among the ten most popular programs in the country.[33]

"Amos and Andy" opened on WMAQ (NBC) Chicago, August 19, 1929. Two months later Pepsodent bought the show and sent it over one of the earliest coast to coast network hook-ups.[34]

Up to 1943, Gosden and Correll played all the characters involved in the scripts; Gosden, besides playing Amos, portrayed the Kingfish, Brother Crawford, and Lightnin', and Correll, in addition to his role as Andy, supplied the voices for Henry Von Porter, the Landlord, and many others.

In 1943, however, the show underwent some changes. Other actors supplemented Gosden's and Correll's roles, outside writers were brought in, a studio audience was allowed to watch, and the broadcasts were lengthened to thirty minutes, but were cut back to only one day a week. The changes proved beneficial, for the show which had gradually been losing listeners was given new zest, and it rose again to its accustomed place among the top programs.[35]

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[33]"Gosden, Freeman, and Correll, Charles," Current Biography Yearbook, 1947, p. 249.

[34]Chase, op. cit., p. 179.

[35]"Gosden, Freeman, and Correll, Charles," Current Biography Yearbook, 1947, p. 249.

The programs prior to 1943 in which Gosden and Correll portrayed several characters, including Amos, Andy, and the Kingfish, are requested, for these broadcasts illustrate the pair's versatility as comedians.

Jack Benny found his way to prominence by taking the laugh lines instead of giving them. Benny led with fat straight lines, and his troups of established characters proceeded to slaughter them.

"Jack Benny," observed Max Wylie, "stands in the middle of it all, beleaguered, resourceful, and stingy. Always depreciated, but always vainglorious, guyed, gulled, and tyrannized, but never completely routed; Benny swings and misses, ducks and stumbles, but never goes down for the count."[36]

But while Benny bumbled, his ratings soared. Under Jell-o's sponsorship, Benny gained the number one spot by 1935,[37] and he maintained high rating positions during his entire radio life span. By 1941, "The Jack Benny Program" had five times been named the top program in an annual poll of radio editors across the country and Benny himself had seven times been named the favorite comedian in the same poll.[38]

But to remember Jack Benny is to remember his ancient Maxwell, his long takes, his "Well!" and "Now cut that out!" his underground vault, his troupe of Rochester, Mary Livingston, and Don Wilson, and his eternal miserliness, all of which were permanent furnishings in the house that Jack built.

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[36]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1939-40, p. 111.

[37]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[38]"Benny, Jack," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 68.

Jack Benny's complex image cannot be completely understood from only one broadcast; instead, several programs should be included in the library so that radio historians can better know the complete Jack Benny. For example, the library should have episodes of Jack's long and involved trips to his vault, of his trips in the Maxwell, of his indecision at Christmas time when selecting gifts, and of his difficulties with his next door neighbors, the Ronald Colmans.

Fred Allen, who had a running feud with Benny--but all for laughs--, moved his "Town Hall Tonight" show into the top ten in 1934, and parked it there for the rest of the decade.[39] The show eventually moved from Wednesday to Sunday nights, and was changed in title to the "Fred Allen Show," but still the listeners remained.

Allen started in show business billed as "World's Worst Juggler," but he left that act when the emcee at a theatre asked, "How'd you get to be a juggler?" and Allen retorted, "I took a correspondence course in baggage smashing." With that line, the theatre manager fired the emcee and hired Allen.[40]

Fred's first venture in radio was "The Bath Club" which proceeded to go down the drain after a few weeks,[41] leaving Allen unemployed. Soon after this failure, though, he got together his "Town Hall Tonight" gang, and his fortunes changed.

The weekly trip through a never-never land called Allen's Alley was the most popular feature of his "Fred Allen Show" of the forties. Allen's conversations with Ajax Cassidy (Peter Donald), Falstaff Openshaw (Allen Reed), Mrs. Nussbaum (Minerva Pious), Senator

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[39]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[40]Chase, op. cit., p. 224.

[41]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39, p. 212.

Claghorn (Kenny Delmar), Titus Moody (Parker Fennelly) and Socrates Mulligan (Charlie Cantor) paved the Alley with laughs.

The most popular denizen of Allen's Alley was the Senator named Claghorn, who was--putting it mildly--from the deep south. In filibuster fashion, the Senator proclaimed his allegiance to the south, reporting that he would never go through the Lincoln tunnel, that he ate his pie only with ice cream Texas style--pie Ala-mo, and that he would not eat apples for fear one of them might be a Northern Spy. He claimed he graduated magnolia cum laude from CCNY (Charleston, Chattanoga, Natchez, and Yazoo) and had been voted by his class the most likely to secede. E. Beauregard Claghorn was born on October 7, 1945 with the line, "Somebody, I say, somebody knocked"; but his often mimicked line, "That's a joke, son," did not come till the following week when a pun the Senator made fell flat.[42]

There are several Allen shows that should be added to the library. One example of the old "Town Hall" series was Max Wylie's "Best Broadcast" selection of December 7, 1938. Also, the shows of April 24 and May 1, 1940 would be good because the former featured an episode with Benny's valet Rochester which illustrated the Benny-Allen feud, and the latter had an excellent burlesque of a popular program of the day, "Information Please." Finally, at least one "Fred Allen Show" with an Allen's Alley should be collected, and preferably it should be a post October 7, 1945 show so that Senator Claghorn could have the floor for a portion of the show.

Besides Jack Benny, Fred Allen, and "Amos and Andy," there were other important shows that do deserve a place in the library.

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[42]G. Cook, "Senator Claghorn," Life, 20 (March 18, 1946), p. 61.

One addition to the library should be Eddie Cantor's programs which most certainly had a following. Cantor broke into radio in 1931 as a guest on Rudy Vallee's program;[43] by September of that year, he had his own show for Chase and Sanborn, and by the next year, Cantor had displaced "Amos and Andy" as the number one evening show on the air. His popularity continued during the thirties even though he changed shows and changed networks. During 1939, however, he dropped from the top ten for good.[44]

Cantor was one of the highest paid entertainers of the thirties, receiving $16,500 per broadcast.[45]

Some of Cantor's Chase and Sanborn shows from 1932, the year he was rated number one, would illustrate what kind of humor people listened to in the early thirties.

George Burns and Gracie Allen's comedy teamwork, which attracted an audience of more than forty million listeners, got them a spot in the top ten for the first time in 1935.[46] From that point on, the former vaudeville couple managed to stay among the top programs in radio during a stand that lasted almost twenty years.

It was Eddie Cantor who gave the pair the boost to get them on radio. He offered Gracie a five minute spot on his program and CBS liked her style.[47]

One of the programs from 1940, when Gracie was running for President as a candidate of the Suprise Party, would be an interesting

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[43]"Cantor, Eddie," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 133.

[44]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[45]West, op. cit., p. 211.

[46]"Burns, George," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 76.

[47]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1939-40, p. 168.

addition to the library. Gracie's candidacy received a good deal of coverage in the press, and she even wrote a book "How to Become President" which was published in 1940.

A ventriloquist act, which is primarily a visual routine, seems incongruous on radio, but then Edgar Bergen and wooden-headed friend Charlie McCarthy were more than just a puppet act, they were social critics. The duo was invited to appear on Rudy Vallee's show on December 16, 1936 and, after making an immediate hit, was invited back several times before they had their own show in 1937.[48]

By 1945, when the Bergen-McCarthy show was rated fourth in the nation by Hooper, the team had scarcely ever been out of the top ten, and had been number one for two and a half years.[49]

Of the many programs that Bergen and McCarthy aired, especially welcome for collecting would be shows featuring Mortimer Snerd and Effie Klinker, two of Charlie's wooden friends, or shows that starred W. C. Fields, with whom Charlie never got along, in a guest role. Most welcome, though, would be the Bergen show of December 12, 1937 when guest Mae West used vocal inflections to "sex-up" a comedy routine about Adam and Eve. The routine ignited a wave of protest from listeners all over the country, and even drew a reprimand from the Federal Communications Commission. NBC and J. Walter Thompson, the agency that placed Chase and Sanborn's advertising, were themselves upset over Miss West's tactics, and did apologize to the outraged listeners.[50]

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[48]"Bergen, Edgar," Current Biography Yearbook, 1945, p. 43.

[49]Ibid., p. 43.

[50]Landry, op. cit., p. 91.

The house at 79 Wistful Vista was home for another of radio's comedy couples, "Fibber McGee and Molly." Husband and wife team Jim and Marian Jordan, who played Fibber and Molly, introduced the series to a daytime audience in April of 1935. However, it was not until the show moved into a nighttime slot sometime around 1936 that the popularity of the show began to climb.[51] Once the show did hit, though, it continually rated high on popularity charts and, in 1943, established the highest Crossley rating ever by a commercial program up to that time.[52]

One of the best known running gags in radio comedy was Fibber's overloaded closet which could not be opened without the entire contents of the small repository falling out in spectacular fashion. Certainly an episode that features the closet opening has to be a part of the library.

Gertrude Berg's creation, "The Rise of the Goldbergs," which combined melodrama with light comedy, was another successful laughmaker. "The Goldbergs" which Gertrude Berg not only wrote and produced, but also starred in as "Molly" was aired first on November 20, 1929. Only a few weeks after the premier broadcast, Mrs. Berg was forced off the air by illness; during the time she was gone, 11,000 phone calls were received inquiring as to what had happened to the original "Molly Goldberg."[53]

With this manifestation of listener interest, CBS got its first indication that the "Goldbergs" were bound to rise--in popularity. By June of 1941 when the show was being broadcast on twenty-three stations of the "Goldbergs'" parent network (CBS), plus thirty NBC

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[51]"McGee, Fibber," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, pp. 543-544.

[52]Robert M. Yoder, "McGee's of Wistful Vista," Saturday Evening Post, 22 (April 9, 1949), p. 26.

[53]Gross, op. cit., p. 122.

Red network stations and Mutual's WOR in New York, it obtained the most thorough airing of any radio show heard up to that time.[54]

One of the "Rise of the Goldbergs" programs of 1941, when the show was so widely heard, is suggested for the collection.

"The Aldrich Family" was another comedy series based on the humor of the home. Written by Clifford Goldsmith, the show was often in the top ten, and had an audience of about twenty million listeners. Goldsmith himself had one of the fattest writing fees in radio--an impressive $3,000 per program.[55]

The programs that are added to the library should have Ezra Stone in the cast as Henry Aldrich, for Stone's ability in portraying Henry was a definite factor in the show's popularity. Stone left the mike in 1943 to serve in World War II and he did not return until after 1945. This fact should be recalled when collecting programs by date.

Still other comedy efforts that kept the nation laughing through the depression, the Second World War, and the first few years of the atomic age were "Duffy's Tavern," "The Great Gildersleve," "The Red Skelton Show," "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet," and "People are Funny." Other entertainers who kept 'em laughing on various shows were Bob Hope, Jones and Hare, Joe Penner, Baron Munchausen (Jack Pearl), Jimmy Durante, Garry Moore, and Ed Wynn.

The broadcasts for collection:

Amos and Andy, pre 1943 (NBC-B, CBS, 7:00-7:15 P.M. M-F)

Aldrich Family, Late 30's, early 40's (NBC-B, 8:00-8:30 P.M. Tuesday)

Burns and Allen, 1940 (CBS, 7:30-8:00 P.M. Monday)

Eddie Cantor, 1932 (NBC-R, ---)

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[54]"Berg, Gertrude," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 72.

[55]"What a Family," Time, 41 (April 12, 1943), p. 48.

Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy, December 17, 1937 (NBC-R 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

Fibber McGee and Molly, ---(NBC-R, 9:30-10:00 P.M. Tuesday)

Fred Allen Show, October 14, 1945 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Jack Benny Program, NBC-R until 1948, then CBS.

Rise of the Goldbergs, 1941 (CBS, 5:15-5:30 P.M. M-F)

Town Hall Tonight, December 7, 1938 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
April 24, 1940 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
May 1, 1940 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)

Mystery and Detective Programs

The chilling dramas on NBC's "Lights Out," which ran at the weird time of 12:30 A.M. Thursday mornings were some of the first mystery-detective programs on the air. Produced and written by Arch Oboler, the original series lasted only two years, from 1936 to 1938, before Oboler quit the show, claiming that he was unable to top the thrillers that he had already written.

Besides providing macabre entertainment to late hour listeners, the show was of great benefit to Oboler himself, for it taught him many of the radio techniques that he successfully employed in his later plays.[56]

Oboler revived the series in 1942 to keep from going broke: sometime around January of 1941, Oboler had dropped out of the commercial program field and had given full time without pay to writing propaganda drama for government endorsed broadcasts, and after a year without income, he was nearly insolvent.[57]

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[56]"Oboler, Arch," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 622.

[57]"Oboler's Free World," Newsweek, 21 (March 1, 1943), p. 75.

While there are no specific titles to collect of the "Lights Out" series, programs of the 1936-1938 vintage should be the additions made to the library, for these were the ones that originally intrigued mystery fans and got Oboler started on his noted radio career.[58]

In the middle forties, CBS had a highly touted mystery program called "Suspense" which boasted top flight Hollywood stars in lead roles, and which, while under the aegis of William Spear, paid higher prices for scripts than did most other drama programs. "Suspense" was not a blood and gore show, but rather one that was calculated to keep the listeners in a taut state of . . . suspense.[59]

One of the most exciting and suspense-filled classics in the annals of radio came from that CBS series; that was the Lucille Fletcher creation, "Sorry, Wrong Number." The play was praised by critics and enthusiastically accepted by the audience. By September of 1945, "Suspense" had replayed the drama for the fourth time, a record for radio rebroadcasts.[60]

Lucille Fletcher explained that she wrote "Sorry, Wrong Number" because she wanted "to write a show that was 'pure medium,' something that could be performed only on the air."[61] It took her about two months to conceive the story, and about three days to write it.[62]

Although Ida Lupino and Mildred Natwick also starred in "Sorry, Wrong Number," it was Agnes Moorhead who was the original star,

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[58]More about Arch Oboler is found in the "Drama" section.

[59]Slate, Cook, op. cit., p. 152.

[60]Lucille Fletcher, "Sorry, Wrong Number," Life, 19 (September 24, 1945), p. 91.

[61]A. H. Lass, E. L. McGill, and Donald Alexrod (ed.), Plays From Radio (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1948), p. 8.

[62]Ibid., p. 8.

and who helped make the play famous. For this reason Miss Moorhead's broadcast should be the addition to the library.

In addition to these two programs emphasizing "quality" drama, there were a sizeable number of detective programs that added a mysterious air to the ether. As a group, however, these detective programs lacked the large audience that music and comedy shows, soap operas, and general drama programs, such as "Lux Radio Theatre," obtained.

"Gang Busters," one of the earliest of the detective series programs, was created in 1936 by Phillips H. Lord, the first successful independent producer in radio. He chose Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf of the New Jersey State Police, prominent in the Lindbergh baby kidnapping investigation, to preside at the "Gang Busters" mike[63] as narrator of the case histories of notorious underworld gangsters.

At the close of the program each week, "Gang Busters" broadcast clues furnished by police officials for criminals wanted by various police officials. Through these clues, over one hundred thirty-five criminals were apprehended by police officers from 1936 to 1938.[64]

Also, "Gang Busters" was considered a leader in the use of new sound techniques; according to Max Wylie, many effects first devised on this show were later adopted as standard practices.[65]

The "Eddie Doll Case" broadcast January 18, 1939 and chosen by Max Wylie as the best melodrama on the air that year is suggested for collection.

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[63]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39, p. 365.

[64]Ibid., p. 366.

[65]Ibid.

"Mr. District Attorney," which starred Jay Jostyn, was one of the detective programs that did make a few appearances in the list of the ten most popular programs. "Mr. District Attorney," also a Lord creation, was flamboyantly introduced as the "champion of the people, defender of truth, guardian of our fundamental rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."[66]

Any of the "Mr. District Attorney" programs would be adequate.

"The Shadow," another program born in the thirties, opened with the forboding line, "Who knows what evil lurks within the hearts of men? No one knows but . . . the Shadow!" Orson Welles as an early Shadow[67] was one of the actors who emitted the hideous laugh which was the specter's trademark. It would be interesting to obtain one of those early programs in which Welles took the lead role.

Since these three programs had a slight popularity edge on their competition in this detective series category, their advantage in number of listeners and length of service warrants their inclusion in the listing. However, there were a great number of other mystery-detective programs which entertained their own groups of fans; some of these programs should be included in the library just for a wider sample of how the radio detective of the thirties and forties sleuthed his way into thousands of homes each week.

These other programs include "The Thin Man" and "Sam (the greatest private detective of all) Spade," as well as "Eno Crime Club," "Martin Kane," "Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons," "Grand Central Station," "I Love a Mystery," "Sherlock Holmes," "Perry Mason," "Boston Blackie," and "The Whistler."

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[66]Chase, op. cit., p. 244.

[67]Ibid., p. 203.

The programs for collection:

Gang Busters, January 18, 1939 (CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)

Lights Out, 1936 to 1938 (NBC-R, 12:30-1:00 A.M. Thursday)

Mr. District Attorney, ---(NBC, 9:30-10:00 P.M. Wednesday)

The Shadow, ---(Mutual, Sunday afternoon)

Suspense, "Sorry, Wrong Number" (rebroadcast) September 6, 1945 (CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.) Agnes Moorhead starred in this broadcast.

Soap Operas

Radio's melodramatic serials earned the title soap opera because most of them were sponsored by one or another of the three largest soap companies .

These soap operas, which filled over five hours of the sixteen hour network day,[68] were an inexpensive way for the major networks to program their daytime hours. All of the programs were phenomenally alike, and it was hard to tell when "Stella Dallas" ended and "Backstage Wife" began.

James Thurber, writing in the New Yorker, described these eternally sad programs as "a kind of sandwich, whose recipe is simple enough, although it took years to compound. Between thick slices of advertising, spread twelve minutes of dialogue, add predicament, villainy, and female suffering in equal measure, throw in a dash of nobility, a sprinkle of tears, season with organ music, cover with a rich announcer sauce, and serve five times a week."[69]

Soap operas had their beginning in the spring of 1925 when the agent for a man and wife vaudeville team, which was playing in Chicago,

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[68]Chase, op. cit., p. 178.

[69]Irving Settel, A Pictoral History of Radio (New York: Bonanza Books), 1960, pp. 115-116.

arranged to have his stars perform in a series of skits over WENR (Chicago) in hopes of increasing the box office take at the vaudeville theatre. The skits were entitled "The Smith Family" and as far as WENR was concerned, "The Smith Family" never did make it. Yet that vaudeville couple, Marian and Jim Jordan did make it, for years later, billed as "Fibber McGee and Molly," they were rated as the number one radio program in the country by the Crossley rating service.[70]

If there was any soap opera that was prominent among the maudlin mess, it was Carleton Morse's "One Man's Family." Broadcast in serial form, but only once a week during its biggest years, the program lasted an amazing twenty-seven years, much longer than any other melodramatic soap opera, before it finally expired in 1959.[71]

The program played to an extremely loyal and devoted audience. In 1949, when Standard Brands, after sponsoring the show for fifteen years, released father Barbour and his family from the payroll, listeners wrote 75,000 letters of protest to "OneMan's Family" demanding that the show not be taken from the air despite the loss of sponsor. In addition, some eight hundred dollars was received from listeners who were willing to make a cash donation to assure that the Barbours would keep broadcasting.[72]

"One Man's Family" was still another program reported in Variety as "among the programs listed by advertising agencies as notably having what it takes to inspire paydirt loyalty."[73] Also,

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[70]Chase, op. cit., p. 179. More about "Fibber McGee and Molly" is found in "Comedy Programs."

[71]Ibid., p. 116.

[72]"Family Affair," Newsweek, 35 (May 8, 1950), p. 53.

[73]Landry, op. cit., p. 156.

the program had such a following that Paramount Pictures, wishing to take advantage of a ready made audience, made a movie of it.

The remaining melodramatic soap operas are less important by title than they are by the names of the people who created them. For instance, Frank and Anne Hummert of Blacker-Sample-Hummert, Inc., the advertising agency that was at one time the number one buyer of radio time and the number one producer of radio material, were the creators of such operas as "David Harum," "John's Other Wife," "Stella Dallas," "Lorenzo Jones," "Just Plain Bill," "The Romance of Helen Trent," "Alias Jimmy Valentine," and "Second Husband," among others.[74]

The Hummert entries in the soap opera field were very successful; the episodes were followed with avid interest by thousands of listeners (over 75,000,000 pieces of mail were received by the Hummerts from fans each year) and the stories did sell soap![75]

"The Romance of Helen Trent" would be a good example of the Hummerts' work to add to the collection.

Another important writer was Irna Phillips, the most prolific soap opera writer,[76] who turned out over two million words a year in scripting such dramas as "Guiding Light," "Women in White," and "Road of Life,"[77] as well as "Right to Happiness," "Women Alone," and "Today's Children." The latter, "Today's Children," enjoyed the top Crossley rating for daily soap operas just before it left the air in 1938;[78] it is suggested for collection.

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[74]Chase, op. cit., pp. 188-189.

[75]Ibid., p. 191.

[76]"Phillips, Irna," Current Biography Yearbook, 1943, p. 590.

[77]Chase, op. cit., p. 182.

[78]"Phillips, Irna," Current Biography Yearbook, 1943, p. 590.

Also, Elaine Sterne Carrington, creator of "Pepper Young's Family," and "When a Girl Marries," must be mentioned for she was one of the most highly paid radio serial writers. She also contributed to The Saturday Evening Post, Harpers, Good Housekeeping, Women's Home Companion, and Redbook.[79]

Mrs. Carrington's "When a Girl Marries" was in first place in Hooperatings in January of 1944. Also, Variety called her "Pepper Young's Family" "above average in quality and popularity.[80] Max Wylie selected episode 1031 of "Pepper Young's Family" (December 25, 1939) for inclusion in his Best Broadcasts of 1939-1940.

The familiar "Pepper Young's Family" is a choice example of Mrs. Carrington's work, and should be added to the library.

If possible, the melodramatic soap operas should be collected in a series, rather than by single broadcast. In this way, one can better understand the snail's pace these programs pursued in the process of dragging out their plots month after month.

The programs to be collected:

One Man's Family, ---(NBC-R, ---)

Pepper Young's Family, An NBC program that ran on both the Blue and Red networks, as well as on Mutual. Various times, M-F.

Romance of Helen Trent, ---(CBS, 12:30-12:45 P.M. M-F)

Today's Children, ---(NBC-R, 10:45-11:00 A.M. M-F)

Drama Programs

Radio drama got off to a poor start. Early broadcasters either irritated listeners by having an announcer constantly cut in on the

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[79]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1939-1940, p. 300.

[80]"Carrington, Elaine Sterne," Current Biography Yearbook, 1944, p. 86.

dialogue to explain what was happening "on stage," or confused listeners by broadcasting just the dialogue and neglecting to announce what action was taking place.[81]

The error of broadcasters, as Francis Chase, Jr. points out, was not that they modeled their efforts after the legitimate theatre, but that they carbon-copied it. The first effective piece of radio drama on the air was "True Story Hour" sponsored by Benarr MacFadden to advertise his True Story magazine. This program, begun in 1929 on CBS, evolved a technique of its own: the story teller, using first-person narrative, started the tale by setting the stage before giving way to the drama itself. Also, "True Story Hour" dramatized current life which gave the show a kind of realism.[82] Interestingly enough, this same program introduced the musical curtain, a brief musical interlude between scenes to indicate passage of time.[83]

The first of the highly popular drama programs was the old "First Nighter" which got started in 1930, but "First Nighter" is not nearly as well remembered as the immensely popular "Lux Radio Theatre of the Air." The Lux show began in New York in October of 1934, featured stage plays--usually old ones--rewritten for radio, and starred players from Broadway.[84] This Sunday afternoon drama series on NBC's Blue network found immediate popularity and was listed as one of the top daytime shows in late 1934 and early 1935.[85]

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[81]Chase, op. cit., p. 200.

[82]Ibid.

[83]West, op. cit., p. 73.

[84]F. Daugherty, "He Sells Soap," Christian Science Monitor Magazine, (March 25, 1944), p. 8.

[85]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

In 1935 "Lux Radio Theatre" became a CBS show and was moved to Monday night; also in that year, Cecil B. DeMille was made host for the program, and the show was relocated in Hollywood.[86] The audience continued to grow during the latter years of the thirties, the show's rating zoomed as high as second place among evening shows, and the number of listeners was estimated at around twenty million.[87] From 1935 to 1944, the show was voted the best radio dramatic show in America in a poll conducted by a New York newspaper.[88]

A valuable addition to the library would be a "Lux Radio Theatre" program which starred either Bob Hope, Hedy Lamarr, Loretta Young, Barbara Stanwyck, William Powell, Walter Pidgeon, Greer Garson, Ronald Colman, or Claudette Colbert; these were the most popular players with the audience, and those which appeared the most often.[89]

Radio drama took a step forward in July of 1936 when the "Columbia Workshop" went on the air at CBS. The "Workshop" was under the direction of Irving Reis who, among others at CBS, believed that there was much to be done to improve the originality of radio drama, both in content and in production.[90]

Dedicated, then, to what the "Workshop" called experimental drama, the program used the scripts of William Saroyan, Archibald MacLeish, Douglas Coulter, Max Wylie, Davidson Taylor, and Reis himself.[91] The "Workshop," although never commanding a large audience, is now recognized as a milestone in radio because it

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[86]"He Sells Soap," p. 8.

[87]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[88]"He Sells Soap," p. 8.

[89]Ibid., p. 8.

[90]Douglas Coulter, Columbia Workshop Plays (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1939), pp. vi-viii.

[91]Chase, op. cit., p. 31.

presented plays written especially for radio, and because it used sound so dramatically to create certain effects in the plays.

One notable "Columbia Workshop" presentation was "Meridian 7-1212," by "Workshop" director Reis, which took full advantage of the technical opportunities offered by the engineering setup, sound effects, and other equipment. Reis incorporated board fades, oscillators, dial tones, receiver clicks, cello tones, filter mikes, boat whistles, door slams, and the hum of a high frequency generator as only a few of the sound props used to add dramatic impact to his play. The resulting program was one of the first to dramatize the wide latitude radio offered to those who understood radio's own dramatic techniques.[92]

The show was a series of vignettes about what the telephone number Meridian 7-1212, the number of New York's time service, meant to various people on one particular evening. Reis anchored his play on a man named Fawcett, of the fictitious Manhattanite magazine, who visited the time service that certain evening to get a story for his journal.

The program was chosen for rebroadcast on occasion by the "Columbia Workshop" staff and was selected by Douglas Coulter for his book Columbia Workshop Plays, a volume of Coulter's choices as the best of the "Workshop" offerings.[93]

Archibald MacLeish's "The Fall of the City," broadcast April 11, 1937, was another important "Columbia Workshop" presentation. MacLeish's work was the first poetic drama of permanent value to be written expressly for the air, and the first poetic effort to be accepted by the "Workshop" without having to be specially adapted.[94]

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[92]Coulter, op. cit., p. 31.

[93]Ibid., p. 31. Coulter was Assistant Director of Broadcasts for CBS, and was Director of the New York University Radio Workshop.

[94]Ibid., p. 349.

Many critics found words of praise for MacLeish's poetics; Gilbert Seldes, for one, heralded the work as "a very moving and . . . highly dramatic and imaginative play in favor of human freedom." Seldes went on to say, "The Columbia Broadcasting System is to be congratulated on having made the production."[95]

The "Workshop" took special pains to create desired effects in the play; for instance, it broadcast "The Fall of the City" from the drill hall of the Seventh Regiment Armory at Park Avenue and Sixty-Sixth Street in New York City where a mob of extras was assembled to furnish the authentic sound of the big crowd.

The first production of "The Fall of the City" starred Orson Welles as the radio announcer, Burgess Meredith as the orator, and Edgar Stehli as the high priest.[96]

The dramatic piece that is credited with making the greatest impact on the nation was the famous "Mercury Theatre on the Air" broadcast of October 30, 1938. That evening "Mercury Theatre" director Orson Welles presented H. G. Wells' War of the Worlds which had been adapted with a highly realistic flair by Howard Koch. The broadcast, Welles explained in the last few minutes of the program, was just a Halloween prank, a little scary fun for that traditional day dedicated to mischief. But thousands of listeners missed the joke and actually believed that the world was coming to an end, that nothing could repel the Martian invaders.

Hadley Cantril, in his book The Invasion From Mars, reported that at least six million people heard the broadcast, and that a least one million persons were frightened or disturbed. Telephone switchboards were jammed all over the country, police were swamped with

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[95]Gilbert Seldes, "The Fall of the City," Scribner's Magazine, 101 (June, 1937), p. 61.

[96]Coulter, op. cit., p. 350.

inquires, and some people in New England tried to drive away from the deadly gas reportedly used by the Martians.[97]

Several factors, all compounded, are at least partially responsible for the widespread panic that the drama caused. First, the play was adapted in terms of an on-the-spot news broadcast which made the Wells story seem exceedingly real. Then, many persons, either not paying particular attention to the opening lines of the broadcast, turning on their radios late, or joining the program while in progress after they had listened to the beginning of the Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy show on NBC, never heard the announcement to the effect that the happenings were just part of the "Mercury Theatre's" presentation for that evening. Finally, the country was not exactly over the shock that the Munich Crisis had administered only a month previous, leaving many persons uneasy about the future.

In 1939, Norman Corwin made a significant contribution to radio with his verse drama, "They Fly Through the Air" which was broadcast on Corwin's own poetry program "Words Without Music."

"They Fly Through the Air" was one of the few verse dramas to have aroused an enthusiastic response from both the public and the critics. Ben Gross of the New York Daily News called it "The best radio play ever written in America,"[98] and the letters received by the "Workshop" were nearly unanimous in their praise for the program.

Corwin, who dedicated the play "to all aviators who have bombed defenseless civilian populations, and machine gunned helpless refugees,"[99]

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[97]Hadley Cantril, The Invasion from Mars (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 24.

[98]Norman Corwin, 13 by Corwin (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1941), p. 79.

[99]Coulter, op. cit., p. 97.

admitted that he was mad when he wrote the play. CBS made no move to censor the drama, and even broadcast it twice more in the next few months.[100]

Two other Corwin plays that were important to radio were "We Hold These Truths," broadcast on December 15, 1941, and "On a Note of Triumph," aired May 8, 1945.

Corwin, who had already become widely known because of his own program, "Words Without Music," was called upon to create a program for the one hundred fiftieth anniversay of the adoption of the Bill of Rights only twenty-six days before the show was to be broadcast. Corwin refused to do it at first, insisting that he did not have the time to write such a program in that short time, but eventually he agreed to write the anniversary tribute.

Entitled "We Hold These Truths," the broadcast featured Edward Arnold, Lionel Barrymore, Walter Brennan, Bob Burns, Walter Huston, Marjorie Main, Edward G. Robinson, James Stewart, Rudy Vallee, and Orson Welles, and included two symphony orchestras, one conducted by Bernard Herrmann and the other by Leopold Stokowski. All four major networks carried the forty-five minute program--and the fifteen minute speech by President Roosevelt which followed--on Monday, December 15, 1941 at 10:00 P.M. Only one other performance in the history of radio drama ever enjoyed a larger audience than "We Hold These Truths"; the Crossley rating service reported that sixty million listeners were tuned to the program.[101]

That one dramatic program that did claim the largest audience was Corwin's "On a Note of Triumph." So enthusiastic was the public's

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[100]Corwin, op. cit., p. 79.

[101]Ibid., p. 55.

response to this V-E Day broadcast that CBS rescheduled "On a Note of Triumph" five days later with only minor changes in casting and production. The program was also produced on the Australian Broadcasting Commission's network, October 31, 1945.[102]

For the program, Corwin received the first radio citation of the National Council of Teachers of English, as well as a Page One Award from the American Newspaper Guild.[103]

Still other dramas, if they can be located, should become a part of the library. For example NBC's Arch Oboler should be represented at least by his "Alter Ego," chosen as the best air drama of 1938, and by his well-known, "This Lonely Heart," first broadcast January 14, 1940. Oboler is credited as being the first dramatist to successfully employ the stream of consciousness type of writing; he distinguished himself in the directing of his "Arch Oboler's Plays" and in the work he did for the "Free World Theatre."[104]

More of Corwin's work would also be welcome in the library. The rhymed "The Plot to Overthrow Christmas" (December 25, 1938), credited as being his first highly successful play, along with "Untitled," "Seems Like Radio is Here to Stay," and "My Client Curley," adapted from Lucille Fletcher's short story, are all superb renderings from--quite possibly--radio's greatest dramatist.

Additional "Columbia Workshop" plays would also be premium additions. "A Trip to Czardis" (April 15, 1939), "Never Come Monday" (April 23, 1938), "The Dark Valley" (June 2, 1940), "Half-Pint Flask" (August 29, 1937), along with the already-mentioned "My Client Curley"

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[102]Norman Corwin, Untitled and Other Radio Dramas (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947), p. 119.

[103]Ibid., p. 439.

[104]"Oboler, Arch," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 622.

(March 7, 1940), are good examples of the "Workshop's" work. (In addition to those dates of original broadcast, given in parentheses, there are a few dates of rebroadcasts to be mentioned: "Half-Pint Flask"- July 6, 1939, "Never Come Monday"-July 13, 1939, and "A Trip to Czardis"-July 27, 1939.)

Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," a play that was a seasonal tradition on radio, should also be added to the collection. First broadcast on CBS, December 24, 1934, the Dickens's favorite was heard for the next twenty years on network radio; and on each of those broadcasts, save the one of 1936, Lionel Barrymore portrayed Scrooge. (In that broadcast of 1936, John Barrymore took the lead role.)

Still other dramas to be added are "One Special for Doc," by Milton Geiger, called the most broadcast play in radio,[105] Edna St. Vincent Millay's "The Murder of Lidice," and a broadcast from the "First Nighter" program.

The programs to be collected:

The Fall of the City, April 11, 1937 (CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.) (rebroadcast--September 28, 1939, CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Lux Radio Theatre of the Air, ---(CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)

Meridian 7-1212, (rebroadcast) August 24, 1939 (CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

On a Note of Triumph, May 8, 1945 (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M.) (rebroadcast--May 13, 1945, CBS, 11:00-12:00 P.M.)

They Fly Through the Air, February 19, 1939 (CBS, 2:30-3:00 P.M.) (rebroadcast--September 7, 1939, CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

War of the Worlds, October 30, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

We Hold These Truths, December 15, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:45 P.M.)

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[105] Lass, McGill, and Axelrod, op. cit., p. 42.

Variety Programs

Variety shows provided entertainment for listeners by presenting a diversified array of acts and performers on each of the programs. These programs, which possessed something of a vaudeville quality, had a regular host or master of ceremonies who gave the show continuity from act to act and from show to show.

One of the first variety shows was Rudy Vallee's "Fleischmann Yeast Hour," which started in 1929 and ran for ten successful years under Standard Brand's sponsorship.[106]

The program, rated as high as number two--and never dropping below the top ten,[107] had a peculiar knack of introducing personalities who later became star performers; Vallee's show introduced Eddie Cantor, Edgar Bergen, Ezra Stone, Phil Baker, Alice Faye, Frances Langford, Joan Davis, and others. The show occasionally featured dramatic pieces and two of these dramas led to the programs "The Aldrich Family," and "We the People."[108]

If one of the shows introducing a future star could be located, it would make an interesting addition to the collection. For instance, the show of December 17, 1936 when Edgar Bergen first appeared on the program would be excellent for the collection.

"Major Bowes' Amateur Hour" was one of the most popular of the variety shows, commanding a gigantic audience of from fifteen to thirty million listeners every program. The "Amateur Hour" premiered March 24, 1935, on sixty stations of NBC's Red network[109]

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[106]Chase, op. cit., p. 219.

[107]Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[108]Chase, op. cit., p. 217. The Vallee show was not always called the "Fleischmann Yeast Hour"; it changed its title everytime a different Standard Brands product became Vallee's sponsor.

[109]"Bowes, Major," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, pp. 96-97.

and, by the following year, leaped to the number one rating in popularity. Like Vallee's show, it also spent all of its time among the top ten programs.[110]

Bowes, ringmaster of the bellringers, toothbrush players, musical sawyers, jug players, vocalists, and other home-grown entertainers, made famous the New York phone Murray Hill 8-9933 which was the number to call when voting for the various acts of the evening.

To supplement his $15,000-a-week radio salary, Bowes also formed his "Major Bowes' Units" comprised of the best "Amateur Hour" acts; Bowes sent these acts on nation-wide tours where they played in local theatres.

Because the Bowes programs were so much alike, any of them would be satisfactory for the library.

Variety at the breakfast table was Don McNeill's gimmick, and so successful was he with his "Breakfast Club" that the four calls to breakfast are still heard today on ABC.

Formerly known as the "Pepper Pot" show, the "Breakfast Club" evolved in 1933 shortly after McNeill took over the writing and emcee chores.[111] Now in its thirty-first year, it is one of the longest running series in the history of broadcasting.

Around ten million listeners faithfully join Don for breakfast each morning and are served a delightful sixty-minute bowl of folksy humor, audience interviews, songs, poetry, philosophy, sentiment, and inspiration, all topped with the traditional march around the breakfast table.[112]

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[110] Variety Radio Directory, pp. 92-98.

[111] "Corn for Breakfast," Newsweek, 26 (July 2, 1945), p. 70.

[112] Ibid., p. 70.

Two regular favorites on "Breakfast Club" were comedian Sam Cowling, with the show twenty-three years,[113] and "Aunt Fanny," played by Fran Allison; these two contributors should be a part of the shows that are collected for the library.

"We the People," "Maxwell House Showboat," "The National Farm and Home Hour," and Arthur Godfrey's morning show were other important variety programs and would also be welcome in the library.

The programs to be collected are:

The Breakfast Club, Weekday mornings (NBC-B, ABC, ---)

Rudy Vallee Show, December 16, 1936 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

Major Bowes Amateur Hour, 1936--the year of Bowes' top rating (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M. Thursday)

Music Shows

Radio and Song have always made beautiful music together. They were wedded in the early days of radio because stations desperately needed to program something relatively inexpensive during long broadcast days, and because of the popularity of musical programs, Radio and Song's close companionship continued as the medium grew older.

Bands and orchestras provided a great deal of the music on network radio, especially during the thirties and early forties. The sounds of Ben Bernie, Vincent Lopez, Ozzie Nelson, Wayne King, Kay Kyser, and Ted Weems filled the air waves, and the listeners seemed to like it.

The most popular band of all, however, was one the music critics labeled as "corn ball," "square," and "strictly from hunger."[114]

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[113]"Everybody's First Cousin," Time, 80 (July 20, 1962), p. 40.

[114]Gross, op. cit., p. 178.

But name calling did not bother Guy Lombardo's "Royal Canadians," the band that was selected as the number one dance orchestra in national polls of radio and television editors more times than any other bank, that even at the height of the swing craze in 1939-40 had higher Hooperatings than Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, and other top jive groups,[115] and that still is on radio for special appearances today, thirty-seven years after the group was first heard over CBS in 1927.[116]

One of Lombardo's Sunday afternoon programs from 1938 is suggested for collection, for it was in that year that the band's program was the highest rated daytime show on radio.[117]

In addition to bands and orchestras, a variety of vocalists also added to the popular music fare on radio. One of the most popular of these vocalists was the "Song Bird of the South," Kate Smith, who was introduced to listeners on May 1, 1931.

Kate Smith rose quickly to national fame on radio; after being on the air only a few months, she became so popular that her salary was raised into the four figure bracket. During her first decade in radio, she was voted one of the "Ten Outstanding Women of the Year" and she was also awarded the Red Cross Legion of Valor. She was even asked to give a Command Performance for King George VI.[119]

So popular was Kate with listeners that once when she sneezed on the air, she received five thousand post cards within the next three

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[115] Ibid., p. 179.

[116] "Lombardo, Guy," Current Biography Yearbook, 1946, p. 355.

[117] Variety Radio Directory, p. 86.

[118] Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39, p. 96.

[119] "Smith, Kate," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 745.

days saying "Gesundheit!"[120]

One program that would be interesting to obtain for the library would be the November 10, 1938 broadcast on which she first sang Irving Berlin's "God Bless America." Although the song did not make much of an impression that evening, Kate continued singing it and it did become a patriotic classic.[121]

Another vocalist in the popular music field, and one of highest paid radio music-makers was a frail little soprano named Jessica Dragonette. Jessica came to radio via WEAF's "Musical Comedy Hour" in 1925, and in 1930 was signed by the "Cities Service Concert" as a soloist for a weekly salary of $1,250. During her next seven years on radio, Jessica Dragonette was a worshipped idol, ardently followed and loved by an immense sector of the listening audience.[122] However, in 1937, Jessica and/or her manager-sister Nadia felt that the star was not getting anywhere near the salary that she was truly worth. In that year Jessica left Cities Service and became the star of the "Palmolive Hour" at $2,500 per week. The story is told, though, that her new employers were under the misapprehension that the soprano had been receiving a figure near the salary they themselves set for her; when Palmolive discovered that they had doubled her old salary, they became displeased with Miss Dragonette and did not sponsor her after the 1937 season.[123]

One of the "Palmolive Hour" broadcasts which paid Miss Dragonette so well is suggested for the collection.

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[120]West, op. cit., p. 18.

[121]Gross, op. cit., p. 139.

[122]Ibid., p. 92.

[123]Chase, op. cit., p. 31.

Bing Crosby, the old groaner, also merits space in this list of popular vocalists. Bing was first heard on CBS in 1932 after Everett, Bing's brother, mailed a recording of the crooner's "I Surrender Dear" to William Paley, then president of Columbia. Paley liked the kid's style and brought Bing to New York, where, after only a few broadcasts, Crosby became an immediate hit.[124]

Bing left Columbia in 1936 to star on NBC's "Kraft Music Hall" at a salary of around $7,500 a week.[125] With the addition of crooner Crosby, "Music Hall" sprang into the top ten and stayed there for much of the ten years that Crosby was with the show.[126]

In 1946, Crosby and his employer disagreed about recording programs in advance of when they were to be broadcast. NBC, definitely against anything but live broadcasts, would not consider Bind's demands that he record his shows; Crosby left the National Broadcasting Company over the incident and sang instead for the newly formed American Broadcasting Company which was glad to have the star, and which was willing to "cut" his programs in advance. This incident was a milestone in radio, for Crosby was the first major star to demand that his programs be recorded ahead of the time the show was to go on the air. Because of Crosby's reluctance to broadcast live week after week, the networks re-evaluated their recording policies, gradually becoming less and less strict about broadcasting live shows.[127]

While any of Crosby's shows would suffice for the collection, it would be interesting to try to obtain those first recorded programs he

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[124]"Crosby, Bing," Current Biography Yearbook, 1953, p. 132.

[125]Ibid., 1941, p. 183.

[126]Ibid., 1953, p. 132.

[127]Ibid.

did for ABC since these broadcasts had a great impact on the industry.

Radio also catered to the devotees of classical music, broadcasting such programs as the New York Philharmonic on Sunday afternoon, and the NBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Arturo Toscannini.

The one classical music program that demonstrated the greatest lasting quality, though, was the Metropolitan Opera broadcast which began on Christmas Day, 1931,[128] and which is still on the air today, although no longer on one of the four networks involved in this project. The opera broadcasts even rated as the number one daytime program from October, 1936 to April, 1937.[129]

One of the opera broadcasts from that period of October to April is suggested for the collection for the programs in that span of time are rare examples of mass acceptance of a classical art form.

The man who made a great number of friends for classical music was Dr. Walter Damrosch, whose "Musical Appreciation Hour" endeavored to give youngsters and adults alike a better understanding of the meaning of music.[130]

This program, which played to an audience of around six million school-age children and three million adults, received about forty thousand letters a year thanking NBC and Damrosch for their contributions to good music.

In 1942 when NBC attempted to cut the show to a half hour because of the great demands for air time during the war, Damrosch, then eighty years old, announced that he could not broadcast a program of that nature in only thirty minutes; therefore, the program was

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[128]"Cross, Milton," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 210.

[129]Variety Radio Directory, p. 101.

[130]"Damrosch, Walter," Current Biography Yearbook, 1944, p. 135.

dropped after thirteen consecutive years of service.[131]

Because all of the programs were very similar, any of Dr. Damrosch's broadcasts would be acceptable for the library.

The names of two announcers who were inextricably involved with classical music must also be listed. Deems Taylor, voice of the Sunday afternoon New York Philharmonic broadcasts, and Milton Cross, announcer for the Metropolitan Opera on Saturdays, gained their fame in radio through talking about music.

Taylor, the more versatile of the two men, also wrote music, music reviews, and books on listener appreciation of music. The well-known Taylor announced the selections and spoke at intermission; his talks were simple, direct, amusing, and personal, and were flavored by his own opinion.[132]

An amusing Taylor broadcast, suggested for collection, is the one of December 11, 1938, when, during the Philharmonic intermission, he spoke on an item which had been receiving much play in the papers. This item concerned the classicists who thought it an outrage that some people were swinging Bach; meanwhile the "cats" claimed they would swing Bach "or anybody else worth swinging."[133]

Milton Cross started announcing for the Metropolitan Opera when the opera broadcasts first began, Christmas Day, 1931, and he did not miss a Met performance in his first decade with the program. Each time they went on the air, Cross and the opera were heard by around ten million persons.[134]

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[131]Ibid., p. 135.

[132]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39, p. 416.

[133]Ibid., p. 418.

[134]"Cross, Milton," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 210.

Besides his opera duties, Cross was also a regular staff announcer for NBC and has one of the longest terms of service as an announcer, beginning his career in 1921,[135] and still before the mike today.

That broadcast of Hansel and Gretel on December 25, 1931, which started Milton Cross and the Metropolitan Opera on their long association, is suggested for collection.

The programs to be collected:

Bing Crosby Show, Latter part of 1946 (ABC, 10:00-10:30 P.M. Wednesday)

Deems Taylor, December 11, 1938 (CBS, 3:00-5:00 P.M.)

Guy Lombardo, Spring, 1938 (CBS, 5:30-6:00 P.M. Sunday)

Kate Smith Show, November 10, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

Metropolitan Opera, October, 1936 to April, 1937 (NBC-B, 1:40 P.M.)

Milton Cross, December 25, 1931 (NBC-R-B, 1:45 P.M.)

Musical Appreciation Hour, ---(NBC-R-B, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Friday)

Palmolive Hour, First weeks of 1937 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M. Friday)

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[135]Ibid., p. 209.

CHAPTER III

THE EVENTS AND VOICES OF NETWORK NEWS

News Events

Although one of radio's first major broadcasts was of a news event--the coverage of the Harding-Cox election returns in 1920 over KDKA, Pittsburgh--radio gave news little attention in the early and mid-twenties. Broadcasters felt that the dissemination of news was a job for the newspapers, so radio, for the time being, stayed out of the news business.

By the late 1920's, however, radio news coverage began to pick up. Radio covered the Dempsey-Tunney fight in 1926, the return of Charles Lindbergh in 1927, as well as the World Series games. In addition, regularly scheduled newscasts were beginning to be permanent entries on the radio logs.

However, radio's decision to broadcast news got it into a bitter battle in the 1930's. In those dark days, newspaper publishers found that radio was getting an increasingly larger proportion of the all-too-scarce advertising dollars; some publishers, knowing they had to fight the electronic competitor, tried to keep radio out of the news business by exerting pressure against press associations not to give or sell their news to radio networks or stations not owned by newspapers.

The first skirmish in this press-radio war came the night the Electoral College chose Franklin Roosevelt over Herbert Hoover. Radio had provided election night coverage ever since 1920, but mostly on a bulletin basis. That year, however, CBS decided to spend the

entire evening covering the election, and Columbia entered into a contract with United Press for election coverage--at a nominal $1,000 for the one-evening service.[1]

After UP had set up its teletype machines in CBS studios, the news agency decided to abrogate the contract. Karl A. Bickel, then president of United Press, informed CSB's Paul White that UP's income came almost entirely from newspapers and, with publishers feeling the way they did about radio, UP just could not afford to incur the wrath of newspapermen by supplying the returns to CBS.

But what looked like a newspaper victory turned into a radio field day. The Associated Press, hearing of the UP-CBS contract, and not knowing that it had been cancelled, decided that it, too, had to be represented on the air in order to compete with UP. Therefore, AP gave both NBC and CBS the election night service for nothing. Then, at the last moment, International News Service also installed its machines in NBC and CBS studios at no cost to the networks. Finally, those UP machines that were installed at CBS, but never removed, also fed results to the newscasters; mysteriously the machines were switched to the United Press main trunk service shortly before broadcast time![2]

Radio did triumph that Election Day night in 1932, but the sweet smell of victory turned sour in only a few months. Newspapers so severely criticized the Associated Press's donation of election coverage to the networks that in a meeting, April of 1933, the Associated Press Board of Directors voted to withdraw any kind of service to networks. UP and INS quickly followed suit, so by late spring of 1933,

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[1]White, op. cit., p. 35.

[2]Ibid., p. 35.

the networks and most stations could not get press association news.[3]

That CBS broadcast of November 8, 1932, was important, then, for two reasons. First, the broadcast was an illustration of the increasing emphasis that the networks were beginning to put upon news. Second, it was directly responsible for the decision by the press associations to stop supplying their services to radio, a decision which touched off the press-radio war and forced radio into the newsgathering business until 1935 when UP and INS began to serve radio. (AP did not sell to radio until 1941.)

Radio news became increasingly important in 1938 when listerners became exceedingly eager to know exactly what was happening in Europe. CBS responded to this eagerness on March 13 when it instituted the first multiple pick-up news broadcast in order to better report on the Austrian Anschluss. This first "world news round-up," as they came to be called, included William R. Shirer speaking from London, Edward R. Murrow direct from Vienna, Ellen Wilkinson also in London, and other newsmen reporting from Berlin, Rome, and Paris,[4]

Later that same year when they both covered the Czechoslovakian crisis, NBC and CBS gave news a priority it had never enjoyed before. Radio news gained new importance and stature as people began to depend more on NBC and CBS than on their daily newspaper. It was in September of 1938 that radio news came of age.

CBS, which aired 471 broadcasts over a twenty-day period,[5] is usually hailed as having done the superior job, thanks mainly to H. V. Kaltenborn, whose feats during the crisis are discussed in the following section.

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[3]Ibid., p. 35.

[4]Ibid., pp. 45-46.

[5]Crisis (New York: Columbia Broadcasting System), 1938, p. 2.

Many broadcasts during those days should be collected for the library. Certainly there should be several Kaltenborn broadcasts in order that radio historians hear how the commentator ad libbed all his broadcasts. Then, there should be a few CBS world news round-ups--there were fourteen during the Crisis coverage--to provide further examples of this new idea in international news reporting. Finally, there should be the famous Max Jordan scoop on NBC of the full text of the Munich pact; William L. Shirer, CBS radio journalist, called Jordan's beat, "The most important broadcast during this period. . . . He was able to read to his listeners in America the text of the Munich agreement before it was known in official quarters in London, or Paris, or even in Berlin."[6]

Radio news continued its maturation process during World War II as it covered the hostilities from a thousand and more places on the globe; and during these years of battle, radio news had its finest moment, the coverage of the Normandy invasion.

The coverage was shared by all four networks, NBC, CBS, Mutual, and the Blue Network, and in the height of the excitement that June day, "pool" broadcasts--those available to all networks--were the rule rather than the exception. The cooperation and teamwork among the networks that day was, as Paul White of CBS put it, "magnificent."[7]

The entire affair began June 6, 12:37 A.M., when the AP teletype carried a bulletin that read:

> New York, June 6--(AP)--The German transocean news service has announced that the Allied Invasion has begun.[8]

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[6]A. A. Schechter, I Live On Air (New York: Fredrick A. Stokes Company, 1941), p. 209.

[7]White, op. cit., p. 325.

[8]Ibid., p. 331.

INS carried a similar message moments later, but it was not until 3:32 A.M. that the War Department confirmed the German source by stating, "Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied Naval Forces,, supported by strong Air Forces, began landing Allied Armies this morning on the northern coast of France."[9]

The networks made elaborate preparations for D-Day; for instance, CBS technicians installed a device called a "piano" on news director White's desk. This gadget, which only vaguely resembled the instrument for which it was named, allowed White to listen in on CBS trans-Atlantic channels, to be advised as to whether a signal from abroad was usable, to direct announcers in a nearby studio as to what point they should introduce next, and also to hear--or overhear, rather--all conversations on the FAX circuit between broadcasters of other networks and their home offices. CBS also rigged up a microphone attached to a long cord that could be taken by an announcer into the newsroom where he could view all of the thirteen automatic printer machines, or any of the five other machines which linked the CBS newsroom with various cable companies. There was also a switch on the mike that would, when depressed, shunt aside the entire network, so that the microphone would become the main express line.[10]

The spectacular coverage that radio achieved was hailed by thousands of listeners who mailed in their thanks to all four networks. Even Time magazine acknowledged the operation by exclaiming, "This was radio's greatest day. Radio did a job."[11]

There were some memorable broadcasts that day which would be excellent material for the library: one was radio's first eyewitness

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[9]Ibid., p. 334.

[10]Ibid., pp. 327-328.

[11]Ibid., p. 357.

account of the invasion by Wright Bryan of NBC who was picked up on a "pool" basis by all networks as he told of his flight in "Snooty" with seventeen American paratroopers. Another broadcast was Quentin Reynolds' comments on the Dieppe raid and what that raid meant to the D-Day invasion. Finally, there was George Hicks' eye-witness account of the landing recorded at 5:40 A.M. June sixth and played back from London later in the day; that particular broadcast won Hicks more radio awards than any other individual broadcast of the entire war.[12]

(Since this list is concerned with only programs important to radio history, and not to history in general, many broadcasts of historic significance are not included in the list because they are not important to radio itself.)

Those broadcasts to be collected:

Czechoslovakian Crisis, September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---) World news round-up, H. V. Kaltenborn; September 29, 1938 (NBC, ---) Max Jordan scoop of Munich agreement.

D-Day, June 6, 1944 (NBC, ---) Wright Bryan with first eye-witness report; (CBS, ---) Quentin Reynolds with comments on Dieppe raid; (NBC, ---) George Hicks with account of first landings.

European News Round-up, March 13, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-8:15 P.M.)

Roosevelt-Hoover Election Coverage, November 8, 1932 (CBS, 6:00 P.M.--throughout evening: NBC, 6:00 P.M.--throughout evening)

Sports Events

Sports events, as part of the total network news coverage, provided very few radio milestones. Outside of the events that were involved in the NBC-CBS "war," there were really no other broadcasts that can be called important network sports programs.

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[12]Ibid., p. 353.

The NBC-CBS "war" was the battle between the two network giants to out-scoop, out-wit, and out-broadcast the other in various special events, including sports contests. The object in this war was to so dominate the special events field that listeners and advertisers alike would have no trouble in knowing which network provided the best special events coverage.

As it turned out, the "winner" of the CBS-NBC "war" was not one of the combatants. Instead the "war" was won by the listeners who benefited greatly from the expanded sports and special events coverage while the networks battled to a draw.

Two examples of this "war" are not significant in themselves; one is an interview with Ralph Guldahl, golfdom's National Open Champion of 1937, and the other is a description of the A.A.U. track meet in Milwaukee on July third of that same year. Rather, it is the story behind these broadcasts that gives them their flavor of importance.

CBS had the golf rights sewn up in 1937, and Ted Husing was scheduled to interview Ralph Guldahl at the Oakland, Michigan, course immediately after he won the event; but Tom "Red" Manning of NBC had other plans for the new champ. Authorized by Abe Schechter, NBC News and Special Events chief, to add $500 to Guldahl's income, Manning arranged an impromptu studio in a garage adjacent to the golf course, and he guided Guldahl to that garage while a worried Husing searched in vain for the star of his broadcast.[13]

But while NBC's initiative won that day, it was CBS' spunk that took first place three weeks later. NBC had made an arrangement with the Amateur Athletic Union for exclusive broadcasting rights to the annual A.A.U. meet, held that year in Milwaukee. CBS, also

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[13]White, op. cit., p. 301.

wishing to broadcast the track and field meet, sent Husing to Marquette Stadium, but the Columbia announcer was barred because of the contract NBC had with the Union. Undismayed by this barring, Husing managed to get permission from a Lutheran pastor to set up his broadcast apparatus on the roof of the church-owned schoolhouse overlooking the meet.[14]

Although Husing did keep NBC from an exclusive, he paid for his effort in sweat. As the Milwaukee Journal reported, "It was a triumph for Ted Husing, but it may have been a Pyrrhic victory, for when Husing climbed down from his platform, he appeared to be in grave danger of sunstroke."[15]

Other sports broadcasts that would be valuable for the library would be the first World Series play-by-play on network radio (NBC) in 1926, as well as the boxing bouts between Louis and Schmeling, first fight (June 19, 1936), Louis and Braddock (June 22, 1937), Louis and Farr (August 30, 1937), and Schmeling, second fight, (June 22, 1935) which all had huge radio audiences.

Broadcasts to be collected:

Guldahl Interview, June 12, 1937 (NBC, about 7:00 P.M.)

Milwaukee A.A.U. Meet, July 3, 1937 (CBS, throughout afternoon)

Newscasters

When radio news became established as a part of network programming, there was born a new kind of radio personality. Called a radio newsman or news announcer, he often subsequently became a news analyst or commentator.

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[14]Ibid., p. 301.

[15]Ibid., p. 302.

Two of the most important news announcers and analysts were Lowell Thomas, who was best known while with NBC, and H. V. Kaltenborn, who achieved fame while with CBS.

Thomas began in radio with CBS in 1930 and became prominent shortly after he took over for Floyd Gibbons on a newscast sponsored by the Literary Digest. He left CBS in 1932 to broadcast for the National Broadcasting Company and became popular with the listeners, pulling ten to fifteen million per program, soon after he started.[16]

Lowell Thomas was extremely important to NBC in the thirties for as Abe Schechter, NBC's News and Special Events Director at the time, recalled, "He was practically our entire news commentator 'staff' in those days."[17]

More than just a newscaster, Lowell Thomas was also an adventurer and an explorer. His world travels began when he rushed his bride up the gangplank of a transport in 1917 for a honeymoon on the Western Front to write success stories of American troops in action. Tiring of the writing job, Thomas went on to the Holy Land where he met the mysterious T. E. Lawrence who was leading the Arabs in revolt against the Turks, and it was Thomas' biography of Lawrence, With Lawrence in Arabia, that shot the author into fame.[18]

Thomas, called the most factual and objective reporter of the radio era, was also one of the most widely heard newsmen during World War II.[19] Still broadcasting today, but back again with CBS, Thomas has enjoyed one of the longest continuous stints in radio of any personality.

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[16]"Thomas, Lowell," Current Biography Yearbook, 1952, p. 589.

[17]Schechter, op. cit., p. 12.

[18]Chase, op. cit., p. 143.

[19]"Thomas, Lowell," Current Biography Yearbook, 1952, p. 589.

As popular as Thomas has always been, there was one broadcast in his career when he had a pretty good idea that only a few listeners were tuned in. This program of February 7, 1938 was broadcast simultaneously with a Roosevelt speech, "So," mentioned Lowell, in an off-hand manner, "I guess nobody is listening." But before the newscaster left the studio, eighteen telephone calls came in from fans assuring him that they were listening.

One left this message, "Don't you worry Lowell, I'm with you."

Another said, "Those Democrats can't do this to us."[20]

Any of Thomas' work behind the newsmike would be quite satisfactory, but if this incident just mentioned could be obtained, it would offer some comic relief to the section of the library involving news events and news voices.

H. V. Kaltenborn joined the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1928,[21] and first came into prominence while on the Iberian peninsula covering the Spanish Civil War. Kaltenborn was in the midst of the Spanish uprising; he gathered his material first hand, sought interviews with both Loyalist and Insurgent leaders, and even took his microphone to the front so that listeners could hear the sounds of battle.[22]

But Kaltenborn really made his niche in radio history during the Czech crisis of 1938, when his 102 broadcasts in twenty days kept a worried nation informed as to the state of European affairs. Sleeping only on a couch in the studio, and subsisting mostly on onion soup provided by Mrs. Kaltenborn (" a crisis is a wonderful

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[20]Schechter, op. cit., p. 378.

[21]Wylie, Best Broadcasts of 1938-39, p. 123.

[22]West, op. cit., p. 349.

way to lose weight," reminisced H. V.[23]), the commentator did an amazing job of interpreting and analyzing the news.[24]

Kaltenborn's efforts were rewarded by fifty-thousand letters and telegrams, telephone calls from Herbert Hoover and Alfred Landon, and a multitude of citations and awards, all praising his monumental achievement.[25] After the ordeal, CBS acknowledged him as "America's most distinguished news analyst,"[26] and a Motion Picture Daily poll in 1939 named him "America's most popular newscaster."[27]

Kaltenborn would have directed the CBS news attack during World War II had he not been in Europe when hostilities broke out. News chief Paul White invited Elmer Davis to take the helm in Kaltenborn's absence, and when H. V. returned from abroad in 1940, he joined NBC.

Because Kaltenborn was such an important figure at the time of the Czech crisis, recordings of his many broadcasts during those twenty tension-filled days would be especially valuable for the library.

Two other newscasters that merit a place in the listing are Gabriel Heatter and Walter Winchell. Heatter, noted for his news work in the late thirties and all during the forties, first became an important radio personage during his Mutual coverage of the night of Bruno Richard Hauptman's death in the electric chair.

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[23]"Kaltenborn, H. V.," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 447.

[24]Ibid., p. 447.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Crisis, p. 162.

[27]"Kaltenborn, H. V.," Current Biography Yearbook, 1940, p. 448.

Hauptman, convicted kidnapper-murderer of the Lindbergh child, was scheduled to die at 8:05 P.M. on Friday, April 3, 1936 at the state penitentiary in Trenton, New Jersey. Desiring to be the first to broadcast the news of Hauptman's death, Heatter set up his remote equipment in a hotel room overlooking the penitentiary. He next located a man in the warden's office who was to receive word of Hauptman's death from the warden, then relay the message to a man in the corridor who would tell a man at the penitentiary gate, who, in turn, would wave a handkerchief three times to a man in Heatter's room standing at the window. This man at the window would then say to Heatter, "It's happened."

Heatter started his broadcast at 8:00 P.M. and by 8:12 P.M. he still had received no message but was told to keep talking. It was 8:47:30 before the message started on its way, and during the long three-quarters of-an-hour wait,[28] Heatter set a new Mutual ad lib record, and propelled himself from the rank of a minor newspaperman into a $3,500-a-week commentator.[29] And, yes, he was the first to broadcast the news of Hauptman's death . . . by ten seconds![30]

Heatter became famous during World War II for his optimistic, "There's good news tonight." He explained his outlook this way: "Even during the darkest days of the war, I was certain of our victory over the Nazis. My optimism caused me, almost unwittingly, to look for at least one item favorable to our side for each of our broadcasts. So no matter how dreary the outlook, I'd play up this item and preface it with, 'There's good news tonight.'"[31]

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[28]P. Hamburger, "Crier: Gabriel Heatter," New Yorker, 20 (January 20, 1945), p. 30.

[29]Gross, op. cit., p. 159.

[30]Hamburger, op. cit., p. 25.

[31]Gross, op. cit., p. 318.

If Heatter's ad lib the night Hauptmann died could be obtained, it would be a valuable addition to the library. Also, one of his World War II broadcasts should be added to obtain his "good-news-tonight" motto.

Walter Winchell, father of the school of gossip commentators, zipped off his news reports at the rate of two-hundred fifteen words per minute, and took home one of the highest salaries in news broadcasting.[32]

Winchell, who had a Hooperating of 20,000,000 listeners following him on two-hundred sixty stations,[33] never claimed an award for being world's most factual reporter; and when he did make mistakes, he did not bother to correct them.

In one of his most famous broadcasts, the "blood" fiasco of 1946, there was a typical Winchell mistake, but that time, it was not his fault. Asked to make a plea in order to save a life, Winchell announced, "If you have AB blood, if you have AB blood, and you are in the state of Florida, please call Dr. Meadow at the Biscayne Hospital, Miami."[34]

In a matter of moments, ABC switchboards across the country were jammed with phone calls. In New York, AB people asked for airline space, in Augusta, Georgia, an AB chartered a plane, and in Miami, hundreds of people rushed to the hospital to help. The trouble was, though, that the blood type needed was the rare AB-Rh negative, not the common AB. Winchell claimed he received only the letters AB, and therefore was not at fault;[35] but the result of his communication

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[32]D. Hartwell, "Walter Winchell, American Phenomenon," Colliers, 121 (February 28, 1948), p. 12.

[33]Ibid., p. 13.

[34]Ibid., p. 85.

[35]Ibid.

showed what impact he had on listeners.

Any of Winchell's staccato broadcasts would be suitable for the library, but if a program could be found that contained a Winchell error, it should be garnered, for it would be more typical of W. W.'s work.

Still another news announcer who should be a part of the listing is Edward R. Murrow. In May, 1937, CBS sent Murrow to England as their lone European representative and intended to have him arrange speakers for cultural programs. However, Hitler's activities in Europe made Columbia change their plans for Murrow, and in 1938 the network instructed him to cover news and special events on the continent.[36]

It was in 1938 that Murrow started his London broadcasts--each commencing with the calm "This is London"--which informed concerned Americans as to the state of European affairs. Murrow stayed at his post until 1945 when he returned home and was made a CBS vice president in charge of all news, education, and discussion programs.[37]

Murrow has been heralded as one of the best known and most influential commentators in American radio. Elmer Davis, CBS newscaster and commentator said of Murrow: "We who work with (him) are keenly aware of his excellence as a reporter of pure news."[38]

Any of several Murrow broadcasts would be splendid additions to the library. His part in the first world news round-up (see "News Events") on March 13, 1938 would be an important piece for the

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[36]"Murrow, Edward R.," Current Biography Yearbook, 1942, p. 619.

[37]Ibid., p. 619.

[38]Ibid.

collection, as would his reading of General Eisenhower's Order of the Day at 3:37:40 A.M. on June 6, 1944. Yet the one Murrow broadcast that is specifically suggested is the one of June 23, 1940 when Murrow, in his "This-is-London" manner, described the details of the Compiegne armistice terms. This particular broadcast is advised because it was typical of Murrow's work during World War II.

Although not formally listed, there is a group of other reporters who must also be acknowledged as well-known newscasters. These reporters include Floyd Gibbons, highly popular newsman of the early thirties; Bob Trout, the man who often introduced President Roosevelt on radio, and who was a much-depended-on CBS announcer; Max Jordan, Mr. Scoop for NBC on the European scene; Raymond Gram Swing, one of the most thoughtful and observing commentators; Boake Carter, the often criticized but very articulate reporter; Elmer Davis, leader of the CBS news assault on the home front in World War II; Major George Fielding Eliot, a leading war commentator; Cecil Brown, globe-trotter who covered beats from Sicily to Singapore; and George Hicks, good all-round news reporter--used on many NBC remotes.

The broadcasts to be collected:

Edward R. Murrow, June 23, 1940 (CBS, ---)

Gabriel Heatter, April 3, 1936 (Mutual, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
During World War II (Mutual, 9:00-9:15 P.M. M-F)

H. V. Kaltenborn, September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---)

Lowell Thomas, February 7, 1938 (NBC-B, 6:45-7:00 P.M.)

Walter Winchell, 1946 "blood" broadcast (ABC, 9:00-9:15 P.M. Sunday)

Sportscasters

In many instances, the sportcasters themselves were as important as the sporting events they reported, for to many listeners, the decision of which game to tune in, or whether to even tune in at all, depended upon the ability and personality of the radio sports reporter calling the event.

Major Andrew J. White is given credit as being the first radio sports announcer by virtue of his reporting the Carpentier-Dempsey boxing match on July 21, 1921. The Major had an estimated audience of around 200,000 for this radio first which occurred roughly six years before the networks started their sports broadcasting.[39]

It was Graham McNamee, though, who was the first important network sports announcer. McNamee gained his fame in the 1927 Rose Bowl game; Mac's thrilling description of the 7-7 tie between Alabama and Stanford won him a multitude of listening friends.[40]

McNamee was dean of the "old school" emphasizing the excitement of the event often at the expense of accuracy. For instance, in the Baer-Carnera fight, McNamee, who certainly conveyed the drama of that two round bout, mistakenly announced that Baer sent a crushing uppercut to his own jaw, and that Carnera took several swings at himself.[41]

Mac did have a specific philosophy about his kind of announcing: "It is my opinion," spoke McNamee, "that the audience often doesn't know or doesn't care what a left hook or in-fighting is. The listener wants a dramatic picture of the scene, he wants to follow the progress

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[39]West, op. cit., p. 364.

[40]Slate and Cook, op. cit., p. 54.

[41]West, op. cit., p. 378.

of the fight. I try to get him the information as fast as I can, and I get excited like anyone else while I'm doing it."[42]

In McNamee's long record of service to NBC, he called many athletic events that would be valuable additions to the library. The Rose Bowl game of 1927, which lifted him into sports announcing stardom, would be a classic broadcast, but, no doubt, hard to find.

McNamee's rival on CBS for many years was Ted Husing, who, unlike Mac, was more factually oriented in his announcing. Husing was the voice of CBS during the thirties; in fact, it was the versatile Husing who covered nearly every major sports event that the Columbia System broadcast in that decade.

Husing's first work in sports came in 1925 when he assisted in Major White's broadcasts of athletic events. White, to Husing, was both a model and a tutor, and he laboriously studied the Major's techniques.[43]

Husing's popularity as an announcer was widened by such awards as the United Press All-American Sports Announcer, 1931-38 and the Radio Daily poll All-American Sports Announcer, 1937, 1938, 1940.[44]

With so many assignments to his credit, there are, no doubt, many Husing-called games that could be located and added to the library. However, the broadcast of the 1929 Poughkeepsie Regatta which Husing called "the most exciting half-hour of sports broadcasting I ever knew"[45] would be a prize addition.

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[42]Ibid., p. 369.

[43]"Husing, Ted," Current Biography Yearbook, 1942, p. 404.

[44]Ibid., p. 404.

[45]Ted Husing, Ten Years Before the Mike (New York: Farrar and Rhinehart, Inc., 1935), p. 137.

Clem McCarthy, NBC's turf expert, was another famous sports voice, and is included in this listing despite the fact that he was essentially a one sport announcer. Clem was NBC's man at the track and his one real love was the horse races he called.

McCarthy's trademarks were his great announcing speed, his brilliant command of words, and his throaty "a-a-a-a-and they're off!" which signaled the start of each race.

NBC decided to broadcast the Kentucky Derby for the first time in 1928, and the network selected McCarthy to call the classic. McCarthy showed his stuff that spring afternoon, and NBC, which has always liked a winner, put Clem behind the mike year after year for many consecutive Derby assignments.[46]

McCarthy's greatest call was his description of the Seabiscuit-War Admiral battle in November of 1938. Abe Schechter, NBC's News and Special Events Director, said that Clem "attained the heights that afternoon";[47] and years afterward, fans spoke of his vivid description as "the most exciting race report ever heard."[48] Needless to say, this race would be a fine document for the library.

Another NBC sportscaster extraordinaire was Bill Stern who joined the Special Events staff in June of 1937. While Stern's duties the first years were mainly boxing assignments, he eventually covered a variety of sports, and had a large popular following.[49]

However, Bill Stern's play-by-play work was not his only

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[46]"McCarthy, Clem," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 542.

[47]Gross, op. cit., p. 326.

[48]Ibid., p. 326.

[49]"Stern, Bill," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 823.

connection with sports; Bill became quite famous, or, rather, notorious according to some newspaper columists, for a radio show called "Sports Newsreel."

Stern concocted some rather unfounded stories which he told on the "Newsreel" about famous people and their connections with sports. For instance, one of the "profiles and portraits for posterity,"[50] as Stern called them, was about President Lincoln, who, when on his death bed, supposedly called Colonel Abner Doubleday to his side and whispered, "Keep baseball alive. In the trying days ahead, the country will need it." Lincoln, then, according to Bill, fell back on his pillow and expired.[51] The fact that Lincoln never regained consciousness after being struck by the bullet must not have impressed Stern.

Stern also had a very dramatic way of presenting his stories: he usually kept the hero's name secret until the very last line, when he revealed, ". . . and that man was---!" For example, his story about Thomas Alva Edison's deafness, in which Stern attributed the inventor's loss of hearing to being beaned in a semi-pro baseball game, ended with the ludicrous ". . . and the man who threw that pitch was . . . Jesse James!"[52]

Lloyd Lewis of the Chicago Daily News and Red Smith of the New York Herald-Tribune were only two of Stern's critics. But neither they, nor NBC, nor the listeners ever persuaded Bill to stop telling sportsland's fairy tales.[53]

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[50]Crosby, op. cit., p. 126.

[51]Ibid., p. 126.

[52]"More Lateral Than Literal," Time, 53 (June 6, 1949), p. 79.

[53]Ibid., p. 79.

Stern's ability to stretch the facts entered into his game announcing on very few occasions. In one Notre Dame game, however, he did use his ability to fictionalize to help him out of an embarrassing spot. During an eighty yard run by a player identified by Stern as Zilly, Stern realized that the incipent hero was really a man named Sitko. As the ball carrier crossed the five and headed for the goal line, Stern announced, "Zilly's just thrown a lateral to Sitko. Sitko scores!"[54]

Ted Husing recalled the incident when Stern came to Ted to ask some advice on calling horse races. "I can't help you," said Husing; "you can't lateral a horse."[55]

But all in all, Bill Stern was one of the great sports announcers and commentators. Alton Cook of the New York World-Telegram, among others, acknowledged Stern as one of the finest.[56] Also, since very few sports comment programs such as "Sports Newsreel" ever got on radio, and the fact that Stern's show was on and did last for more than a decade is a testament to Bill Stern's stature as a sports personality.[57]

Both an example of Stern's play-by-play work and his efforts on "Sports Newsreel" should be collected. There are, really, no specific broadcasts that are advised for collection, unless the Lincoln story on "Sports Newsreel," which was touted as one of Stern's better fantasies, could be located.

Melvin Allen Israel, who officially shortened his name to Melvin Allen when he entered the service in 1943, was another CBS sports great.

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[54]Ibid., p. 81.

[55]Ibid.

[56]"Stern, Bill," Current Biography Yearbook, 1941, p. 823.

[57]"More Lateral Than Literal," Time, op. cit., p. 79.

It was the old CBS-NBC feud in the thirties that brought Allen into the lime-light. After securing rights to cover a Poughkeepsie Regatta in 1939, CBS was scooped when NBC covered the race from a plane. CBS decided to fight back with a double coup the next week-end, so Ted Husing was assigned to cover the Drake Relays from a church steeple, and newcomer Mel Allen was chosen to announce the Vanderbilt Cup Races from a plane.

However, the cup races were delayed by rain, and Allen was forced to ad lib for over an hour; but so well did Allen do his ad libbing, that CBS bestowed special commendation on him. By 1941, Allen was earning $30,000 a year.[58]

John Crosby of the New York Herald-Tribune called Allen (and Red Barber) the best of sportscasters. Allen also received many awards including those from Sporting News and the Academy of Radio and TV Arts and Sciences; in 1949 he was in top place in the nation-wide polls that Motion Picture Daily and Radio Daily conducted to determine outstanding sports broadcasters.[59]

In 1949, Allen created a slogan that swept the country. Joe Di Maggio, after missing sixty-five games because of a heel injury, came back to the Yankee line-up during the World Series and hit four home runs in three days. The fans were hysterical, and Allen, voice of the Yankees during the regular season, could not restrain his excitement. It was in that series that after every spectacular home play Allen would cry, "How a-bout that?"

Mel finishes the story: "I did this without the slightest premeditation. It was just a natural impulse. I had occasion to repeat

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[58]"Allen, Melvin," Current Biography Yearbook, 1950, p. 3.

[59]Ibid., p. 4.

it many times. Then, a few days later, I said 'How--' and then I suddenly stopped, because at that moment, I heard thousands of fans in the grandstands and bleachers yelling. They were chanting, 'How a-bout that?' Ever since then this question has been my trademark and I couldn't do my job without it."[60]

Allen's popularity was also attested to by the fact that Yankee fans set aside a day in his honor at Yankee Stadium on August 27, 1950. This was the first time a non-player had ever received such an honor from the fans in the Bronx.[61]

Many of Allen's chores behind the mike would be suitable for the collection. However, his famous "How-about-that?" Series of 1949 would be a special treasure.

Walter Lanier (Red) Barber was still another great voice of sports, but Red's real heyday in announcing came when he was with WHN, a New York independent. Barber had gained some fame while with WOR, the NYC Mutual outlet; but since he did spend most of his best days in the independent station, his name is not included in this listing of network broadcasters.

The list of other sportscasters who were good network broadcasters goes on and on. Such men as Sam Taub, Harry Wismer, Perry Charles, Bill Munday, Don Dunphy, and Red Grange are on this list, but there are others, too.

Those broadcasts to be collected are:

Bill Stern, Sports Newsreel, and play by play (NBC, ---)

Clem McCarthy, Seabiscuit v. War Admiral, November 1, 1938 (NBC-B, 3:45-4:15 P.M.)

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[60]Gross, op. cit., p. 320.

[61]"The Tenth Yankee," Newsweek, 36 (October 2, 1950), p. 50.

Graham McNamee, Rose Bowl, January 1, 1927 (NBC-R, 5:00 P.M.)

Mel Allen, World Series, October 5-9, 1949, (Mutual, 12:45 P.M. on 10/5 through 10/8; 1:45 P.M. on 10/9)

Ted Husing, Poughkeepsie Regatta, June 24, 1929 (CBS, 5:30 P.M.)

CHAPTER IV

SPECIAL BROADCASTS OF NETWORK RADIO

Some of network radio's biggest broadcasts can be classified neither as news events nor as regular programs and therefore must be accounted for in this section devoted to special network offerings.

The most widely heard broadcast in the world must be included among this list of specials; broadcast by both NBC and CBS in the United States, the program was carried all across the British empire and was hastily translated for listeners in Spain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslavokia, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Switzerland, Argentina, and the Dutch East Indies. A very conservative estimate set the total number of listeners at two-hundred fifty million.[1]

The program was heard in the United States at 5:00 P.M.; and in New York City, switchboards were silent, streets were strangely deserted, and traffic seemed to be at a standstill. People from all walks of life were gathered around their radios to hear this broadcast of December 12, 1936. "At long last I am able to say a few words of my own,"[2] began the speaker, and with those words the Duke of Windsor explained his abdication of the throne of England for the woman he loved.[3]

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[1]Crosby, op. cit., p. 246.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

The American audience for the program must have been substantial, but exactly how many listened, no one knows. Because the figures are not available on audience size, the broadcast that is acknowledged as the "most listened to" in the United States in the history of network broadcasting was Franklin Delano Roosevelt's radio address on Tuesday, December 9, 1941. This was Roosevelt's first war message in which he announced that production policies were going to meet the emergency, and that we were going to win the war and the peace that followed.

C. E. Hooper counted ears that evening and announced that 92.4% of all U. S. radio families who were home that Tuesday heard the broadcast; Hooper estimated the total audience at ninety million Americans![4]

This was not the first time that Roosevelt used radio to communicate with his democracy; in 1933, only eight days after becoming President, F.D.R. inaugurated what came to be a series of speeches, reassuringly called "Fireside Chats." This first "Chat" came shortly after the banks had been closed, and he began his program with the informal, "I want to talk for a few moments with the people of the United States about banking. . . ."[5]

The "Fireside Chats" were important for more than just the number of listeners the broadcast attracted; they were a unique political communication that Roosevelt used successfully to explain the not-so-easy-to-understand actions of the federal government.

All fifteen or so of the "Chats" should be collected so that the radio historians may study Roosevelt's techniques in using radio.

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[4]"Listening Nation," Time, 38 (December 22, 1941), p. 53.

[5]Chase, op. cit., p. 112.

All of the "Fireside Chats" emanated from the Oval Room of the White House, which, ironically, did not have a fireplace.[6]

War Bond Day for CBS, which featured Kate Smith at the microphone for eighteen consecutive hours, is another special broadcast that should be listed. Commencing at 8:00 A.M. on September 21, 1943 and running until 2:00 A.M. the next morning, Kate used various emotional appeals--love, hope, shame, hate, fear, sacrifice, and so on--in urging listeners to buy War Bonds.[7]

Twice before Kate had starred in special programs designed to sell bonds: the first show raised one million dollars in pledges, and the second raised two million dollars, but the third extravaganza raised the extraordinary sum of thirty-nine million dollars in War Bond pledges![8]

Robert Merton, Columbia University sociologist, studied the program and the appeals that Kate used in selling bonds, and presented his findings in the book Mass Persuasion.

Which brings us to the last selection in the library, a most inappropriate spot for the broadcast that was officially network radio's first program.

The show was NBC's inaugural broadcast sent to a hook-up of twenty-four stations on the night of November 15, 1926. Broadcast from the grand ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, the program included such greats as Will Rogers, "picked up" from Kansas City; Mary Garden, heard "direct" from Chicago; and Eddie Cantor, Weber and Fields, Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony, Albert Stoessel and the New York Oratorio Society, Titta Ruffo, the famous Metropolitan Opera baritone, and the dance

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[6]Ibid., p. 113.

[7]Robert Merton, Mass Persuasion (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), p. 2.

[8]Ibid.

orchestras of Vincent Lopez, George Olsen, Ben Bernie, and B. A. Rolfe. Edwin Franko Goldman's band played marches and concert music, and the Gilbert and Sullivan Light Opera Company rounded out the evening with song.[9]

And the size of the radio audience for that first broadcast? Hard to tell, but NBC reported that hundreds of thousands heard it, even as far west as Minneapolis and St. Paul!

That inaugural show was the first of the first, the grandiose entry into a grandiose era, the birth of a new kind of sound, the birth of nationwide network radio. The show ran from 8:00 P.M. to midnight; and after the airwaves began to cool down following the broadcast, Will Rogers was heard to remark.. . .[10] "Radio is too big a thing to be out of!"

The programs for collection:

Bond Rally, Kate Smith, September 21, 1943 (CBS, 8:00 A. M. throughout day)

King Edward Valedictory, December 12, 1936 (NBC-CBS, 5:00 P.M.)

NBC Inaugural Broadcast, November 15, 1926 (NBC, 8:00-12:00 P.M.)

Roosevelt's First War Message, December 9, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Roosevelt's Fireside Chats, Several speeches, usually broadcast on all networks.

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[9]Slate, Cook, op. cit., p. 64.

[10]Ibid., p. 65.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The important broadcasts of network radio have been listed at the end of each section of the text. For convenience, however, this list is repeated, both alphabetically and chronologically.

Alphabetical Listing

Aldrich Family, late thirties, early forties (NBC-B, 8:00-8:30 P.M. Tuesday)
Allen, Mel, World Series, October 5-9, 1949 (Mutual, 12:45 P.M. on 10/5 through 10/8; 1:45 on 10/9)
America's Town Meeting of the Air, January 6, 1938 (NBC-B, 9:30-10:30 P.M.)
Amos and Andy, pre 1943 (NBC-B, CBS, 7:00-7:17 P.M. M-F)

Bing Crosby Show, latter part of 1946 (ABC, 10:00-10:30 P.M. Wednesday)
Bond Rally, Kate Smith, Sept. 21, 1943 (CBS, 8:00 A.M. throughout day)
Breakfast Club, weekday mornings (NBC-B, ABC, ---)
Burns and Allen, 1940 (CBS, 7:30-8:00 P.M. Monday)

Cross, Milton, December 25, 1931 (NBC-R-B, 1:45 P.M.)
Czechoslovakian Crisis, September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---) world news round-up, H. V. Kaltenborn; September 29, 1938 (NBC, ---) Max Jordan scoop of Munich agreement.

D-Day, June 6, 1941 (NBC, ---) Wright Bryan with first eye-witness report, (CBS, ---) Quenton Reynolds, with comments on Dieppe raid; (NBC, ---) George Hicks with account of first landings

Eddie Cantor Show, 1932 (NBC-R, ---)
Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy, December 17, 1937 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
European News Round-up, March 13, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-8:15 P.M.)

Fall of the City, The, April 11, 1937 (CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
(rebroadcast--September 28, 1939, CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Fibber McGee and Molly, ---(NBC-R, 9:30-10:00 P.M. Tuesday)
Fred Allen Show, October 14, 1945 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Gang Busters, January 18, 1939 (CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)
Guldahl Interview, June 12, 1937 (NBC, about 7:00 P.M.)

Heatter, Gabriel, April 3, 1936 (Mutual, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
Husing, Ted, Poughkeepsie Regatta, June 24, 1929 (CBS, 5:30 P.M.)

Information Please, April 14, 1939 (NBC-B, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Jack Armstrong, --- (NBC-R-B, ABC, 5:30-5:45 P.M. M-F)
Jack Benny Program, (NBC-R until 1948, then CBS)

Kaltenborn, H. V., September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---)
Kate Smith Show, November 10, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
King Edward Valedictory, December 12, 1936 (NBC-CBS, 5:00 P.M.)

Let's Pretend, ---(CBS, ---) see text for specific titles requested
Lights Out, 1936-1938 (NBC-R, 12:30-1:00 A.M. Thursday)
Lombardo, Guy, spring, 1938 (CBS, 5:30-6:00 P.M. Sunday)
Lone Ranger, ---(NBC-B, ABC, 7:30-8:00 P.M. M,W,F)
Lux Radio Theatre of the Air, ---(CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M. Monday)
see text for specific programs requested

Major Bowes' Amateur Hour, 1936 (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M. Thursday)
McCarthy, Clem, Seabiscuit v. War Admiral, November 1, 1938
(NBC-B, 3:45-4:15 P.M.)
McNamee, Graham, Rose Bowl, January 1, 1927 (NBC-R, 5:00 P.M.)
Meet the Press, August 27, 1948 (Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Metropolitan Opera, October, 1936 to April 1937 (NBC-B, 1:40 P.M.)
Milwaukee A.A.U. Meet, July 3, 1937 (CBS, throughout afternoon)
Mr. District Attorney, ---(NBC, 9:30-10:00 P.M. Wednesday)
Murrow, Edward R., June 23, 1940 (CBS, ---)
Musical Appreciation Hour, ---(NBC-R-B, 2:00-3:00 Friday)

NBC Inaugural Broadcast, November 15, 1926 (NBC, 8:00-12:00 P.M.)

On a Note of Triumph, May 8, 1945 (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
(rebroadcast, May 13, 1945, CBS, 11:00-12:00 P.M.)
One Man's Family, ---(NBC-R, ---)

Palmolive Hour, first weeks of 1937 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M. Friday)
Pepper Young's Family, ---(an NBC program that ran on both the Blue and Red networks, as well as on Mutual; various times, M-F)

Quiz Kids, ---(NBC-R, ---)

Rise of the Goldbergs, 1941 (CBS, 5:15-5:30 P.M. M-F)
Romance of Helen Trent, ---(CBS, 12:30-12:45 P.M. M-F)
Roosevelt Fireside Chats, several speeches, usually broadcast on all networks
Roosevelt First War Message, December 9, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Roosevelt-Hoover Election, November 8, 1932 (CBS, NBC, 6:00 P.M. throughout evening)
Rudy Vallee Show, December 16, 1936 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

Shadow, The, ---(Mutual, Sunday afternoon)
Stern, Bill, Sports Newsreel, and play by play, (NBC, ---)
Stop the Music! March 13, 1949 (ABS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)
Suspense, "Sorry, Wrong Number" (rebroadcast September 6, 1945 CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.) Agnes Moorhead stars

Taylor, Deems, December 11, 1938 (CBS, 3:00-5:00 P.M.)
They Fly Through the Air, February 19, 1939 (CBS, 2:30-3:00 P.M.) (rebroadcast--September 7, 1939, CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Thomas, Lowell, February 7, 1938 (NBC-B, 6:45-7:00 A.M.)
Today's Children, ---(NBC-R, 10:45-11:00 P.M.)
Town Hall Tonight, December 7, 1938, April 24, 1940, May 1, 1940 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
Truth or Consequences, March 15, 1947 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Uncle Don, ---(Mutual, 6:00 P.M. M-F also Saturday mornings in late forties)

War of the Worlds, October 31, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
We Hold These Truths, December 15, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:45 P.M.)
Winchell, Walter, 1946 "blood" broadcast (ABC, 9:00-9:15 P.M. Sunday)

Chronological Listing

NBC Inaugural Broadcast, November 15, 1926 (NBC, 8:00-12:00 P.M.)

McNamee, Graham, Rose Bowl, January 1, 1927 (NBC-R, 5:00 P.M.)

Husing, Ted, Poughkeepsie Regatta, June 24, 1929 (CBS, 5:30 P.M.)

Cross, Milton, December 25, 1931 (NBC-R-B, 1:45 P.M.)

Eddie Cantor Show, 1932 (NBC-R, ---)
Roosevelt-Hoover Election, November 8, 1932 (CBS, NBC, 6:00 P.M. throughout evening)

Major Bowes' Amateur Hour, 1936 (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M. Thursday)
Heatter, Gabriel, April 3, 1936 (Mutual, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
King Edward Valedictory, December 12, 1936 (NBC, CBS, 5:00 P.M.)
Rudy Vallee Show, December 16, 1936 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

Palmolive Hour, first few weeks of 1937 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M. Friday)
Fall of the City, The, April 11, 1937 (CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Guldahl Interview, June 12, 1937 (NBC, about 7:00 P.M.)
Milwaukee A.A.U. Meet, July 3, 1937 (CBS, throughout afternoon)
Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy, December 17, 1937 (NBC-R, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)

America's Town Meeting of the Air, January 6, 1938 (NBC-B, 9:30-10:30 P.M.)
Thomas, Lowell, February 7, 1938 (NBC-B, 6:45-7:00 P.M.)
Lombardo, Guy, Spring, 1938 (CBS, 5:30-6:00 P.M.)
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Czechoslovakian Crisis, September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---) world news round-up, H. V. Kaltenborn; September 29, 1938 (NBC, ---) Max Jordan scoop of Munich agreement
Kaltenborn, H. V., September 10-30, 1938 (CBS, ---)
War of the Worlds, October 30, 1938 (CBS 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
McCarthy, Clem, Seabiscuit v. War Admiral, November 1, 1938 (NBC-B, 3:45-4:15 P.M.)
Kate Smith Show, November 10, 1938 (CBS, 8:00-9:00 P.M.)
Town Hall Tonight, December 7, 1938 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
Taylor, Deems, December 11, 1938 (CBS, 3:00-5:00 P.M.)

Gang Busters, January 18, 1939 (CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)
They Fly Through the Air, February 19 (CBS, 2:30-3:00 P.M.) (rebroadcast--September 7, 1939, CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Information Please, April 14, 1939 (NBC-B, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)
Meridian 7-1212, (rebroadcast August 24, 1939 CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
Fall of the City, The, September 28, 1939 (rebroadcast CBS, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Burns and Allen, 1940 (CBS, 7:30-8:00 P.M., Monday)
Town Hall Tonight, April 24, May 1, 1940 (NBC-R, 9:00-10:00 P.M.)
Murrow, Edward R., June 23, 1940 (CBS, ---)

Rise of the Goldbergs, 1941 (CBS, 5:15-5:30 P.M.)
Roosevelt First War Message, December 9, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)
We Hold These Truths, December 15, 1941 (CBS, NBC-R-B, Mutual, 10:00-10:45 P.M.)

Bond Rally, Kate Smith, September 21, 1943 (CBS, 8:00 A.M. throughout day)

On a Note of Triumph, May 8, 1945 (CBS, 9:00-10:00 P.M.) (rebroadcast--May 13, 1945, CBS, 11:00-12:00 P.M.)
Suspense, "Sorry, Wrong Number" (rebroadcast September 6, 1945 CBS, 8:00-8:30 P.M.) Agnes Moorhead stars
Fred Allen Show, October 14, 1945 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Winchell, Walter, 1946 "blood" broadcast (ABC, 9:00-9:15 P.M.)
Bing Crosby Show, latter part of 1946 (ABC, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Truth or Consequences, March 15, 1947 (NBC, 8:30-9:00 P.M.)

Meet the Press, August 27, 1948 (Mutual, 10:00-10:30 P.M.)

Stop the Music, March 13, 1949 (ABC, 8:00-8:30 P.M.)
Allen, Mel, World Series, October 5-9, 1949 (Mutual, 12:45 P.M. on 10/5 through 10/8; 1:45 P.M. on 10/9)

(Those programs which were not listed with a specific date are not included in the Chronological Listing.)

"Where does one go from here?" is a logical question to pose at this point.

The most apparent answer is that a search should be begun for these listed broadcasts. Since this list was composed for the purpose of pointing out which programs should be included in a library of important network programs, voices, and events, it is obviously the writer's hope that this list be utilized.

Where one goes to locate these broadcasts is, however, another problem. The networks themselves may have some idea where a few of the broadcasts might be, and chances are that advertising agencies, which created and produced many of the shows in the thirties and forties, may even have a better idea where old recordings could be located.

Certainly, the KIRO-CBS library at the University of Washington has an extensive collection of Columbia's World War II broadcasts, and all the documents are nearly catalogued in Milo Ryan's book History in Sound. The National Voice Library at Michigan State University may also have some of the requested broadcasts, but the collection has not been catalogued, so the value of that sound depository, as a source for radio materials, is not yet known. Then, too, there is a radio archive in the Department of Television and Radio at Michigan State University; the archive as yet is not very large, but it is growing steadily, and it is catalogued.

Collectors may also wish to check with other universities for possible broadcast libraries, as well as with radio stations which were affiliated with the networks in the thirties and forties and which may have collected copies of network programs themselves.

Finally, those interested in collecting radio programs should be aware that the Library of Congress has a great number of recordings in storage, but has not been granted funds to catalog the collection.

A less apparent answer to "where does one go from here?" is that one should keep alert to any new information that may be important to this listing. As was pointed out in the Introduction, the listing is intended to be complete, but not final, and new knowledge about network radio may influence the content of this list.

Another answer to the question is that one undertake other listing studies for other proposed collections. There could be, for one, a list of important programs, voices, and events that were on radio, but not on network radio. A list such as this would allow the inclusion of those notable events that occurred before the networks were formed, as well as other events that were broadcast through the thirties and forties that were not on the four major networks.

Listing studies could also be made in special areas of radio broadcasting, for instance, notable radio commercials or jingles, important political broadcasts, or infamous hucksters could be enumerated.

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