

TELEVISION

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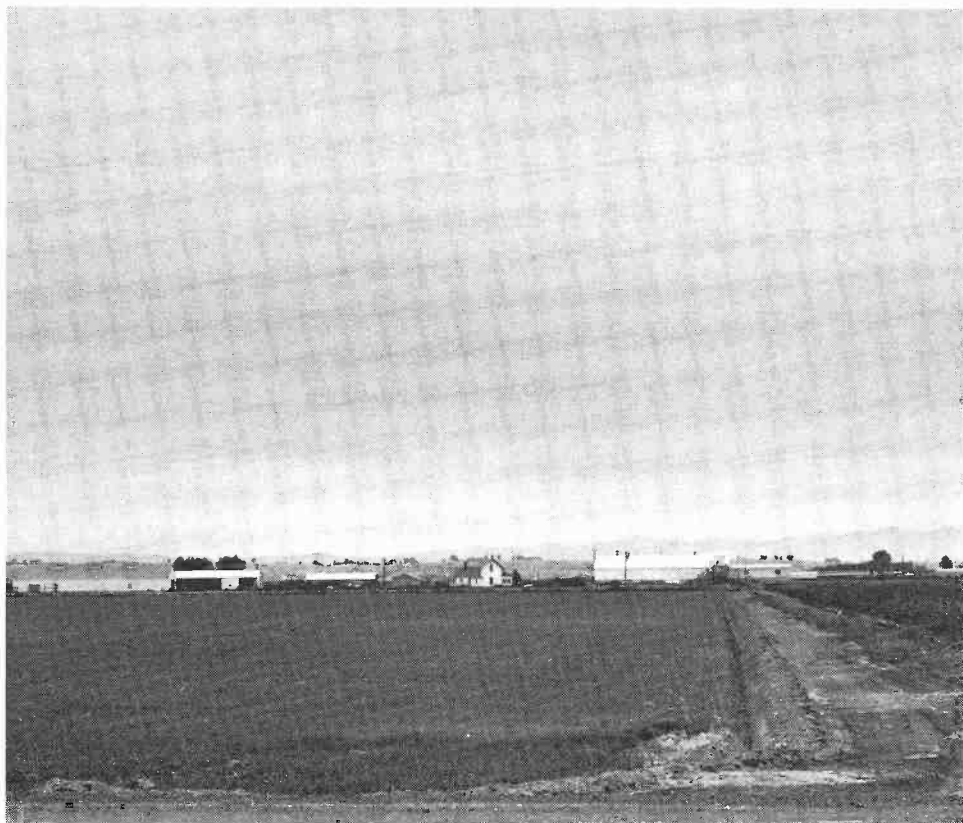
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THE JOURNAL OF THE  
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF  
TELEVISION ARTS  
AND SCIENCES

Published by The National Academy  
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# TELEVISION QUARTERLY

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OF TELEVISION ARTS AND SCIENCES

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# TELEVISION QUARTERLY

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WINTER 1968 VOL. VII NO. 1

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## PUBLIC TELEVISION — A SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

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### *THE NEXT STEP*

In the long view, perhaps the easier problems of establishing an alternative television service in the United States have been overcome. A Public Broadcasting Act has been enacted into law, creating a Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The members of said Corporation have been duly appointed, and funds have been authorized for implementation of programs. By all odds, the future of Public Television should be bright and clear.

But the more basic problems remain to be resolved, and these relate to the matter of establishing a clear role and identity for PTV. What should "Public" Television be? What are its philosophies and its aims? What role should it play in an already over-communicated-to society? Shall it be dominated by national or regional-local concerns? Who shall receive funds, for what purpose and under what conditions? Above all, what kind of programs shall it address to the public, and what approaches to programming should it adopt?

Because these questions are of vital concern to all professionals in the medium, *Television Quarterly* devotes this entire issue to a review of the current and future status of Public Television in America.

The major part of this effort is a report of the proceedings of a January conference—sponsored in part by the Johnson Foundation of Racine,

Wisconsin—which brought together several spokesmen for various educational television organizations and a number of interested observers, including *Television Quarterly* Board Chairman **Lawrence Laurent** and three Board members with special interest in the role and future of PTV. These, together with former FCC Chairman **Newton Minow** and TV critic **Richard Doan**, deliberated for two days in a conference format which allowed for the presentation of basic position papers followed by group discussion. The papers, together with substantive parts of the ensuing discussions, are included here.

In addition to the proceedings of the Racine conference, *Television Quarterly* sought one additional source of “inside-ETV” opinion regarding the new and dramatic developments precipitated by the enactment into law of the Public Broadcasting Act. **Thomas Petry** writes of these events from the point of view of the smaller local ETV station manager.

Finally, proponents of Public Television in the United States had barely begun to speculate upon their good fortune when the first dissenting voice was heard. Early in 1968, at a series of debates sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute For Public Policy Research, Professor **Ronald H. Coase** of the University of Chicago argued that the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 was a “wholly unnecessary and ill-conceived piece of legislation.” The act would create, said economist Coase, nothing more than a “poverty program for the well-to-do.” In keeping with its firmly-established editorial policy that all aspects of controversy in television be given full and fair exposure, *Television Quarterly* reproduces here the full text of Dr. Coase’s argument.

THE WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE  
ON  
PUBLIC TELEVISION\*

Participants

PETER COTT	<i>Executive Director, National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences</i>
RICHARD K. DOAN	<i>Editor, The Doan Report, TV Guide</i>
ROGER ENGLANDER	<i>Producer, CBS-TV Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein</i>
WILLIAM H. KOBIN	<i>Vice-President, Programming, National Educational Television</i>
HERMAN LAND	<i>Communications Consultant</i>
LAWRENCE LAURENT	<i>Radio-TV Editor, The Washington Post</i>
RICHARD M. PACK	<i>Senior Vice-President, Programming, Group W</i>
JAMES ROBERTSON	<i>Manager, WHA and WHA-TV, Chairman of the Board, National Association of Educational Broadcasters</i>
JONATHAN C. RICE	<i>Program Manager, KQED, San Francisco</i>
NEWTON N. MINOW	<i>Partner: Liebman, Williams, Bennet, Baird and Minow</i>
YALE ROE	<i>Vice-President, Harrisclope, Inc.</i>

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\**Television Quarterly* expresses its thanks to the Johnson Foundation for its generous support of this conference.



# THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK

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LAWRENCE LAURENT, RICHARD K. DOAN

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## LAWRENCE LAURENT

I forecast a very difficult 1968 for Public Television. We are all spoiled by the ease with which Senator John Pastore slipped the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 through the Senate. Such speed is not a matter of course. On the record, the average time for a piece of legislation to go from introduction to Presidential signing is about four years. This Bill made it in nine months which, on the Washington scene, is little short of incredible.

All that really exists at this point, then, are the referee's instructions to the fighters. The bout is yet to begin. There will be fights over long-term financing. We can look forward, not only in 1968 but in the years that follow, to a continuing battle over establishing some kind of true individual identity or mission for PTV, and a fight for the publicly-supported machinery that will give the nation "an industry for public good." Those of us who are interested in this kind of thing are pretty much in agreement about objectives. But each has his own ideas about the methods, the techniques, and the program content.

It is important to consider the fact that the legislation which has been passed might have been far more restrictive. I am referring to the "Pickle Amendment," which actually did pass the House of Representatives. It would have restricted programs on Public Television to "Programs not primarily for amusement or entertainment purposes." It gets its name from its proposer, the Honorable J. J. Pickle, a Democrat from Austin, Texas. Insiders tended

to regard it as insignificant until it turned up in the House Committee's marked-up version of the Bill that was going to be sent to the floor. As restrictive as that would have been, it was included in the version that passed in the House of Representatives. Needless to say, everyone who had some feeling about the need for this particular legislation had some very bad moments at that time. By restricting programs of Public Television to those "Not primarily for entertainment or amusement purposes—" the Pickle proposal raised the immediate question of whether PTV would ever be allowed to telecast a symphony, a classic drama, or a good art-film. The warning vote on this came up with the motion to recommit, which serves almost the same purpose as killing a bill. The motion to "recommit with instructions" which the House considered meant that the Bill would have been sent back to committee, from which it might never have emerged again. The motion to recommit failed only because Representative William Springer of Illinois began rounding up Republicans from the cloakroom and sending them up the aisle to be counted against it.

This background is of interest because it demonstrates simply that there is a considerable body of doubt in the House of Representatives about the whole concept of public broadcasting and public financing of it. The portent is that those doubts may grow greater—not smaller—when the time comes for appropriation of public tax money to support the Corporation which the Bill establishes.

It should also be noted that even without the Pickle restrictions, the version of the Bill which came out of the House and Senate Conference (where differences between the two versions of proposed legislation are settled), still contained the difficult House language that would require that "each individual program would have to meet the test of objectivity and balance." Just before the Conference completed its work, some forceful pleading from a staff expert (Nicholas Zapple of Senator John Pastore's staff) convinced the members that the language was unduly restrictive. As a result, the language was modified and changed substantially to say that "each program in a series need not meet the test of objectivity and balance, but the series, when considered as a whole, must meet those tests." Obviously, this kind of language opened up opportunities that might otherwise never have existed for PTV.

Once the Bill did pass, it did not take long for strong reaction. In a speech at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, Dr. Ronald Coase, a University of Chicago economist, made what

will undoubtedly be one of many attacks on the Public Broadcasting Act. The phrase which he employed to describe it was "a poverty program for the well-to-do." That description may do infinite harm to the growth of PTV, because it was spoken before an organization that does command high congressional attention, and because it has appeal among a growing number of political figures who are opposed to any piece of legislation that comes out of the White House.

These various episodes and events in connection with the passage of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 point toward some conclusions about the way in which its supporters ought to proceed in the years ahead.

First of all, there should be less internecine struggle within ETV-PTV ranks. At least throughout 1968, the fewer the public utterances which call attention to the local national-ETV power struggle the better. Those who want to see a strong non-commercial network which has authority and is mobile, responsive and effective ought to put their arguments in terms of the fact that such a network's existence will make operations more effective and more meaningful for the local licensed affiliate. ETV in-fighting must be avoided.

In addition, it is clear that the National Citizens Committee for Public Broadcasting needs some grassroots organization and support. Those congressmen who voted for The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 ought to be made aware, each in his own individual community, that there are some people who admire him for having voted that way. Equally, those congressmen who opposed it, and who probably still oppose it, ought to be made aware that each of their own communities has a number of people who think that their representative made a bad mistake.

Finally, the supporters of this hopeful project should remind themselves that 1968 is an election year. In election years Washington waltzes to the musical strains of a balanced budget and the need to cut federal spending. The simple lyrics urge us to reduce the tax burden. Things will be easier to bear if all concerned remember the long distance between authorization and appropriation. Proponents of a public broadcast system must be prepared to persuade again, and this time under more difficult conditions. The last thing needed now is a public display of dissension, quarreling, or loud doubts about the social good that would come out of a funded, and viable, non-commercial system.

## RICHARD K. DOAN

My total feeling, to begin with, is that the friends of Public Television have their work cut out for them. If I were to put Public Television's 1968 prospects in Wall Street terms, I'd have to say the outlook is highly bearish. McGeorge Bundy's scintillating proposal of a domestic satellite system to generate funds for Public Television as well interconnect it has gathered dust for a year and a half at the FCC. Any prospect of early action on either this or Comsat's counter-proposal of an all-purpose satellite pilot test appears to have been sent glimmering by President Johnson's fielding of a task force to examine the whole communications spectrum.

I attempted to assess the impact of this White House move and found a widespread hesitation around the FCC to speculate on the subject in any manner. What we do know is that the President's panel has been given a year to report, and these things have a way of dragging on. It is difficult to imagine a domestic satellite system getting any further push toward reality until after this panel reports.

Congress has passed a Public Broadcasting bill, and President Johnson has signed it, but again I think that the hurrahs probably can be saved until sometime in 1969, because not even seed money has been appropriated. This is an election year, and Congressional tax measures and blood from a turnip have something in common. Somebody had better keep on Senator Pastore's trail, if he is indeed television's best friend on Capitol Hill. Maybe he can put pressure in the right places to get this money into channels.

The National Citizens Committee for Public Television has been organized, which seems a logical and needed step, and that "What's-Happening Guy," Thomas P. F. Hoving, has been recruited to make it sing. The trouble is that every time Mr. Hoving opens his mouth publicly, he seems as apt to lose friends as to win them for the cause. I don't know exactly why. It seems, more than anything, he just isn't considered one of the family, and ETV is nothing if not clannish.

In fact, if I decipher the rumblings correctly, the pioneers of ETV are anything but happy about the turn of recent events. At least in some instances, they seem comfortable in their poverty and comparative obscurity, and they see on the horizon the spectre of Big Brotherism usurping their programming prerogatives and

reducing them to the status of electronic serfs, on a par with local affiliates of the big commercial networks. The symbol of these fears is none other than commercial TV's biggest turncoat and defector, Fred W. Friendly. You'd think he was a network spy in the ETV camp.

Morale around NET, I'm told, is hardly at an all-time high, if only because of the uncertainties ahead, and the ever-present possibility that the Ford Foundation might pull the rug. The fact that the Public Broadcast Laboratory is technically an NET satellite is apparently little consolation.

And then there's PBL. To begin with there is the unhedged opinion one hears so often—that the undertaking was ill-timed, that the wrong people were put in charge, that the two-hour Sunday night potpurri is doing Public Television more harm than good, *ad infinitum*. Obviously, of course, PBL is ill-timed, if it really is, only because the results have not been pleasing. I'm among those who have found PBL wanting, but I also must say I have found it compelling viewing at times.

I also think PBL has served a number of real purposes already. For instance, has it not demonstrated dramatically what a difficult road lies ahead for Public Television? Has it not given us a new appreciation of the professional standards of much of the news and public affairs programming, if not the entertainment, on the commercial channels? Among other things, it seems to me that PBL's patent disinterest at times in exploring both sides of a controversial issue may have made us newly aware of the values of commercial TV's habitual balancing out of pros and cons, a practice sometimes deplored by the critics as offering the viewer no conclusions. But at least he has, thanks to commercial television's usual approach, a chance to see both sides of a question and to make up his own mind.

More than anything else, perhaps, PBL may be showing us how difficult it is going to be for Public Television to wean the American masses away from their steady diet of so-called mindless pap on the plug-happy medium. As you may have read in *TV Guide*, among other places, one of the commercial networks and one of the major Madison Avenue ad agencies were curious enough about how much attention PBL was getting in the living rooms across America to ask to break out a rating on it. The pitiful revelation was that, despite considerable paid advertising as well as advance ballyhoo and such things as a half-page highlight in *TV Guide*, the PBL

premiere pulled something less than a one rating—if we can believe Nielsen.

In short, only a comparative handful of Americans, at least by commercial TV standards, even bothered to *sample* what PBL had to offer! The tune-in may have improved since then, and then again it may not. My hunch is it probably hasn't.

Now I'm aware that Educational or Public TV is supposed to be able to "afford" to talk to minorities. It does not strive for ratings. Its objective is to reach minds, not masses. But I submit that PTV is never going to be a vital, moving force in this country unless it has the potential and the capacity, at least upon occasion, to make great armies of people get off their duffs and switch to their non-commercial channels.

In so saying, I'm certainly not suggesting that ETV should resort to sensationalism, or should try to compete with the experts in common denominationalism. I don't have any easy answers as to how this is going to be done. But I feel bone-deep that it's got to happen. Public TV has got to be of much more consequence than it now is if it is ever going to be wanted by enough people to make Congress follow through on last year's initiative.

Perhaps PTV just can't be an overnight wonder. Perhaps it'll have to come on slowly, just because too many of us are inured to the commercial way of TV life, and too many others are content with a mostly non-TV way of life. I wish I knew. I only know that Public TV faces a dilly of a challenge.

# THE GREATER NEED

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NEWTON N. MINOW

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When I went to the Federal Communications Commission in 1961, we said that if there was no nation-wide, interconnected, strong educational television service in this country, it would not be the fault of the FCC. At that time, believe it or not, there were no educational television stations in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore and other key cities.

That was only six years ago. We have since been very busy building new television stations and laying the foundation of a Public Television network. The Carnegie Commission brought the whole issue to the law-makers and to the President, and we have now enacted this new law, the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967. I think this is a remarkable six-year record. Despite this accomplishment, however, we have been so busy building stations and spending money for facilities that we have still not really formulated what I would regard as a satisfactory philosophy of educational, or public, television.

In the beginning we were stuck with the word, "educational." Graybeard professors descended on the medium and bored everybody to tears. We got very little in the way of community or national attention. After a while, we began to realize that educational television required professional television people who knew the medium, and who knew how to capture and sustain attention. We have made great progress, but we have also made one basic mistake. The principal limitation of commercial television is that it seeks to reach a large audience almost all the time and that it seeks to do this, with very few exceptions, by putting on many different programs in hope that each distinct program will appeal to a very large audience. Commercial television must do that in order to attract and keep advertisers. Regrettably, non-commercial television has fallen into the same pattern.

It seems to me that non-commercial television ought to say to a community—or to a nation—“we don’t want you to watch non-commercial, or Public Television all the time. That’s not our purpose.” PTV should so structure its approach as to encourage people to also spend time reading a book or a magazine, or watching commercial television, or going to the PTA, or meditating, or spending time with their children. I don’t think that it’s PTV’s purpose to try to get people to spend all their time—or even very much of their time, watching what they offer. That’s my basic philosophy, and I think it is at odds with the philosophy of most program managers, whether they are in commercial or non-commercial television.

What PTV should say to the community is: “We think the best we can do with our talent, assuming we had the money, is try to provide you with a couple of hours a week that are going to make a difference in your life, such that if you miss them, you really have missed something important, significant, compelling.” These few hours should then strive to change the way people think. They should change the way they look at issues, and change the way they appreciate things. PTV should concentrate its efforts on doing just those couple of hours—making them so good, so attractive, that they can justify giving the audience four or five chances to see them. Then, if people want to watch *Bonanza* or if they want to go bowling or do something else, they will not miss that period of time to which PTV has devoted its best efforts.

My first basic point then, is that PTV should concentrate on doing few things, doing them well, and repeating them often. The kind of people who are watching Public Television today are also the busiest people—the people who have a lot of other interests and activities. PTV must capture their attention for important programs by offering more options in their busy schedules. This approach will also give critics a real chance to guide people toward things they think are worth spending time with. You have to allow time for them to say, “You should have seen that.” And you have to offer more opportunities to see it.

Beyond this matter of convenience for the audience, Public Television must acknowledge that there is a far greater need, and that is to capture national attention. In my opinion, it has not fully done so, and I think that in order to do it, PTV must take one important project and bet all its money, talent, and creative effort on it.



The project I have proposed, and continue to propose, is *The Great Course in American History*. I once talked to President Kennedy about this. At that time we had four living ex-Presidents, and it was my hope that all four of them would initiate such a series by spending an hour in the White House together discussing—before the cameras—why every American must know and appreciate American history. I felt that would get an audience for the first night. If that couldn't do it—well, I give up.

Hopefully with that kind of lead-in such a project could start off with millions of people watching the first program on American History. Obviously, what follows must be done as well as anything that's ever been done on television, with first-rate writing, production, performance and the actual films, still-photos and other documents of our history used whenever possible. It should be *the* great course in American history, and each program should run on all the ETV stations four or five times a week so that all would have a chance to see it.

If such a series were good enough, it would be timeless. It could be run over and over again, all over the world. I think that such a series, more than anything else, would make Public Television important and significant. For the small minority in the United States that is sufficiently motivated to want to get college credit for the course—(maybe a half a million people) suitable arrangements could be made with local universities and colleges. For the bulk of the audience, a certificate might be offered.

Finally, to further attract national attention, I would use Public Television to do something that may be regarded with distaste by both Public Television programmers and commercial television programmers. I would rerun the best offerings of commercial television on Public Television very often. In Chicago for example, *Walter Cronkite and the News* on CBS-TV and *The Huntley-Brinkley Report* on NBC-TV are carried at a very inconvenient hour for many millions of people. They appear on the local outlets at 5:30 and 6:00 P.M. respectively when many people are just arriving at home. Could these programs be taped—giving CBS or NBC full credit—and run again at 8:00 P.M. on Channel 11? Would that not be a noble service for the people of Chicago? I do not understand why this would be bad use of a precious half-hour of Public Television.

Clearly, this kind of worthwhile use of a PTV channel will run into a number of obstacles. The principal roadblocks to this idea are set up by various guilds and unions, the problems of payment

of residuals and so forth. But is it not time that the members of such organizations put their talent fees and residuals where their mouth is? If the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences wants to do something about Public Television, it might campaign for the easing of some of these rights in order that non-commercial television—a non-profit system—would be able to give second or third or fourth exposure to the best films and tapes of the commercial system. I have found less in the way of obstacles to this idea from the owners of commercial stations and the networks who, I think, would be willing to do this if they did not have to meet these talent fees and union requirements. I am sure that this might be a very specific, hard and concrete idea for the National Academy to explore. If they really want to do something for non-commercial television, this is "Chapter A." If you took, for example, the *Hallmark Hall of Fame*, the *Bell Telephone Hour*, or a number of other programs, and extended them to a further audience, this would be a very fundamental service to the American viewer.

Finally, I think that while there are many things done by the stations that deserve a national audience, we are kidding ourselves if we think local ETV managers will not put obstacles in the way of acceptance—if for no other reason than that they have not done the programs themselves. One of the realizations that Public Television people must face is that they cannot do everything. They have to share and pool their talents in such a way as to make a bigger impact than can individually be made.

I do not want to leave an impression that I am being negative or critical. The growth of Public Television is exciting. What has been done in the last decade is astonishing. The Carnegie Commission's report, and what happened in Congress this year, has restored my faith in the democratic process. But with the possibilities before us, it is important that we use a little imagination. Imagination is more important than money, and breaking rules is the only way that we are going to succeed.

## DISCUSSION

### MR. PACK

I assume that none of us, including those in commercial television, ever has enough money to do all the things we would like to do. To get five really good hours of programming, you've got to make twenty, out of which you may get four good ones, one great one and twelve bad ones. Quality only comes out of a certain abundance of dedicated quantity. I just don't think you can narrow your sights as Newt suggests. In fact, I don't know where the suggestion to do fewer programs leaves those of us who are interested in program development.

### MR. KOBIN

I thoroughly disagree that we should do less, but I also see no sense in trying to do everything. But who is to decide on whether to do one great idea or another?

### MR. MINOW

My point is that even with all the resources and the talent *Group W* has, it doesn't attempt to do as much as Public Television tries to do with smaller resources and less talent. Isn't that so?

### MR. PACK

Yes. We have a staff three times the size we ever had and are doing fewer programs than we were doing five years ago.

### MR. MINOW

So *Group W* is going in the direction of fewer, but better quality, programs?

### MR. ROE

We should remember that anyone who is in this business is constantly faced with choices, whether the budget is a thousand dollars a week, ten thousand or fifty thousand. We are forced to exercise judgement authority or power if you will—over whether to do six brush-painting and guitar programs in one day or something on urban problems. We have to decide whether one kind of programming—one objective—is more important than another, in these times, in this city, in this nation.

**MR. RICE**

Our KQED producers come to me with new public affairs ideas every day, but I have to reject many because there has to be some sort of balance. There is no policy, however, on balance.

**MR. KOBIN**

We have many different audiences for NET programs, and we can't simply decide to exclude large potential audiences because of one thing we want to concentrate on in any given year. Obviously, priorities have to be established. Everything cannot be done simultaneously. I am opposed, however, to narrowing the whole field down to a small number of efforts because we can't do everything at hand. We simply cannot afford, as a practical matter, to do only a few things. This does not mean that we have no priority list. If there are many different audiences and not just one big audience, then I think we have to try to figure out some way between the two extremes of either serving a very small or a very large audience. We have to be able to provide a considerable amount of material for a considerable number of people—and it cannot be done with a single program, or a single theory.

I think that we can point at once to ten or more concepts for series we all agree ought to be done. This is a problem any programmer is confronted with every day. You have to establish priorities, but you also cannot take one or two, concentrate on them totally, and forget the rest.

**MR. MINOW**

I understand your reasoning, Bill, on not wanting to lock yourself into a weekly show with the limited hours on the NET schedule, but what is really wrong with that approach?

**MR. KOBIN**

I think it is wrong to say "This is what I think would be good for the American people this week, or this year." I think the history series is a marvelous idea, and I would like to do it. I just don't want to do that and nothing else.

**MR. MINOW**

You are making an incorrect assumption. You are saying: this is what we're going to supply them with for a given number of weeks, and there will be nothing else for them to watch. You are

making the assumption that their only choice is to watch the American history lesson. I say they can watch commercial television. They can do anything they please. It isn't as though you had only one television channel. If we had one television channel in this country, I would agree with you. But the choice isn't so narrow. We aren't the only theater in town.

**MR. KOBIN**

I know that. I don't think this should be the only series in town. If we are going to be an alternate source of program material, which I think we should be, we should not be doing the same kinds of things as commercial television. I think we should have an array, even if a limited one, of alternative products to offer the viewer.

**MR. MINOW**

How many hours a week of superior quality do you think you can offer?

**MR. KOBIN**

Not five, which is what we offer our affiliates now. Obviously, the amount of money available for programming is basic. On our current budget, I'd say we can offer about three hours of superior programming.

**MR. MINOW**

Jon, on your current budget at KQED, how many hours of really good, quality programming can you turn out?

**MR. RICE**

Four.

**MR. MINOW**

Then from our only educational network and one of our best educational stations, a maximum of seven hours a week about which we could say: "Judge us by this," is produced. My point is that we take those seven hours and run them four times.

**MR. RICE**

Except that I also have programming from ETS and commercial sources.

**MR. MINOW**

Do people watch it?

**MR. RICE**

I get about three letters a week, criticizing me for reruns. They say there is nothing else to look at, and they watch us all the time. They are bothered by the reruns. If I doubled or trebled that rerun number, I would really catch hell.

**MR. PACK**

I think we are posing unnecessary dilemmas. We are looking for the one great idea, one great program. There isn't any. There is no one perfect solution. You do not have one kind of program, and no programmer is going to find any one solution to what he is supposed to do.

I want to emphasize however, that Public Television is going to have to face the ultimate question of what it really is, and what its primary function, most of the time, should be. Is it primarily—and this seems to be the ETV philosophy—an alternative program source—a kind of American BBC? If so, is it BBC Number 1, which tries to combine occasional mass entertainment appeal with occasional programming to educated intellectual minorities? Is it going to give up being a night school or university of the air, except in its own ghettos? Until such questions are resolved, the kind of discussion we're now engaged in may be irrelevant.

How many ETV stations now depend, economically, on day-time classroom and instructional programs? I wonder if in their desire, to be more commercial than they think they are, and in their rush to go after the mass audience more than they think they are, they aren't possibly downgrading instructional television, which is perhaps, a more important part of their schedule than they want it to be.

I don't know why there shouldn't be at least a half hour for a University of the Air in the prime time of any ETV station. Why relegate it as in the case of one station I know to the weekend, thereby creating a "Sunday ghetto" of their very own. Why put a High School Equivalency course on at 6:00 P.M. instead of in prime time? I can even foresee the possibility of two ETV channels: one, the popular channel for cultural or performing arts programs, the best of NET, and the best of the new regional combine of eight great ETV stations; and the "ghetto" station for instructional television. I don't think this is right. I think it's getting ETV off course.

I don't think that ETV has to do programs that are going to compete with commercial successes, nor do I think it has to do programs that no one will watch. I think it has to do *many* things, and one of the things, which is slipping away from it is truly educational programming. We have to consider Public Television not only in the short view, but in terms of what it's going to be like ten years from now. By 1980, not only will approximately two-thirds of U. S. urban dwellers be college-trained, but it is almost certain that systematic elite re-training will be standard in the political system. In other words, people will have to go to school continuously, and maybe television ought to be there to help.

# A TOOL FOR SOCIAL ACTION

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YALE ROE

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Former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare John Gardner recently observed: "The scope of our social goals today is breathtaking. We have declared war on ignorance, disease, poverty, discrimination, mental or physical incapacity—in fact, on every condition that stunts human growth or diminishes human dignity." I think the television industry has done very little to meet this challenge—to fully participate in this great social revolution.

Never before in history, around the world and in our own country, has the deprived person insisted that *he get his while he's on earth*. In the past, the deprived person assumed—or was told—that he'd be taken care of in the hereafter. He felt that he was hopelessly entrapped within the social system of his time. Now the whole world is caught up in the revolution of rising expectations. Everyone is saying, "I am entitled to live, too. I want mine." Meanwhile, those of us with an interest in Public Television continue to hold our conferences and write our papers—taking pride in the fact that we're doing good and are riding the crest of the times when in fact we are ignoring the basic forces which now control the destiny of our civilization. To help deal with these forces, we might well consider using the television medium for *social action*.

Let me offer some personal reasons for my concern with this use of TV. Like the rest of you, I have read about the problems of the Negroes and the problems of the deprived. But during this past



year, as the riots increased in number and in intensity, I began to understand these problems at a visceral, rather than cerebral, level. For some time, I have been president of a social action organization in Chicago called the New Illinois Committee. Our work is a very modest attempt to do some good. Our results are even more modest, and I have probably gained more from it than I've been able to give to anyone else. This action has brought me personally into the slums, into people's houses, and into personal contact with the deprived people. For the first time, I felt in the gut what I never had truly comprehended in my mind—the feeling of frustration, of hope unfulfilled, and of the desperation that pervades our society. I can illustrate this desperate state with one brief story.

I was talking to some Negro women in a housing project in Chicago. One of them told me she had saved a certain amount of money and had hoped it would be used as a down payment for a home in an effort to break out of the ghetto. But her husband took the money and bought a car. I sympathized with her, because I knew how much she wanted the new opportunities in education and all the other advantages a home in another part of the city would mean. And when I finally asked why he did it, the woman made a statement I don't think I'll forget as long as I live. She said that her husband simply told her: *You can't put a half a dollar's worth of gas into a home and pull away from a white man.* That answer left me with chills, and also with some deeper understanding of the hatred and animosity these people feel toward a world they did not make.

Why don't we use the television medium to try to help these people? When I go into these slums, I find that the ubiquitous television set is always turned on. I also see that the children in these homes frequently speak late in life because no one talks to them. They lie around like vegetables, ignored much of the time. They don't know the language. They don't know ideas. They don't know thinking processes. They don't know what a hotel is, what an escalator is, what an elevated train is, what the world only two blocks away from their home is like. They know only frustration and the hatred that is seeping down to them from their parents, or as is often the case, parent.

It seems to me that it would be a marvelous contribution to our society if we re-channelled the funds which are largely spent on programs which appease the contributors to our ETV stations, which play to the intellectuals who don't watch the programs and

therefore which simply merchandise our stations to the monied social set. These funds should be used to program outstanding and appealing entertainment shows for children from 6:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. I do not mean a show with the usual storyteller—the friendly whoever-he-is who appears inevitably on every educational television station around the country. I mean a program that comes out like a Negro version of *Romper Room*, a Negro version of *Captain Kangaroo*—a show that can make it, just as children's shows make it on commercial television.

As a commercial broadcaster, I am not intimidated by the power of commercial broadcasting. I think that educational stations can do the job just as well. But they need a point of view. They need a sense of purpose and a philosophy. They need to accomplish specific social purposes rather than merely justify their efforts with the rationalization that they are doing things that are generically educational, and therefore "good." If ETV could reach these children for only one hour of the time they devote to television everyday—if it could command their attention with a version of a *Romper Room*, put on by public broadcasting, that taught them something, I think it would be making an important and positive contribution in solving one of the greatest social problems of our time.

Let me present another example of how ETV could make a more positive move into this area. One of the greatest problems in the Negro society is the existence of a matriarchy—the absence of a man who sets standards in the home. He may fear that if he is there, the family will lose its aid to dependent children, he may be simply too embarrassed to stay at home because he can't make a living while the woman can. Think how difficult it would be for any man to discipline his children or set standards for them if he is unemployed while his wife is the only one who can earn a living. I submit that all the talk about assistance for the Negro in terms of better schools, better housing and so forth is peripheral until the family structure is solidified, and I further submit that one of the basic approaches to solidifying the family structure is to put the man back in the home.

On a political basis, the solution to this problem is a massive government-and-business job effort, but in terms of television, is it too much to suggest that a Public Television station offer some sort of job-training program two hours each day? Nor can we simply assume that the man will have enough initiative to watch it. This

effort must be merchandised in the way in which commercial broadcasting merchandises its activities. The station, for example, might work with the Mayor's office in establishing ten television training centers around the city. They could be staffed with people whose job it would be to bring whoever needs the help—20, 40, or 50 men—into each respective center, and work with them in TV training sessions devoted to specific skills. Why can't we use the television medium for that type of social action?

I am not suggesting, of course, that this is the only path to follow. I think that emphasis on the performing arts is important. I think other program efforts are important. But I do say that ETV ought to decide that it wants to accomplish one, two, or three urgent and significant things, and then move to actually accomplish them. I believe that this approach—this use of television for social action—is very much worth considering, if for no other reason than that the problems of the poor represent the most explosive situation in our lives today.

My favorite Fred Allen line regards the time somebody frantically shouted, "the show must go on." There was one of those marvelous pauses, and then Allen said, "Why?" I think of that line frequently in connection with ETV. Nobody has asked why ETV should go on. One of its biggest problems is that it is too satisfied than anything that is generically educational is, *ipso facto*, satisfactory and good. I would suggest that perhaps the essence of Public Television should be that it not be an excuse for everything, but rather a purpose for something.

## DISCUSSION

### MR. LAURENT

Robert Conot recently underscored your point, Yale. He says that in a relatively short period of time, perhaps 20 years, the politics of the major urban centers of the United States are going to be Negro controlled. I also remember Theodore White's observation in *Making of A President*, that the Presidential election is decided by the votes in twelve major cities in the U. S. I think this underscores the need for the kind of social action you're talking about.

### MR. RICE

I agree with Yale's argument. Let me tell you of one such effort we made, and what happened. We sweat blood and put together

a major project to try to remake Oakland. Oakland is a very interesting city. The Negroes are down on the flatland and the power structure is up in the hills. There is more unemployment there than in other Negro communities in California. We put together the most complicated project in our history. Its essence was to set up a sub-station in the ghetto with a permanent staff and newsmen available to these people, to see if we could establish communication and understanding and get them to talk.

I think it might have worked. It was a \$750,000 project and the Ford Foundation said it was too big. It might cause a riot. And we said, "Yes, it might cause a riot, but only if a riot was inevitable, and we could get it over with on a lesser scale and get down to hard tacks."

We have several Negro producers, one of whom is on the air. He's a small-time Willie Mays, and the kids follow him the way they do Willie Mays. The fact is we *have* tried to reach these people. They know we've done four or five good programs for social action. They've heard of them. They don't watch them.

#### MR. ROE

But those programs are part of a potpourri, and I am saying that putting a Negro on television doing a talk show about what the establishment should do about the color problem is not the answer. The answer is that if you want to educate people, you've got to create a total effort. You must either get them into some centers where you can work with them, or make your program so appealing that they will want to watch it in their home. You can't just put a program out over the air and assume that therefore you are going to do some good.

#### MR. MINOW

Yale, I think your idea is exciting. It's a great idea. But let's assume that tomorrow, on all the Public Television stations in the country from 6:00 A.M. until 10:00 A.M. you had a great children's program. Let's call it *Negro Romper Room*. I don't think that in itself would get them to watch it, even though it was good.

I have often reflected upon the terrible weekend when President Kennedy was assassinated, and upon the impact television had on this country—when for four days everyone in this nation sat glued to the television set. I have often felt that television experience of cutting out all schedules and all commercials probably preserved

the sanity of the nation and prevented a lot of riots and fear. And since that horrible time I have often wondered why it should take a President's assassination to make us aware that we could use the medium in that way? I don't mean just non-commercial television, but *all of it*.

Would it be such a terrible thing for all television to take a weekend and devote itself to the race problem, simmering as it is, with explosions impending over the whole country? Would it be illogical if, instead of waiting for a riot to happen and having all the newscasts cover it, for one weekend, everybody—all the networks, all the non commercial stations—were to say, "Dammit, this is vital to the survival of this nation. We're going to have to get everybody communicating and thinking and trying to solve this?" Would that be too much to ask? I think it would have to be the same program on all channels simultaneously, so that people could not escape from facing this problem.

This thing is "bigger than both of us," as the saying goes. I think all of television, commercial and non-commercial, must really begin searching together and simultaneously in order to cope with the situation.

**MR. DOAN**

And then they'd watch CBS and NBC instead of the Public Television channel.

**MR. MINOW**

Maybe so. Maybe that would start it, and you could tell people that from now on this is going to be on Public Television, too. Maybe you should use commercial television to get an audience for it. Maybe that's the function of the commercial system—to work within its own framework to help Public Television.

SEVAREID: You seem to have a fear about the rise of intellectuals in political life.

HOFFER: First of all, I ought to tell you that I have no grievance against the intellectuals. But I'm convinced that the intellectuals, as a type, are more corrupted by power than any other human type. You take a conventional man of action—he's satisfied if you obey, eh? But not the intellectual. He doesn't want you just to obey. He wants you to get down on your knees and praise the one who makes you love what you hate and hate what you love. In other words, whenever the intellectuals are in power there's soul-raping going on.

SEVAREID: I think it's true in Russia, but is it true here?

HOFFER: Well, in this country the intellectuals are not in power. People ask me: How about mass movements in this country? And I tell them that mass movements haven't got a chance in this country for the simple reason that mass movements are started by intellectuals. And in this country the intellectual has neither status, nor prestige, nor influence. We, the common people, are not impressed by the intellectuals, see. We have seen the pencil-pushers working even on the waterfront. And we actually define efficiency by the small number of pencil-pushers, you know, by the ratio between the supervisory, the office personnel and the producing personnel. The highest supervisory personnel is where the intellectuals are in power—in the communist countries. There one-half of the population is supervising the other half. Now I'm going to ask you a question. Who comes next after the communists? Come on.

SEVAREID: I can think of countries like Uruguay that are not communist where half of them are telling the other half what to do.

HOFFER: Yeah, but actually Britain. Imagine that! Wherever intellectuals are in power you'll have an enormous population of supervisory personnel. And why? Because they have a tremendous contempt for the masses. The intellectual cannot operate unless he's convinced that the masses are lazy, incompetent, dishonest, that you have to breathe down their neck, that you have to watch them all the time. And this is where we are sitting pretty, because the masses perform only if you leave them alone like weeds.

—From *Eric Hoffer: The Passionate State of Mind*,  
CBS News Special, September 19, 1967

# MAJORITY OR MINORITY AUDIENCES?

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JAMES ROBERTSON

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I think we are approaching the day when ETV is going to really have to live up to its new name—Public TV, because up to now generally it hasn't. Of course, its programs have been available to the general public, but only a segment of our total population has availed itself of this service. While there are many very good reasons for this, the fact remains that during its first decade or so, ETV has been watched and enjoyed largely by the already educated—those who already know the satisfaction and the stimulation to be gained from the personal pursuit of knowledge and culture. This is not to say that cab drivers do not watch ETV. They do, but not in the same numbers as those with greater education.

Repeated surveys by Wilbur Schramm of Stanford University indicate that the "regular purposeful viewer of ETV" is more likely to be white collar than blue collar, more likely than the average citizen to read national newsmagazines, good books, and to buy concert and theater tickets as well as to participate actively in the life of his community. Yet, though these people are often the decision-makers in our society, they are only a minority of the public.

Now there are exceptions. Many ETV stations have become aware of their own tendency to serve mainly the already greatly educated. They try to program against this; they present lip-reading lessons for the deaf, baby-care lessons for expectant mothers, informal instruction for foremen in slide-rule and blueprint reading, typing and shorthand for aspiring secretaries, programs on home workshop, cooking, gardening, language lessons, driver training, health and physical fitness, and family budgeting. Such instructional programming doubtless has reached many people who are not receptive to the Bartok quartets, avant garde opera or even documentaries.

Further, one cannot disregard the significant service to the many who, thanks to ETV, have continued their formal education when circumstances have prevented their presence on campus; among the first to receive an Associate in Arts degree from the Chicago TV Junior College was a woman with ten children and a husband who worked nights.

Why don't more people watch ETV? In many communities ETV can only be seen on UHF channels. Those people with VHF-only sets cannot see it. People in the upper-income brackets were quickest to buy all-channel receivers. So a large segment of the public is still without non-commercial TV service. Another factor is inadequate information about programs. I remember when I was with WTTW in Chicago, saying "I ought to cut the program budget in half and use 50 per cent of it to tell people about what we're doing that's good."

Perhaps the most fundamental reason for the lack of substantial viewing of ETV lies in the concept held by most people here in America that TV must be entertaining. They turn to TV for escape not for education or to say it another way, to get their minds off things rather than on. So the impact of ETV, though significant, has not been as substantial as many had hoped. To allow this situation to continue would mean wasting a valuable public resource. Fortunately, the Carnegie Commission and others have seen the folly of this. The importance of public broadcasting has been recognized and the machinery set up to strengthen the efforts of ETV to serve all the people.

With the pledging of public funds however, comes what I consider to be a new obligation: to serve not just a few of the people but all of the people. If this is to be "Public" Television, it should be operated in such a manner as to serve all of our people on what, after all, are public franchises. Already one academician, somewhat more alert than others, has spoken of this. Dr. Ronald Coase said the federal subsidy for television benefits an audience drawn from an extremely narrow segment of the higher income population at the expense of those with lower incomes.

Professor Coase apparently isn't particularly familiar with the proportionate tax dollars collected by the government from the rich as compared to the poor, nor is he aware that the so-called "government subsidy" for ETV will for many years, be a small fraction of the support needed by non-commercial stations. Granting that his warning is insecurely founded, it is still one to be heeded. We must



learn to make our program service something which will be recognized as not only desirable but necessary in every American home. As John Taylor of WTTW has said, "If every person in Chicago could tune in once a week to the ETV station, and find something of interest and value, then the station is doing its job." I agree with Dr. Taylor, and I think we've got to reshape our programming to serve all kinds of homes in our communities. We've got to understand more clearly the real needs of all people at all income and educational levels, produce programs attractive to them and promote these programs. And we've got to give special attention to those viewers who haven't discovered we exist. Finally, we've got to evaluate more carefully the effects of what we do. If we can do this, and I think we must, we will no longer need to worry about adequate financing for public broadcasting because our service will mean so much to so many that it can never be put in jeopardy by a few.

But how do we go about doing this? It's pretty hard to be specific. We could do more instructional programs, but many of those subjects don't necessarily effect the people emotionally. We're trying something else: WHA-TV, Madison and WNBS-TV, Milwaukee, are collaborating on a substantial project—to tell the people of Wisconsin outside of Milwaukee's inner core what it's like to live inside. It's costing \$30,000 for one program, which will be tied into discussion groups with study materials. When we present this program we're going to have to say something about the Milwaukee riots, but there are many people in Wisconsin who prefer not to think about them. If we list the program in newspaper logs and tell readers what will be on it, many of them will be scared off. In a way, I suppose, we're making it hard for people to watch.

Nevertheless, sometimes we strike a spark. In the early days of TV, I recall receiving letters from viewers saying, "I know that the quality of your kinescope recordings is very bad, but I still watch because I think the program is important." People who write such letters have motivation. But we've got to make it less difficult for others to look at ETV. We've got to have better program formats, better writing, better performers, and better technical work. We've also got to improve the signals of many ETV stations which now operate with limited power.

Finally, I think we must find out what people are interested in and what's bothering them. Some would suggest that all our programs be about money and sex, but we can't just adopt the philos-

ophy of giving the audience what it wants. Obviously the dual problems of understanding the audience and its needs while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the station and its obligation to prod and goad the viewer into opening himself up to a more stimulating kind of TV experience are very complex.

I'm not suggesting any real answers. I'm really posing the questions to which ETV must address itself. Perhaps we defeat ourselves because we program full schedules. When a symphony orchestra is given a certain amount of money it presents a certain number of concerts with that money. We program the entire day. Maybe we'd do better to be on the air from eight to nine every night and to program it superbly as Newt Minow has suggested. Now I know I'm defeating my own position here, because with one hour in the evening we can't reach the people with sufficient significant material. Consequently we find ourselves in a quandary. These questions are, however, more important in the long view than the immediate financial concerns. Once we have answered them, the medium will be performing the type of service that will guarantee its welfare.

## *DISCUSSION*

### **MR. LAND**

Must Public Television forever remain content with serving "minorities," however you may wish to describe them? Dick Doan raises the question when he says, "Let's do something to move people off their duffs." Newton Minow says: "Let's do some great new projects." Yet everyone seems to agree that no matter what one does, the actual audience is a small one. Is this a necessary state of affairs? If it is, is this good or bad?

### **MR. LAURENT**

Whatever we call "public opinion" in this country, it is created—on non-pocketbook issues—by a very small per centage of the population. The general scale is somewhere between two and five per cent, and this small per centage of the population constitutes the support ETV has had, whether it has looked at the programs or not. ETV may decide, in its own wisdom and experience, that it is to its own best interest to continue to have that kind of audience, and have it fervently in its favor, which is, really, what gave ETV a Public Television role in the first place. There is no massive widespread support. Maybe there is never going to be. I suspect that ETV must somehow hold the good will of the opinion-making

minority while finding ways to branch out and increase its impact in other areas.

**MR. RICE**

If we can move that five per cent, and I know KQED can, then maybe it becomes the short cut to accomplishing everything else. If we move the opinion makers, which is what we've done with much of our local public affairs programming, then we've changed the attitude of the community. I am now convinced, however, that there is an audience of 30 to 40 per cent, many of them college graduates to whom any form of educational television is anathema. They say "I bought my set for entertainment"—and entertainment means being a vegetable. Well, I don't see any point in our putting one per cent of social action or education or culture in with 99 per cent junk in order to get them.

We have tried desperately, in many ways, to get this 35 per cent. We can get them with an occasional sports program. But this audience is faithless. I think that a third of it is escapist. We tried jazz. We can get them if we carry *The Jefferson Airplane*, but they'll leave when it's finished. Once I was convinced that the corner grocery man would watch *Advertising for the Small Business*, despite *I Love Lucy* or anything else. Well, he won't. I was convinced the foreman would watch if he had a chance to become a superforeman by education. He won't. Still, ETV has sold 120,000 guitar books.

**MR. ROE**

I think we can agree that ETV, by definition, must be minority programming forever. I'm not sure that is necessarily bad. I do not feel that much is accomplished if 25,000 or 100,000 books are sold, because the real challenge hasn't been met. I think if TV put test patterns into two-and-a-quarter million homes, ten thousand people would watch them. You have to measure against potential, not results. When I was with ABC, we had a station manager who was impressed because every year his figures beat last year's figures. What he never understood and doesn't today—even though he lost his job—is that his performance never began to look good when measured against his potential. I am suggesting, Jon, that the sale of those guitar books isn't a fair measure of your potential.

**MR. RICE**

Still, I think we are providing some sort of service if there are 100,000 people who play guitars because of an ETV course offering.

MR. DOAN

There seems to be general agreement that you can't really reach the people who need to be reached. Maybe the real problem is how to reach the people who don't watch ETV.

MR. ROBERTSON

Let's say we haven't gotten to them—yet. I don't think it's fair to cite the accomplishment of the present day as final. We're still facing problems that we may not know how to deal with for another ten or twenty-five years. The fact that we haven't found the combination to some of these things yet doesn't mean we never will.

MR. KOBIN

The word "potential" is important. It is unfair to speak of the Public Television audience today in fixed terms. If there are surveys which show that the audience is much smaller than most of us wish it were today, there are also studies which show that in the past few years it has increased at an astonishing rate. If it continues to increase—and it may not, of course—then we are not talking at all about the minority audience of the well-educated.

When we talk about audiences, it seems to me that we consider only two extremes—either "the mass audience" or a tiny percentage of it. In between, I think, there is a potentially very large audience, not a great mass audience, but a very large group which will accept the different kinds of offerings we are talking about. That's the group we have to get to, in one way or another. It may simply be the group which now watches cultural and public affairs broadcasting on the commercial networks. We are not getting to them either. If *CBS Reports* gets five or seven per cent that is still well above the audience total for many of our offerings. We still are not reaching enough of that commercial audience which is now oriented toward the kind of programming which really is the basis of our schedules.

MR. DOAN

But haven't they tried? I think we all know about the full-page ads that PBL took in the news-magazines, in the *New York Times* and in other papers. Somebody told me that they spent more money on the ads for the premiere of PBL than Channel 13 spends in a year on its entire public information. Despite this, they didn't get a rating, did they? Maybe it demonstrates that no amount of money

spent on promotion will make people get up and turn their sets to something as fundamentally serious as PBL. I would agree that PBL is creating more talk within the industry than anything that educational TV has done so far, but I don't know how much interest it has created outside of the industry. Is it really being talked about?

**MR. RICE**

All I can go by is the mail-pull, which is not a very good indicator. We have received more of what you would call positive mail on the first three or four PBL shows than I've gotten on anything in the last 15 years.

**MR. ROBERTSON**

This is consistent with our experience. There were some 75 or 80 calls immediately following the first program and they were overwhelmingly favorable. There's been a great deal of talk about it on campus, in the legislature, and in the state offices. Perhaps this is the reaction of some of the people who have been watching Channel 21 in Madison for a long time and haven't found anything terribly exciting before. Now perhaps they are, and they are talking about it. I'm not sure, however, that these are new viewers.

**MR. RICE**

One strain ran through the mail—the 100 to 120 letters we received—"I had lost the television habit. The existence of this series and what I expect from it, has helped me come back." The correspondents don't say they're happy or unhappy with it, but at least it has brought them back to spending Sunday night with the television set.

**MR. DOAN**

The thing that concerns me most is the need for Public Television to arouse a great ground swell of public support. I don't see the Citizens Committee doing much yet. I wonder how much attention is being given to devices for creating this kind of public enthusiasm so that it will reach Capitol Hill. If you spend a wad of money opening up PBL and get only a one rating, there must be a tremendous amount of apathy.

**MR. MINOW**

Why couldn't some heavy audience-pullers like the David Susskind or Bill Buckley programs be done by NET or one of their stations? What's so magic about them?

**MR. KOBIN**

We have never deliberately tried to build a personality or a show around a personality. It may be a mistake. But we just haven't. In the public affairs department, we try to deal with issues. We go after the best qualified people. For example, we do a regular program with the *New York Times*. I don't hold it up as parallel with the shows you cite, but it's the kind of program that we feel we ought to do.

Certainly, a personality show attracts attention, but I guess it depends on what you really want to do. If your primary objective is to attract attention, and entertain, then I think such an approach is a fine thing. I question whether Susskind's or Buckley's show is more important than what we are trying to do in the public affairs department simply because they reach more people. I would rather not be locked into having one kind of show every week. In the two-and-a-half hours that we have to program they would undoubtedly eliminate other things.

**MR. RICE**

The real answer is not the format or anything else. It's the magic of the personalities themselves. When I came to educational television, Frank Baxter was just doing his first Shakespeare Series, and in that original Shakespeare series, he was absolutely magnificent. Julia Childs has it, Susskind, in a funny way, has it. Buckley has it.

**MR. MINOW**

I think NET ought to pick someone who has the same whatever-it-is, and build around him.

**MR. KOBIN**

In all honesty, I don't quite know what to do about it. Documentaries certainly don't build personalities.

**MR. RICE**

The writers and the best documentary directors want to get more and more away from any narration.

**MR. DOAN**

But what are you trying to do? Are you trying to please an extremely sophisticated elite or are you trying to reach a larger audience?

**MR. ROBERTSON**

I think ETV stations try to find programs that manage to attract people to their channel who wouldn't otherwise tune to it. But even though Gimbels in Milwaukee, for instance, has certain things it advertises heavily, if it sold only those things, it would be out of business.

**MR. RICE**

I'd be curious if Jim Robertson would agree with me when I say I would rather move 5,000 people a yard than 100,000 people an inch. When I make my judgements, my purpose is to move them to think, to take up politics, to renew themselves with some new dedication.

**MR. ROBERTSON**

I would argue that many of the 5,000 people you are moving a yard are the people probably least in need of being moved.

**MR. MINOW**

I am still asking, why can't we do both? Isn't this really what NET's role should be?

**MR. RICE**

If I had a choice between Susskind and *NET Journal*, I would take the *NET Journal*, on that basis.

**MR. MINOW**

Perhaps you could have both.

**MR. KOBIN**

I think if we made the attraction of a large audience the primary goal for any series, we could do it. If we decided that we wanted a tremendous audience, we would have to be able to rationalize the position that this belongs on Public Television. But maybe we should attempt to get such large audiences.

**MR. MINOW**

I am concerned about the feeling that there is some inconsistency between the concepts of a "large audience" and *Public Television*. Let me give you an example. In Canada last year I watched what

I am told is the longest running public affairs program on Canadian television. It has a very large audience. It's called *Front Page News*. The program is a mixture of *What's My Line* and *Meet The Press*. They have a regular three-man panel made up mostly of newspaper writers or television personalities. A mystery guest comes out and stands behind the panel. The panel members are given a series of hints, and they have to guess within a three-minute period who the guest is. Then the guest is interviewed by the panel on public issues in a *Meet the Press* format. There are two such guests each week. That little twist, the mystery flavor at the beginning, has a great deal to do, I think, with the fact that the program has such a large audience. It is highly controversial. The panelists are people who ask very searching, probing questions. That program, it seems to me, combines within it a strong sense of public affairs and responsibility and just enough entertainment value to attract a lot larger audience than it otherwise would. Now, is that inconsistent with our standards of public broadcasting? I don't think it is, although it is admittedly gimmicky.

**MR. LAND**

But doesn't this come right back, finally, to the question of purpose? What is really wrong with putting some fun into learning? There seems to be built into the program philosophy at NET an almost theoretical opposition to such an approach. Is that the case?

**MR. KOBIN**

No. I think our reluctance is based largely on the fact that it's so difficult to do. The shortage of funds makes it unlikely that we would take a flier on something like that because it would mean knocking out maybe 25 per cent of the schedule of either department to do it. But maybe that's what we've got to do. Perhaps it is worth doing, though, because of the possible increase in audience.

**MR. ROE**

I'd like to suggest another important element that is frequently missing in ETV. It is the element of "being human." You want *human beings* on the screen, who make you feel comfortable. Why, instead of a pompous station identification, don't you run jingles? I think it would be fun. I'd let the audience know that people in ETV perspire and worry and giggle and laugh—that they are not just beautiful execution, but human. I think one of the biggest problems is that ETV takes itself too seriously.



In Chicago, there is a beautiful girl named Suzy Falk, who is very social, very wealthy, and who happens to have a marvelous television personality. She has a beautiful voice, wonderful stage presence, and warmth. If I ran the ETV station in Chicago, I would have her coming on in miniskirts to give the station identification. Instead, the station pompously announces that we will now have a three hour such-and-such. Usually, the announcer is either ponderous or falling asleep. There is no warmth or love in it. If we can get humor, fine. But first, let's just be human.

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SEVAREID: Why do you say this so-called Negro revolution is a fraud in this country?

HOFFER: The Negro revolution was used as an instrument by the Negro middle class, to fulfil its own desires. The leaders of the Negro revolution have no faith in the Negro masses, no concern for them. Who the hell needed desegregation except the Negro middle class, who had a boy they wanted to put in a special school? The Negro middle class will now have to integrate itself with the Negro masses, if the Negro is going to attain anything. You ask any longshoreman what a Negro leader should do and he'll tell you. What a Negro leader should do is to dovetail the Negro's difficulties into opportunities for growth. You have the Negro slums, right? You have the Negro unemployed. Now what a Negro leader has to do is to train these Negro unemployed into skilled carpenters, masons, plasterers, plumbers, painters. He has to master the art of slum renovation. You organize these Negro workers into a solid black union. And then you renovate the slums. And after you don't worry who owns the slums. You just go ahead and turn it into a garden. And after you have renovated the slums, you challenge the discriminating white unions to open up or get wiped out. This is the way you get power.

—From *Eric Hoffer: The Passionate State of Mind*, CBS-TV September 19, 1967

# NATIONAL OR LOCAL POWER?

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WILLIAM H. KOBIN, JONATHAN RICE

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## WILLIAM H. KOBIN

My priorities for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are these—permanent long-lines interconnection, children's programming, strengthening local stations, and encouragement of new creative artists and people who work in the field of TV.

It's not enough to have the ETV stations interconnected one night of the week for the Public Broadcasting Laboratory, though funds are sometimes also made available for a handful of additional national broadcasts during the year. Funds are desperately needed for coverage and communications as well as for program distribution. This can't be done by NET which, at present, provides a network in regular operation two hours one night during the week.

Public TV should become the primary informational and cultural broadcasting resource for the country. Only interconnection would make this possible. Then programs could be prepared which interpret and analyse important events—key legislation, Supreme Court decisions, Congressional hearings, UN activities, seminars and symposia—while those events have the attention of the American people. Interconnection would link people in distant locations whose views would add to our understanding of issues. It would permit the telecasting of premieres of important cultural events as well as operas, plays, symphonies and summer festivals. Network lines would also make it possible to present a nightly program of news interpretation and analysis which would go beyond the news presented on commercial networks—to enrich and supplement it.

These network lines would be used not only for live coverage and background programs on breaking events, but also for the distribution of programs which would become outdated if they were sent

to stations by your current conventional methods. Taping the program and duplication in our Ann Arbor, Michigan, as we do now, and distribution to all our stations, is a very cumbersome, time-consuming process. On a number of occasions the program that we have recorded, for one reason or another, has become partially outdated, by the time it reached the air. I'll never forget the time we did a program on South Viet Nam, where we referred to a premier in South Viet Nam who was no longer premier by the night the program was supposed to go on the air. We had to notify all stations to edit the tape before they put it on the air that night. The same thing happened in a year-end program about the Soviet Union. The premier of the Soviet Union made a major policy speech the day before telecasting which was not mentioned in the program. When Clark Kerr resigned from the University of California we were working on a documentary, which KQED had been making for us, that included an exclusive interview with Clark Kerr. The statement was very meaningful in terms of what was happening that specific day, but we could not get it on the air for two weeks.

Similarly, we wanted to do interpretive programs when the United States sent troops into the Dominican Republic. The commercial networks did a superb job of battle coverage, but everybody was confused about why we were there. We wanted to help shed some light on our intervention. And the same problem occurred in the Indian-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir. We also find a sad lack of interpretation after major policy speeches made by the President or the Secretary of State. Its the timing of programming of this kind that, I think, is critical. As James Reston has said, "The time to talk to the American people is when they're listening." I don't think there is any question about that.

Special program units will have to be established for programming of this kind. This is going to be another responsibility of the corporation. It should also think in terms of creating events, not simply covering them. Why shouldn't Public Television create and cover a major national or international symposium on foreign policy, or a national symposium on the problems of the cities? I think that in this area we as a network, the stations, and the Corporation have an overriding responsibility to try to create a dialogue, to communicate and enlighten the public about the critical problems that are going to confront us in coming years. Everyone is very aware that this summer is going to bring massive turmoil. Television on a national basis really has a responsibility to become

involved in focusing the attention of the people and the authorities on these problems.

Finally, the network would provide the means for attracting substantially larger numbers of viewers to certain programs, by broadcasting them all over the country simultaneously and using national promotion to notify the viewing public that they are going to be on the air. Rarely do non-commercial television programs receive attention from national services in the form of such items as AP and UPI feature syndicates in the national news-magazines, because programs appear at different times in different areas. Obviously, the programs have to rate attention and approval on their own, but we've learned painfully that national publicity and promotion are important elements in getting an audience.

It is one thing to say that a great program is going to be on the air, but it is quite another matter simply to try to let a great many people know that it is going to be on. CBS reportedly spent \$800,000 publicizing "Death of a Salesman." Entire NET promotion budget for 1967 was 80 thousand dollars. It was necessary to pick and choose very carefully that tiny per centage of problems—out over 130—which were to be promoted. I think this may help to make the Public Broadcasting Corporation aware of the absolute necessity that expenditures be made in this area.

In advancing this rationale for a strong national network, I think it should be made clear I'm not talking about the traditional kind of network, where network headquarters dictates what the stations are going to put on the air and when they're going to put it on the air. I am talking about a co-operative arrangement, where representatives from Public Television stations throughout the country—working with NET and elected representatives—would plan the co-operative use of an interconnection system in which, ultimately, public broadcasters from local, regional and national program sources would allocate network line time to those who are interested in using those lines. Let me turn now to children's programming where the need is self evident. The affiliates of NET have felt this so strongly that for the past two years a large number of them have made voluntary contributions from their own meager budgets for the acquisition and production by NET of additional children's programming. Only through a tremendously increased outside programming can we even begin to fill this need. A recent Nielsen survey shows that during the peak viewing months of November and December, children under six years old average 54 hours of

television a week. Children between six and eleven watch it 52 hours a week, and young people between 12 and 17 watch television 48 hours weekly. This all compares with a national average of 42 hours a week.

This viewing averages out to seven and eight hours a day, so it is obvious that we need many new daily series of programs for children in all of these age groups—from the pre-school child whose mental development must be stimulated very early to the teenager, who has very special needs and requirements, concerns, which necessitate special programming for him. If the Public Broadcasting Corporation put every penny at its disposal in the next year into the creation of new programs and series for America's children and young people, it probably would be able only to staff one children's production unit to prepare and produce one year-long daily series for a single age group. I would judge there is a need for at least five such series on a continuing basis.

Further, in providing children's programming, Public Television must be certain to concern itself with the need to broaden the experience of both the more fortunate middle-class child and the children of poverty. The gulf between the earliest development of these two groups is, of course, wide. Television can be used effectively to help close that gulf. Public Television broadcasters are eager to begin the job of enriching the inhome experience of the disadvantaged and of making the more fortunate child aware of people and ways of life which differ from his own. It should be one of the primary responsibilities of the Corporation to provide ammunition for this battle.

I would also like to see the creation of a Children's News Department which would broadcast—on a daily basis—a national network news program of interest to older children. Such a series would serve to interest young people in news as a continuing story and lead them, hopefully, to a deeper understanding of, and involvement in, the public affairs of their time.

My third priority is to enrich our current services as well as encourage the development of new creative artists and performers. In the fall of 1966, NET began the presentation of a weekly drama series, *NET Playhouse*, and a weekly public affairs series, *NET Journal*. And neither the affiliates nor we are able to produce nearly the quantity of programs needed to fill those strips with quality programming each week. In 1967, for example, NET and its affiliates produced only eight dramas for the *NET Playhouse* series.

Programs we import from abroad form the larger per centage of the Playhouse strip.

Last, but far from least, we must strengthen local stations. If Public Television in the United States is to achieve its full potential, strong local stations and a strong national network will be essential and interdependent. The twin needs for network capability and effective local stations which serve their communities and regions are inextricably inter-related. The costs of equipping and staffing a television station are astronomical. Only with greatly increased funding on a national scale will large numbers of Public Television stations in America develop the necessary capability and have the funds to exercise that capability. There are, of course, a number of superb Public Television stations in existence today. But not one of them has the funds to buy all the needed equipment; pay all personnel adequate, competitive salaries; produce more than a fraction of the programs necessary to serve the community adequately; promote extensively their outstanding programs. And the less affluent stations simply battle to stay in existence.

## *DISCUSSION*

**MR. ROE**

Are you suggesting that public broadcasting revenues be used primarily for national production, and that perhaps the emphasis in the Carnegie Report on local ETV was unwarranted? Doesn't your argument suggest that the emphasis on local ETV serves little purpose beyond that of assuaging psyches, and that the real, effective production will come out of national ETV resources?

**MR. KOBIN**

No. I don't mean to imply that at all. I think that strengthening local stations is very important.

**MR. ROE**

But aren't you implying that certain important production areas be served primarily by a national organization?

**MR. KOBIN**

No. I think that it's absolutely essential that both the network and the ETV stations be as strong as possible. They are so inter-related that they cannot be separated. I don't think there can be a viable Public TV system if its going to be dominated by a national

center, or by 200 non-commercial stations which have no network relationship. The two are not mutually exclusive. They've got to live together, and cannot be separated.

**MR. ROE**

One last question: Can the programs for children and those which feature the creative artists be successfully produced by local stations?

**MR. KOBIN**

Some are being produced by local stations right now. I think they can be produced by both the network and the local station. But to continue, the relationship between NET and the Lincoln Center illustrates the kind of thinking I hope will permeate the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Lincoln Center, in association with NET, provides commissions to creative artists to create works especially for TV. These works are then produced by NET. So far, two programs have been produced based on such commissions. Among the artists involved in these programs were choreographers Anna Sokolow and John Butler, composer Marck Bucci, and playwright Frank Gilroy. Agnes DeMille, Leon Kirchner and Roy Harris have been given subsequent commissions. The Corporation also will have an obligation to encourage the production and presentation of classics and contemporary works which have been performed elsewhere. I hope that through the years Public TV will build a library of outstanding performances in all the arts. The desire to do this has existed for many years. Only the means have been missing. Long before commercial TV produced "Death of a Salesman" and "The Crucible" we tried to buy the rights but could not afford them. I'd like to see a drama series funded too—one which would deal specifically with contemporary problems. I'm thinking particularly of a suggestion that Newton Minow has been making for some time—a major drama series about important events in American history. To return to strengthening the stations, I think that money should be pumped into ETV outlets in those cities which have important companies in drama, opera, and ballet. The stations and NET have just begun to scratch the surface in programming of that kind.

## JONATHAN C. RICE

I don't know whether my suggestion is politically or economically feasible, but I do think it may be the only practical way to achieve a major breakthrough in program distribution so that the stations can get enough of the good programming they need to realize the potential of Public Television. To begin with, let us say the Corporation for Public Broadcasting has the \$20 million requested by the President for the next fiscal year. I would suggest that \$5 million go to NET, \$5 million to interconnection, and \$10 million to the stations for the experiment I am recommending. Or perhaps NET ought to get \$7 million and the experiment \$7 million, leaving \$6 million for interconnection.

Under this plan, a group of selected stations—six, eight, or ten—would be given a large block of money, perhaps a million dollars a year each, for three consecutive years. Of this total, \$900,000 would be put into local program development and production. Ten per cent would be committed to the establishment of a National Station Unit. The sole job of this Unit would be to keep abreast of programming from its home station and other stations in the region, select that part of the programming that had usefulness elsewhere, adapt it for national distribution, and feed it on the line for other stations to screen and use at will. The Unit would consist of a producer and a small film team. They would edit the local material, put in new intros and closings, and incorporate whatever commentary and other changes were necessary in order to make local material useful and understandable in other areas.

The selected programs and insert materials would be fed to all interconnected ETV stations, including the six to ten originating stations, following a schedule to be determined by someone housed at NET or ETS. Frequency of such transmissions would depend on both timeliness and quantity of the offerings. One person at each station would be responsible for screening and recommendations. Each station could select for broadcast those programs which meet its own specific needs. Each would have available the appropriate productions of six to nine stations, all of which would be producing significant and innovative programs. This would mean an immediate substantial increase in the amount of valuable programming available to every station. At a minimum, KQED produces 50 hours of local material a year which would be valuable to others.



What kind of programming would be involved? Let's take the field of community and public affairs, for example. My single greatest ambition is to have our station known in San Francisco as "the station where the action is." The urban situation is growing more critical by the moment. At KQED we believe that Public Television offers the best opportunity for an urban area to maintain some semblance of cohesiveness through establishment of a kind of old-town-meeting feeling in the community. We are building toward the point where, if anything unusual or surprising happens, the audience expects to turn to KQED to see what is going on, and what it means.

You will recall, I am sure, the free speech movement at the University of California, Berkeley. It was the most confusing situation that you can imagine. We did a three-hour program involving five or six panels. The panels kept changing and intermingling; there were students, administrators, faculty, community leaders, newsmen. The program had such impact we were forced to run the entire three hours twice, two days later. Prints went to colleges and universities all over the nation. The Regents looked at it, the state legislature looked at it. We are sure it helped calm things down at UC, Berkeley. Had we had the National Unit in operation at that time, we could have fed an edited version of the material to other stations immediately, and the rest of the country could have had the timely benefit of that major local effort which affected the course of higher education throughout the entire country.

But it was when a similar situation at San Francisco State College exploded into a near-riot that KQED did the kind of thing I feel it was born to do—and that it could do more of, to everyone's benefit, if it had the funds. Student and off-campus radicals were in an uproar, and in the ensuing hassle a door was broken, some damage was done at the college book store, and there were many threats and some fighting. The president of the college, John Summerskill, did not call for the help of uniformed police. KQED and KCET in Los Angeles followed up the entire controversy with full coverage totalling nearly 25 hours, including remote pick-ups of two key hearings. Press accounts, in the opinion of many, were limited and not always impartial. Even the fact that Summerskill was acting under police advice was not made clear at first. But on Public Television in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento virtually everyone involved, from politicians to police to students, was on the screens telling his own story. That the coverage affected the

outcome of the situation is frankly admitted by many, including Summerskill himself, for major critics across the state reversed themselves, and Summerskill's actions won official approval from those who had at first condemned him.

Unfortunately, the Los Angeles and San Francisco public affairs staffs were totally occupied arranging for this local coverage. Had there been a national representative at either station, the entire country could have been fed a succession of highly dramatic programs pertinent and of national news value.

There are several things scheduled right now by KQED which could be of interest to other stations. For example, this week Secretary of State Dean Rusk is making a speech in our area in which he may be challenged on his reaction to Vietnam peace feelers. We do not know how significant the event will be. We plan to broadcast the speech and question-and-answer period, but it is not available to anyone except viewers in San Francisco and Sacramento. However, under the National Unit plan it could be on the line by 9:30 that night for other stations to monitor and use if they want to.

This coming weekend there is a major Democratic Convention in Fresno. We looked into coverage possibilities with Los Angeles. The problem is that it will cost at least \$7,000. We'd love to cover it. There's a chance, even if not great, of a confrontation between Vice President Humphrey and Senator Eugene McCarthy. This, too, could be made available under the plan proposed.

Similarly, interview programs such as the series with Eric Hoffer, our cultural efforts—concerts, dramatic productions, and other events—could be fed into the system. And we would love to have the important corresponding material fed back from the other local centers. Obviously, the greatest cultural and educational potentials are in the major cities. It follows that their stations are the ones most likely to provide quality programs. In addition, there are important regional differences in this country. These should be represented in our television schedule. One of the reasons I don't want NET to do everything is that Bill Kobin can't help being New York-oriented, and I want material that may be done from a New England or Southern point of view.

The advantage of this system to me is that it gives me, as a program manager, a wide choice of programming from outside, permitting me to use what I think will best serve our community. Moreover, it eliminates one of the problems involved in applying for programming grants. KQED's general manager, Jim Day, and

I are both opposed basically to this whole business of applying for such grants. The danger exists that if I have to write a specific proposal to the Corporation for every program it is going to finance, I am automatically going to tailor the proposal to meet its biases and political needs. Now the simple truth is that nobody in his right mind would buy the proposals for all of the things we want to do. Many are far from standard. But when the experiments work—and they do here with reasonable regularity—then we have a product that anyone would like to use. The approach I have suggested means that the money is provided in advance, freeing each station to do the kind of programming it feels should be done, rather than the kind it thinks would be acceptable to the Corporation. The entire plan would thus fulfill a major goal of the Carnegie Commission report by providing a highly varied selection of quality programs to all stations for use on a local option basis.

The station would have far more money than it has ever had for programming. My present budget for out-of-pocket expenses over and above normal salary and operations cost is something like \$1,000 a week—probably less. This has to account for talent, overtime, film stock, a guard for a truck if it has to be out overnight, and any expense that isn't included in normal below-the-line costs. One remote can eat up two or three weeks of budget. As a result, I spend a good deal of time—too much—looking for underwriting support of programs. The \$900,000 would enable KQED to upgrade both our production capability and our staff and thus improve our operation enormously. We are today far better off in those respects than we were a few years back, but we still have a long way to go before we develop the full programming resources that are there to be developed in the San Francisco Bay Area. The same is true in other cities. These funds mentioned would go a long way toward enabling us to tap the richest that are there—and for the benefit of the entire nation.

#### *COMMENT: MR. ROBERTSON*

There is no need to elaborate on the need of any local station for outside programming sources, and obviously, the smaller the community the more important the need. I do not mean to say, of course, that we ought to envision local stations that produce no local programs of their own, however. The need was, I think, inherent in the Carnegie Commission report. It is part, too, of what

Newton Minow has argued for in the past—when he urged passage of all-channel set legislation, the purpose of which is to increase the number of these stations so that viewers may have wider choices. The individual station needs to have a wide choice of *sources* of programming—his own station, NET, and other stations.

To some degree, what Jonathan Rice is proposing is essentially a far stronger version of what has already been done and is actually now being done on a very modest scale. I am referring to the ETS Program Service. ETS is the Educational Television Station Division of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters. About two years ago, it established a central clearing house for the exchange of locally produced programs. The producing station gets no dollars. It simply contributes its programs to the pool. Tapes are made of them and offered to other stations. A committee of program managers looks at the programs and selects those which, with no production enhancement, can be used by other stations.

One of the weaknesses of the system, of course, is the possibility that mediocrity will be distributed simply because it is all that is available. I am not saying that the programs are mostly mediocre. They have been very useful and are a step in the right direction. The ETS experience certainly does demonstrate that the diversity secured in this way—the different points of view on similar subjects, the new personalities that appear on the station screens, the different ways of producing the same kinds of things—brings a richness to the program fare of any single station not possible through a single approach.

One of the difficulties, of course, is that none of the contributing stations have even the kind of extra budgets that Jon has talked about—the \$40,000 to 50,000 a year for additional expenses. Most of them have not been able to build up necessary staff and facilities as KQED has. Nor have they had the opportunity to benefit from the experience of doing contract production for NET. Moreover, there is a basic problem built into the present system of distribution. The ETS Program Service is built on the “bycycling” of tapes, so there is the problem of finding dollars for tape duplication. Nevertheless, it represents a beginning. However modest, the ETS Program Service suggests that Jon’s idea is fundamentally valid. If you had a system of immediate program availability, rather than the present practice involving tape delays of several months, many timely programs produced locally would be found suitable for use by other stations.

The experience of KCET Los Angeles, indicates what might be possible if Jon's plan were to be adopted on a national scale. About a year or so after it went on the air, KCET received a half-million dollar grant from the Ford Foundation for a three year project. It was to be used for the very purpose Jon has talked of—to develop programming that could find distribution beyond the local area. As a result, this UHF station has grown much more rapidly than it would have if it had to rely solely on its own basic salary and expense budget, or the good will of people who were willing to work for nothing.

The project has made possible such a program as *R&D Review*, a report on technical developments in the aero-space and electronic industries. In Los Angeles, of course, these industries are important. The program, though, has proved equally interesting to the electronic complex around Boston, in Houston, and in other places where these industries are substantial. Other backing has been found to take the place of the Ford Foundation grant, which has run out, and the program continues to be seen on from ten to fifteen stations. Another program made possible by the Foundation dollars was *Symposium* an off-beat type of film appreciation show growing out of the motion picture industry. The funds also enabled the UCLA theatre group to produce an experimental TV drama which NET purchased for national distribution.

I cite this as a working example, albeit, a small one, to demonstrate the importance of Jon's suggestion. The precise mathematical relationships—that is, how much of the million should go for this national purpose, is not the most important question. What is important, is that here is one solution to a problem with which many of us in educational broadcasting have been struggling for a long time. I think that a great many people will come to see its immense value, and that the proposal will be warmly received by most of the stations.

## *PTV AND THE LIBERAL IDEA — A DISSENT*

Nowhere has the apparent danger of Lord Acton's statement that power corrupts come to mean more than in the public broadcasting sector of our industry. At each meeting of "educational" or "public" broadcasters the air is filled with pious promises of "freedom and participation" for all of the affiliated stations in much the same vein that a congressman campaigning for reelection will "promise 'em anything, but give them a whiff of Arpege"—or fish for sale as the case may be. The Public Television stations themselves also seem locked in to their own concepts of what their audience should see and hear, and all too frequently this has become a stereotype as well.

Public Television broadcasters who suddenly find themselves with unlimited programming power, if not unlimited funds and skill, have decided that "what's good for General Bullmoose," etc. Public Television at this point has developed an Establishment, and the Establishment has a tendency to want to call the shots. The fastest way for PTV to develop acute hardening of the arteries is to go always to the same people and the same places for ideas. The PTV Establishment has opted for the Liberal approach and has built around it a cult of those who keep reiterating the Liberal Message to our society. This Establishment has succeeded in developing an audience which, like lovers of the *Dean Martin Show*, is seeing and hearing what it wants to hear and applauds loudly.

Where does that leave PTV? We hammer at the big issues of the day, but in so doing we perhaps hammer them into the ground. We have engaged the Liberal mind without reaching the conservative or, for the most part, the large segment of "non-thinkers" who may still be won. The PTV group is full of non-humor, too. The ability to accept humor as just such and seek to put it before an audience is rejected, perhaps on the basis that the PTV audience doesn't want humor.

This humorless, incessant dinning of The Liberal Idea may satisfy the psyche of an ivory-towered, double-domed intellectual who is not in touch with American television viewers, but is it not possible that some time and effort should be taken to find out what the thinking viewer is *really* thinking. Is it possible that the Liberal, too, might profit from occasionally having his mind blown free of the usual, warm friendly concepts which are easily at hand in the *New Republic*, *Nation* and *Saturday Review* on a regular basis—even to the extent of having his thinking abraded a bit by more conservative and irritating ideas which might hold the germ of solutions to some of America's huge social problems?

Please do not misunderstand. It is with pleasure that I see PTV in full cry after dishonest credit practices, the terror and horror of the Black Ghetto, the injustice of prejudice, and the folly of conservatism for conservatism's sake. But I think there is an unparalleled opportunity waiting for the PTV programmer who is ready to blow the Public Liberal Mind. We should engage the Conservative of our time, find out what he is thinking and how he got that way. Take a walk down the conservative path to 19th Century Fox and enjoy an exploration of what seizes and holds so many Americans who voted for Goldwater or who believe in the sanctity of prejudice and strict interpretation of the Constitution. Let's do it not through the mouthpieces of reaction like Hargis or Fred Schwarz. Instead let's slip through the Looking Glass and see what's on the other side. It seems likely that everything we find may not be popular with our audience, but we may also find that we have some audience we didn't have before.

One last word—I am *serious* about *humor*. PTV has been too serious for too many years. If we don't find our own formula for humor, sooner or later we shall be so tired that we won't even watch ourselves.

Edward L. Morris

— — *A paper prepared  
for the Conference at  
Racine*

# THE SEARCH FOR TALENT

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ROGER ENGLANDER, RICHARD M. PACK,  
PETER COTT

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## *ROGER ENGLANDER*

Let me cite one example of what PTV can accomplish in assuring the steady and continuing development of new talent while also encouraging established performers and groups to create for the medium. An early PBL Show included a segment devoted to the Paul Taylor Dance Company. It was a sponsor audition for this company, whose New York season consisted of only nine performances. Largely as a result of the exposure on television, all nine performances were sold out. In addition, money to help finance the season was donated. It wasn't a great deal—something over a thousand dollars—but that is still quite significant.

This led me to thoughts about what PTV can possibly do in exposing such groups as the Paul Taylor Dance Company, which is a very very small group, or similarly exposing a small opera company, a chamber music group, or whatever, and thereby building live audiences for it. Those groups which are hard pressed for funds can then come back with renewed financial strength and vigor, and perform more on television, enlarging their audiences and giving back to them the new work which their renewed strength has made possible.

Public Television should not only broaden out into more areas in the performing arts, but also establish performing arts institutions expressly for its own needs. These institutions should be small in nature, and yet be able to produce a certain number of hours for a PTV network. Certainly such programming should not come from the great entertainment centers only. I am fascinated, for example, by such grassroot projects as the Minneapolis Repertory Theater and the Utah Modern Dance Group.

Before there was such a thing as the idea of "Public" Television,



I argued that the commercial networks had an obligation to broadcast the performing arts programs—music, the dance, opera, theater, and so forth, as against “cultural programs.” Then I began to see why—essentially—they can’t. The commercial networks have to deal in terms of immediacy. The audience for our CBS-TV young people’s concerts has grown every year, but still it’s nothing comparable to the audiences of programs which pay the bills and which please the stockholders. The commercial network can not wait for its audience to really build. The ratings that are on the executive’s desk the next morning are far more important than those that will be there five years from now. So this is an area that Public Television must serve. When CBS immediately offered a million dollars to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, they were in effect saying, “Please take these kinds of programs away from us—the symphonic orchestras, the operas, the dance groups. Here’s the money to do it with. We’d like to get away from it.”

Perhaps one of the delaying factors in getting support for such development is the mistaken assumption that building such performing arts institutions must be extremely expensive. Obviously, such ventures as the NBC-TV Opera Theater were high in cost, but others need not be. Consider an organization known as The American Dance Theatre, which had a very short life and is still waiting to be “discovered” again. All of the major choreographers except Martha Graham is waiting to go on to television—to create works specifically for the tube and not for the stage. It won’t take more than a million dollars to develop such a group to full TV potential, and if enough programming could come out of such an organization it would be worth the investment.

What other kinds of projects might be in the offing, awaiting PTV support? Here are some possibilities. During the past summer I developed a project which has to do with creating musical works for television. Channel 13 in New York spent a lot of money supporting this development, but the project has not yet been funded. All we have is my lengthy report which spells out just how such money could be spent. I got specific commitments from leading composers, choreographers, and librettists—all of whom told me to proceed. With Public Television two years off, it still may be up to the National Endowment for the Arts to fund this. Specific corporations might also help to fund it, but there is a worthy project already set up and ready for funding by appropriate agencies or institutions concerned with PTV.

In addition, a meeting was held by UNESCO last summer in Salzburg for the purpose of starting an international institute for music, dance and the theater, with headquarters in Vienna. The Austrian Government has been very helpful in providing seed money. UNESCO is considering the funding of this for one purpose: to expose new creative talents on the electronic media. This institution will come into being, and the United States will be a part of it, even though it will not be at the center of it at all. Europe is going in this direction—not only with commissions for special works, but in the training of the kinds of talents without which there can be no television at all.

There are some interesting changes now occurring in the audience for the performing arts, and these should be noted as we begin a full-scale PTV effort. The arts first began, we may recall, as something for the very few. The rulers of a society would extend a commission for an opera to be presented at court—probably to an audience numbering half of those who were performing on the stage. Art was created and reserved only for the privileged. Gradually, it became something for the many. Great theatres and concert halls, and all the attendant companies and programs were developed over the centuries.

Now we are back to the audience of the few again, but on a different level. Art is once again reserved for small audiences—but only in physical terms—a few people sitting in front of the tube. We anticipate a time when there will be a home “entertainment center”—when anyone can go to the market and buy an EVR-kind of disc or film. These possibilities affect the future of the performing arts in important ways. More than ever before, it is necessary to whet the appetites and satisfy the curiosities, in order to expose that large home audience to what is possible. What medium is going to do this better than television?

## RICHARD M. PACK

Talent development is the greatest problem confronting both commercial and non-commercial television. We are concerned with two kinds of talent—the production talent who will write and produce all of these programs, and performing talent. At this point, I am more directly concerned with the former. To find and train the number of producers, writers and program people that Public Television will need in the future is going to take some new thinking and additional funds.

The quality, and perhaps the quantity, of professional, formal training of television people in this country is going to have to be greatly improved. My experience with universities which offer courses or degrees in broadcasting indicates to me that many of those people are living in the past. Their curricula are unrelated to the problems of radio and television today, let alone tomorrow. Some of them are more concerned about equipment than about what they are teaching, to whom, in what way, and with what objectives. Some of them over-emphasize live program production, and others at the opposite extreme neglect live TV and become "film-schools." While film is a vital ingredient of TV, overemphasis in either direction is a weakness. Some departments, of course, are still nothing but glorified variations of speech and elocution departments, and I'll be damned if I know what teaching elocution really has to do with training people to produce, write, direct, and conceive good television programs of any kind.

I would like to present this challenge to that portion of the academic world which is involved in the training of people for commercial or non-commercial radio and television—resolve your internal conflicts! How many universities and colleges still permit an outside area to control broadcast training—whether it be a speech department, a journalism department, or even, sometimes, a film department? I know of one university radio-TV program which must yield to the desires and attitudes of six different conflicting forces, and until recently these internal differences have not begun to be resolved. The quality of formalized teaching by those universities which offer courses must be improved.

I think PTV eventually may have to found a major professional institute of its own for training television producers, directors, writers and creators of all kinds. Commercial television may be able to help PTV, and share the responsibility for such a project. Such an institute that would not only train people in the creative use of film, but would combine all the aspects of television creation—including journalism, entertainment, instruction, and all of the disciplines in the arts.

Such an Institute is still a dream at this stage, so it would be best to review some practical solutions which are either in operation or can be initiated. First, PTV should consider developing some summer workshop "refresher" courses and four-week "quick" courses, just as business and commercial broadcasting do for their people. Public Television is going to need a formalized, thorough

training system of this kind, based within the colleges and universities. But this should not be the only approach. Although I am a believer in formalized, professional training for television and radio, I also believe that a bright, intelligent young man who is taking a general B.A. program is sometimes a better bet than someone who's learned how to push a television camera around a bad studio.

I think PTV should also have exchange training programs with the best of European television systems and with Canada. *Group W* has had a very successful exchange with Rediffusion of London in the past three years. We have sent them one of our best young producers for six months, and they have sent us one of their best young producers. Each of us has learned from the other. We can enrich American television, not only by buying programs from abroad but also by importing some of their best production people who can expose us to their ideas.

We also are going to need teams of "roving professionals" who can go out into the smaller communities—the minor leagues of television—and run brief, one-week courses in lighting, directing, or other important creative disciplines. We tried this with our stations with some success. In writing, for instance, we hire top writing men to lecture to our station personnel. We've hired a top documentary producer, Dan Klugherz from NET, to visit our stations and deliver lectures. Perhaps I misread the Carnegie Report, but I don't subscribe to the romantic notion that there is a wealth of performing production talent available in every town and hamlet all over the country, and I'm glad to hear from the educational television people that they are aware of the differences between the big league and the minor league.

## PETER COTT

About a year and a half ago the National Academy came to realize that even though presenting awards for some good things has considerable merit, the fact was that thorough and dedicated advancement of the arts and sciences in television was something about which we were doing very little. The Academy was not really affecting the quality of television programming. We then decided that the least we could do—perhaps the most—was to broaden the options available to television by seeking to develop talent and ideas.

Ideas, and program forms of an innovative, experimental nature, are most likely to come from new and innovative talent, so we began a national Talent Discovery and Development Program. I think we are uniquely equipped to do this in many respects. We are a national organization with a base in each of nine major cities. Each of these cities has its full complement of stations, both commercial and non-commercial, and each has one or more major universities in its area. We decided to try to serve as a liaison between the youngster with talent in the university, and the commercial television world. I refer to talent in all areas—performers, writers, directors, cinematographers and others who might be on the college campuses or might also be professionals in that community.

We wanted to discover this talent locally, by cooperative ventures between the academic institutions and the commercial and educational television stations. We wanted them to present it regionally—to develop it regionally through internship, through workshop presentations on the air and through public involvement. We could then evaluate the best of these people and send them on to the national centers in Hollywood and New York where the Academy does have the capacity and the experience to expose these people to the users.

At this point, we can say that we have started. We've established firm contacts with the academic community, where there is great enthusiasm for such a program. In specific and pragmatic terms, the project has been activated largely in New York which, incidentally, negates the whole idea because the idea is not to discover people in New York, but to discover them in Columbus, Ohio! Nevertheless, because they are an eager bunch in New York, it has worked best there, and in that respect the New York Chapter effort can serve as a precedent for other chapters. There are active internships now going on at every production center in New York. That isn't much, obviously, in terms of network television, but it is a lot in terms of the kids' needs. The universities and colleges in the New York City area are all involved, through their television departments, in sending their best people to the advertising agencies and their commercials production operations, and to all of the live shows on a regular program basis—with the fullest cooperation of the producers. This is also being done, though to not quite so great a degree, in Los Angeles and in the other Chapter cities.

We are also promoting and encouraging the development of new talent through talent showcases in New York. These are run on

monthly basis, with performing talent from off-Broadway as well as from Broadway. The show-cases are presented to programmers, to agents and to producers. Out of the final versions, which occur semi-annually, every person displayed has gotten work—both because they deserve to work and because they offer a new and exciting talent. Lainie Kazan was first discovered by television programmers and producers through a talent showcase of the New York Chapter. A Negro group now working regularly on Channel 11 was showcased by the New York Chapter. The Prince Street Players—now at WCBS-TV—constituted an entire showcase presentation of the New York Chapter. We are hoping to find talent in the same fashion at Ohio State University, at UCLA, at USC, at the University of Arizona, and among the professionals in the smaller cities. We have just made a bare beginning in that direction, however.

Our interns are not just observers. We have worked closely with the producers, and they have allowed our people to use equipment, under close surveillance, of course. We've gotten letters from kids saying that they have experienced more out of five weeks of internship than they had in two years of college. The reverse of that is that the Academy, through its Speakers Bureau, has helped to structure a great many television courses so that they are updated and practical.

Our Los Angeles Chapter has done a most effective job with what they call a "Teach Committee." The educational television teachers came to the Academy, and said, in effect, "We think we're falling on our faces. We don't know how to use graphics, how to use make-up, how to present course structures. Will you help us?" So we got the Serlings to go over course scripts, and we got the Edith Heads to go over attire. We have these people as members, and can acquire their services. This is one of the best services we can render to TV. We would like to make these Teach Sessions available nationally, via tape and film.

Finally, a few years ago we decided to establish a comedy-writing fellowship because of the dearth of good comedy writing in commercial television. This resulted in what we called the Ernie Kovacs Comedy Writing Fellowship. We received about 300 applications for the fellowship, from which we chose two candidates. One was a recent graduate with a Master's from NYU, the other was from UCLA. Both were sent to Screen Gems, on the coast, which produces most of the best comedy series.

# AT THE END OF THE MAZE

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THOMAS PETRY

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For the past twenty years non-commercial educational television—whether sponsored by a state university, a school system, or in many instances by a community non-profit organization—has merely eked out an existence. The potential has always been there, but it was not until the Carnegie Commission released its definitive report that the fireworks began—largely because a plan for realizing this potential emerged. The 1967 debates in Congress; persuasive arguments by both commercial and non-commercial broadcasters, educators and Foundation representatives; the expansion of regional and state ETV networking; the dramatic introduction of nationally interconnected programming by NET; all simultaneously served to generate real national interest and concern for what is now referred to (albeit ambiguously) as Public Television.

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Before coming to WCNV-TV (Syracuse, N.Y.) as Vice President and General Manager, **THOMAS PETRY** served as a producer, program manager and general manager for ETV stations in Chicago, Albuquerque and Pittsburgh. He has been assistant director of the ETV Facilities Program for the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and has served on state advisory boards in Pennsylvania and New Mexico. He holds a B.A. from the University of Chicago and an M.A. in Public Law and Government from Columbia University.

As a result of the debate and discussion, many oldtime ETV viewers, staffers and trustees are now becoming confused by the sudden emergence of PTV, PBL CPB, NCCPTV,<sup>1</sup> all superimposed and overlapping with the more familiar (but perhaps not less confusing), ETV, ITV, NET, NAEB, EEN and JCEB.<sup>2</sup> Diversity is also the name of the networking game these days, when a typical community station such as WCNY-TV in Syracuse may offer interconnected programs from NET, EEN and NYN<sup>3</sup>, and in addition carry the weekly national interconnected program, PBL, and a variety of film and tape offerings from at least five other national or regional program sources.

Equally confusing is the frequently-conflicting information being given wide circulation regarding the financial planning for both the local and national development of PTV. Federal support ranging from four million to two-hundred million, direct and indirect aid, a plethora of proposed tax methods, a trend toward the increased centralization of Foundation and other private financing combined with the increased need for local support—now you see it, more frequently you don't. The poor PTV viewer may be forgiven if one day he thinks that his local station is now being totally supported by Washington, and on the next that his ten dollar contribution may mean the difference between the life or death of French cooking in his community.

Once the rhetoric has been partially cleared away, we might conclude that given a very modest initial financial base (some five to six million dollars from Federal and private sources), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will indeed become operational this year. We might also believe that, true to its primary mission, CPB will channel the large portion of its funds into programming grants to existing national and regional networks, as well as to major PTV production centers. Finally, we may hope that, true to past promise and performance, the existing producers of PTV programs will then be able to demonstrate to an even greater degree that PTV has a genuine role to play in a society beset with moral, social, and educational ills.

There is no question that the Corporation for Public Broadcast-

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<sup>1</sup>Public Television, Public Broadcasting Laboratory, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, National Corporation Council Public Television.

<sup>2</sup>Educational Television, Instructional Television, National Educational Television, National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Eastern Educational Network, and Joint Council of Educational Broadcasters.

<sup>3</sup>New York Network.



ing can provide a focus of national leadership and direction and that it must generate added visibility and creative stimulus. By the judicious distribution of whatever funds it does manage to draw unto itself, it can generally upgrade the quality and variety of available programming while strengthening existing production centers and stations and also making possible the creation of new ones. Nevertheless, while caught up in the throes of developing its own identity and mode of operation, PBC will simultaneously be confronted with all the urgent problems just mentioned, and overwhelmed by large numbers of well-wishers, special pleaders, critics, pundits, and public, as well as private, watchdogs. Assuming this to be the case, where should PTV focus its attentions?

The argument that the available monies could be channeled directly to the independent stations themselves ignores the need for a national coordinating body that will be strong and prestigious enough to provide a national direction, adequate funding for both a national interconnected network, and an optimum number of viable local stations. The mere funneling of Federal funds into existing stations, even if it were possible, would in many instances do no more than temporarily bolster rather inadequate local operations. The PBC, however, would hopefully develop a strong voice which would clearly enunciate a firm policy for national PTV, which would in turn give added strength and protection to every independent or state network station. True insulation against political and other interference requires a combination of national and local strength.

Moreover, with the obviously limited funds available to PBC, and a tough fight ahead for more realistic appropriations, it becomes essential that these few dollars are put to good use. It should be clear that we cannot afford to dilute their effect on a multitude of minor projects and operations (no matter how seemingly vital) when we should concentrate on strengthening our major existing sources of programming in order to continue and increase our demonstration of what PTV is all about. No question must remain as to whether the American public can afford or whether it needs PTV.

Such a policy will not throw the local station, particularly those in smaller markets, to the wolves. Quite the contrary. It is the small station which most often needs the added promotion, publicity, and "prestige programming" that only a strong combination of state, regional and national production centers and networks can provide. The PBC could further strengthen such existing resources by

tying them together and coordinating their efforts. At the same time, PBC can foster increased competition among the existing producers, and when the time is right and funds are available, encourage additional producers. Meanwhile, there are those who argue that the local station is struggling to make ends meet; to raise minimal daily operating funds. But again, part of the local problem has been lack of attention, lack of promotion, a lack of urgency and keen interest on the part of existing and potential audiences. Many schools remain lukewarm to ITV, and much of the public is only dimly aware of the hidden resources of their local PTV station. Obviously, they must be made to care. Programming must be so excellent, so relevant, and so compelling, that greater numbers will turn on to Public Television. These viewers will then be so committed that they will not only support the local outlet with their giving, but with their letters and votes the Congressmen who will support PTV nationally. As public interest grows, private and public monies will be attracted to a service that is so demonstrably in the national interest and for the public welfare.

While the charge of exclusivity and clubbishness leveled at ETV programming is largely unfair (as should be obvious from a cursory examination of the schedule of any of the more successful community stations), one could argue that PTV deserves a larger and more popular slice of the audience. Given existing fare, those who claim that PTV does not provide some very broadly based, enjoyable and quality programming that can appeal to a substantial audience, are either very badly informed or hold a low opinion of the American public. Given a national "dynamic," a steady source of diverse and outstanding programming; given permanent national networking facilities (and the resultant access to national publicity), I would argue that the local station is already dollars ahead in terms of generating local funding. Beyond that, as I have tried to indicate, the circle of interest created by national pump-priming will enlarge further to attract private and government support to be channeled through the PBC to the individual stations. This latter income would be used to simulate the development of local programming and, in part, for general operating purposes.

In time, many of the smaller facilities, especially those fortunately located in the midst of outstanding educational, cultural, scientific or natural resources, would quite spontaneously become feeder stations and production centers for the strengthened state, regional and national distribution sources. That is a feasible development

can be seen in the Northeast where 34 stations have, in fact, formed state and regional networks which, in turn, cooperate closely with NET, the NAEB national program service, and other regional networks throughout the country. Every local station (and particularly the smaller ones) in the Eastern Educational Network has certainly felt a sense of quickened importance and strengthened potential growing out of this exemplary cooperative venture. A recent Carnegie Corporation grant of \$250,000, made to the EEN, paid tribute to this potential by providing monies to further enhance and increase programs that would stress cooperation between participating network stations and would use network interconnection in a creative fashion. Carnegie Corporation President Alan Pifer stressed the interdependence of EEN by commending its election "to depend upon the resources of local stations in producing programs rather than upon central production facilities."

It is instructive to note that the operations of the stations and of the Eastern network are largely the result of cooperation of local stations and state networks forming in loose partnership with NET (who wished to further develop patterns for national networking). In most cases the development of relations between stations, with the state, and within the region resulted from local station initiative and support. National matching funding for interconnection and program projects, (from NET and Carnegie Corporation, among others) was generated by the mutual initiative of the independent stations, and secured by their *combined* promise.

The very variety of some of the programs to be produced by EEN affiliates with the aid of the Carnegie grant, should be an answer to those critics who claim that PTV is exquisitely esoteric and largely designed for an intellectual elite. Announced so far by the EEN are programs to be produced live (and with film segments) by combinations of stations all over the Northeast on such subjects as: a timely review on "unionism of Civil Employees"; a rural New England Town Meeting, seen as a "dying American phenomenon"; an on-the-spot analysis of the New Hampshire primaries; the ICA-AAA Track Meet from Philadelphia, involving over 77 area colleges and universities; a "Draft Resistance View-In"; a live production from the Buffalo Festival of the Arts; a three-hour children's special featuring the creative production efforts of three cities and four countries; "The Visual Generation" highlighting several original films to be commissioned by EEN and produced by ten different inner-city teenage production units; an intensive preview of the UN

nuclear non-proliferation treaty hearings; a yet-to-be-announced Senate hearing broadcast in its entirety with extensive analysis and background provided by member stations; and an audience participation "game" program involving several test panels in the studio to determine the effect of controversial documentaries on a TV audience, and to probe the validity of such programming. Other programs being planned will deal with our race problems, Vietnam, culture and politics, and a broad variety of cultural and event-oriented projects.

This kind of programming will, in addition to diversity, add a search for new forms and new sources of interaction between stations, and more important still, between audiences. Each program will hopefully further extend each station; stations will be stimulated by each other's efforts and will discover new approaches through the interaction of their staffs. With the involvement of the audience as a major thread running through the entire project, the EEN expects collectively to develop increasing regional attention and interest, and thus broaden the base of support and involvement for each local station.

The implications of the Carnegie-EEN project for the PBC are clear. The interaction between local station, state network, and regional and national network are seen here in practice. Local operations supplemented by national support through collective enterprise can be observed. A strengthening of resources and a sense of direction provided by mutual effort, is achieved without any significant diminution of the local station.

The local stations do have a stake—a vital one—in what now happens to the Public Television movement. It is the stations that must ultimately build loyalty and involvement in their local audiences, who, in turn, must care about what they see and urge Public Television to move forward. This is the major effort that all community stations have before them—the success of the Public Television movement, nationally, begins and ends at the local station and, in large part, depends on their local success. Strong local stations, working in harmony with an energetic national Public Television movement, will protect both elements against financial and political domination.

# WHO SHOULD PAY?

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RONALD H. COASE

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About two months ago, at a ceremony attended by some of the most distinguished figures in the American educational world and public life, President Johnson signed the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967. This Act brought into being a broadcasting system similar to that which had earlier been proposed in the report of the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television. The Act received powerful support from the Ford Foundation, which had itself put forward a variant proposal for Public Television in proceedings before the Federal Communications Commission the (FCC). Testimony before the congressional committees concerned with the Act was almost unanimous in its favor. In the Senate, the Act was approved with only one vote recorded in opposition, that of Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, although Senator Carl Curtis of Nebraska had also spoken against passage of the Act. In the House, more opposition was expressed but the Act was finally passed by the comfortable margin of 265 to 91. Even the commercial television networks and the National Association of Broadcasters, who might have been thought the natural enemies of Public Television, welcomed the measure. Thus was passed, amid general applause, this wholly unnecessary and ill-conceived piece of legislation.

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**RONALD H. COASE** is Professor of Economics in the Graduate School of Business and the Law School of the University of Chicago and Editor of the *Journal of Law and Economics*. He was a 1958-59 Fellow of the Center For Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. Among Dr. Coase's numerous publications are: *British Broadcasting: A Study in Monopoly* (1950), and *The Iron and Steel Industry, 1926-35; An Investigation Based on the Accounts of Public Companies* (1939).

The heart of the new Act is the creation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with its Board of Directors appointed by the President. This Corporation will arrange for and finance the production of programs (although it will not itself directly produce them) and it will make these programs available to educational stations either without charge or possibly for a very small fee. The Carnegie Commission suggested that the Corporation, as part of its production arrangements, should establish at least two production centers—one of which would be the National Educational Television and Radio Center (NET)—and it seems likely that something like this will be done. In addition, the Corporation will make grants directly to the stations to assist them to produce programs and also to finance their ordinary operations. The Corporation will also make arrangements for interconnection between the educational stations and will presumably largely determine, by its actions, the form and extent of networking. The Corporation will be, in essence, a supplier of programs. The description I have given is based on the terms of the Act and on testimony before congressional committees which indicated the intentions of those responsible for the legislation. Of course, in detail it will have to be modified in the light of the decisions taken by the Corporation once it is in operation. But the general character of the Corporation seems clear.

The Corporation will be financed in part from private donations but mainly with funds coming from the federal government. The stations will obtain some funds from the Corporation, but most will come from other sources. However, these will largely be governmental (including state and local government). Here I should refer to Title I of the Act. This was essentially an amendment and enlargement of the Educational Television Facilities Act of 1962 which provided matching funds to states for the construction of educational television facilities. But the 1967 Act increased the allowable Federal share from 50 per cent to 75 per cent, non-commercial radio was included, the provisions were extended to include territories of the United States and the category of expenditure which the grant could cover was enlarged. Dollar grants from the federal government were to equal \$10.5 million in 1968, \$12.5 million in 1969, and \$15 million in 1970. These grants would be administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

What will be the total cost of this public broadcasting system? The Carnegie Commission estimated that by 1980 the annual cost would be \$270 million, of which about \$200 million would be provided by

the Federal government—the rest coming from state and local government, foundations, firms, and individuals. Now this estimate assumes that 380 stations will be in operation—although the FCC has reserved 623 channels for educational television stations. As estimates tend to be—with the best will in the world—too low, and since some of the resources made available for the system (for example, the frequency spectrum) will be supplied for nothing, it seems likely to me that the cost will greatly exceed \$270 million per annum. But exact calculation is out of place at this stage. These figures give the order of magnitude. Nothing in my argument depends on whether the annual cost is \$300 million, \$500 million, or \$1 billion. Whatever the amount, the proportion coming from nongovernmental sources will be very small and the proportion coming from governmental sources will be very large, of which the bulk will come from the federal government.

It is one of the peculiarities of the Act that, apart from Title I, the amount of Federal finance and the way in which it would be raised are not stated. In the Act, \$9 million is provided for the Corporation, an amount which, as Senator Pastore of Rhode Island said, “was never intended to do much more than get the show on the road.” Unfortunately, he did not explain where the road would lead us to. The amount to be raised to support Public Television, and how it will be done, depend on action to be undertaken by the executive and in Congress. The future is thus to be determined. But at any rate if there is to be a future for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, it will require substantial federal funds.

I spoke of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as a supplier of programs. But what programs will it supply? It is, I think, important to realize that although the Act is commonly thought of as establishing an educational television system, education in the sense of the kind of activity carried out by schools and similar institutions is largely outside the Act as passed, apart from benefits received under Title I. A distinction was, in fact, drawn by the Carnegie Commission between instructional television and Public Television, and it is Public Television that is being established by the Act. This is what the Commission said: “In carrying out its charge, the Commission from the very beginning was troubled by the name ‘educational television.’ Justifiably or not, it sounds forbidding to many. It calls to mind the schoolroom and the lecture hall. It frightens away from educational channels many of those who might enjoy them most. . . . Education is not always somber or laborious. It is co-

extensive with the full range of human experience and includes joy and gaiety as well as hard intellectual endeavor. Educational television should be no less. . . . The system we propose . . . is proposed as a system of educational television. We do feel the importance of distinguishing between its parts—Public Television, directed toward the general public, and instructional television, dealing primarily with formal education.”

That instructional television is excluded from the Act is made clear by Title III. Under this Title, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare was authorized to conduct a comprehensive study of instructional TV and radio to determine whether and what federal aid should be provided for instructional TV and radio and the form that aid should take. The formation of policy on instructional television will await this report which does not have to be submitted to the President until June 30, 1969.

Another indication of the character of the Act is that, although educational TV and radio programs were defined in the House version to mean “programs which are primarily designed for educational or cultural purposes and not primarily for amusement or entertainment purposes,” in the Act as finally passed the words “and not primarily for amusement or entertainment purposes” were deleted.

If instructional television is excluded from the Act, what will be the program schedule of the Corporation? It seems clear that it will present a general program of news, information, and entertainment. What the supporters of this legislation had in mind and how far the Corporation would cast its net can be gathered from the testimony of Dr. Killian, Chairman of the Carnegie Commission, given to the House committee considering this Act. This is what he said:

I would not want to see Public Television, or whatever its name may be in the end, precluded from what we call entertainment. I think there are many kinds of what can be properly called entertainment that commercial television is not handling at the present time, and that public television ought to be so broad in its scope that it can deal with those kinds of entertainment, along with instructional television, with all kinds of educational activities, public service broadcasting, and so on.

I would think that one would have to rest this definition that Public Television ought to include all of those kinds of things that are not suitable for advertising to support, or which are not being supported by commercial television, and are not designed for the classroom use in formal education. That is the best definition that I can make.

. . . We are hoping for a system here that would bring to the American people things that they now are not getting.



Let me cite the example of sports. I think there should be some sports broadcasting on Public Television, because there are certain kinds of sports now that are not broadcast by commercial television at all, where there are specialized audiences.

At this point, Representative Torbert H. MacDonald of Massachusetts interrupted and the testimony continued as follows:

MR. MACDONALD: What are those? I follow sports very closely and I have seen every kind of sports there are.

DR. KILLIAN: Soccer.

MR. MACDONALD: That is on.

MR. HENRY (a member of the Carnegie Commission and President of the University of Illinois): National soccer but not inter-collegiate soccer.

DR. KILLIAN: There are any number of sports of this sort that do not attract commercial audiences. . . . Anyway, I am trying to make the point that there are athletic events that commercial television quite properly doesn't cover and which might well come under Public Television. The American people should not be denied the opportunity for those kinds of televised programs.

This testimony shows how far-reaching the plan for Public Television is. On another occasion, in a Carnegie Foundation publication, it was suggested that motorcycle racing might be included in the schedule. Thus, we may yet see Hell's Angels subsidized by the federal government, a useful supplement to some parts of the Poverty Program.

The point that I want to make here is that, although commonly presented as part of a scheme for educational television, Public Television bears no resemblance to what most people would consider educational television. In this connection, the phrase, "non-commercial television," commonly used by the Ford Foundation, is better since it does not suggest something that it is not. What is being brought into existence is, in fact, a television system of a quite general character—to be financed in the main by the federal government.

How is such a new broadcasting system, with its finance coming from the federal government, justified by those who favor it? In large part it is done by conjuring up prospects of programs and benefits hitherto unknown. The Ford Foundation put it this way: "Such a non-commercial television system could provide a spectrum of informational, cultural and instructional services as wide and deep as knowledge, wisdom, talent and imagination permit." Mr. O'Connell, who is President Johnson's chief telecommunications adviser, in his testimony before the Senate committee supporting the

Act, showed how wide (if not deep) a permissive imagination allows one to go. He said, ETV (that is, educational television):

...will seek to increase the gross national product of personal values and human capabilities—and to reduce the tremendous national cost of personal inadequacy—of deficient education—of lack of knowledge in a world moving so fast and in such ferment that only a great growing competence of an informed electorate can cope with the demand of the democratic process. Certainly that competence is growing now but perhaps not as fast as the complexity of world affairs. The march is on toward more knowledge—bringing better physical and mental health—less crimes—less poverty stemming from educational deficiencies—this march must in all ways be stimulated to grow.

Its objective is the enrichment of human personality in a positive and creative way. Obviously this can only be done by inspiring and motivating people toward the higher goals of self-improvement—to swim upstream—not float downstream—to seek the higher values of growing knowledge along with the diversion and entertainment which is now so plentifully available and at least to achieve a better balance between the two. It is obvious that ETV offers our best chance to achieve this balance.

Thus inherently the prime task of ETV will be to exert great leadership—whereas inherently commercial television to be successful has had to develop the talents of followership of the ratings and of the mass tastes of our public for diversion. ETV must develop the talent for leadership—for innovation and for “incentivation.”

Truly—the possibilities and the difficulties of this challenge are almost limitless—we are only taking the first few faltering steps up a steep and difficult path—but one which can lead us to fundamental progress toward solving some of the most difficult problems of our people and of our times.

As we learn more about the potentials and the popular acceptance of Public Television we can move ahead to reach a multiplicity of groups and interests whose identity cannot be immediately determined—to serve the public interest through making available the most imaginative examples of our cultures and our diverse interests.

Such a statement is not without its appeal. Heaven would be cheap, even for \$270 million a year.

But such statements are not, of course, to be taken seriously. We know what the programs of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will be like—most of them will be quite mediocre. And it is possible to assert this with complete confidence because this is true of most human activity whatever it is concerned with. If you make a list of the great men in any field, you will soon discover that most of them are dead.

Sometimes, however, the argument is pitched at a lower, though more defensible, level. It is claimed that a federally-financed system

is required because there are programs that ought to be broadcast which are not broadcast under the existing system. And this was part of Dr. Killian's case. An example of this kind of argument can be taken from the testimony of Mr. McGeorge Bundy (now of the Ford Foundation) who said: "There are things which commercial television really cannot do because of the pressures of its own obligations to its owners, and stockholders, and which non-commercial television can and should do."

Why this should be so in broadcasting and not in other comparable fields, such as newspaper and book publishing, has troubled not only opponents but also supporters of the Public Broadcasting Act, as is evident from the halting answers which are given when the question is raised.

Lest you should disbelieve me, I will read you some extracts from the testimony on behalf of the Act. In the first, Representative Clarence J. Brown, Jr., of Ohio is questioning Mr. Gardner, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Secretary, why pick television as a medium? Shouldn't we have public theater, for instance, or maybe a public publisher for books or magazines or newspapers so that we can get a different kind of thing in the public domain than we have now?

SECRETARY GARDNER: As I pointed out in the example of books, you have a situation in which publishers can publish an enormous variety of books and they are all in the bookstore. In television you have a limited number of channels.

MR. BROWN: The reason for this is that you can support a limited number of channels, is that not right, with private business venture?

SECRETARY GARDNER: The spectrum is limited—the broadcasting spectrum.

MR. BROWN: But the spectrum and channels available are not all utilized at present, are they?

SECRETARY GARDNER: No.

In the second extract, Mr. Brown is questioning Dr. Killian, the Chairman of the Carnegie Commission.

MR. BROWN: I asked a question of the Secretary yesterday, without getting what I thought was a meaningful answer. . . . If it is applicable to television, why isn't it also applicable to publishing, to movies, to other means of cultural advancement, other kinds of public entertainment?

DR. KILLIAN: We have a flourishing private publishing business in this country.

MR. BROWN: We have a flourishing private television business in this country.

DR. KILLIAN: This is right. It was built originally on that tradition. But the whole economic setup is such that this can happen,

and I do not believe that the economics are such that it can happen in public (?private) television.

I also would hasten to point out that what we are talking about here in Public Television is the total cost. We made a long-range projection. By 1980 there ought to be around \$270 million going into the system, private, public, State funds of all kinds.

The FCC reported in 1965 the revenues of the commercial television system of this country was slightly under \$2 billion. We are talking about peanuts compared to the amount of funds going into commercial television at the present time.

MR. BROWN: We get into essentially the same problem, do we not, in publishing? There are a lot of trashy books being published today. Why shouldn't the Federal Government get into the business of selecting certain authors and making available on a subsidized basis, which is what we are talking about, their production of literary effort so that people would have this available to them economically, so that they could enjoy it?

DR. KILLIAN: May I point out that in our total publishing system in this country we have a whole group of university presses that are providing a kind of book that the commercial publishers do not provide. This is enormously important to the scholarship and the research of this country.

MR. BROWN: Isn't this possible in the television industry?

DR. KILLIAN: No.

MR. BROWN: That is, without the expenditure of a quarter million (?billion) dollars?

MR. SANFORD (a member of the Carnegie Commission and former Governor of North Carolina): The difference is that printing is so much cheaper than television. You have an added pressure to subsidize, except through the universities, the printing business, because the cost is not so massive as it is in this new kind of communication. I think that is the real business.

MR. BROWN: Television is being subsidized by universities, is it not?

MR. SANFORD: Yes, but not adequately.

MR. BROWN: The publishing business perhaps is not being adequately subsidized.

MR. SANFORD: I think it is, though. Certainly, relatively it is.

DR. KILLIAN: I will point out another thing: We are spending Federal funds for research that are comparable to the programming on television. The research that Federal funds make possible, and which is published ordinarily through commercial channels, could not be done were it not for Federal funds, to the extent and quality at which it is being done at the present time.

All this suggests to me that supporters of this Act did not have a well thought-out position. But of course they had no need of one. If you adopt the modern view, as they seem to have done, that there is only one remedy for all ills—a new governmental agency—careful diagnosis is hardly called for.

I would agree that there is something wrong with the working of

the American broadcasting industry. But I believe that an understanding of why this is so leads to a very different remedy.

The views which I am now going to present to you are not ones which I have recently adopted. I have held them for a long time and in fact put them forward in testimony to the FCC in 1959. I then said in opening: "I appear before you with a strong conviction and a bold proposal. My conviction is that the principles under which the American economic system generally operates are fundamentally sound. My proposal is that the American broadcasting industry adopt those principles." I had expected some resistance to my views, but I must say that the response to my testimony surprised me. When I had completed my statement, the first Commissioner to start the questioning, Commissioner Cross, said: "Are you spoofing us? Is this all a big joke?" I was somewhat taken aback by this but managed to reply, "Is it a joke to believe in the American economic system?" I did not hear from Commissioner Cross for some time, when he remarked that mine was "the most unique program yet presented." As I think that the misconceptions which I was then attacking are still widely held and as it is these misconceptions which form an essential part of the intellectual case for Public Television, I do not, I think, need to apologize for presenting them once again.

The way in which one of the resources used in the television industry, the radio frequency spectrum, has been handled, has led to a great deal of inefficiency but what is equally relevant for our discussion of the financing of educational television, by obscuring what is really happening, it has caused much confusion of thought. In the ordinary way, a resource will be obtained by those who will pay the most for it. A firm or industry, wishing to expand because the value to it of a resource is greater than its price, will bid it away from other users by offering more than these other users would pay (which of course is equal to the value of that resource to those other users). In this way resources are used so as to increase the value of their contribution to production. However, in the United States, the radio frequency spectrum is allocated by government agencies (one of which is the FCC). The result is that use of the radio frequency spectrum is determined administratively without the knowledge which the market would provide of values in alternative uses. The obvious solution would be to sell (or lease) frequencies.

We may not be able to change this system, at least in the near future, but the least we can do when we are calculating the costs of any service which employs the radio frequency spectrum is to make

allowance for the value that the part of the radio frequency spectrum employed would yield elsewhere. In the estimates of the cost of the educational television system, made by the Carnegie Commission, no allowance is made for the cost of the radio frequency spectrum. If frequencies were bought and sold, no one would make this error.

Perhaps even more relevant to the question of educational television is the way in which the American broadcasting industry is financed. The revenue comes exclusively from advertisements and the system is commonly called commercial broadcasting. The essence of a commercial broadcasting system is that the operator of a radio or television station is paid for making broadcasts or allowing them to be made. But he is not paid by those who listen to or who view the programs. He is paid by those who wish listeners to receive a particular message. However, simply to broadcast a commercial or a string of commercials will not usually lead many people to listen or view. In a commercial broadcasting system, the object of the program is to attract an audience for the commercials.

This puts a severe restriction on the programs that can profitably be transmitted. The costs that will be incurred for a program are limited to the profits on the additional sales of the advertised product that broadcasting of the program will bring. It is easy to see that this upper limit bears no relation to the amount which people would be willing to pay to hear or view a program. There must therefore be many programs for which consumers would be willing to pay an amount which covers costs which are not broadcast under the existing system.

The commercial broadcasting system has other effects on the choice of programs. Of two audiences of equal size, the one which is more responsive to advertising will always be preferred. In general, a large audience mildly interested will be preferred to a small audience intensely interested. The result of the way in which the system operates is to leave some segments of the public with the feeling that they are not being catered for. And this is true. In my testimony to the FCC, I added the following words, which are especially relevant to our present discussion. "This result is particularly bad because it is often the educated classes who feel that their wants are not being satisfied—and because they are apt to conclude that this is the inevitable result of the working of a private enterprise market economy." Of course it is not—it is only the result of having a market from which the consumer is barred.

All this could be changed by the introduction of pay-television, a

system which is technically quite feasible. With this system, any group of consumers willing to pay the cost could obtain the programs it wished. But in actual fact there has only been one experiment with pay-television making use of the radio frequency spectrum, that in Hartford, Connecticut—and that operated under highly restrictive conditions. The reason for this lack of development is that the commercial broadcasting industry and the owners of movie theatres have been successful in exerting sufficient political pressure to prevent the emergence of a pay-television system. Of course, a justification for banning pay-television has been presented. Much has been made of the fact that with commercial television the service is free and that if there were pay-television operating alongside the commercial stations, the commercial programs would be “siphoned off,” and people would find themselves paying for programs which they previously received for nothing. The argument is essentially the same as that for socialism and the welfare state. The factors of production used in television are not made available for nothing. They will be paid for by someone: by the government out of the proceeds of taxation, by the advertiser, or by the consumer. The last method has the advantage that with it, the consumer is more likely to get what he wants.

A general introduction of pay-television would obviate the need for the newly established Public Television system. But even if such a general move is not possible, there is no reason why the broadcasts of the educational stations should not be financed by payments from viewers. The “siphoning” argument does not apply since we are told that the new system will not broadcast the kind of program found on commercial television. If this were done, there would be no need for a federally financed scheme with all the dangers and difficulties that this brings with it.

It may be asked: Why did supporters of this legislation prefer a Federally-financed scheme to the adoption of pay-television? I do not know enough about the deliberations leading up to this legislation to be able to answer this question. It is, however, instructive to note how the Carnegie Commission dealt with the matter. In their report we are told that pay-television, along with other alternatives, would not be “as appropriate, as manageable and as equitable” as the proposal they make for financing educational television by means of an excise tax on television sets—and that is all. The Ford Foundation, in their submissions to the FCC, did not, so far as I have been able to discover, even mention pay-television. There must be a charitable

explanation for this silence—but up to now I have not been able to think of one.

This failure on the part of the supporters of the 1967 Act to discuss the use of pay-television has had one curious consequence. In July, 1967, the Subscription Television Committee of the FCC issued a long report of some 100 pages of which less than two were on educational television, mainly devoted to saying why they would not deal with the subject. I will quote some extracts from the report. "The matter of educational television as related to STV . . . has not generally been commented on by the filing parties, and we therefore have no basis on which to found decisions pertaining thereto at the present time. Moreover, it is, of course, part of the larger problem of educational television in general, which has recently been the subject of careful consideration by the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, and others; which is presently under consideration by the Congress . . . and which is under study by the Commission. . . . Because, as stated before, we have no adequate record on which to base decisions about STV operations by non-commercial educational stations and because the whole matter of educational television is under broad study on many fronts, decisions on the subject cannot and should not be made." The FCC thus avoided discussion of the applicability of pay-television to educational television because the general subject was "under broad study on many fronts." But the broad study did not include consideration of pay-television. No one therefore examined the question (at least, publicly).

I said that I did not know the explanation of why the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Commission rejected pay-television. But it is not hard to find an explanation of why the commercial television industry would support the establishment of Public Television. First of all, it will reduce the pressure for pay-television. Second, it takes off the market channels which might otherwise be used for commercial television—and thus raises the value of existing channels. Third, it is bound to result in the long run in a much less insistent demand from the intellectual community that the commercial television industry broadcast public service programs and will therefore enable them to concentrate to an even greater extent than they do now on more popular (and more profitable) programs. Indeed, I think it is very likely that this tendency will be encouraged by those engaged in Public Television. One of the problems that will be faced by the new Federally-financed broadcasting system is that its rela-



tively small viewing audience (which it is bound to have if it confines itself to cultural programs, or more generally, those catering to specialized audiences) makes it vulnerable to critics in Congress who will be able to point to how much is being spent for how few and will be able to use this to threaten the new system's source of funds. There are various ways of blunting such an attack. The one way is to increase the viewing audience by limiting the output from the commercial stations of programs competitive with those it transmits (and this is likely to happen, by tacit or even explicit agreement, between those responsible for the two systems, and this notwithstanding any statements which those in charge of the commercial or Public Television systems may now make).

My view that those who benefit from the supply of any product or service should pay for it is commonly countered (and has been in the case under discussion) by pointing out that there are government subsidies for the operation of, for example, museums and libraries. I do not wish to examine these particular cases since whether museums or libraries should or should not be subsidized does not, for me, decide the question of whether the operations of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting should be subsidized. What I will do is to indicate what I consider the conditions which have to exist to justify such a subsidy. You may consider, if you feel able, whether these conditions exist in the provision of museums and libraries. I will consider whether they exist in Public Television.

The first justification for a subsidy is that those who do not pay and therefore benefit are in greater need than those who do in fact finance the service. Normally, of course, since individual circumstances vary, it is better to transfer money from the less needy to the more needy and let them spend it on the particular things that they individually want. But at times it may be thought that the assistance should be provided in a specific form. However, it would be fanciful to suppose that this justification applies to the provision of television programs by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The viewing audience to be subsidized is likely to be, in general, richly endowed in mind and money. Most of the money will come from those who are much worse off in all ways. We can easily discover the kind of audience which is likely to view these programs with their "good music, exciting plays, reports on the whole fascinating range of human activity," to quote President Johnson's words. They are surely the same people who make up the audience for plays, concerts, opera, and ballet. The character of that audience has been

described by Baumol and Bowen in their book, *Performing Arts—The Economic Dilemma*. They state: “the audience is drawn from an extremely narrow segment of the American population. In the main, it consists of persons who are extraordinarily well educated, whose incomes are very high, who are predominantly in the professions and who are in their late youth or early middle age.” They add that even “when professional performances are given free of charge or with carefully set low prices . . . the number of blue collar workers is almost always well over 50 percent; over 50 percent of the males have completed college; and median incomes are almost always well over \$9,000.” The fact of the matter is that, from this point of view, the subsidy is wholly objectionable—a poverty program for the well-to-do.

A second justification for a subsidy is that the product or service cannot be provided by the market. Even in this case it is desirable that, as far as possible, the funds be raised by a form of taxation which falls on those who benefit. In fact, there is no reason why these programs could not be provided by the market (by means of pay-television), while the form of taxation advocated by the Carnegie Commission, an excise tax on television sets, is one which would mainly fall on those who would not benefit from the programs. The second justification for a subsidy is thus without merit in this case.

The third justification for a subsidy is that the provision of the product or service conveys benefits not only to those who consume it, but to others as well. Thus, a subsidy for the treatment of contagious diseases can be justified because it benefits those who do not have the disease, but might become infected. An attempt has been made to justify the subsidization of Public Television along these lines. Professor Pechman, in his memorandum for the Ford Foundation said: “The benefits of non-commercial television will accrue to the general population through the development of cultural values, improved education, and a more informed electorate.” We may exclude “improved education” from consideration since instructional television is outside the 1967 Act. The difficulty with discussing this particular argument is its extraordinary vagueness. It is impossible to refute since it is impossible to understand. What benefits the ordinary person is supposed to get from the “development of cultural values” among those who are the most cultured or from an improvement in the information of those who are best informed (if indeed either of these things, whatever they are, will actually hap-

pen) is left unspecified. Something more is surely required to justify such a large expenditure of federal funds.

But, of course, though there may sometimes be justification for subsidies, they are in fact made available because of the political pressure brought to bear by the groups which stand to gain. And this, of course, is why the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 was passed. That the cultured and the informed seem to be just as unscrupulous as anyone else in furthering their own interests is what makes me pessimistic about the value of that culture and information in improving public policy.

Much is made of the need to keep the Corporation for Public Broadcasting free of political influences. Senator Pastore said "it is natural . . . to raise a question about government interference over programming." He then continued: "Therefore, the words of President Johnson in his recent message are most reassuring and worth repeating: Non-commercial television and radio in America, even though supported by Federal funds, must be absolutely free from any federal government interference over programming." The educational community seems to have been more easily reassured by President Johnson in this case than in most others. Actually, to expect the President in making appointments to the Corporation and Congress in making appropriations to support the Corporation not to be influenced by political considerations is about as likely as that the manager of a slaughter house will be a tender-hearted lover of animals. The proposal by the Carnegie Commission to use an earmarked tax on television sets and that of the Ford Foundation to use the profits of a nonprofit satellite corporation seem to have been designed to reduce the influence of Congress, if not of the executive. But whether either (or both) of these proposals will be adopted has yet to be seen.

Of course, one way of countering hostile political forces is to enter politics—through maintaining an effective lobby and in other ways. I must say that the campaign in favor of Public Television seems to me to have been brilliantly conducted. To use the educational channels for the establishment of a governmental broadcasting system—a purpose that could have been in few minds when they were originally assigned—has a boldness worthy of a better course. The men responsible for mobilizing support for Public Television demonstrated a complete grasp of the situation. No argument which would tell in favor of the plan was omitted. No segment which would tell against it was included.

I have argued that the 1967 Act is totally unnecessary. But if there is to be a Federally-financed educational system, this Act goes about it in the wrong way. A highly centralized organization has been created which increases the opportunity for political influence and counter to all our notions of how any market should be organized, let alone a market for ideas. What has been created is a monopoly supplier of programs. It would be bad if it were completely independent of the political organization. Much is made of the fact that the stations do not have to broadcast the programs financed by the Corporation. But if they take these programs they will be free (or practically so)—if they take other programs they will have to be paid for (leaving aside some other free program sources which are already available and are likely to be relatively unimportant in the new system). The result is that the stations will take the programs of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. If one were interested in reducing the chance of political influence and in creating a competitive situation, while still retaining federal finance, the proper way to do this would be to make grants directly to the stations and let them choose whose programs they would purchase. This would enable a relatively efficient and free non-commercial system to emerge instead of the highly controlled and inevitably inefficient system established by the Act.

Indeed the same argument can be used against all grants which are earmarked for television. If it is desired to assist cultural activities and education by means of federal funds (and this seems to me particularly important in any consideration of instructional television), why not give the money to cultural groups and educational authorities and let them decide how much of it they would like to spend on television?

To conclude: the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 is unnecessary, inefficient, inequitable, and subject to dangerous political influences. But perhaps I have not mentioned its worst feature. It is a striking example of what is coming to be a common situation, in which the educational community sets itself apart from the rest of humanity. They claim special privileges and by political action attempt to secure them. That this is corrupting is clear. But in the long run it holds great danger for the educational community and for society.

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

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Paul L. Fisher and Ralph L. Lowenstein, editors. *RACE AND THE NEWS MEDIA*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

While I was reading this book I happened to see a copy of the *Boston Record-American* on sale in a New Hampshire village. The tabloid had placed on its front page a large, full-width headline about a second page story concerning a Negro witness who told a government committee in Washington that under certain circumstances he would shoot President and Mrs. Johnson. Included was a large picture.

The *New York Times* put the same story on page 48, under a one-column head, and with the same picture.

Which editor handled that story properly? What is "proper" handling?

That sort of situation is what this book is about.

The consideration of the problems facing the media in relation to racial news is by no means confined to newspapers, although the latter receive most attention, being the oldest of the media. Four broadcasting personnel give that medium's viewpoint; other contributors refer to television or radio less extensively.

The book is an outgrowth of a three-day conference sponsored in 1965 by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Freedom of Information Center at the University of Missouri. The speeches, in some instances, have been up-dated. The editors are the director and the publications director of the Center.

As with so many collections, we find editing shortcomings: no index, and the considerable duplication between certain speeches is allowed to stand. But these are off set by the extremely valuable analyses and suggestions, all coming at a time when the media are in great need of guidelines.

The addresses are grouped logically into sections, opening with a general discussion, and followed by two or three presentations each on reporting the crisis in the North and in the South, the changing content of racial news, broadcasting's role, another on "Social Persuaders and Editorial Judgment," and a final one on "The Role of the Negro Press in the Civil Rights Struggle."

The editors consider what is happening a Negro revolution. Their experience of revolutions must be limited, for the present social unrest has little resemblance to one. A true revolution, as occurred in Russia or Cuba, always is accompanied by a plan or program to assume power, if not the capacity to hold it.

Whatever the situation is called, the speakers are well aware of its effects upon the media. Among the several able presentations is that by Buford Boone, publisher of the *Tuscaloosa (Ala.) News*, and the comment upon it by Hodding Carter III, who was involved in the civil rights movement before most of the other speakers knew it was forming. Boone describes the problems in the South.

Another incisive speech was that by Ted Poston, a *New York Post* reporter long known for his writing about Negro news coverage and for his prize-winning work as a newsman. Under the title "The American Negro and Newspaper Myths," he notes an improvement in Southern papers, but goes on to describe, with specific instances, the appalling cowardice or dishonesty of certain Northern and Southern papers. Yet he is not blind to the shortcomings of journalists of his own race, for he accuses some of avoiding assignments of Negro stories, which he thinks they could have covered better than white newsmen; he also laments the departure of Negro journalists from printed media to "the more flexible—and better paying—fields of radio and television." He could have added public relations.

Broadcasting's activity, problems, and responsibilities in handling racial news are dealt with by four men. One is Don Farmer, an ABC correspondent, who briefly points up two problems: the handicaps of direct coverage and the difficulty of finding the moderate, average man and getting his story rather than that of the extremist at either end. William Peters, a *CBS Reports* producer, also spoke briefly, and mainly raises pertinent questions. The really meaty consideration of broadcasting in the situation comes from William B. Monroe Jr., NBC news bureau chief in Washington, who like Poston gets down to specifics. He also notes: "The consensus of the people I've talked to about the subject is that television has been a central factor in the development of the Negro revolution—has accelerated it and forced a much speedier confrontation of emotions and ideas than otherwise would have been the case. That is certainly my own belief."

Monroe also believes that the civil rights crisis has "helped television find itself, not only as a powerful technical instrument, but as a journalistic medium of maturity and guts—one capable of adding to the vigor of a vast democracy." This may sound as if he is unaware of faults, but a reader of the full address, one of the longest in the book, will see that this is by no means so.

Joseph L. Brechner, president of WFTV, Orlando, Fla., under the title "Were Broadcasters Color Blind?" says he believes that some were, and points up the differences between the problems and performances of local and network broadcasts.

Much else is here, including several rare considerations and descriptions of the Negro press today, and a most stimulating and wise discussion of the pressure group problem by Samuel Dalsimer, vice-chairman of the

board of Gray Advertising Agency, Inc., and a representative of the conference co-sponsor, the Anti-Defamation League.

But even if nothing else in the book were worth its price, pages 9 and 10 certainly are, for here the editors summarize a consensus on a number of points that emerged. These are called "Guidelines for Newsmen" and offer 14 points covering personnel and news. Debatable as some are, they unquestionably will help reporters, writers, and executives on the various media think through their policies on this delicate and timely matter of handling racial news today.

ROLAND E. WOLSELEY

*Syracuse University*

Stuart Hood. *A SURVEY OF TELEVISION*. London: William Heinemann, Ltd, 1967.

Stuart Hood has been many things: a novelist, teacher, the Editor of *Television News* and subsequently Controller of Television Programmes for the BBC, and a Programme Controller for Rediffusion, which had been one of the main program contracting companies to the Independent Television Authority in Great Britain. He is now a free-lance (a rare, new breed) television producer, television playwright, and television columnist for *The Spectator*. His credentials are apparently excellent. That he obviously knows television thoroughly, has a deep understanding of the problems and potential of public communication and mass media, that he has (in general) a supportable point of view, and that he writes with precision, intelligence and style make this short book something to be read and appreciated. (One should not be thrown off by its bland, neuter title; one could wager that this was the publisher's choice and not Mr. Hood's.)

"Each country gets the television it deserves," states Mr. Hood. "It is commonly said [he does not tell us by whom] that British television is the best in the world. . . it is freer from political controls and direct intervention by the advertiser. . . [and it is freer] because the tradition of broadcasting in this country has been one of striving for freedom from external pressures and toward the independence of the broadcasting organizations. . . ."

In support of this thesis he points out the political implications (many presumably undesirable or slightly preposterous) of government-controlled television operations in Europe and of, in their own way, the equally-restricting considerations of television as a business and advertising venture in the United States. Britain, he believes, has the best of all possible worlds in television, with its system whereby politics and advertising do not so directly (though surely indirectly—and how significantly?) control the structure or censor programs. This indirection, as he honestly admits, shows up in attempts to control or at least influence, and in this regard

his "bête-noires" are politicians and the public advisory committees and councils which both the BBC and the commercial program companies have. His charge is that these reflect not so much public taste, but rather "a constant stream of pressure—generally from some section or subsection of the Establishment. . . . Their only claim to normalcy is that their philistinism is above average."

His comments about the geographic scope, operational patterns, financing, and programming of the BBC television service, and of the ITA and its contractors, are very revealing. He has a clear eye for recognizing the limitations and deficiencies of these organizations as well as their uneasy co-existence. He has no hesitancy in placing blame or bestowing praise as needed. When he writes about the competition between the two organizations for audience, and the further competition between the contractors for financial advantage, he shows us that, at least in these respects, Britain and America are not too far apart. In Britain, also, such factors as cost-per-thousand and the rating game are ever-present realities.

Although Hood harpoons the BBC for being monolithic he still feels that it presents a better atmosphere for creative work in television than the smaller and less-bureaucratic ITA program companies. The BBC, being what it is, has more flexibility and its creative program people have more freedom. Except for depiction of violence at times when children are normally viewing, there are no television codes or "seals of good practice;" rather there is a reliance upon precedent and tradition. This freedom is what attracts creative people to the BBC-TV "in spite of its bureaucracy and its rigid [personnel] grading system." Hood examines the question of dissent in an open society, the ability and the need to have questioning of the Establishment. He claims that it is the BBC which has been more adventuresome than the ITA. (Apropos of this, Hood gives an excellent critique of the successes and failures of "*That Was the Week That Was*," its problems, its rise, its fall. "It was," he states, "one of the great seminal programmes of our time.") According to him, the ITA plays it safe with too-extensive and inhibiting program self-censorship, forced into this position by the requirements of the Television Act of 1954. (This Act was not applicable to the BBC.) Yet Hood does acknowledge that certainly in the early days of ITV they pioneered and led the way in news and documentaries—very much influenced by the content, form and style of what the American networks had done.

Hood pays a professional's tribute to the skill and craftsmanship with which the best of American television programs imported into Britain are carpentered. He states that it is easy for British criticism of American television "to slip over into routine anti-Americanism. . . . some of what we find distasteful in certain series has its roots in American life—the acceptance of violence and its realistic portrayal, which is accompanied paradoxically by pronounced sexual Puritanism." One infers that in Britain it is just the reverse. The irony—and certainly the financial injustice—of



these contrariwise moral standards is that American television programs sell well in Britain (although limited in number by Britain's import quota), and are very attractive to British audiences, but that the home-grown counterparts find rough going in the trans-Atlantic exchange.

The author indicates that the British will persist, however, in trying to sell to us, even if its means changing their standards of content acceptance so as to conform to what they believe to be ours. And the reasons given simply are professional pride, resentment, prestige, patriotism and the desire for dollars. In television, America represents the big leagues, and as Mr. Hood knows only too well there can be both good and bad in that.

It is worthy of note, if not necessarily of joy, to add that this push to invade the American market, together with the increasing desire of the creative people in ITV and BBC to escape from the space, time and program confinements of studio television production, is leading to more and more pressure for films for television in place of live or live-tape.

As he ranges the spectrum of his material, Mr. Hood provides information about the NTSC, SECAM and PAL controversy in regard to a universal standard in Europe for color television. On the higher level of global television, Mr. Hood expresses cogently the possibilities, needs, and the problems of international communication, even with the potential envisioned through satellite transmission. The problem of literacy, the uncertainty of national policy, the degree of people's interest in other countries' offerings, differences of language, taste, cultural traditions and standards—all these are current problems in the Eurovision system, problems increased in complexity because of varying political systems and ideologies when Intervention is added. These factors, plus the possibility for international propaganda via direct satellite relay (a reality that has existed in international short-wave radio transmission for nearly a quarter of a century) are all inescapable considerations.

Hood notes that America has already, through radio and television, been successful in exporting its popular music and its telefilm programs to many parts of the world. One question is raised: when is cultural exchange subverted by cultural domination? We Americans are suspect enough now as it, politically, economically, as well as culturally.

Television, he believes, is basically a medium of and for the masses, thus the continuing problem of programming for minority audiences. It is on this point that Mr. Hood loses his cool in his chapter on "Television as Education," just as Yale Roe did some years ago in his still-important book, *The Television Dilemma*. There is not yet in Britain, one gathers, any formal, widespread ETV broadcast system, and where Roe, in effect, damned American educators and educational broadcasters for not having used and put the medium and their stations to what he considered to be the fullest and best use, Hood is militantly against British "educationalists" who, he fears, would use the medium so narrowly that it would work against the best interests of the larger viewing audience. It is easy to

identify his emotional involvement in the issue; it is less easy to gauge the degree of reality of his fears or the accuracy of his contention that "the one thing the [British] viewer does not wish is to be educated... [and that] there is a revulsion against the didactic, the educational, the instructional which reflects the failure of the educational system of [his] country to make teaching relevant to the lives of any but a small section of the community." If this reviewer reads the signs correctly, that system is changing; now if Mr. Hood and other iconoclasts could find ways of replacing "educationalists" with educators then perhaps education and instruction on British television could become both relevant and significant.

For Britain (and one could assume that he would suggest broader application), Hood argues that appreciation of television as a medium is needed, and that quite possibly "it is more important and more relevant for a very large proportion of school children to know what is a good and what is a bad television programme than to be able to read a novel. [Cries of outrage are heard offstage.] Of all the mass media, television is the one which will be most closely integrated into their living habits; it will—for the majority—be their main source of entertainment and information."

Mr. Hood's book over-all is informative, articulate, thought-provoking, even admittedly "dogmatic." Its up-to-dateness even includes a currently-fashionable reference to "MacLuhan" [sic], identified as an "American sociologist." Although he is probably by this time, for better or worse, Americanized, the gentleman from Toronto would, I should imagine, just as quickly deny his being a card-carrying sociologist as would the full membership of the American Sociological Association.

RICHARD J. GOGGIN

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UNESCO, *New Educational Media in Action: Case Studies for Planners*, Vols. I, II and III. Paris: UNESCO, 1967.

Titles, perhaps because of the need for a maximum amount of attraction in a minimum number of words, can be terribly deceptive, and this one is more deceptive than most. What is *your* definition of "new educational media?" Is radio too well established to be "new?" Is a correspondence course in and of itself a medium? Programmed instruction, film strips, television, should surely belong, but what about high or low speed playback of standard speed tape recordings? If you subscribe to a catholic definition of "new educational media," and would include *all* of these examples, then you would undoubtedly feel a bit cheated by the present collection of case studies. If, however, your primary interest happens to be in radio and television, and, more particularly, in the way in which these media are being employed to educate students at all levels (parents

and teachers included) throughout the world, this set will prove most useful.

It is not likely, however, that you are a member of the reading audience for whom these books were primarily intended. As is often the case with works published by UNESCO, these are designed to inform (and encourage) those who teach or administer teaching activities in places where innovation in teaching may be in short supply. This accounts for two aspects of the writing that may or may not annoy you, according to your tastes in these matters: a very simple, unadorned style, and considerable emphasis on exact equipment used and on figures. Also, perhaps because UNESCO would rather encourage than discourage, critical comment is infrequent, although most of the individual reports contain some cautionary notes. This is unfortunate, since my own contact with some of the operations described has revealed that many mistakes were and are made, but that the mistakes would be worth sharing with others who might later wish to attempt similar enterprises. To be sure, certain operations (notably the Farm Radio Forum in India, the radio clubs in Niger, and some of the television experiments in Nigeria) are subjected to considerable critical analysis, but this is the exception, rather than the rule.

Nearly two dozen different situations featuring the new educational media in action are described. Three are from the United States (Hagerstown, Chicago's Television College, and MPATI), while the remainder come from Africa (Niger, Ivory Coast, Algeria, Nigeria, Togo) Europe (Italy), Latin America (Honduras, Peru, Colombia), the Mid-East (Gaza Strip), South Asia (India), and the Far East and Oceania (Japan, Australia, New Zealand, American Samoa). Television and radio claim the lion's share of the coverage, correspondence programs (connected with radio and television, for the most part) come up quite often, but other media, including programmed instruction and film, appear only rarely. The reports themselves are both clear and concise; they rarely run over thirty pages; and each begins with a brief description of the country's educational situation and/or a short history of the specific project to be examined. As descriptive reports (descriptive here opposed to analytical), they are excellent, and should stimulate imitations and variations on a wider scale, which is exactly what they are meant to do.

If you are interested in gaining an impression of the myriad ways in which radio and television have been put to work in the service of education, you have a good cross-section here. There are other places and other ways where and in which broadcasting has been used to educate, and a brief review (or a simple annotated listing) of these, together with a few key names and addresses, might have been helpful. Still, I cannot quibble with the selection, which seems to have covered most angles very thoroughly. A word of appreciation is certainly due Wilbur Schramm (Stanford), Jack Lyle (UCLA) and Friedrich Kahnert (International Institute of Education) who consolidated most of the data and compiled the final reports.

These three gentlemen, together with P. H. Coombs, have made some overall recommendations and evaluations of the role of the media in education in the fourth volume of this set, *The New Media: Memo to Educational Planners*. Unfortunately, this had not been received by the time my review was due, but I hope to discuss it in a future issue of *Television Quarterly*. The present set of three volumes should prove long enough and detailed enough to keep the average reader busy until then!

DONALD R. BROWNE

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Irving Settel. A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF RADIO. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1967. (earlier edition: 1960)

Arthur Shulman and Roger Youman. HOW SWEET IT WAS—TELEVISION: A PICTORIAL COMMENTARY. New York: Shorecrest Inc., 1966.

Daniel Blum. A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF TELEVISION. New York: Bonanza Books, 1959.

George N. Gordon and Irving A. Falk. ON THE SPOT REPORTING: RADIO RECORDS HISTORY. New York: Julian Messner, 1967.

It's not surprising that a field as popular and present as broadcasting and especially television has its share of pictorial histories. The three picture volumes display most of the good and bad points of both broadcasting and picture books. The approach of each is somewhat different.

Settel's volume on radio is a reprint of his 1960 book with 13 pages on radio's role in the 1960's added for this edition. This is really an illustrated history, for the author provides a running text through the book as well as the pictures and explaining captions. After a nostalgic view of radio drama in the 1940's (by Brock Brower), Settel presents some of his most interesting illustrations in the two chapters discussing early development of radio and broadcasting in the 1920's. Almost anyone who was anyone rates a mention in the chapters on the 1930's, 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's, including most of the famous airtime personalities. In numerous places, Settel gives parts of scripts to show how average shows "went." As a light approach to an often light medium, Settel has presented an interesting view marred primarily by a confusing mixture of text and lengthy picture captions which are at times hard to follow. Nevertheless, the author has given us a good "feel" for the programs and personalities of nearly a half century.

The two volumes on television are, as one might expect, far more pictorial than textual, but even here there is variation in approach and effect, let alone coverage. Daniel Blum's book, released nine years ago (which may make this a record for belated review in *Television Quarterly*,

but should be included here for a comprehensive picture) is almost totally picture with a minimum of text. After a few pages of picture highlights of the 1938-47 period, the author presents pictures of comedy and variety shows with their stars in some 185 pages; aside from an additional 40 pages on general dramatic shows, all other programming gets short shrift (documentary, news and special events and interviews get a combined six pages). This, then is not an attempt at a balanced history, but rather presents a collection of publicity and production stills which give some idea of what TV was like in its ill-defined "golden age."

Shulman and Youman, besides having a more recent work, have produced a more useful and pleasing book on television. Certainly we have more balance here as the authors give an equal amount of space to "The Real World" (news, religion, documentaries) and to the world of comedy, variety, and stars. Another interesting section serves to remind us of the many one-time "spectaculars" in all fields. What Shulman and Youman have done, however, is to mix pictures with explanatory text so that we have a pictorial commentary instead of a mere collection of stills. Well indexed, the volume will help answer the many inevitable questions on who played what part in what series umpteen years ago. Certainly one gets a better feel of the character of television over nearly two decades than is possible from the Blum volume.

Anyone interested in broadcasting history, however, would do well to have all three works; Settel, as he presents the only picture history of radio available, and the two works on television because they cover different things to different degrees (and there seems to be little picture duplication).

Gordon and Falk, of Hofstra and New York Universities respectively, have written a light and bright book for youthful readers on the rise of radio news reporting. Skimming the high points and capturing the excitement of famous news events by reprinting actual scripts or words used "on the scene" and "at the time," the authors build a case for entry into the still-viable field of radio journalism.

The first short chapter traces the rise of news communication before the inception of radio. Beginning their discussion of the role of radio, the authors take a chronological jump to examine what they consider the high point of news on the air—Edward R. Murrow's broadcasts from London during World War II. Then the book goes back for a brief look at the technical development of radio and some of its earliest reporting achievements. In covering their story from the early 1920's to the present, the authors use a narrative vignette format based more on individual reporters or types of news events rather than a strict chronological order. This, the body of the work, is based primarily on the memoirs of radio personalities such as Graham McNamee, Ted Husing, George Hicks and Abe Schechter (NBC's first news director, who writes a forward for this volume). Except for the interesting personal glimpses of great moments with famous broadcasters, the book's value suffers from such limited source

material. Reference to other books and periodical sources could have given more contemporary color and viewpoints to balance those of the broadcasters involved.

A number of important events in the development of radio news were not mentioned. Certainly some note should have been taken of the effect of the so-called press-radio "war" of the 1930's which helped lead to the formation of network news departments as we now know them. Mention should also have been made of the Orson Welles' "War of the Worlds" broadcast in October 1938 both as an exciting news event in itself, and as an example of panic brought about by public trust in radio as a legitimate news medium.

In the book's final chapter, Gordon and Falk attempt to show how a typical large-market station news operation functions today. They have taken WDAF (Kansas City) as their example, but have given the reader no reason for this particular choice. A better approach for the youthful reader perhaps considering a career in broadcasting would have been to compare a small station's news operation with one of the large urban market stations. Such a comparison would have given a clearer view of the variations in radio news. As it is, the authors have given us an interesting view of news personalities in one city, but little real knowledge on what makes a typical station's news department tick.

On the whole, this is interesting and informative reading for young people, but the book shows signs of being rapidly written; it suffers from choppy writing, errors which show a lack of proper editing (D-Day was in 1944, not 1945), and organizational deficiencies. While it is far from being a scholarly work, for both high school and late grade school readers the book is bound to spark an interest in a medium they probably take for granted.

CHRISTOPHER H. STERLING

*University of Wisconsin*

Levy, Lester S. GRACE NOTES IN AMERICAN HISTORY. POPULAR SHEET MUSIC FROM 1820 to 1900. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967.

Nineteenth century American popular musical arts have not fared well at the hands of critics and chroniclers. With the important exceptions of certain works by Stephen Foster, most popular music of the last century has been ridiculed if not ignored. A series of widely-popular books by Sigmund Spaeth and others in the 1920's and 30's suggested that condescending amusement was the proper response to 19th century songs, and the public has been mirthfully charmed ever since. Performances of old popular songs have often been parodies of the material or variants so drastically altered that little of the value of the original remained.

Yet, if we are to comprehend the Common Man of the nineteenth century his tastes need to be taken seriously as part of his condition. The charm of his songs must be a function of an understanding of the man rather than of a belittling of his mentality and aesthetics, however different the latter may be from our own.

Lester Levy has gone far to rectify our dearth of knowledge about 19th century popular music. His book is not scholarly, critical, systematic or comprehensive, nor is it meant to be. He has selected approximately 100 items of nineteenth century popular American sheet music, songs and instrumental pieces, provided for each a short exposition of its contemporary setting, and sketched in enough social history to remind the reader of the state of the nation which produced this popular art. His book is divided into two major sections, *Mores* and *History*, each with topic subdivisions. Because Mr. Levy strives to avoid a condescending approach and has sketched in the background of the songs with clarity, the lyrics appear in a context which suggests that the standards of achievement a century ago among song-writers were not so low as Spaeth and others have implied. There is vitality, wit, and a great deal of shrewd comic satire in this collection.

The tunes of the songs are included; the reader is left to his imagination with the instrumental pieces. The pictorial covers of most of the pieces are excellently reproduced and are themselves valuable documents for the study of taste in the visual arts. The pre-Civil War pictorial covers contain some prime examples of American comic art of a sort which has seldom been reproduced. From his robust respect for his subject, and his largely successful attempts to avoid quaintness, Mr. Levy has given us a useful cross-section of both the musical and the visual popular arts of the nineteenth century.

DAVID TATHAM

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