HANDBOOK OF RADIO WRITING

BY ERIK BARNOUW

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(*Continued from front flap*)

What type of material is needed; what kinds of programs are needed; what special demands and requirements must be fulfilled, and what sort of money is paid?

The appendix provides for the use of any individual writer or class study a radio version of "Macbeth", with detailed notes on adaptation and production problems. This illustrates in one script almost all of the devices which have been explained earlier in the book. The balance of the appendix is a writer's guide to radio—a 20,000-word Baedeker to the radio world which assembles in concentrated, usable form a vast amount of information on radio institutions, programs, complete technical terms, and other information.

"In the 'Handbook of Radio Writing' Mr. Barnouw has written a platinum mine of concise, authoritative information for both the professional radio writer and the aspiring student. This work should become a standard text in its field."—*Arch Oboler, radio playwright, author-producer of NBC's Arch Oboler Plays, author of 250 plays broadcast on the Vallee Varieties, Chase & Sanborn Hour, Good News, Workshop, Texaco Star Theatre, Lights Out, and other major programs.*

$2.50

"This book should be as much a part of every radio writer's equipment as a receiving set, a typewriter and a dictionary."—*Norman Corwin, writer and director, "Words Without Music"; author of "They Fly Through the Air With the Greatest of Ease", "The Plot To Overthrow Christmas", etc.*

HANDBOOK OF RADIO WRITING

By ERIK BARNOUW

The unsolicited manuscript by an unknown writer is coming into its own in radio, the one field vast enough to have plenty of room for beginners with ability and a knowledge of the possibilities of their medium.

Mr. Barnouw, former script writer for NBC and at present Professor of Radio Writing at Columbia University, has geared his book to fill the requirements of all classes of radio writers—beginners, amateurs and professionals.

The book starts with a general appraisal of the market and of the medium, and then proceeds with a methodical analysis, illustrated with charts, of the tools, the technique and the characteristic methods and devices of radio writing.

This section is followed by a thorough survey of the radio script market. It supplies answers to such questions as:

(*Continued on back flap*)

HANDBOOK OF
Radio Writing

ERIK BARNOUW

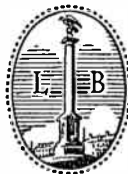
HANDBOOK OF RADIO WRITING

AN OUTLINE OF TECHNIQUES AND MARKETS IN RADIO WRITING IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

ERIK BARNOUW

Radio Writer and Director
Instructor in Radio Writing
Columbia University



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To D. B.

This book uses radio terms and mentions radio institutions freely without explanation. Detailed definitions and identifications will be found in APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO (p. 271).

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PART I: BIRD'S–EYE VIEW

1. Of the Market.
2. Of the Medium.

1. OF THE MARKET

WHEN you speak of radio writers in the United States, you mean staff-writing girls earning $15 per week, gag experts making $1500 per program, and the countless in-betweens who all contribute their bit toward the twenty million words that are broadcast daily to the American air.

Take all the words in all the full-length pictures produced in Hollywood in a year, and you do not have enough words to keep radio in the United States going for twenty-four hours.

Or, take all the words in all the Broadway plays produced in the last ten years; they still could not feed the hungry coast-to-coast giant for one day.

Twenty million words, 17,000 different programs — every day.

No one knows how many writers handle this assignment. But anyone who contemplates joining the assembly-line of broadcasting at the writer's end should know first of all that the radio writer works, today in the United States, under three different types of business arrangement.

We start out with this distinction because it will provide us not only with a scheme for this book, but with a sort of plan of attack for the prospective writer.

Therefore, the next program you listen to may have been written: —

(1) UNDER CONTRACT

Most high-priced network series are written by writers who work when and where they please, as long as they supply a set number of scripts per week, at a set weekly salary, before a stipulated deadline, all according to advance agreement. Within the limits of this agreement these writers choose their own working conditions. They do not have to be in an assigned office during assigned hours.

Some "under contract" writers work closely with directors and performers, and appear at rehearsals and broadcasts. Others mail their scripts in from farm, suburb, or beach resort. Some dictate to secretaries and dictaphones; others just bang their scripts out on a typewriter, or even write them in long hand.

The point is, if you ran the Radio Department of an advertising agency producing a coast-to-coast serial, and you'd found just the right writer, you would not care particularly when or how he or she wrote, so long as the scripts arrived on time and were what was wanted. But you'd probably make some definite arrangement or contract, written or oral.

This is the "big money" field in radio writing.

Naturally, an executive hesitates to make a contract agreement with you unless he knows a thing or two about you — enough to feel sure you can keep on turning out good scripts, and won't have a nervous breakdown after the third week. So, unless you have at least some sort of background already, best forget this market for the moment, and turn the next page to

PROGRAMS WRITTEN UNDER CONTRACT

Types of Program	How Much?	Some Examples
SERIALS: *Almost all.* Here continuity of authorship is desirable, and contract arrangements usually result.	Local: $0–$100 per week.	Rare. Some local five-a-week serials have been written for $0.00 per week, for prestige and hope of sponsor. Syndicate competition.
	Network: $75–$1250 per week.	$15–$25 per script is average network sustaining rate. $25 per script is usual minimum for Blackett–Sample–Hummert (producers of *David Harum*, *Just Plain Bill*, etc.) and of other advertising agencies. A few big-name serial writers have pushed their salaries to $1000 per week, and beyond (*e.g.*, Elaine Sterne Carrington, of *Pepper Young's Family*).
COMEDY MATERIAL: *Almost all.* Here effectiveness of material depends so much on exact knowledge of comedian's delivery that comedian usually makes some sort of contractual arrangement with one or more gag-writers who have the right touch.	Local: $1–$10 per script.	Gag-men rare except with top-flight network comics.
	Network: $25–$1500 per script.	Hal Block, comedy writer, worked his way through college supplying material to Phil Baker at $20 per joke. $1000-per-week-and-up class was reached by Harry Conn, formerly with Jack Benny, and the late David Freedman, long with Eddie Cantor. Freedman was said to have a card file of 60,000 Class A jokes, many more Class B, a staff of filers, sorters, translators.
NON-SERIAL DRAMA SERIES: *Some.* Drama series needing specialized knowledge of a certain background or technique are often best written by one or a few persons, under contract.	Local: $5–$100 per script.	Local drama series more often staff-written; sometimes derived from syndicates.
	Network: $75–$750 per script.	*Death Valley Days*, *Warden Lawes* series, *True Story* series, etc., each written by one or more writers, contracted. (For other drama series, not written under contract, see Programs Written in the Open Market, p. 9.)
CONTINUITIES FOR "BIG" PROGRAMS: *Some.*	$100 up per script.	Example: Variety hours, or other programs where large investment is involved.

Note: Transcription series, when merely supplementary to a network campaign, may bring the writer some or no additional payment. Payment on an all-transcription campaign varies with number of stations used and importance of sponsor. Large campaigns have a network status.

(2) ON STAFF

These are good jobs too. The staff writer probably makes a smaller salary than the writer "under contract," but his job is usually more secure.

Reporting to an office regularly, working in some cases in an assigned cubbyhole, writing whatever he or she is assigned to write, and drawing a check on payday, make up the business of the staff writer.

Networks and stations need staff writers for announcements, adaptations, when not done by directors; commercials, when not provided by advertising agency or sponsor; continuities; talks; interviews; and some special-occasion scripts. On smaller stations writers double in other jobs; this, especially if it includes acting, announcing, directing or engineering, may be priceless experience for the new writer.

Advertising agencies, if they are very active in radio, need staff writers to write commercials and continuities of various kinds.

Some *program agencies*, and special services like radio-news syndicates, also maintain staff writers.

Staff writing does not wait on inspiration. It affords no occasion for not-being-in-the-mood. You have to write an assigned job in a certain time. The exercise of quick judgment, rapid execution, constant ingenuity, can beget pleasure, experience and a useful confidence. A writer who has done a staff stretch on any active station, when asked what sort of material he writes best, is apt to say, "Why, anything."

Staff writing may open a gate to a contract job. But how to get a staff job? For one possible way, turn to page 8.

PROGRAMS WRITTEN ON STAFF

Types of Programs	How Much?	Some Examples
A *station* staff writer may find himself writing: CONTINUITIES COMMERCIALS TALKS ANNOUNCEMENTS ADAPTATIONS INTERVIEWS SPECIAL-OCCASION SCRIPTS ODD JOBS	Station: $15–$75 per week.	A highly organized station like WLW, Cincinnati, may employ several writers at $30–$75 per week. On smaller stations a staff writer may also do service as pianist, organist, announcer, press agent, actor, general manager or telephone operator.
A *network* staff writer may find himself writing: CONTINUITIES COMMERCIALS TALKS ANNOUNCEMENTS ADAPTATIONS INTERVIEWS SPECIAL-OCCASION SCRIPTS ODD JOBS	Network: $40–$150 per week.	The NBC or CBS staff writer does not have as varied a life as a station staff writer. Free-lance writers and agency staff writers take over many jobs, which, in local broadcasting, would fall to a station staff writer.
An *advertising agency* staff writer's chief functions are the writing of: COMMERCIALS CONTINUITIES	Advertising agency: $25–$250 per week.	In smaller agencies, radio commercials are often written by the regular copywriters. In large agencies, especially in New York and Chicago, commercial writing becomes a highly paid specialty; the writer also writes incidental connective tissue for music programs or variety hours — unless this is important enough to be contracted to an outside writer and billed to the client.
A *program agency* or *syndicate* staff writer may work on: SERIALS DRAMA SERIES AUDITIONS NEWS RELEASES	Program agency: wide salary range.	A program agency or a syndicate may occasionally hire a staff writer to work on current series or on future projects.

(3) IN THE OPEN MARKET

You work at home, at odd scripts. Let's say that in three months — you'd have to be really good for this — you've sold one script to a variety hour, one to the *Columbia Workshop* and placed another with a syndicate.

You might now have earned a few hundred dollars. That doesn't last long.

You have small chance, in this market, of making a real living. Then what is it good for?

Well, this field may yield you air-mention of your name, usually denied to writers under contract, though sometimes accorded to staff writers. You may get some newspaper publicity. Your record will open a few business doors, help toward contacts, maybe pave the way to a staff or contract job.

Write on a job application, "I've had two half-hour plays on NBC sustaining," and you will likely get an answer. You're officially a writer. For your own gratification, as well as the business advantages, a hearty fling at this field is worth the trouble.

All open series have specific requirements, some of which will be reviewed later. Some series, working on a sort of assignment basis, involving synopses, are not good opportunities for a new writer.

Maybe you write for spare-time pleasure, or for self-expression. Then this open market is the field for you. You won't get rich; you may have some real pleasure, and an occasional clipping and some fan letters to store away.

PROGRAMS WRITTEN IN THE OPEN MARKET

Types of Programs	How Much?	Some Examples
10-MINUTE SKETCHES: for variety programs. Since variety is wanted, work from a wide range of writers is desirable.	$100 up.	Most large variety hours, at some time, buy ten-minute sketches in the open market. Prices depend on the reputation of the writer. Highest prices paid have been in the neighborhood of $1000. Frequent price for unsolicited sketches from unknowns: $100.
NON-SERIAL DRAMAS: especially for series using a "framework" to tie together unconnected sketches.	$25 up.	Sustaining: CBS *Workshop* buys scripts of "experimental" or literary value (*e.g.*, MacLeish's famous *Fall of the City* appeared on this program). NBC buys similar scripts. Prices: $25 up. Commercial "framework" series: *First Nighter*, *Grand Hotel*, *On Broadway*. Price range $100–$150. Some series are only half-open, demanding preliminary synopses and/or some personal contact: *Cavalcade of America*, *Aunt Jenny* (15-minute semi-serial).
SPECIAL-OCCASION SKETCHES.	$25–$100.	A famous birthday, an anniversary, opening of Congress, the death of a king, laying of a cornerstone may call for a sketch. These are sometimes written by staff writers, sometimes bought in the open market.
MATERIAL FOR SYNDICATING TO LOCAL STATIONS.	25 cents–$2 per script per station.	Syndicates, operating in various cities, peddle material to local stations for local use, at low rate. Odd sketches and short series are offered. These may be household talks, beauty hints, etc. Writer's income, on royalty basis, varies with the number of stations subscribing.

So our road plan is something like this: Some solid accomplishment in the open market is the best possible entrée toward steadier radio writing jobs. It is not the only entrée. Some people have entered staff writing through acting, directing, advertising or newspaper work.

A staff-writing job is the best experience and foundation for the more lucrative and spectacular careers "under contract." It is true, of course, that people have also reached these heights by other paths, through luck, effective salesmanship — and simply through good writing.

Later, in PART III: MARKET MUSTS, we'll examine the problems and requirements met in each particular field of radio writing.

First we'll look at radio in a more general way, and examine that part of any radio writer's repertoire of tricks which is based on some knowledge of his medium, its technicalities and its tools.

2. OF THE MEDIUM

Radio as an instrument of expression has its limitations and its special delightful skills. The radio world discovered these gradually, over a period of years, evolving accordingly the characteristic methods and devices of radio writing.

Since the writer new to radio often goes, much more rapidly to be sure, through the same sort of evolution, the same painful adjustments and pleasing discoveries, it is useful to begin with a quick historic glance at radio writing, and observe the many changes through which it has passed since those days of the 1920's when the makers of speeches and producers of plays began in earnest to experiment in front of microphones.

Before enumerating the painful adjustments and pleasing discoveries — radio's evolution in a nutshell — it is well to point out that almost all of them spring from two very simple facts. These facts were entirely obvious from the beginning. But they had such unexpected and immense ramifications that it was, and still is, impossible to grasp them at one glance.

These two simple facts are:

(1) Radio's audience is not a crowd audience, as is the theater's, but one of individuals. The individuals may be gathered in small groups, but these are seldom large enough to bring into play anything we call "crowd psychology." *Radio's audience unit = an individual.*

The radio writer here shares a bookwriter's problem: both address people in armchair isolation, psychologically independent.[1]

(2) Absence of the visual element means that radio drama really exists only in the imagination of the listener. In the theater, dramas have an actual external existence, on stage or screen. The theater thus *demonstrates* stories. But radio only cajoles its listeners into *imagining* them. Whatever may happen in broadcasting studios bears only faint resemblance to what goes on in the listener's mind. That is where the drama really unfolds — whether it be a courtship by Charlie McCarthy or a gang roundup on *Gang Busters. Radio's stage = the imagination.*

Here again the radio writer shares the bookwriter's problem: Both must enlist the active collaboration of the audience's imagination.

It is not surprising if the unexpected significance of these two circumstances was not at once clear to radio's early writers, whether of dramas or speeches, or to subsequent writers new to radio. For never in the previous history of mankind had orators made a regular practice of directing orations toward a man sitting alone in an armchair with his feet up. Never before had huge dramatic productions been staged for the entertainment of this same casual individual. More puzzling still, never before had all these activities been directed toward an auditor who could not see nor be seen, and who was really contemplating not a performance but something in his own mind.

Radio's earliest efforts in speech and drama were all

[1] Except during broadcasts of political demonstrations, games, prizefights, comedy programs, etc. In these the listener may become psychologically part-member of the crowd. This exception affects the writer mainly in comedy programs with studio audiences. It will be considered in this connection, and otherwise ignored.

mistakenly gauged for visible crowd audiences. For they were lifted bodily from stage and platform, and placed before a microphone.

Then, as the meaning of radio's novel circumstances began to be felt, "radio writing" came gradually into existence, evolving its own devices, methods and forms. Sometimes these were vestiges of the theater, radio's foster parent; sometimes they were symptoms of radio's curious, unexpected affinity to the silent printed page; often, too, they were expressive of radio's independence and individuality among media of expression.

Let's examine, in somewhat oversimplified chronology, the most significant acquired characteristics of this medium.

The rapid getaway. One immediate difference between telling something to a crowd and telling it to a man alone in his home is that the crowd inevitably requires some preparatory, attention-corralling devices. These are needed to weld the audience into a psychological unity, in which the desired information can then be propounded as to one individual.

Thus the master of ceremonies in a theater, or the introducer of a lecturer in an auditorium, of necessity starts with some subtle or obvious equivalent of — "Ladies and gentlemen, we are happy to announce . . . that we are about to present . . . a delightful . . ." This is a necessary psychological lassoing of divergent attentions.

In later stages of an auditorium speech or play, devices of this sort may have to be repeated before any vital point.

Radio's early writers, who felt that they *were* addressing some surging, thrilling coast-to-coast arena of human beings, inevitably used these devices. "Ladies and gentlemen of the far-flung radio audience" was a cherished

opening, or, "And now, Ladies and gentlemen . . ." or, "We take great pleasure, at this time, in . . ." Today such preparatory hitching-up of the pants is almost sure to run into a producer's blue pencil.

To the man sitting in the room with you, you only need to say: "Have a cigarette, John." You do not need to attract and unify his attention with: "My good friend sitting there on the couch . . ."

Radio programs can and do start with surprising abruptness. Here are the first words of one program:

```
ANNOUNCER: The Calvalcade of America, presented by du
           Pont.
(MUSIC:    THEME) 1
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This extraordinary swiftness and economy, impossible on the stage, have become radio's most characteristic approach. In a room, each word can count.

In launching into dialogue, too, radio makes abrupt beginnings. One of radio's largest producers says: "We like the sort of writer who, when he's going to write a script about Mrs. So-and-So not being able to pay the rent, comes right out and has her say in the first speech: 'I'm sorry, Mr. Edwards, we can't pay the rent.'"

This is unthinkable in the theater.

The stage has a semi-humorous but at the same time serious rule: "When you want to tell your audience something, first tell them you're going to tell them something; then tell them; then tell them you told them something."

In radio the rule is reduced to: "Tell them."

In radio drama the intriguing or arresting start, the quick plunge into essential conflict, have forever supplanted the two maids with the dusters.

[1] *Cavalcade of America.* Sponsor: E. I. du Pont de Nemours Co. Agency: Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn.

The faster rhythm. The theater audience, once welded, is in a regimented state. Not only is it physically regimented by sitting in rows, straight-up with insufficient leg room for relaxation; it is psychologically regimented by the forces of crowd behavior. Each individual, surrounded by men and women all stirred to similar emotions and reactions, is keyed to a common, slightly hypernatural pitch.

This means he can weather quite lengthy stretches of dull dialogue without revolt. Even if he is so individual as to *want* to leave, his partial imprisonment in Row D, Seat 105, strongly deters him.

But the radio listener is a free and unregimented individual — like the armchair reader with his book. These two are in no such physical or psychological concentration camp as an auditorium audience. They are fairly free to react individually, and to express their reaction by tossing aside a dull book, switching off a dull program.

Perhaps the listener is still more ready to be fickle than the reader. The impatient reader can skip ahead; the listener can only accept or reject. Also the fact that most reading matter costs money may make the reader less quick to discard lagging entertainment.

The independence of the home-listener and his consequent capriciousness make for radio's faster pace and more continuous tension.

It will be seen that almost all radio's characteristics work toward two interrelated qualities: speed and compression.

Smaller casts. In the mind world in which radio drama has its only real existence, the listener cannot possibly keep track of as many characters as he can in the visible media. The screen and stage can handle a vast number of

plot characters. The reader also has an advantage over the listener in that he can at least check back to learn who's who. The listener, once lost, is lost. The difficulty of differentiating between a large number of voices adds to the hazard.

The result is radio's smaller casts. Small casts lead in turn to simpler plots, to the elimination of subplots and unnecessary characters. Again we see radio tending toward compression.

Elimination of non-plot action. On the stage the actor, while talking, gets up, sits down, crosses, recrosses, lights a cigarette, clasps his hands in front of the fireplace and helps himself to a whisky and soda.

Actions of this type, most of which the actor calls "business," seldom advance the plot. Of course they do on stage and screen serve an important function. But it is not a plot function. It does what we might call the job of lubricating your eyeball.

If the stage or screen picture which you are watching should remain, for even a few minutes, completely motionless, you would begin to suffer not only eye boredom but eyestrain, and a sort of hypnosis. For this reason the stage picture is kept in fairly constant fluid motion, and the screen's camera is incessantly on the move or on the jump, from long shot to close-up to medium shot, first from one side, then from the other.

Actors, directors and playwrights are fond of movement and "business." Especially on the screen, these elements may achieve an art and delightfulness of their own. Radio's first dramatists tried hard to bring this art with them. They learned, as a result, something like this: that about five per cent of the theater's "business" may be very

valuable, especially if radio selects those bits of activity which have a picture-making, scene-setting value. Such "business" radio will of course most often use near the beginnings of scenes.

They also found that the remaining ninety-five per cent became impracticable and useless.

There is no point in being hopeful that the audience will somehow, through momentary reference or vague, unidentifiable sounds, catch the fact that while the hero is conversing on matters of plot he is also, at the same time, stuffing his pipe, putting his feet on the davenport, brushing an offending ash from his sleeve, and following other picturesque pursuits.

Radio had to learn: first, that it could not handle these decorative elements; secondly, that it did not need them.

The writer should realize, of course, that radio feels almost no restrictions in *plot action.* When Buck Rogers steps into his rocket ship and roars off for another planet, the action is always entirely clear, because that is what the plot and the dialogue are about. As will be seen later through examples, radio has no trouble making clear, even excitingly real, any activity that has a place in the plot sequence. At times such actions seem to derive a particular excitement from being invisible. The squeak of a rusty door hinge, the crunch of footsteps across gravel, are somehow more exciting than the activities they represent. In any case, *Big Town* and *Gang Busters* and other programs have amply shown that radio can, when it wants to, and needs to, indulge in orgies of plot action.

What radio has discarded is the added eye-entertainment of stage and screen, the activity whose job it is to distract and lubricate the eye whenever dialogue alone is carrying on the plot. This decoration radio cannot handle,

does not require. Radio does not have to give your eyeball something to do. The bugaboo of the static picture is gone. An episode of *Amos 'n' Andy* or *The Goldbergs* may on occasion proceed ten or twelve minutes without a single hint of physical activity. In radio the inner drama, through the dialogue, may take the whole stage.

Once more we find radio discarding the superfluous for its own characteristic, severe concentration on essential plot matters.

Scenery by suggestion. The evolving radio art still had to make one or two more adjustments before it was ready for more exciting adventures of discovery.

Radio's early writers, troubled by the absence of visible scenery, often let the announcer speak the type of material included in the opening directions of a stage play. "At one side of the room is a couch. Beside the couch is a small table with some magazines, books, ashtrays. Facing this, a few feet away, is an overstuffed easy chair of old-fashioned design, and behind this . . ."

In other words, the listener's mind was treated as a fast-working stage carpenter, and presented with a verbal blueprint. Directors and writers realized the difficulty of swallowing such material in one quick gulp, but thought it the only solution for a hopelessly handicapped medium.

What had to be learned was that the mind works far more magically from a mere hint than from a blueprint. Tell the mind "a cheery bedroom," and instantly it leaps into a picture-making activity. A cheery bedroom comes to life. But an itemization of the number of chairs and the dimensions of the room would start no such image-making; instead, it would choke the baffled imagination.

Radio had to learn to hint, to suggest, to stimulate. It

had to learn what *not* to supply. Again we find a curtailing and simplifying of the radio writer's work.

Freedom of movement. Once it had learned the value of the brief, evoking suggestion, radio began to make pleasant discoveries. It realized that it had access to a vast scenic warehouse — in the mind of every listener. The radio writer can almost instantly call up images from the listener's whole past experience — material drawn not only from life but also from movies, books, magazine illustrations, Sunday supplements and fantasy and fairy-tale memories.

The writer need only push the right button, say the right word.

Not only does this enable the radio writer to stalk the world with seven league boots, but it gives him access to scenes unconstructable by the most ingenious scenist.

John Tucker Battle, author of the *Heroes Was People* Negro comedy sketches, featured first on *Vallee Varieties* and later on *Showboat*, wrote a sketch in which we followed Jonah into the Whale's stomach. Jonah soliloquized forlornly in this cavernous setting, which had a hollow sound. Deciding to light up his pipe, Jonah looked for a place to strike a match, and tried the wall of the Whale's stomach, which made the Whale very squirmy.

It is curious that when this was being rehearsed, everyone concerned seemed to have an exact idea of what the match struck on the stomach wall should sound like. When they got it right, they all agreed: "That's it!"

But the significant thing was the utter believableness of the scene. The listener received only a very few hints. There was never any elaborate description of the setting. The listener's picture was first created by the announcer's

words, "In the Whale's stomach." To this suggestion was added Jonah's own comment, "My, it's dark down here." The barrely echo effect which surrounded these words was a further valuable suggestion. Finally there was the exact striking of the match.

Let the mind complete the picture. Give it the right word, perhaps the right sound, occasionally the right picture-making music. The mind will do the rest, and enjoy the work.

Freedom of form. Once the writer has realized that he can go where he wants, and quickly, he glimpses the exciting freedom of form that radio affords him.

The early radio writer, who looked to the theater for his forms, found an art that habitually consolidated its action into a fairly limited number of scenes, often compressing into one act, in a drawing room, events which might more logically be scattered at different times over the garden, bedroom and dining room.

A writer looking to the movies for guidance would find these, on the other hand, deliberately scattering their action for the sake of visual variety, sometimes breaking up a sequence which might logically happen all in a drawing room and spreading it somehow over garden, bedroom and dining room.

Radio learned to follow an independent course.

Unlike the stage, radio is under no compulsion to localize its action; radio scenery costs nothing and shifts easily.

Unlike the films, radio feels no urge to scatter its action for decorative purposes.

So the radio dramatist has the very blessed freedom of being able to follow merely the logical needs of his story.

The writer of *Vic and Sade*, who spends his twelve or fifteen minutes comfortably in one living room, and the writer of a Warden Lawes drama, who moves through fifteen or twenty scenes and settings in twenty-six minutes, are both doing just that: following the dictates of their material. In radio, that is just what they should do.

Radio has the privilege of moving; it also has the privilege of not moving.

The development of narration. There is another aspect to radio writing's wide range of forms.

Radio early introduced the announcer or narrator, but felt at first that he was merely an evil makeshift. Only gradually writers began to realize that narration might become to radio as valuable and flexible a tool as to the printed page.

Little by little radio's narrators acquired a variety of functions. Some were given personality, like the Old Ranger on *Death Valley Days* or the Voice of Time on *March of Time.* Finally, especially in Orson Welles's productions for the *Campbell Playhouse*, the narrator achieved a dominating dramatic role.

The use of narration, as developed by Orson Welles, took radio drama far away from the forms of stage and screen drama, and made it resemble much more closely the forms of the novel. While this program continued to use, as the novel may too, long unbroken stretches of dialogue, it also introduced the use of stretches of narration sometimes a page or two long. Such narrations might occasionally lead to only three or four lines of dialogue, these leading in turn to more narration. Occasionally, the narrator might even inject himself into the middle of a scene.

As important as the flexibility of form this technique permitted, was the entirely new element it brought to dramatic storytelling: drama in the first person singular, told from the point of view of one of its protagonists. This protagonist might comment, explain and even plead to his audience. Modern drama before radio was strictly objective.

Orson Welles called his original sustaining series *First Person Singular;* and, in recognition of how little his programs resembled what we usually mean by drama, he preferred not to call them dramas, but "radio stories."

It is significant that while drama was developing its narrative possibilities, an opposite evolution was taking place in programs formerly all narrative or all expository, such as the educational talk. Programs of this type were tending to develop away from one-voice delivery toward such forms as the dialogue, the round-table discussion or the lecture with dramatic flashbacks.

Today, the radio telling of a story, or presentation of a subject, may take an objective, all-dialogue form, a subjective all-narration form, or innumerable combinations.

That radio came to achieve this variety was inevitable in the fact that, like the printed page, it unfolds its drama in a world of the imagination.

The versatile collaborator. Of all the special pleasures of the radio writer he learns to appreciate more than anything else the fertility of his collaborator, the listener's mind.

It is very evident that the listener enjoys the image-making he must add to the story. For example, though he cannot see facial expressions, he will write to radio artists and say, "When you said that, I could just see you grinning." Doesn't this seem to mean that the fitting of an image to a provocative sound is a very definite pleasure?

In the same way we must explain the pleasure of the intriguing sound effect. In the mystery drama, the listener enjoys supplying, to the footsteps on the creaking stair, the unseen figure of the burglar. In the same way we must explain the pleasure of suggestive music.

The radio writer must learn to develop a feeling for the listener's creative activity. He must learn to give it scope, control it and predict its probable course.

And that means he must become aware of the habits and laws of a fascinating mind-world whose operations are totally unlike those of the world in which we live.

The understanding of that shadowy world is the crux of the radio writer's problem.

The shifting mind-world. It is a world of odd and interesting shiftiness in which such factors as *scenery*, *costume*, *smells*, *heat*, *cold*, even *people*, may be made vividly real and alive at any desired moment, and later be allowed to lapse into a suspended semi-existence.

Radio usually allows existence only to whatever is dramatically useful at the moment.

The door of a room, in a radio play, has only a sort of potential existence until the moment it is mentioned or used. Now it *opens*. This brings the door itself into a sudden reality, and in the listener's mind something of a room may also for a moment shape itself around that door opening, and the half-realized room-sound that goes with it. The door closes. Now room and door retreat once more to a subconscious mist.

"Oh, what lovely, lovely roses," says the radio heroine. Immediately, the mind conjures roses, as good as the property man's, but with this strange added virtue, that they retire to limbo when no longer actively needed.

The unused, silent stairway, dramatically meaningless, has no existence in radio. Neither has the inactive foot. But now the foot goes charging up the stairway — both foot and stair enter, at that moment, the world of drama and the world of radio.

Radio feels that since the play's the thing, the resulting concentration, the freedom from the obtrusion of non-essentials, are valuable.

The selective spotlight. Radio's constant selectiveness may be further illustrated by the subject of costume.

If, in a historical sketch, a feeling of quaint costumery is desirable, the radio writer can make costumes as real as the novelist can, simply by describing them or referring to them, in dialogue or narration. The picture may further be enhanced by occasional sounds — the swish of skirts at a dance, the clink of a sword — or by the suggestiveness of period music.

But radio may, if the drama is an inner psychological one in which costume would become a superficial and meaningless intrusion, present a world in which costume just doesn't exist.

Radio, in a drama about George Washington and his state problems, has the privilege of being able to portray the Father of his Country free of irrelevant upholstery — as a man, not a museum piece. If costume isn't mentioned, it doesn't exist.

In the same way radio can present a Hamlet who wears neither tights nor tuxedo. Radio chooses just those dramatic elements it cares to use.

Summary. The radio writer deals with an imagined mind-world resembling that of the reader reading a book, but

adds to this the vibrancy and aliveness of human voice, sound and music. This world is in no sense one-dimensional, nor is it only an aural world. It may be steeped, as any radio listener knows, in excitements to all the senses: cold and heat, softness and harshness, sunlight and dark. It is the writer's job to call these forth.

For radio, the ear is the route to the imagination of the listener.

This gives the writer an instantaneous passport to wide worlds of fact and fancy.

Radio's peculiarities commit it forever to the quick start, the simple plot, the unprecedented concentration on plot essentials.

But its enlistment of man's imagination is its most important fact, the very core of its flexibility and story-telling power.

This chapter has discussed characteristics inherent in the radio medium, and probably observable in radio writing everywhere. We have outlined these in a very general manner.

PART II: TECHNIQUE, will continue this discussion with a much more detailed analysis of the tools, devices and tricks of radio writing.

But this still leaves out of consideration innumerable forces which influence the radio writer in this country. The radio writer works in no Elysium. The content and forms of much of the material he writes are affected by such forces as: the regulations of the Federal Communications Commission; the self-censorship of networks and stations; the theories and practices of advertising and merchandising; the taboos of child psychologists; the protests of parent-teacher associations; the protests of

religious, racial and political pressure groups; the pressure of educational groups; the pressure of legal advisers; the Hollywood guest-star system; the regulations of unions.

PART III: MARKET MUSTS, taking up one by one all the most important types of scripts written by writers in the United States, will consider in detail the effects of these forces.

PART II: TECHNIQUE

1. The Three Tools.
2. Routine Devices.
3. Trick Devices.

1. THE THREE TOOLS

The radio script is a trio for three singers: (1) sound effects, (2) music, (3) speech.

At any time, any of these can carry a solo passage, or they may be used in any combination.

Here are *sound effects* carrying on the story alone:

(HEAVY BELL CHIMES TWO O'CLOCK)

(POURING DRINK INTO GLASS)

(SET BOTTLE DOWN)

(DRINK—GULPING—SET BOTTLE AGAINST GLASS AND POUR AGAIN)

(GULPING DRINK AGAIN)

(PUSH CHAIR BACK)

(WALK ON WOODEN FLOOR AND OPEN AND CLOSE ROOM DOOR)

(WALK DOWN FLIGHT OF WOODEN STAIRS AND OPEN DOOR)

(TRAFFIC NOISES AT 2 A.M. AND CLOSE DOOR) [1]

In the following, *speech* has the stage, and then hands it over to *music*, which proceeds to spend a few seconds swabbing the ether with its tonal paint brush.

ANNOUNCER: Fasten your windows. Bolt your doors. Turn down your lights. Draw your chairs close. For he comes once more...that amazing Spook ...the Ghost of Benjamin Sweet...

(MUSIC: DREARY, DESOLATE, GRAVE-YARD STUFF)[2]

[1] From an *All-Sound Effect Mystery-Drama* by Richard Morenus.

[2] *The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet*, by Fred Gilsdorf. CBS sustaining.

Speech usually does most of the work. But be sure to notice that, in radio alone, sounds and music are no longer mere accessories or backgrounds in drama, but can occupy the *entire stage*. They become storytelling factors in their own right.

When two or three of our trio singers are used in combination, "center stage" — that is to say, the center of attention — goes automatically to whichever element is being sent out by the engineer at full volume. The listener doesn't decide, in general, where his attention shall be. The engineer decides it for him.

This is how the engineer might alter the relative attention-value of two elements being used simultaneously — an actor and a sound effect:

Cast Mike	Sound–Effect Mike
X	X
Actor "haranguing a crowd"	Sound effect recording of "angry mob"

Engineer

Blending how?

One possibility:

If: The engineer sends out the crowd at full volume, the speaker at half volume —

The Effect Is: *A speaker hopelessly trying to address a tumultuous mob.*

Another possibility:

If: The engineer sends out the speaker at full volume, the crowd at half volume —

The Effect Is: *A speaker successfully conveying his message to an unruly crowd.*

This difference in effect can be accomplished by the engineer alone, with the studio performers doing exactly the same thing in each case.

In the following instance music and speech are in simultaneous use:

CAST MIKE	MUSIC MIKE
X	X
Boy and girl talking as during dance	Pleasant dance music

ENGINEER

Blending how?

One possibility:

IF: The engineer sends out the boy and girl at full volume, the music at half volume—

THE EFFECT IS: *A boy and girl talking while dancing.* The talk takes the spotlight.

Another possibility:

IF: The engineer sends out the music at full volume, the boy and girl at half volume—

THE EFFECT IS: *A dance, with some talk as of dancers in the background.*

For this reason the writer must occasionally provide such directions as:

(FEATURE RIVER RAPIDS FOR A MOMENT, THEN DROP TO BACKGROUND.)

(REGISTER TRAIN, THEN DOWN UNDER FOLLOWING)

(MUSIC UP, THEN DOWN AND LOSE BEHIND)

(ESTABLISH STREET NOISES, THEN FADE AND SNEAK OUT BEHIND FOLLOWING)

(SNEAK IN MUSIC)

The words used in the above, *establish*, *feature*, *register*, *fade down*, *fade up*, *sneak in*, *sneak out*, are among the most common used to indicate the constant emerging of an element into the spotlight, its perhaps momentary stardom, its withdrawal into the background or its quiet edging out of the mind's world.

It will be noted on the RECOMMENDED RADIO SCRIPT FORMAT described and reproduced on near-by pages that most scripts are typed in such a way that speech, sound effects, and music stand out from each other at a quick glance. This is valuable in production, not only to the usually different groups handling the three separate elements, but especially to the engineer who is doing the mechanical blending or balancing, and to the director or production man who dictates the balance.[1]

There are a few facts a radio writer should know about the three tools at his disposal.

It will be seen in the following sections that though each tool has fairly distinct jobs to perform, each can also to some extent take over the functions of the other tools. Thus, a storm might, at the writer's option, be sometimes a sound-effects storm, sometimes entirely a music storm, sometimes a sound-effects-and-music storm.

Or, if your Jack and your Jill got married, you *might* have your announcer tell us that "Jack and Jill got married, and went to China for a honeymoon," or you might let a music bridge play the wedding march and then *segue* to a "Chinese theme."

These examples are merely meant to emphasize what can't be emphasized too much — that radio is like a trio

[1] The number of microphones used depends on the simplicity or complexity of the program. It might be anywhere from one to ten. The important point for the writer is that, when necessary, the three elements can have separate mechanical control.

in which for a few minutes one of the singers does his stuff alone, then suddenly hands the spotlight to one of the others, and once in a while two or three of them burst out together. When they do, it's up to you to make clear, if there's any doubt, which one must dominate.

Volume is radio's spotlight.

RECOMMENDED RADIO SCRIPT FORMAT

The format described on this page, and used on the opposite page, is approximately that in use at NBC, CBS and many advertising agencies. Some agencies use a form adapted from theater practice, with the names of the characters in the middle, above the speeches. But the form here described is in wider use, and is recommended chiefly for that reason. It will be noted that in this format radio's "three tools" stand out from each other at a glance.

NAMES. Put the names of the characters at the side, in capital letters, followed, if you like, by a colon. But no dots, dashes, parentheses or underlining. If names are too long to fit into the allotted space, they are broken, and two lines are used. For this use single space, as with STUDIO ANNOUNCER. Abbreviations may also be used; for instance, on subsequent speeches the STUDIO ANNOUNCER might simply be labeled S.A.

SPEECHES. Begin the speeches about twelve spaces to the right of the name margin. Always use double space in speeches. Don't use quotation marks around the speeches. If the speech at the bottom of a page runs onto the next page, it is usual to put the notation (MORE) at the bottom of the page.

SOUND EFFECTS. Sound effects are always in capital letters, in parentheses, but not underlined. Their position varies as follows. Effects occurring between two speeches of the same scene are usually placed on a line by themselves, several spaces to the right of the speech margin, as with (TYPING STARTS AGAIN). Effects occurring or beginning in the middle of a speech are placed wherever they occur or begin, and do not need a separate line. Effects that are *bridges* between scenes or narrations are often typed like music bridges, though not underlined. A margin notation such as BRIDGE, EFFECT, SOUND, BUSINESS or BIZ, may be used at such times. Some writers use these margin notations at other times also, but this seems superfluous.

MUSIC. Music is always in capital letters, in parentheses, and underlined. Position varies according to the function and importance of the musical passage. If it is a *bridge*, or opening effect, or musical number, it is usual to set it up like (MUSIC: SWELL SWIFTLY TO FINISH). The marginal notation may be MUSIC, or may specify the personnel: (QUAR-TET: . . . . .), (PIANO DUO: . . . . .), (LAWRENCE TIBBETT: . . . . . .). When the musical passage is only an effect incidental to a scene, it may be set without marginal notation, in the positions used for sound effects: on the inner margin, if occurring between speeches; in the middle of a speech, if the musical effect occurs or begins there.

DIRECTIONS. Directions to actors, directors, engineers, or sound-effects men are all typed in capital letters, in parentheses, not underlined; in other words, they are typed like sound effects. They are placed at the beginning, or during, or at the end of speeches, whichever position seems most logical. Example: (A MAN).

RECOMMENDED RADIO SCRIPT FORMAT

(MUSIC: "STOUT-HEARTED MEN"...AND FADE BEHIND...)

VOICE: Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.

(MUSIC: SWELL SIGNATURE BRIEFLY AND FADE BEHIND...)

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: Uncle Sam, this is America dictating! Take a letter!

NARRATOR: Twenty-six billion times a year, Uncle Sam hears that call and obeys it! Twenty-six billion times he takes the letter, the magazine, the newspaper, the parcel post package—and conveys it swiftly, safely to its destination. The National Broadcasting Company brings you a behind-the-scenes picture of the Post Office Department in action.

(MUSIC: SWELL SWIFTLY TO FINISH)

(FADE IN SOUND OF TYPEWRITERS CLICKING)

ANNOUNCER: In an office!

CLERK: (A MAN) Hey, Mazie. It's five o'clock.

(TYPING STOPS)

MAZIE: Is it? Goodnight, Herman.

(TYPING STARTS AGAIN)[1]

[1] *Post Office Show*, by Wade Arnold and Richard McDonagh. NBC sustaining. Reproduced by permission of the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

(1) SOUND EFFECTS

Because every sound effect represents a physical action, there is excitement even in reading a list of sound effects.

Sound effects nowadays may be conveyed by mechanical, electrical, manual, vocal and acoustical devices; or, recorded sound effects may be used.

An hour spent browsing through a catalogue of recorded sound effects is an ear-opener to any writer. Here are a few scattered items from the catalogue of Gennett Records, of Richmond, Indiana, which sells its records to most U. S. A. radio stations and transcription companies.[1]

BACON FRYING — 1055B (1) Close up 1 : 05 (2) Coffee percolating with bacon frying, close up : 55 (3) Coffee percolating close up : 50 . . (Popcorn popping)

BADGER — 1120B (3rd cut) Badgers hissing (close up, exterior) : 40 (1) Wild Mallard ducks quacking and drinking : 55 (2) Canadian Wild Geese and goslings 1 : 00 (4) Bear begging : 20. Recorded in small outdoor zoo with incidental sounds in background. Courtesy Izaac Walton Zoo, Hart, Mich. (Kittens)

BARN DOOR — Roller type — 1141A (1) Opening, interior : 10 (2) Opening, exterior : 08 (3) Closing, exterior : 10 (4) Closing, interior : 20 (5) Opening roller type door inside barn : 10 (6) Closing inside roller door : 12 (7) Man descending inclosed wooden steps inside barn : 14 (8) Man ascending inclosed

[1] This represents half a page of a thirty-two-page catalogue. The words in parentheses indicate in each case what is on the reverse side of the record. Often each side has several "cuts," as indicated. The running time of each cut is shown in minutes and seconds. The long numbers are catalogue numbers.

For a list of companies marketing recorded sound effects, see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *sound-effects records*.

wooden steps inside barn : 14 . . (Man on stairs)

BARNYARD — 1033A (Confusion of miscellaneous sounds) Close-up, exterior, continuous — roosters crowing, hens cackling, cows mooing, mules braying, hogs grunting and pigs squealing 2 : 55 . . . . (Milking cow)

BASEBALL GAME — 1161A (Players warming up before game) Continuous 3 : 25, with crack of bats and general conversation of small crowd in background. Courtesy Indiana-Ohio League . . . (Crowd)

BLIZZARD — 1027B. Continuous (Not from life) 2 : 53 . . . . (Howling winter winds)

BOWLING ALLEY — 1105A. (3 cuts) Interior with some reverberation. Sound of balls rolling on alleys; balls hitting pins, and setting up of pins. (1) 3 alleys in rotation : 30 (2) 3 alleys continuous 1 : 30 (3) single alley continuous 1 : 15

ICE — 1096A (1) Putting ice into pitcher : 11 (2) : 07 (3) Putting ice into pitcher and pouring liquid on ice : 20 (4) : 12 (5) Putting ice into glass : 06 (6) putting ice into 2 glasses : 09 (7) Putting ice into 2 glasses and filling with liquid : 25

MILKING COW — 1033B. Close up, interior, continuous. Sound of milk hitting empty pail and pail filling; incidental mooing of cow 1 : 20 (2) Milking cow (same as 1) 1 : 10 . . . . . (Barnyard)

Peculiarities of sound effects. In becoming aware of the endless sounds, homey and exciting, through which we move daily, the radio writer should habitually tuck them away in his mind under three separate headings.

We'll explain why and how in a moment.

Most people probably know that a radio fire is often conveyed by crackling cellophane.[1] A big fire, as of a house burning, might be compounded of:

(1) Crackling cellophane,

(2) Rumble of kettledrum, for roar of flames.

Now it is also true that a *thunder shower* might be compounded of:

(1) Crackling cellophane, for rain.

(2) Rumble of kettledrum, for distant thunder.

Both cellophane and kettledrum could be operated fairly similarly in both cases.

In other words, the job of making these two effects satisfactory, as they can perfectly well be, is only partly a mechanical problem. It is fifty per cent the script-writer's job.

Example. Let us say that, in a sketch, a chat by two men on a street corner is interrupted by the unmistakable:

(SCREAM OF FIRE SIRENS)

(ALARMED VOICES IN DISTANCE)

Now, as the men comment that there is a fire and rush to the scene of it, and the crowd at the fire fades in with the roar of the kettledrum and the crackling of cellophane, there is no doubt about the picture. It can be clear, even alarming: It is a *fire*.

But — should you fade in crackling cellophane and kettledrum without the preparation, your listener might conceivably ask, "What is the rumble and the cellophane?"

Three pigeonholes for sound effects. Think of sound effects as one of these:

[1] Other methods are also used. But this illustration still holds good.

(1) Always satisfactory — identification not needed.
(2) Equally satisfactory — if at once identified.
(3) No good — and best omitted.

Self-identifying sounds. Among sound effects that are always immediately picture-making, always crisply self-identifying:

(HORSES' HOOFS)

(DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING)

(DOORBELL)

(FOG HORN)

(ANGRY CROWD)

(TELEPHONE DIAL)

(TINKLE OF GLASSWARE AND SILVER)

(LOCOMOTIVE WHISTLE)

(WIND HOWLING)

You can continue the list yourself.

Sounds needing identification. Here follow a few sound effects that need identifying. In *very* dubious cases, the identification should be *before*, or the *instant* the sound begins. When the effect starts, the imagination's readiness to leap into action at your behest is something heart-warming and incredible. Hint "fire," crackle cellophane: The fire blazes.

But if you let a *wrong* notion get a head start, let the listener once think "Conveyor belt" when he should think "Waterfall" — this is not at all inconceivable — and your illusion has been badly disrupted. It may have a hard time making a comeback.

A few effects that it's best to identify:

(RAIN)

(WATERFALL)

(MANUFACTURING NOISES)

(THUNDER)

(AUTOMOBILE)

(TRAIN)

(AEROPLANE)

These last three buzzy, hummy, rhythmical sounds are not as satisfactory as they might be — if they occur alone. However, a locomotive whistle spotted at the beginning of the train effect makes a quick identification. An auto horn quickly identifies the auto. Context must usually take care of an aeroplane.

In these cases, of course, there is no serious danger of the mind going far astray. Early identification may be enough. The identification should never be too obvious. An implied identification:

(FADE IN HEAVY RUMBLE OF TRUCK)

BILL: Take the back road again, Chuck?

CHUCK: Yeah. It's quicker. No lights, and less traffic.[1]

In many cases, sounds become clear through the plot itself, through perfectly natural references in dialogue and narration. For example, here is a very difficult effect, impossible without careful preparation, yet surprisingly effective when careful groundwork has been laid:

[1] *Thatcher Colt Mysteries*, by Himan Brown and associates. Sponsor: Packer's Tar Soap. Agency: Stack-Goble.

PELTON: (NARRATION)...I had just ordered my men to dig in. Our first battalion was to pass over our heads to continue the attack. In the gravel pits were twenty-two prisoners, taken that day. We had just about finished digging in when the first started to jump over us.

(GUNFIRE, OFF. MEN DIGGING, ON)

PELTON: All right, fellows, that's deep enough.

WADE: Here comes the first battalion over, Serge.

PELTON: Well, get your heads down or those guys'll kick your brains out when they go over.

WADE: Watch it.

(MEN RUNNING ON, JUMPING OVER TRENCH)[1]

The point is: A doubtful sound can be used just as effectively as a clear sound, if the context is arranged so as to give the needed hint.

This leaves the "no-good" sounds.

No-good sounds. Listen in a room with several people talking; close your eyes. You'll find that we live much of the time in an acoustical chaos, from which the mind habitually sifts those sounds which it chooses to hear and accept, and rejects other fuzzy half-sounds it does not want.

Radio also has to select.

A man striding down a gravel path, or tiptoeing a creaky stairway, makes fascinating sounds that are dramatically useful. But moving around his living room he makes less interesting footsteps. On radio they would be more confusing than picture-making. Radio uses foot-

[1] From *Nine Prisoners*, a *Columbia Workshop* script by William March. CBS sustaining.

steps to indicate movements over some surface of special interest: the stone floor of a vault, the loose boards of a barn, gravel, a cornfield; otherwise it prefers to ignore footsteps.

Every sound effect that does not contribute a usefulness or pleasure to the picture, or help to give it a three-dimensional reality, should be dismissed as "no good."

Further selectivity. Even a good effect, useful in one scene, might be omitted in another similar scene. This might apply to such an everyday effect as doors.

In a scene involving much coming and going of characters, the constant opening and closing of a door might have various useful values. It might serve a comic purpose; or give a feeling of bustle; or serve to emphasize, if the fact was important, that the scene was in a closed room. If the effect had no such particular value, the writer might omit it altogether.

This wouldn't necessarily mean that there wasn't a door, or that the door was open. It might merely mean that the matter was not sufficiently important to be brought into the spotlight.

Even the chance to use a good effect may sometimes profitably be ignored.

Sounds as backgrounds. Besides their usefulness in depicting action, sound effects do some service as scenic backgrounds: trains, automobiles, birds, babbling brooks.

This is effective in short scenes, often irksome in long scenes. For long scenes, it is a frequent practice to set the scene by "featuring" the sound effect for a few seconds at the beginning; then, when the dialogue is under way, to fade the sound effect to a faint background, or even out

entirely; then toward the end of the scene to sneak it in again, and possibly at the very end to feature it once more for two or three seconds.

The sound-effect background is often used not so much for its own effectiveness — occasionally it's a headache — as for its usefulness as a scene-shifting device. This will be discussed in a special section on SCENE-SHIFTING.

Stylization through sound effects. The deliberately unreal timing of sound effects is often useful to give a sort of stylization to a scene or sketch. The crisp opening and closing of a door, too fast actually to get through it, is a general comedy device. It gets characters off and on with a speed that suggests complete freedom from physical laws. This gives the same sort of amusing satisfaction as a movie at double speed.

Fred Allen's programs often achieve a stylized unrealness through unreal timing of effects. So do Jack Benny's, particularly with doors.

Expressionistic use of sound effects. Sometimes, with only a slight hint, the listening mind can grasp an effect as not actually happening, but merely expressing an idea.

In quite a few sketches, for instance, a clock or metronome has been faded in during a critical, tense scene, merely to emphasize the slipping away of precious time. This device is not necessarily confined to "experimental" programs.

Example: In a sketch by Stewart Sterling, the dialogue emphasized during a crisis that *time* was short. There were only *minutes* to go, *seconds* to go. During this talk the metronome was sneaked in. It was kept in till the climax. Occasionally there were such lines as, "We haven't time to waste!," "We're losing minutes!," "We've only seconds

left to make it!" The metronome here was invaluable in intensifying the suspense.

Summary on sound effects. All the color and movement and flavor of an action often seem caught in its very sound, so that the sound is an instant picture.

Even when this isn't so, the mind is ever anxious to supply what's missing; it only needs a steer from the writer.

Thus, properly handled sound effects, whether used for plot action or to suggest a locality by its characteristic activity, are of value in steeping the scene in a sense of reality.

Sometimes, conversely, they can create an imagined, desirable *unreality.*

The mind may also be persuaded to accept them as having a symbolic, not realistic meaning.

Sound-Effect Experiments

1. Buy or borrow some sound-effect records;[1] they can be played on any phonograph. Play to yourself, or to a group, a *rain* record. Now, knowing it is rain, try listening to it *as something else.* For instance, tell yourself *sewing machine.* See if you cannot make the illusion extremely compelling. Now try to persuade yourself *waterfall,* or *fire,* or *assembly line,* or *distant applause.* If you can obtain a *surf* record, try thinking *train going into tunnel,* or *car sloshing through mud and rain.* If you have access to a microphone system, try playing a scene with the *wrong* record, and see if you cannot make the effect believable anyway, just through the right mental suggestions. This experiment should develop a realization of the possible collaboration of the listening imagination, when properly guided.

2. For a day, jot down all the sounds you come across, cataloguing them under the three headings: *self-identifying; non-self-*

[1] See Appendix B: The Writer's Guide to Radio, *sound-effects records.*

identifying; no good. This game should develop an alertness for the valuably suggestive sound.

(2) MUSIC

Music, though the least necessary of the three tools, and not at present of much significance in daytime drama, is useful for certain types of programs.

Music has the unique ability to create a mood almost instantaneously. It is therefore useful to radio drama as background and also as a scene-shifting device.

Curtaining the end of one scene in exactly appropriate mood, it can *segue* quickly to a new mood or atmosphere, giving the following scene a valuable tonal send-off. This will be discussed in more detail under SCENE-SHIFTING. We will consider also at that time prejudices against this type of scene-shift on some programs.

In indicating a mood bridge or a mood background, the writer may, if he has no very definite type of music in mind, and prefers to leave this to a musician, merely write:

(MUSIC: ....)

Or he may be specific. In this case some writers use the musician's learned lingo in regard to mood music — which is half English and half Italian — while others contrive pleasantly weird phraseology of their own, often much more expressive of what's wanted. (LET THE MUSIC HERE JUMP AROUND SORT OF KITTENISHLY) writes the *Court of Human Relations* writer [1] for the benefit of his organist.

In music libraries catalogued for dramatic usage — such as might be owned by a station, network, orchestra leader, or music publisher — the world's music is neatly chopped up and filed away in mood-segments of a few seconds to

[1] William Sweets.

several minutes, labeled under perhaps a hundred different classifications.

Thus you might run across snatches of the *Peer Gynt Suite* catalogued under BARBARIC, CAREFREE-ABANDON, DEATH, EXOTIC-GROTESQUE, DREAD, DAINTINESS, GRIEF, MARCHES, MYSTERIOSO-COMIC, NORWEGIAN, SEA, and STORM AGITATO.

It will be noted that some classifications refer to places and periods — there are always SOUTHERN; EGYPTIAN; NEW YORK — while the rest refer mostly to moods.

Among these, the moods most often described with Italian words would include:

AGITATO
ALLEGRO
APPASSIONATO
FURIOSO
MYSTERIOSO

which are all self-explanatory. Convenient English terminology in constant use includes:

AGGRESSION
CHASE
FOREBODING
GALLOP
HURRY
REVERIE

But actually, any mood-suggesting word is useful. The writer might indicate, for instance:

(MUSIC: IMPRESSIVE STUFF)

(MUSIC: A CONTENTMENT THEME)

(MUSIC: ANGRY, WITH MAYBE A DIRTY, CONSPIRATORIAL NOTE)

(MUSIC: LOVE THEME, VERY SOFT AND LILTING)

Our purpose here is merely to suggest the infinite nuances of musical expressiveness, whose exact and judicious use can be more valuable to radio than to any other dramatic medium. Music, taking the spotlight, can drench the scene in its proper light.

But it has other uses and functions.

Music as action. In the prankish atmosphere of the original *Pop-Eye* program, music was used in a delightful way to sketch action. Pop–Eye swallowing his Wheatena was a rapid gurgly musical figure, suggesting descent in a maelstrom. Here music became an expressionistic sound effect, valuable in creating a fanciful world.

In fantasy, music may frequently suggest action normally silent. The following is an example:

```
GOOD FAIRY: My wand, please...thank you...Now, are we
            ready?  Three waves of my wand should do, I
            think.  (FAIRY MUSIC IN)  All that in this
            palace lies motionless in Death...trans-
            form.  One...two...three!
              (THREE WAVES OF THE WAND ARE REPRESENTED
              IN THE SCORE)[1]
```

Note that the meaning of this effect was carefully pre-established, in exactly the way we have seen used for non-self-identifying sound effects.

Music as commentator. That music often becomes a sort of Greek Chorus, commenting on and interpreting the action, will be noticed on many programs. The music says, sometimes more surely than a narrator can, "Wasn't that

[1] *Henry Brocken*, by Walter de la Mare. NBC sustaining.

too bad?" or "A great moment in history!" or "Don't take it too seriously." Music is a constant editor, cajoling us, impressing us, trying to scare the life out of us with dire prediction. Sometimes too it takes us inside a character. Picture the following conventional moment, which is the ending of a scene, with and then without the music's added statement:

CARL: I'm going to get myself a good stiff drink! In fact, I think I'll get plastered!

(ORCHESTRA: CRASH IN WITH MOOD.)[1]

Here the music says, "He meant it!" Without it, the resolution would hang limply in the ether.

In the following, we find the music representing the extreme *pain* of one of the characters, who is about to have a bullet removed from his leg with a pen-knife. The characters are all children:

BEAU: Sit on his head, Digby. Or hold his leg, or something. Now: I wonder how deep the bullet went in.

DIGBY: Hold still, John.

BEAU: Ready?

(MUSIC: HIGH-PITCHED MUSICAL NOTE HELD ON STEADY VOLUME HALFWAY THROUGH FOLLOWING)[2]

Further aspects of the use of music as a curtain and as a scene-shifting device will be discussed under SCENE-SHIFTING.

[1] *Your Unseen Friend,* by M. H. H. Joachim. Sponsor: Beneficial Management Co. (Personal Finance). Agency: Albert Frank-Guenther Law, Inc.

[2] *Beau Geste,* by P. C. Wren. Adapted by Orson Welles and associates for *Campbell Playhouse.* Sponsor: Campbell's Soups. Agency: Ward Wheelock Co.

A Music Experiment

Play over, to yourself or to a group, a favorite classical phonograph recording. Play it several times, cataloguing it, as you listen, into mood-segments of 10–45 seconds. For each segment, jot down in a few words the type of scene you can imagine the passage introducing or curtaining. Example: "Good for leading out of a scene in which something very sad has happened, but the people are very brave, almost with a feeling of serenity." Then compare notes. This experiment should develop a feeling for the subtle mood-expressiveness of music.

(3) SPEECH

Radio's use of speech may be divided into *narration* and *dialogue.*

NARRATION

Radio drama makes valuable use of that vestige of Greek drama which survived in Shakespeare's occasional use of a figure labeled "Chorus," but which later almost vanished from stage drama. In radio he appears as "Announcer" or "Narrator," though he turns up also in false whiskers as the "Old Ranger," the "Voice of Time," "Aunt Jenny," Warden Lawes or Robert L. Ripley. He is any figure who, outside or temporarily outside the plot, addresses the audience directly, or through an intermediary, narrating, interpreting, creating atmosphere or anticipation. He is a middleman between play and audience. He is the novelist's "I," the editorial factor banned from objective drama.

Even in the daily serial, which uses him sparingly, he crystallizes audience hopes and fears with:

```
ANNOUNCER: It looks as though Clarence has stirred up
           plenty of action.  We wonder what has been
```

going on in the farmhouse, and what Clarence expects to accomplish by himself.[1]

and, with his lead-ins, lends the continuity that makes the serial possible:

ANNOUNCER: We know Nancy and Bill. They can't harbor grudges; they pity people like Margaret Burns, who...............[2]

On many evening programs, the narrator becomes an important figure, rapidly sketching story backgrounds, banishing completely the cumbersome expositions of old-time drama, and setting the tone of every event.

Lengthy stretches of narration are broken up or avoided by two common devices.

Proxy listener. Sometimes the writer provides the narrator with a *proxy listener*, who represents the listening audience.

Thus on *Death Valley Days*, the Old Ranger talks to a character whose chief function is to listen, and on behalf of the coast-to-coast audience ask occasional questions.

The chief difficulty with the proxy listener is that as long as you have this character you must occasionally do something with him or her. Thus the writer may find himself writing questions that aren't really essential and may not crystallize any actual audience-feelings of the moment: "And then what, Uncle John?" and "Tell me about it, Uncle John."

[1] *Myrt and Marge*, by Stuart Hawkins. Sponsor: Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. (Supersuds). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

[2] *Just Plain Bill*, dialogue by Robert Andrews. Sponsor: American Home Products (Kolynos). Agency: Blackett-Sample-Hummert. Note: the reason for the use of the words "Dialogue by" in crediting programs produced by this agency will be found in APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, BLACKETT-SAMPLE-HUMMERT.

On *Gang Busters*, and *Believe It or Not*, narration has usually been done to some intermediary figure or stooge. On the *Court of Human Relations*, the Judge himself served as stooge. Occasionally two or three proxy listeners are used.

Age and sex of proxy. The nature, age and sex of the proxy listener may serve as a useful focus for the home listener. The choice of two children, a boy and girl, as proxy listeners for The Old Wrangler on the *Tom Mix* series, was probably an effective invitation to a boy and girl audience of similar age.

Split narration. This is another way of breaking long stretches of one-man narration. In this device various voices keep relieving each other — a vocal relay race.

Where the functions of the two or more speakers are clearly distinct, this may be very effective. On *The March of Time* an Italian voice might tell quickly of a situation in Italy, an English voice of the situation in England. Then back to Italy, then back to England.

Or, the voice may have some sort of life role, as in the following from a Standard Oil of Ohio electrical-transcription series by Merrill Denison:

VOICE 1: Morgan making for the Ohio River, pillaging as he comes.

(TELEGRAPH KEY BRIEFLY)

VOICE 2: (MORE RAPIDLY) Morgan crosses the Ohio River at Brandenberg! Indianapolis now thought to be the objective!

(TELEGRAPH KEY)

VOICE 3: (VERY FAST) Morgan and 2,000 raiders enter Ohio at Harriston! Cleveland now believed to be the objective![1]

This, which was done against a background of Morgan's cavalry plunging ahead, is split narration with a sort of realistic disguise. It really brings us to the device called montage, which will have a section of its own under *Trick Devices*. The splitting of narration may often be carried to the extent of involving a large number of voices. This is particularly useful in so-called "documentary" drama. It has also been used interestingly in the adaptation of poetry to the air. We shall discuss this in a later section on CHORAL SPEECH.

Here is an example of split narration using many voices. Since it presents a subject rather than a story, it might be called a "documentary" drama:

NARRATOR: At noon, on September 23rd, 1938, as the exact moment of the autumnal equinox approached, there gathered on the grounds of New York World's Fair 1939, a solemn group of scientists and industrialists to consecrate to the people of 6939 A.D., the Westinghouse Time Capsule, within whose slim stream-lined confines was packed the heritage of our times.

VOICE: The capsule:

SECOND VOICE: A torpedo-shaped cartridge of cupaloy, most time-resistant metal known to modern

[1] *Let's Explore Ohio*, by Merrill Denison. Sponsor: Standard Oil Company of Ohio (Sohio). Agency: McCann-Erickson, Inc.

man, seven feet six inches long, within which is encased a pyrex glass sheath, in which are packed—

VOICE: The contents:

THIRD VOICE: First, curious trivial articles of modern daily life, from which the archaeologists of 5,000 years from now may derive some amusement or instruction.

WOMAN: A can-opener.

MAN: An alarm clock.

MAN: A miniature camera.

MAN: An electric razor—and a safety razor.

WOMAN: Cigarettes—and a hat by Lille Dache.

GIRL: And make-up—and a rhinestone clip from the five and ten.

MAN: A watch, and a slide rule.

MAN: A nail file and a padlock and a Mickey Mouse cup.

MAN: And a score of other things we use and enjoy every day.[1]

First person singular. It has already been noted that in radio's flexible usage a character may be involved in narration one minute, in dialogue the next. In the following instance, Geraldine takes over the narrating from Your Unseen Friend; later she becomes a character in the story. The shifts may be confusing to read, but are clear in the hearing.

[1] *Not to Be Opened for Five Thousand Years*, a *Columbia Workshop* script by William N. Robson. CBS sustaining.

YOUR UNSEEN FRIEND: Tonight's drama is based on a letter that came to me from a young woman who thought happiness was a commodity that could be purchased. Her name, let us say, is Geraldine Manning!

GERALDINE: I am Geraldine Manning, living in New York City with my husband Carl.

(ORCHESTRA: IN WITH MOOD)

GERALDINE: I'll never forget the evening my husband and I were ''at home'' for the first time, in our modest little apartment, having just returned from our honeymoon....(FADE)

CARL: Isn't it swell, honey!

GERALDINE: It's wonderful! Our own little place...and all to ourselves! [1]

In the above, we have a shift from third-person narration to first-person narration.

Stream of consciousness. Occasionally, first-person-singular narration may assume the guise of a "stream of consciousness." In this device or convention, we suppose ourselves to be listening to a person's thoughts, rather than to someone "telling a story."

Thus, the entire *Campbell Playhouse* broadcast of *Arrowsmith* was the story of Arrowsmith's life as it passed through his mind during the seconds he was walking up the aisle of

[1] *Your Unseen Friend*, by M. H. H. Joachim. Sponsor: Beneficial Management Co. (Personal Finance). Agency: Albert Frank-Guenther Law, Inc.

a long hall to receive the Nobel prize for a distinguished medical career.

Narration of this type often acquires a more dramatic intensity than narration by someone merely reciting his life story. In the *Ugliest Man in the World*, an Arch Oboler sketch, we hear a man's life racing through his mind as he sits with gun in hand, ready for suicide. The helter-skelter narration in this case takes up most of the script, and the flashback episodes are often so brief that they could hardly be called "scenes." Sometimes they are mere momentary voices or sounds that inject themselves suddenly into the rapid tumble of thoughts:

PAUL: (DOWN IN AGONY) Ugliest Man in the World! All right, I'll think the thing for the last time, tear the words around in my head over and over as they've torn for thirty years! Ugliest Man in the World. Ugliest Man in the World!... Press the trigger and stop it press the trigger! No, no, I can't. Got to wait! Wait for what?... (PAUSE) My chance...yes my chance to think...think it all out clearly for the first time in my life...how it started why it's ending this way.... Think it all out clearly from the start...then press the trigger...

MOTHER: School today, Paul.

PAUL: There's a start—first day of school. How old was I? Nine or ten. She kept me home away from the others. I didn't know why until that day she said:

MOTHER: School today, Paul.

PAUL: I said:

BOY: (PAUL AS BOY OF ABOUT TEN, BRIGHT-VOICED LAD) All right, Mother!

PAUL: She took me to school—into a room full of more children than I'd ever seen...I was so happy I wondered why her face was white and set...She said:

MOTHER: (NERVOUSLY) Miss Edwards, this—this is my son. I—I want him in your class. Please—be kind to him.

PAUL: Before the teacher could answer mother hurried out of the room and left me there. The teacher's eyes were on me.[1]

This passage has almost the same rhythm as if one person were speaking the entire passage. The voice changes merely serve to give remembered people and moments an instant's vivid aliveness in the rushing stream of the leading character's thoughts.

In *The Ugliest Man in the World* we find narration, in an effective manner, becoming the dominating dramatic element.

Further aspects of the use of narration will be discussed under THE FIRST NARRATION, THE SCENE-SETTING MOMENT, SCENE-SHIFTING.

DIALOGUE

The vanishing character. The first warning on radio dialogue should be: a character not talking, like the door not

[1] *The Ugliest Man in the World*, by Arch Oboler. From the series, *Arch Oboler's Plays*. NBC sustaining.

in operation, soon slips from the listener's mind into a cloud of non-existence.

Remarks *to* Aunt Harriet, or *about* Aunt Harriet, indicating her presence, may for a while keep the listener aware that there is such a person in the room. But the listener does not really *sense* Aunt Harriet unless she occasionally says something.

When a long speech comes along a director must often insert interruptions from some other character, just to "keep him alive," to "keep him in the picture." Otherwise, he would simply "die."

This makes for shortness of speeches in most radio dialogue.

The vanishing character utilized. The very fact that a character who isn't speaking has no concrete existence to the listener is sometimes turned to advantage for an eerie effect.

For instance, a *True Story* sketch was about an old man who had been struck dumb. Other characters were, throughout the play, constantly talking to him, constantly interpreting his apparently pitiful gestures. The radio audience had no audible proof of his existence except through the opening and closing of doors, and the slight sound of his wheelchair as he was brought in and out of the room.

Around these sounds the listener merely felt a sort of living vacuum. He knew the man was there, but couldn't really feel him. Here the very fact that he *couldn't* gave the scene its creepy atmosphere.

The vanishing character utilized for comedy. In the world of Jack Benny comedy, which is not a realistic world, the

writer doesn't care a hoot about the prosaic worry of keeping characters alive. Sometimes, in fact, he derives a definite value from letting them die.

Mary Livingstone isn't in the picture continuously. Sometimes she has silent intervals during which she drops completely from our consciousness. This, as a matter of fact, is what makes her sudden reincarnations so delightfully abrupt and shattering.

This same abruptness couldn't quite be conveyed on the stage. It owes its punch to the very fact that, a moment before, she didn't even exist. In the following, Mary hasn't had a line for about a page. Jack is being "interviewed" on his own program.

WILSON: Mr. Benny, there's one more question the ladies in particular would be very much interested in. Do you mind telling us your age?

JACK: What's that?

WILSON: Do you mind telling us your age?

JACK: I'm just 31.

MARY: He minds.[1]

A quick stab like this is the more effective because, like the door, or the telephone that rings, Mary comes into existence at just that moment.

Summary on the vanishing character. Except in the case of special effects, comic or eerie or dramatic, characters in radio must usually be kept alive by being made to talk at more frequent intervals than may be necessary on stage or screen.

[1] The *Jell-o Program*, by Jack Benny and associates. Sponsor: General Foods Corp. (Jell-o). Agency: Young & Rubicam, Inc.

The number of characters. The problem of the size of a radio cast, especially of the number of characters permissible in any one scene, is far more thorny to the new writer than the menace of the vanishing character.

To approach the problem, "How many characters can I use in one scene?" you should begin by taking a look at the file cards in any director's casting file. Each card represents a human voice, and lists the characteristics it suggests to the director.

The first thing you'll notice is that every "straight" man seems to be either a *juvenile*, a *leading man* or a *heavy*.

NED WEVER	EDDIE ALBERT	WILLIAM PRINGLE
Leading man (Baritone)	Juvenile (Tenor)	Heavy (Bass)
Man-of-the-world manner. Good for prosperous lead roles.	Sly humorous treatment of romance and comedy scenes.	Dignified, restrained voice. Good for Senators, Judges.[1]

To classify a speaking voice as baritone, tenor or bass, as many directors do, is about equivalent to the denominations leading man, juvenile and heavy.

Now the fact that Ned Wever has a baritone speaking voice is enough to distinguish him instantly at any time from Eddie Albert's tenor or William Pringle's bass, or from any woman's soprano or contralto. As for distinguishing him from another baritone, that's a complex problem, depending *partly* on the two baritones, but also *on the other people present*. We'll clarify that in a moment.

One reason family groups of four or five are so frequent on the air is that they arrange themselves into a perfect

[1] From the talent files of Arthur Kudner, Inc. Other entries, listing past roles played by the actors, are here omitted.

aural pattern, resembling opera. The opera quartet is the ideal of clarity for radio drama:

Father	(Leading Man) . . .	Baritone
Mother	(Leading Woman). . .	Contralto
Son	(Juvenile)	Tenor
Daughter	(Ingénue)	Soprano

This is the almost symbolic pattern in which radio propagates its families. This pattern is always clear. To it may be added, without confusion: a child in the treble range, a grandfather in bass or falsetto, and dialect bits. Though it would be difficult, with these additions, to keep all the characters "alive" through a long scene, the ear *could* distinguish such a group. In general, four or five characters are the limit of practical simultaneous operation, though we shall qualify this later.

Now you will protest, "What if Father wants to talk to another baritone? And what about Sister and her girl friend who is also an ingénue? Do two sopranos cause confusion?"

The answer is something like this: In scenes between Sister and her girl friend, with no other characters present, their subtle differences of melody, accent, mood and rhythm will be constantly impressed upon us — if the casting's at all adequate — and this will make the two ingénues distinguishable.

But if you inject these two ingénues into our family group, what happens? We hear Mother's contralto voice, then Father's baritone voice, then, for a moment — an ingénue. Which one? One can't instantly be sure.

If your listener must know who's talking, avoid the complex group.

Completely hard and fast rules on this subject shouldn't be made. Other factors are involved, such as: How long has

the audience known the characters? How long is the scene? *How important is it at this moment that the audience should know who's talking?* There are times when it isn't important.

The forced smallness of radio's casts leads constantly to simplification of plots. If John, in a movie, has five would-be friends all giving him bad advice, radio might combine them all into one major big-bad influence.

This is not life. It reduces life to symbols. It forces on the writer a sort of fairy-tale simplification. This, if it must avoid the large magnificent canvas, has artistic virtues of its own.

Dialogue positions. In general, dialogue is assumed to be *at mike* — sometimes called *on mike.*

Occasional movements to and from the microphone lend a picturesque depth to the scene. Such movements, when desired, are indicated to the actor by the directions (FADE IN) and (FADE OUT).[1]

Occasional dialogue between a character *on mike* and another or others *off mike* can also give intriguing depth. In scenes of definite atmosphere — an echo-y cave, a storm, a street with traffic — this feeling of depth and distance can make an exciting contribution to the scene. In the following, hear the *off* voices at different distances. We're in a mountain snowstorm.

(SCREAMING OF WIND AND BLIZZARD)

FRANCISCO: (SHOUTS, ON) Chicho!

CHICHO: (OFF—SHOUTS) Si, Senor?

FRANCISCO: (ON) Your Indians all accounted for?

[1] For the important distinctions between an *actor's fade* and a *mechanical* or *board fade* accomplished by the engineer, see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *fade.*

```
CHICHO:      (OFF) Si, Senor!
FRANCISCO: (ON) Sanchez!
SANCHEZ:     (OFF) All right, here, Senor!
FRANCISCO: (ON) Careful your ropes don't foul.
SANCHEZ:     (FADING IN) This is the worst storm I've
             seen on this mountain, Senor.  I'm afraid so
             much snow may mean avalanche.[1]
```

Script length. Average speed dialogue eats up 150 words a minute. In the RECOMMENDED RADIO SCRIPT FORMAT, suggested earlier in this chapter, a line will average three seconds. For rapid calculation a director may count twenty lines for a minute.

For a fifteen-minute program, comprising up to thirteen minutes of actual dialogue, two thousand words are usually required.

The tyranny of writing for exact periods does not greatly bother a writer used to radio. Most experienced writers find themselves automatically reaching a climax at about the right page. Their dramatic sense acquires a time instinct.

Padding a too-short script is difficult. Cutting a too-long script is not difficult, and almost always beneficial. The slightly too-long script is therefore preferred.

Radio has, at one time or another, had many writers sitting in control rooms boiling mad because a director has had to cut his script two minutes, and hacked away his best bit of dialogue.

The director, however, with no paternal emotions involved, often feels exhilarated with his butchery. Ninety-five times out of one hundred he feels that the trimming down has done more good than harm.

[1] *Bravest of the Brave,* by Henry Lanier. NBC sustaining.

To watch, day after day, one's work being clipped of nonessentials is good writer's training. It demonstrates continually the many lengths to which a scene can be satisfactorily adjusted. It develops an increased sense of the possible rhythms of dialogue.

Here follows a two-minute scene from the *David Harum* series. Then the same scene cut to one minute.

Ask yourself in reading these: (1) Does the cut version cover the essential facts? (2) Which rhythm do you prefer? (3) Does the cutting, by sharpening the focus, actually clarify the main point of the scene? Or has it become too skeletonized? (4) Does the cutting destroy the characteristic leisureliness of David, or can this be preserved by the pacing of the speeches?

(*As written — 2 minutes*)

ZEKE: Now David, what is it ye wanted?

DAVID: Hem. Somethin' mighty important, Zeke. You figure you're goin' to win the election, do ye?

ZEKE: (CONFIDENTLY) You're plaggoned right I am, David. With you and Clem Todhunter spoilin' each other's chances, I'm a cinch to ride right on into office.

DAVID: What would you think of your chances if Clem was to drop out, Zeke? I figure I can get Clem to retire in my favor if I was to talk to him for a spell.

ZEKE: (WORRIED) How's that? Ye say Clem's goin' to drop out?

DAVID: I said I could fix it so's he would, by tryin'

hard enough...Calculate the election would be heap closer in that case, wouldn't it? I'd stand a mighty fair chance.

ZEKE: Yes, David—yes, ye would...

DAVID: And if I was to beat you out for mayor then you wouldn't get the chance to swindle the tax-payers on that new school-house property, would ye?

ZEKE: (ANGRILY) Dog take it, David Harum—you ain't goin' to get the best of me this here time... I've worked mighty hard to win this here election, and I'm aimin' to get what I'm after.... I'll get enough votes one way or another, you mark my words on that...

DAVID: (SOOTHINGLY) Now, just a minute, Zeke. No call to get worked up about this here...I was wonderin' how you'd feel about workin' up a little agreement just between the pair of us—so's neither of us would stand to lose a heap no matter who got to be mayor.

ZEKE: (SUSPICIOUSLY) That depends on what sort of agreement you're gettin' at, David.

DAVID: Somethin' like this here. Suppose we fixed up an agreement so if you got to be mayor you'd let me in on a half interest on the school-house property, and if I got to be mayor, I'd do the same for you. How does that sound to ye?

ZEKE: Well—that might not be so bad, David.

(As cut — 1 minute)

ZEKE: Now David, what is it ye wanted?

DAVID: Zeke—you figure you're goin' to win the election, do ye?

ZEKE: (CONFIDENTLY) You're plaggoned right I am, David—with you and Clem Todhunter spoilin' each other's chances.

DAVID: What if Clem was to drop out, Zeke?

ZEKE: (WORRIED) How's that? Clem's goin' to drop out?

DAVID: I could fix it so's he would, by tryin' hard enough. The election would be a heap closer in that case, wouldn't it?

ZEKE: Yes,...yes.

DAVID: If I was to beat you out for mayor, you wouldn't get the chance to swindle the taxpayers on that new school-house property, would ye?

ZEKE: (ANGRILY) David Harum—you ain't goin' to get the best of me this here time. I'll get enough votes one way or...

DAVID: (SOOTHINGLY) Now, just a minute, Zeke. I was wonderin' how you'd feel about workin' up a little agreement, just between us.

ZEKE: (SUSPICIOUSLY) What're you gettin' at?

DAVID: Suppose—if you got to be mayor, you'd let me in on a half interest on the school-house property; and if I got to be mayor, I'd do the same for you?

ZEKE: Well—that might not be so bad, David.[1]

[1] *David Harum*, dialogue by John de Witt. Sponsor: B. T. Babbitt, Inc. (Bab-O). Agency: Blackett-Sample-Hummert.

Choice of words. In print, the use of unfamiliar five-dollar words may be a harmless and pleasant diversion. The reader may merely wince, admire and pass on with a smile.

But the radio listener, if he lacks the surety of knowing that the big word is merely fireworks, feels for a second he may have "missed something." In the momentary dislocation he may *actually* miss something.[1]

For the listener, there is no pausing to mull and reconsider. He must keep pace with the broadcast. For this reason especially confusion is acutely uncomfortable to the armchair audience.

Esoteric trade terms, strange oaths and similar verbal decorations may be used satisfactorily if they happen to be *unfamiliar uses of familiar words* — or other expressions the listener can be positive he "got right." But if he feels "lost" at any time, the charm of quaint phrases can't sooth his annoyance. The "lost" feeling is the end of pleasure for the listener.

Choice of names. Names difficult to "picture" are best avoided for the same reason. Even common names may be phonetically mystifying. "Can't *Hugh* do the shopping today?" can hardly be distinguished from, "Can't *you* do the shopping today?" Hugh is a good name to avoid.

A seldom worthwhile practice is the use of dual names. On the stage, calling a girl "Kathleen" one moment and "K" or "Irish" the next may be a colorful thing to do; it is practicable because the audience can see who is being addressed. On the printed page this can likewise be made clear. To the listener, it brings the sudden alarming feeling, "Is there someone there I didn't know about?"

[1] In Bing Crosby's scripts the baffling words are a special gag, and the listener *does* have the surety of knowing he isn't supposed to understand them.

The sense of assurance that he has the picture right is important to the listener. Even such dual names as Dick and Richard, Pat and Patricia, Peg and Margaret, Jack and John, may cause momentary coast-to-coast panics. No advantage that can possibly be gained from these dualities is worth the risk of confusion.

Radio characters address each other by name more often than stage, screen or book characters. But except for instances clarified with extreme care, they should pick one name and stick to it.

Sound effects, music, speech. These are the three simple tools that make our daily seventeen thousand radio programs.

If many of the programs are worthless, these same tools, as we have seen, may turn the listener's mind into astonishing worlds of image and emotion.

The writer who can conjure up those worlds is tomorrow's great storyteller.

So let us look at our tools in action — in various crucial phases of a storyteller's job. That is the work of the next chapter.

An Experiment on Radio Dialogue [1]

During a movie close your eyes for some time. Before long you will feel "lost." Check off one of these causes: *Didn't know who was talking. . . . Didn't know whom he or she was talking to. . . . Didn't know where they were. . . . Didn't know quite what they were doing. . . . Too many people, all mixed up. . . .* This game should develop an alertness for the various pitfalls of radio dialogue: unidentified characters, characters who have "died," too many characters, unidentified sounds, scenes, actions. After checking one or more reasons, open your eyes until you feel oriented again. Then close your eyes once more and check the reason for the next "lost" feeling. And so on.

[1] Suggested by Stewart Sterling.

2. ROUTINE TECHNIQUE

We take up technique problems that might be encountered in any script: (1) *The Opening;* (2) *The First Narration;* (3) *The Scene-Setting Moment;* (4) *Keeping the Setting Alive;* (5) *Scene-Shifting;* (6) *Dialogue on the Move;* (7) *The Radio Climax;* (8) *The Closing.*

(1) THE OPENING

Six-and-a-half million homes, statistics say, have their radios on at about the moment this comes bursting from a New York studio:

```
                (RAT-TAT-TAT OF MACHINE GUN)

                (POLICE SIRENS)

                (RAT-TAT-TAT OF MACHINE GUN)

                (SHUFFLE OF PRISONERS IN PRISON YARD)

ANNOUNCER: .....Gang Busters!.......... [1]
```

You may visualize at about this time, in one or two million homes, scattered reactions like this:

Home 1: "Turn that off."

Home 2: "Hurray! *Gang Busters.*"

Home 3: "Something about crime, I guess."

Home 4: "Keep that on. That's good."

The next thirty seconds may well see a minor coast-to-coast upheaval, as several million husbands, wives and children readjust radios and settle down once more.

[1] *Gang Busters*, by Phillips Lord and associates. Sponsor: Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. (Palmolive Shave Cream). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

The moral, of course, is that a radio program, to a large extent, *selects* its audience; that the opening quoted from *Gang Busters* does its job perfectly, because it scares away only the people who wouldn't like the program anyway, and makes the most straight-to-the-point invitation to all roving listeners who might.

The relative uses made by different programs of the three tools — sound effects, music and speech — in putting up this opening shingle for local or national attention, may be briefly summarized:

(1) *Sound effects.* Invaluable for suggesting instantly a characteristic *setting* or *activity.* Examples: the shooting, sirens, etc., on *Gang Busters;* the gavel on *Her Honor Nancy James.*

(2) *Music.* Important if a certain *mood* is an essential characteristic of the program. Any drama striving, for example, for an atmosphere of bigness and importance, will almost certainly try to establish this immediately with an opening involving grandiose music. Mystery sketches profit greatly by an opening touch of *mysterioso.* Music is the most valuable mood-suggesting tool.

(3) *Speech.* For immediate, attention-getting *information,* some speech in the opening is usually essential.

Typical combinations. In practice, openings tend to make use of two or three tools, either in combination or in rapid alternation. These combinations are frequently so arranged as to break up the needed *information* into at least two separate doses, divided by a brief appetite-sharpener of *mood*-suggesting music or *scene*-suggesting sound effects.

Here, for example, is an opening using music and speech. The two are featured alternately:

(MUSIC: HEROIC...STIRRING...FADE TO:)

VOICE: Brave New World!

(MUSIC: UP AND UNDER)

VOICE: Open the book of Latin America!...[1]

And here follows another using all three tools. Notice that they are all used in the space of a few seconds, and each in its most characteristic way. *Speech* gives as economically as is humanly possible one bit of essential information: "Kleenex presents." This information could hardly be conveyed more briefly. Then *sound effects* suggest with just three raps of the gavel the program's chief setting: a Court. Then four more words of essential, unvarnished information: the title. Then, through *music*, the mood of the series.

ANNOUNCER: KLEENEX presents

(SOUND: THREE RAPS OF GAVEL)

ANNOUNCER: Her Honor: Nancy James.

(ORGAN: THEME UP AND UNDER:)

ANNOUNCER: The dramatic story of one woman's love and courage, and the part they play in the resurrection of a great city. The life story of...[2]

What is characteristic about the *Nancy James* opening is that it presents, in a compact arrangement of speech, sound effects and music, an exact suggestion of what sort of program is to follow.

Complexity of form is not, of course, a necessity. Here is the very atmospheric *Death Valley Days* opening, much

[1] *Brave New World*, by Bernard C. Schoenfeld. CBS sustaining.

[2] *Her Honor Nancy James*, by David Victor and Herbert Little, Jr. Sponsor: International Cellucotton Products Co. (Kleenex). Agency: Lord & Thomas.

simpler in construction, admirable to its particular purpose:

SIGNATURE: NOTES PLAYED ON A BUGLE. THE OLD MORNING CALL OF THE COVERED WAGON TRAINS, AT FIRST CLEAR AND LOUD, THEN REPEATED FAINTER AND STILL FAINTER AS IT PASSES DOWN THE LINE FROM WATCH TO WATCH ACROSS THE PLAINS. AS IT FINALLY DIES AWAY AMONG THE ECHOES, THE ANNOUNCER'S VOICE IS HEARD.

ANNOUNCER: Welcome to Death Valley Days, the program of true stories of the old west told by that master storyteller, the Old Ranger...[1]

Frameworks. The trick of echoing the opening in some way in the closing helps to round out the program, and is a frequent device. Thus *Grand Central Station* has made use of train effects in both opening and closing.

When to write an opening. If you are contributing a script to an established commercial series, your framework will probably be ready-made, and not your worry. But if you are putting together a new series, for audition or presentation, you will almost certainly want to devise some effective opening, perhaps a framework.

Also, if you are trying a one-time sustaining sketch not meant for any regular series, or perhaps meant for a series that has no set framework (e.g., *Columbia Workshop*), you will also want to contrive an opening or a framework.

[1] *Death Valley Days*, by Ruth Cornwall Woodman. Sponsor: Pacific Coast Borax Co. (Twenty Mule Team Borax). Agency: McCann-Erickson, Inc.

Here is an effective opening from a one-time shot used on the *Columbia Workshop:*

(METRONOME FOR FIVE SECONDS)

TIME: We have only thirty minutes to cover ten thousand years.

(METRONOME FOR TEN SECONDS)[1]

This example illustrates again the value of the abrupt opening, making suggestive use of a variety of tools.

(2) THE FIRST NARRATION

Having spent a few seconds with an appropriate opening you usually — before or after a commercial, if there is one[2] — work your way into an introductory passage about what's coming.

The usual content of this introductory material is the *where*, *when*, and *who* of the story to follow. Sometimes only one or two of these elements happen to be important, and may be given exclusive attention.

The most usual *form* of the introductory passage is straight narration or announcement — for this is apt to be the most economical way of quickly suggesting essential data.

But the writer should realize that some variety of form is available to him.

Semi-dramatized introductions. In the following example, for instance, from the *Great Plays* series, the narration is split in a very effective device:

[1] *Not to Be Opened for Five Thousand Years*, a *Columbia Workshop* script by William N. Robson. CBS sustaining.

[2] The commercial plug and its special problems will be considered in PART III: MARKET MUSTS.

BURNS MANTLE: ...And now for the characters in our play. First there is Mrs. Peyton of Plantation Terrebonne in Louisiana.

(MUSIC: BACKGROUND THROUGH:)

MRS. PEYTON: ...O sir, I don't value the place for its price but for the many happy days I've spent here. My nephew is not acquainted with our customs in Louisiana but he will soon understand.

MANTLE: Her nephew is George.

GEORGE: I have never met in Europe any lady more beautiful in person or more polished in manners than this girl Zoe.

MANTLE: The inventive Yankee overseer is Salem Scudder.

SCUDDER: I reckon this picture taking machine o' mine will be a big thing some day.

MANTLE: And Zoe of course is the Octoroon.

ZOE: My father gave me freedom. May heaven bless him for the happiness he spread around my life.

MANTLE: But Jacob M'Closky has more definite ideas.

M'CLOSKY: Curse their old families. I'll sweep these Peytons from Louisiana and fair or foul I'll have the Octoroon!

(MUSIC: SWELLS TO QUICK FINISH.)

MANTLE: And now—Dion Boucicault's great melodrama of 1859, The Octoroon or—

COLORED VOICE: Life in Louisiana!

(MUSIC: FAST NEGRO MELODY, FADES UNDER DIALOGUE.)[1]

The adaptor in this case probably felt it necessary to warn the listener of the old-fashioned flavor of the material to follow, and chose a very vivid way of doing so.

A Warden Lawes program chose a similarly arresting technique in its presentation of advance data:

NELSON CASE: Tonight, Warden Lawes tells the story of case history No. 581-753.

VOICE: I am Case Number 581-753. I'm in the death house. But I didn't do it. I swear I didn't. I don't care if it was my gun. I'm innocent. I never shot that tax collector. I'm innocent—I swear I didn't do it. (FADING)

NELSON CASE: I suppose all condemned men say that, Warden Lawes.

WARDEN LAWES: Some do—and some don't! Sometimes of course we know they're lying—and sometimes we're not so sure.[2]

[1] *The Octoroon*, from the *Great Plays* series. Adaptation by Joseph Bell. NBC sustaining.

[2] *Criminal Case Histories*, by Tom McKnight and associates. Sponsor: William R. Warner Co. (Sloan's Liniment). Agency: Warwick & Legler, Inc.

Warden Lawes then proceeded, by way of illustration, to tell the story of Case History Number 581–753. His narration took us into the drama dialogue.

The *lead-in* in the case of the serial has certain specialized problems which will be considered in later discussions on the serial, in PART III: MARKET MUSTS.

(3) THE SCENE-SETTING MOMENT

This section concerns itself with the moment at which we pass from the first narration into the dialogue of the drama.

A crucial need of this moment is an immediate feeling of the reality of the scene. It is usually desirable that some detail or details should give the listener a sudden clear glimpse of the dramatic setting.

Where the setting is of a highly stereotyped sort, no special effort need be made in this direction. For instance, we have seen so many "police headquarters" in the movies that the mere use of this phrase is probably sufficient to pull a "headquarters" of some sort from one's mental photograph album. This means that a scene-setting moment like the following is entirely adequate:

```
CHIEF:   (NARRATION)...Over in Cincinnati the police
         arrested a bootlegger by the name of John
         Marcus—they took him to headquarters...(FADE)
FRANKS:  So you're going to get tough about it, Marcus.[1]
```

But there are times when the writer feels that a more specific picture hint should supplement this general label of locality.

[1] *Gang Busters*, by Phillips Lord and associates. Sponsor: Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. (Palmolive Shave Cream). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

A scene-setting sound. Many writers instinctively grope for some sound effect that can be used at the moment of transition to give the setting concrete, tangible reality:

ANNOUNCER: ...We find the chubby little philosopher in the office of his Homeville Bank, busily calculatin'.

(TYPEWRITER ONE FINGER TECHNIQUE)

DAVID HARUM: Hem...How in Tophet do you spell political anyways? (WITH TYPEWRITER) P-O-L-I-[1]

The listener's mind-picture springs to life around the typewriter click. The scene would not have the same instant reality if David Harum were, let's say, poring over his accounts.

The scenes that open with (DOOR BURSTING OPEN), or (TELEPHONE RINGING) or (AUTOMOBILE HORN) are legion; they follow a correct instinct. They supply sudden dynamic evidence of a physical world.

Atmosphere dialogue. Even when no sound is used, the first five or ten seconds are often devoted to this job of bringing the scene alive:

ANNOUNCER: We find Fran and Henry on the lawn, sitting under a large oak tree, enjoying the warm June evening...

HENRY: Comfortable? Would you like another pillow for your back?

[1] *David Harum*, dialogue by John de Witt. Sponsor: B. T. Babbitt, Inc. (Bab-O). Agency: Blackett-Sample-Hummert.

FRAN: No, thanks, dear, I'm very comfortable—lazily so. It's beautiful out here, isn't it?[1]

Two lines later the plot gets going, the more effectively for the brief offering to the picturing imagination.

It has often been pointed out that Shakespeare, having neither scenery nor lighting, made exactly the same use of atmospheric dialogue. To this we owe many of his most vivid poetic descriptions, which in his theater were not merely decorative, but strictly functional.

The scene-picture, then, is usually put together by labeling the setting in the narration, and then *clinching* this possibly by a sound effect, possibly through atmospheric dialogue, possibly by scene-setting music.

Obvious versus implied scene-setting. In the serial, the scene-setting moment is often handled as obviously as possible. In the following, for instance, the announcer indicates the *when* and *where* and *who* as plainly as a tourist guide, pointing out to tourists what they should look at:

ANNOUNCER: ...Today, we find Stella at the office of the Center Corners Weekly Gazette, the local newspaper and printing establishment, talking to the editor and printer, Cyrus Mather. Stella is speaking. Listen.[2]

"Obvious" lead-ins of this type may even end with the word "says," as follows:

[1] *Today's Children*, by Irna Phillips. Sponsor: Pillsbury Flour Mills Co. Agency: Hutchinson Advertising Co.

[2] *Stella Dallas*, dialogue by Marie Baumer. Sponsor: Joseph Tetley & Co., Inc. (Tetley's Teas). Agency: Blackett-Sample-Hummert.

ANNOUNCER: As we join the Youngs now, they are just driving up to the Town Hall. Mr. Young says: [1]

In sharp contrast to this, some programs, especially those using first-person narration, bar any obvious scene-setting phrases. The *Campbell Playhouse*, for example, has a strict taboo on "He says," and shuns anything resembling "We are now in the public square" or "We take you now to the park" or "Let us join the Hendersons in their sumptuous living room." This program, and others, prefer to establish such information by a more sophisticated indirection. The following example establishes the needed information, but avoids *cliché* phrases:

ARROWSMITH: (NARRATION)...My second year I took Dr. Gottlieb's bacteriology course. That winter I spent more time with guinea pigs, mice, rats, than with people. I lived in a world of test-tubes, filled with watery serum or deadly bacilli, of roaring Bunsen flames and steaming sterilizers.

(SOUND OF SLIDE AND TEST-TUBE)

(FOOTSTEPS)

GOTTLIEB: Hello, Arrowsmith... [2]

The narration establishes "Gottlieb," "Test-tubes," "that winter," but imbeds them in a passage that has an inde-

[1] *Pepper Young's Family*, by Elaine Sterne Carrington. Sponsor: Procter & Gamble Co. (Camay). Agency: Pedlar & Ryan, Inc.

[2] *Arrowsmith*, by Sinclair Lewis. Adaptation by Orson Welles and associates for *Campbell Playhouse*. Sponsor: Campbell Soups. Agency: Ward Wheelock Co.

pendent narrative function, and seems not merely created for the sake of the subsequent dialogue.

Overlapping of narration and scene. One advantage of a sound effect at the transition moment is the possibility of overlapping the narration with the new scene.

```
ANNOUNCER: There was considerable excitement upon a
           certain crowded passenger train enroute from
           Minneapolis and St. Paul to Chicago.  Only
           (TRAIN WHISTLE) an hour or so before, as the
           train rolled southward through the night,
           the engineer and fireman were chatting in
           the cab...
             (A MOVING TRAIN, NOT TOO LOUD)
ENGINEER:  Have to keep plenty of steam up tonight,
           Ed.[1]
```

The overlapping of narration with the following scene can normally be done only through music or sound effects. The overlapping of narration with speech is only feasible in special scenes. For instance, as the narrator starts talking about an address delivered in the Senate we hear the orator in the background. Here the orator becomes a sort of scene-setting sound effect.

On some programs the overlap of sound and narration may be carried on over long stretches. Floyd Gibbons in the following is describing a small tot, who, by some instinct, is going for help for his suddenly sick mother.

[1] *Post Office Show*, by Wade Arnold and Richard McDonagh, NBC sustaining.

GIBBONS: . . .He strains desperately at the knob.

JIMMY: (EFFECT OF KNOB RATTLING, TALKING TO HIMSELF)

GIBBONS: By golly he's got it. (FAST) Those little fingers have actually turned the knob—the door swings open—just wide enough for the little tot to slip through into the hall.

(CREAK OF DOOR—JIMMY PATTERING ACROSS HALL)

GIBBONS: What's this? Another closed door. This one is locked too. But never mind, Jimmy isn't quitting now. He just doubles up his two tiny fists and pounds on that door just as hard as he can.

JIMMY: (POUNDING WITH FISTS)

ALICE: (MUFFLED BEHIND DOOR) Say, is that somebody at the door?[1]

From here on we're in dialogue.

That Gibbons and the boy, heard simultaneously, may be conceived as in no way related in time or in space, is an interesting comment on the listening imagination.

(4) KEEPING THE SETTING ALIVE

As the mental picture, created at the beginning of the scene, begins to dim and recede, the writer may feel the urge to revivify it suddenly.

He can do this through dialogue, but again he finds a sound effect the more zestful tool. The hoot of the owl re-impresses in a flash the night's darkness. The gavel and

[1] *Your True Adventures*, by Floyd Gibbons. Sponsor: Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

the buzz repaint, in a quick impressionistic stroke, the courtroom picture.

This use of sound effects is analogous to the way in which the book writer inserts in the middle of dialogue descriptive touches to re-quicken the reader's image.

(5) SCENE-SHIFTING

The business of switching from the penthouse apartment, where your first scene took place, to the park next morning, where your second scene happens, can be accomplished by five or six different systems. These apply to transitions in time as well as place.

For some programs one device is preferred, for others, another. These preferences, which may have theoretic or economic reasons, will be explained briefly in the following charts and analyses.

SYSTEM 1: A Pause

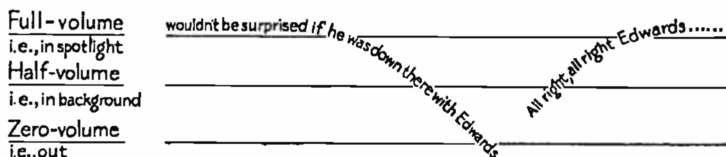
It appears in the script as follows:

KAYDEN: Mother...Clifton is about to pull a fast one! Why, who knows but it's a trick he's cooked up with the D. A. (START FADE) and right now I wouldn't be surprised if he was down there with Edwards...(BOARD FADE OUT)

(PAUSE)

CLIFTON: (FADE IN) All right, all right, Edwards. You can believe as you like, and, being the district attorney, you can act as you like.[1]

It sounds:



Note: The setting of the new scene is established, or at least suggested, in the closing words of the old scene. This is often the best method.

Disadvantages of the Pause Transition:

A pause does not "curtain" a scene — that is, announce unmistakably that the scene is over — in the same way that music can do so.

So, to make clear that the first scene is over, its last words must almost always be faded. Otherwise, we are left "hanging in the air."

However, many speeches do not make good fades, and that is one difficulty. In the above, for instance, a radio set tuned low might miss the last word, "Edwards." This loss would spoil some of the device's effectiveness.

[1] *The O'Neills*, by Jane West. Sponsor: Procter & Gamble Co. (Ivory Flakes). Agency: Compton Advertising, Inc.

As a rule the fading of a speech should be confined to words of no importance. This includes people saying good-by, and other repetitive speeches, like "Operator . . . operator . . . operator."

In general, a fade to denote the end of a scene should be spread over four to fifteen words, the last of which the listener can afford to miss, either because their subject is unimportant, or because their meaning is established by what goes before.

The fade-in of the new scene can be more abrupt, but the same rule holds. "All right, all right, Edwards," in the quotation from *The O'Neills*, is a good example of an unimportant repetitive sentence, practical for a fade-in.

It will be clear that the pause-transition involves a brief, dead stop in the script's movement. If this comes at a moment of suspense, when anticipation for the next scene has already been roused, it may be tantalizing. Otherwise the lag may be death to dramatic interest.

A pause-transition is practicable only when suspense has been created for the new scene.

Advantages of the Pause Transition:

This scene-shift device injects no non-naturalistic element — that is, music or narration — into the picture. Many producers feel that music and narration, though excellent for evening programs, are conventions to be avoided on the daytime serial, which should be a "visit with friends," not entertainment. Hence they prefer the pause-transition to other devices smacking more of showmanship. Also, pauses are cheap.

An extremely close connection between the material faded out and the material faded in often heightens the effectiveness of the transition. In the following, Eddie is writing a letter:

```
EDDIE: (PEN-SCRATCH)...Sweetheart...just a note to you
       ...before I turn in...to tell you I love you...
       and to say I think I got that job I went (START
       BOARD FADE) after today.  I sure hope I got it,
       because...(OUT)

GRACE: (BOARD FADE IN)...because it's a really wonder-
       ful job, and if I land it, what I won't do for
       you, my own darling!  Good-night, love, Eddie.[1]
```

Summary on the Pause Transition:

The pause-bridge is not extensively used at night. Daytime serials, which use few scene-shifts, sometimes prefer it to other devices.

[1] *The Honeymooners*, by Jane Bishir. NBC sustaining.

SYSTEM 2: A Narrator

This is how it appears in the script:

ISHMAEL: A death in the family, eh? Well, there's goin' to be a death in one young feller's family mighty soon, or my name ain't Ishmael Parker. (FADE OUT)

OLD RANGER: (NARRATING) Ishmael left for the city in his car that same afternoon...a very grim old man settin' between wavin' white plumes...Two days later he turned up again at the cabin ...on foot.

MA: Ishmael...where have you been?[1]

This is how it sounds:

Full-volume i.e., in spotlight — or my name ain't Ishmael Parker — Ishmael left for the city...back...on foot [NARRATOR] — Ishmael, where have

Half-volume i.e., in background

Zero-volume i.e., out

Note: In this type there is, of course, no need for the old scene to establish the setting of the new, as the narrator can take over this function.

Disadvantages of the Narrator Transition:

Some producers feel that an announcer injected into the middle of the program "spoils the illusion." This is doubtful. An illusion is not something foisted on the listener against his will. However, this theory

[1] *Death Valley Days*, by Ruth Cornwall Woodman. Sponsor: Pacific Coast Borax Company (Twenty Mule Team Borax). Agency: McCann-Erickson, Inc.

makes some serial producers prefer the pause-bridge for daytime serials, though others make occasional use of the announcer as scene-shifter.

The narrator, or announcer, still does not have the effect of a curtain, so the fade-out of the old scene is still usually necessary. It need not be as broad as in the pause-transition, since the narrator rescues us a moment later from the "hanging in the air" feeling. A three to five word fade is sometimes enough.

Advantages of the Narrator Transition:

This system, if skillfully handled, need involve no cessation of the story. The pauses between dialogue and narration can be short, almost negligible.

The narrator, almost always coming in at full volume, can keep the program moving with only an instant's lag.

In the construction of a script, the big advantage of this is that it allows scene changes at fairly casual moments. Causing no delay, they need not bog down the script. In *Gang Busters*, a narrator can introduce a dialogue of four short speeches between two policemen, shift us somewhere else for another six speeches, and so on. Great rapidity is possible.

Exception: The speed of the narrator system is sometimes slowed up by the presence of a proxy listener. The re-establishing of this character in the middle of a script occasionally proves cúmbersome.

For example, after an exciting episode one sometimes hears the appreciative proxy saying: "Well, that certainly was a surprising turn of events, Captain Liggett. What did Red Cassidy do after that?" Such comments are usually dead weight. The narrator might, meanwhile, be getting on with the story.

Summary on the Narrator Transition:

The narrator as scene-shifter can be a very fluid and speedy device, though it is occasionally slowed down by an overzealous determination to keep the proxy listener alive.

The scene-shifting narrator is used to some extent in daytime serials, but is particularly adapted to evening drama dominated by a "personality" e.g., *Gang Busters*. It is of course highly useful in programs featuring the first-person-singular technique, e.g., *Campbell Playhouse*.

SYSTEM 3: A Sound Effect

It appears in the script as follows. "Legs" is a gangster, planning some dirty work; we're at the gang's headquarters:

LEGS: ...In other words, we'll be the only passengers on that plane, beside Colt and Dougherty. Do you get it, Ptomaine?

PTOMAINE: (FADING) Yeah....I get it.

(FADE IN TRANSPORT PLANE IDLING)

VOICE: Tickets, sir?

DOUGHERTY: Here you are.

VOICE: Thank you. Seats number 1 and 2.

COLT: Thank you.[1]

It sounds something like this:

Full-volume
i.e., in spotlight
Half-volume
i.e., in background
Zero-volume
i.e., out

...get it, Ptomaine? Yeah, I get it... HRMM OF PLANE..HRMM OF PLANE..ticket, Sir? Here you are...thank you
..HRMM OF PLANE..HRMM OF PLANE

Note: In this system, as in the pause system, the setting of the new scene is preferably foreshadowed by the concluding words of the old. This is done in the above.

Disadvantages of the Sound-Effect Transition:

This system probably lends itself more admirably to action drama, with its natural profusion of sound effects, than to programs with a home atmosphere. This is not denying its frequent usefulness in the latter.

Advantages of the Sound-Effect Transition:

The fading in or out of a sound-effects background — street corner, poolroom, surf, dance hall — is usually effective in itself. These back-

[1] *Thatcher Colt Mysteries*, by Himan Brown and associates. Sponsor: Packer's Tar Soap. Agency: Stack-Goble.

grounds have a repeating pattern; therefore, the point at which they vanish from hearing does not particularly matter.

Also, the very first second of the faded-in effect, though barely audible, can clinch the setting of the new scene. In the above, since Legs has mentioned "plane" and "passengers," the very first *hrrm* of the motor sketches a picture. "Tickets, sir?" completes it.

With the fading-in job shouldered on the sound effect, the dialogue of the new scene can come in at full volume, and so get right to business.

The use of a sound effect allows the director to use a much shorter gap between scenes than in the pause-transition. This is valuable if the transition comes at a point where speed is desirable. In the above, the plane can start sneaking in almost the second Ptomaine has finished talking. In some cases, the sound effect of the new scene can be allowed to overlap the end of the old scene.

The overlapping of scenes may be illustrated by the following example:

LEORA: Let's go to the Bijou. It's a nice place, and it isn't expensive, and they've got a funny machine there. When you drop nickels in, it plays brassy kind of tunes, like a merry-go-round. (NICKELODEON SNEAK UNDER) Gee, I'm glad you're so crazy about your lab work, because... well, everyone was perfectly sane where I came from, and I got awful tired of being crazy all alone. (FADING)

(NICKELODEON UP)

(NICKELODEON DOWN UNDER FOLLOWING SCENE)[1]

This overlapping is also a frequent method for flashbacks, in which the significant sound effect takes us to the past instead of the future.

Summary on the Sound-Effect Transition:

A sound-effect background, sometimes a nuisance as a background, can be priceless as a scene-shifter. It is particularly useful in action drama (e.g., *True Detective Mysteries*). For clarity at all times, the sound effect should usually be pre-identified by the context.

[1] *Arrowsmith*, by Sinclair Lewis. Radio adaptation for *Campbell Playhouse* by Orson Welles and associates. Sponsor: Campbell Soups. Agency: Ward Wheelock Co.

SYSTEM 4: Music

This is how it appears in the script:

DR. M.:	Try to reconcile yourself to it, O'Neill... that it's only a matter of a few hours.
JIM:	(CRUSHED....A MOAN)
(MUSIC:	SLOW AND THEN...LIFE HANGING BY A THREAD... THEN DYING AWAY AND STOPPING GENTLY ON AN INCOMPLETED PHRASE...SLIGHT PAUSE...THEN IN FULLNESS OF A PIPE ORGAN AT FUNERAL RESUMES AND SOFTENS)
MINISTER:	(FADING IN) The Lord is my shepherd...I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures....[1]

This is how it sounds:

Note: Locality here is kept clear partly by the context, partly by the very nature of the music. A music bridge often sneaks in before the end of the old scene. It almost always overlaps the beginning of the new scene.

Disadvantages of the Music Transition:

Effective handling of bridge music needs an orchestra or first-class organ. Its absence from some programs has purely economic reasons. Its taboo on others has a theoretic basis, namely, that it introduces a non-realistic element.

[1] *Court of Human Relations*, by William Sweets. Sponsor: Macfadden Publications (*True Story*). Agency: Arthur Kudner, Inc.

Recorded music can often be used effectively and cheaply for bridges. This practice is common locally but not allowed on CBS and NBC. Agreements with the musicians' union likewise ban it from the transcription field, on the ground that the re-recording of music limits employment of musicians.[1]

Advantages of the Music Transition:

Alone among transition devices described, music provides a real "curtain" for the old scene.

Whereas a stage curtain is either a "slow curtain" or a "fast curtain," music curtains have an infinite repertoire. They can come down smashingly, or with a tear, or with a horse laugh. They can smile or weep.

The music curtain also has a mechanical advantage. For the first time we do not have to fade the old scene to show that it's over. A director sometimes prefers a slight fade anyway, but it is not essential.

The listener has no feeling that the end of the scene is "left in the air," for the music immediately and completely occupies the aural stage.

Not only can the music "curtain" the old scene on the right note, but, with an amazing facility impossible to the narrator, it can sweep us to a new mood, emotion, atmosphere or anticipation.

Music in this way does a sort of narrating job.

As with sound-effect bridges, the dialogue of the new scene can begin at full or near-full volume.

Music-into-sound can often be made into an extremely effective scene-setting moment, by the device of letting the music and the sound effect carry a similar rhythm:

(MUSIC: IN THE SPRING A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY, ETC. ON LAST FEW SECONDS FADE TO)

(TYPEWRITER....CARRYING SAME RHYTHM)[2]

Sometimes a music bridge may be scored so as to lead into the *pitch* of a sound effect; music can take us effectively, for example, into a fog horn, or train whistle.

Summary on the Music Transition:

For emotional dramas, where the important shifts are shifts in emotions, rather than from poolroom to race track, music does valuable transition service. It lends a fluidity of movement not attainable in the previous devices.

[1] See APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *unions*.

[2] *The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet*, by Fred Gilsdorf. CBS sustaining.

SYSTEM 5: Combinations

In the following the scene-shifting abilities of music, narration and sound effects are all combined. The program quoted uses a large orchestra. Imagine good storm-warning music.

WEATHER BUREAU: Federal hurricane warning...Conditions
(FILTER) in storm area extremely dangerous. Exercise every precaution. Keep in touch for further advices. (FADING)

(MUSIC:......................)

VOICE OF TIME: Twelve hours later bad news is received.

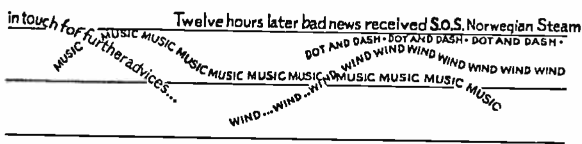
(DOT AND DASH)

(WIND AND RAIN UNDER)

TORVANGER: SOS...SOS...Norwegian Steamship Torvanger, five hundred miles Northeast of Puerto Rico.......[1]

It sounds:

Full-volume
i.e., in spotlight
Half-volume
i.e., in background
Zero-volume
i.e., out



Note: Here the music stirs anxiety; the narrator handles the time element, and creates further anticipation; sound effects flash us the new setting.

[1] *The March of Time*, by William Geer and staff. Sponsor: *Time*, Inc. Agency: Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn.

Disadvantages of Combination Transitions:

If not effectively directed, a complex bridge of this type can cause merely a great confusion.

Advantages of Combination Transitions:

Here is radio at its most flexible, able to call on sound, music, dialogue, narration, alone or in numberless combinations, for their special storytelling, picture-making and mood-creating abilities.

Summary on Combination Transitions:

A really vivid radio scene-shift is no longer merely a scene-shift; it may become a thrilling contribution to the story. It is one of the radio's most individual features. In radio alone, scene-shifting has acquired a stellar role in the dramatic repertoire.

Consistency in use of devices. Complete consistency in the scene-shifting methods of a script is *not* necessary. For example, if you are shifting scenes with music and narration, it is perfectly all right to omit both of these now and then, if you happen to come to a scene-shift that can be more effectively managed with just sound, or with a pause.

However, the use of music and narration should usually be established early in a script, since both are non-naturalistic. This is not true of sounds and pauses.

Conventional symbols. There are a few conventionalized devices sometimes useful. The *slide whistle,* which gives a magic carpet feeling, is often used on children's programs. In the following example we find it lending a valuable, playful note to an educational program:

UNCLE JIM: Perhaps the most impressive thing I ever saw was the Himalaya Mountains. They're the tallest in the world, you know.

BILL: I'd like to see them.

```
UNCLE JIM: Well, suppose we go exploring.  Come on,
           I'll take you there.
             (SLIDE WHISTLE, HIGHER AND HIGHER)
BILL:      (GASPING FOR BREATH) W-where are we?  I
           can't get my breath.
UNCLE JIM: At the highest place in the world, Bill...[1]
```

The frank use of a *device* of this sort can be a strong element in any appeal to a child audience.

The *Chinese gong* and *cymbal crashes* have also been useful for curtaining and separating scenes. In the case of these effects the listener should be warned beforehand that they are a device, characteristic of the program. On the *Eno Crime Clues* series, and on the *Chandu* series, the use of the gong at the opening planted the effect as a sort of symbol. Its later use between scenes was therefore involuntarily understood as a device, and not part of the story.

Reminder on radio scene-shifts. The radio writer does not share the stage writer's duty of compressing action into a fairly limited number of scenes. He does not share the screen writer's duty of scattering his action for scenic variety. He may move around rapidly or stay in one place, depending on the requirements of his story.

(6) DIALOGUE ON THE MOVE

Dialogue may, as in films, move from one place to another without a break. That is, Jane and Ace, of *Easy Aces*, can move from the living room to the kitchen while talking; or they can continue their argument out of the front door, down the street and halfway to town. We follow right along.

[1] *Science and Life*, by Marguerite Bair Felber. Syndicated by Radio Program Associates.

There are two distinct ways of conveying the feeling of this movement to the listener.

(*a*) *Fade-out and fade-in.* The scene is the living room. We hear the heroine saying to her guest, "Our roses are lovely this year. You must come out in the garden and see them." The guest agrees to examine the roses; as they talk we hear the two voices receding.

We picture them naturally as moving out of the room and into the garden.

After one or two speeches heard considerably off-mike, the voices start to approach once more. The second we hear the voices *approaching* instead of *receding*, we understand ourselves to have jumped suddenly, somehow, to a new listening point in the garden.

At first we identified ourselves with a stationary point in the living room; now with a stationary point in the garden.

The actors, of course, have merely moved away from the microphone, then back to the same microphone. But the collaborating listener, having been given in advance the notion *into the garden*, has converted this back-and-forth movement into *movement into the garden.*

The fade-out, fade-in system appears in the script as follows. The two men are at the door of a Milan tavern:

DIEGO: But, Maestro, our lives won't be safe. They will kill there, even for your purse.

DA VINCI: Enough, Diego. (FADING) Come. Follow me.

DIEGO: (OFF) Ugh! (FADING IN) The air is foul and heavy in here.

DA VINCI: It is a horrible place![1]

[1] *Believe It or Not*, by Robert L. Ripley and associates. Sponsor: General Foods Corp. (Post's Bran Flakes). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

(*b*) *The moving mike.* "Let me show you the roses." Our heroine and guest decide to go into the garden, but this time they *don't fade.*

However, we hear a door opening and closing. From this we feel we're moving into the garden with our characters as they talk. This feeling may be heightened if we hear, after the door opening, the tweeting of birds, later growing louder.

This system is called "the moving mike" because the mind conceives the listening point to move with the characters, instead of making the sudden jump.

The actors stay at mike, no one moves.

A stationary sound effect connected with one or the other locality may help foster the illusion. The fading-in birds usher in the garden. If there was a whistling tea kettle in the house, the diminishing, disappearing kettle whistle might help carry us away from the house.

In the following, this method is pursued with a vengeance. The writer is having a good time with his device. The scene is a boarding house, and Jimmy wants to see a room.

MRS. D.: Now if you'll come this way.

JIMMY: Yes, ma'am.

(OFF: BRIEF SOUND OF SAXOPHONE RUNNING SCALES)

MRS. D.: The saxophone is Mr. Burton in Three.

(OFF: SOUND OF FLUTE RUNNING SCALES)

MRS. D.: And the flute's Mr. Winkler...He's back in Four.

(SOUND OF HARP RUNNING RAPID CLASSIC ARPEGGIOS)

```
MRS. D.: The harp's Miss Foster...she lives here in
         Six...that'll be right across the hall from
         you...charming young lady...three seasons in
         Chautauqua.  This is the room.
           (SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR)
MRS. D.: It's all right.  Mr. Spatafaculi went out
         early this mornin'.
           (SOUND: DOOR OPENS)
MRS. D.: Here you are, sir.  Good north light and a
         fine airy room.[1]
```

The "moving mike" and the fade-out, fade-in system are both satisfactory devices.

(7) THE RADIO CLIMAX

The crisis of rising tension which we call climax must sometimes, in radio, follow a different technique from stage or screen.

A climax scene is, most frequently, one in which the two sides of a conflict face each other to win or lose.

It is the scene in which we finally "find out what happens."

When the two conflicting forces are represented, as they often are, by two characters in a dialogue of constantly rising intensity, the very nature of the crisis requires that the listener have, throughout its duration, a constant *awareness of both conflicting forces, simultaneously*. Here, if ever, we cannot let an important character "die."

On the stage, the physical presence of both forces makes possible many crisis scenes in which the two face each other

[1] *Design for Happiness*, by John Battle. Sponsor: American Tobacco Co. (Lucky Strike). Agency: Lord & Thomas.

with dramatic fierceness, but in which one does all the talking. The ringing long-speech climax is practical on the stage.

But in radio, the method used is more often *shorter and shorter speeches*. For only this way can the writer keep both forces in constant electric aliveness in the listener's mind-world.

To be sure, there are many kinds of climaxes; not always are the sides of the conflict neatly personified by characters present.

But as a general thing, rising tension between two characters, rising conflict, need shorter speeches in radio. Sometimes chopped speeches are dovetailed into a rapid machine-gunning pattern. Both forces take the spotlight almost simultaneously.

The woman sobbing throughout the man's speech, the attempted interruptions peppered into a long speech, are other efforts towards creating the simultaneous climactic aliveness of two conflicting forces.

(8) THE CLOSING

Just as the non-dramatic, factual material at the start of a radio drama is often presented to some extent by a narrator, rather than through cumbersome expository dialogue, so the clearing up of details which sometimes follows the climax of a script is occasionally shouldered in radio by narration.

While this privilege should not be abused, it is frequently valuable for several reasons: (1) it can shorten the anti-climax period, since narration is often more economical than dialogue; (2) it allows the writer to leave the dialogue effectively and abruptly at a point of very high interest; (3) it makes possible a definite projection of the story into later days or years.

In the following example, the "man" is a character who has been established as having a "brutal," "treacherous" face:

MAN: Huh, and you want me to pose for Judas? You want me to pose for the traitor? For Judas? (LAUGHS HARSHLY)

DA VINCI: What are you laughing at?

MAN: You have not asked my name, Maestro da Vinci.

DA VINCI: Who—who are you?

MAN: I am the man in whose eyes, many years ago, shone that divine light of love. (WITH BITTERNESS)

DA VINCI: (ALARMED) Signor, who are you?

MAN: I am Salaino, the same man who eleven years ago posed for the face of your Christ.

(MUSIC: UP AND FADE FOR:)

RIPLEY: And Leonardo da Vinci did use that man Salaino to pose for him again, eleven years later. Salaino had had an unfortunate love affair which wrecked his whole life, and he had sunk so low that his face, once Christ-like and spiritual, later served as a model for that arch-traitor of all times, Judas Iscariot, Believe It or Not.

(MUSIC: UP AND OUT)[1]

[1] *Believe It or Not,* Robert L. Ripley and associates. Sponsor: General Foods Corp. (Post's Bran Flakes). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

Here Ripley effectively cuts off the dialogue at the point of highest dramatic interest, and, more swiftly and economically than would be possible in dialogue form, conveys further data through narration. Thus he has the advantage of leaving the scene at the moment of the shock; he succeeds in closing the drama before this shock has worn off; he also projects the story into a later period.

Of course the radio dramatist can, and in many cases does, use all-dialogue closings similar to those of the stage. But he has also this additional type of ending at his disposal. It has been in frequent use on such programs as *Gang Busters*, *Death Valley Days*, Warden Lawes's programs, the *True Story* programs, *March of Time*, *Campbell Playhouse*, and other series making effective use of narration.

Summary on "Routine Technique." The techniques we've been describing are common to radio highbrow or lowbrow, comic or serious.

The devices we turn to next, though they too may turn up anywhere, hold perhaps most significance for those imaginative, "experimental," meaningful dramas which are becoming one of radio's most special prides — and one of its most fascinating opportunities.

3. TRICK DEVICES

This chapter surveys promising devices less generally used than those already discussed. We shall examine: (1) *The Filter;* (2) *The Echo Chamber and Other Acoustical Tricks;* (3) *Montage;* (4) *Choral Speech.*

(1) THE FILTER

One of radio's most interesting tricks was arrived at unintentionally.

What was sought, really, was a convenient method of making a voice sound as though it were talking through a telephone. But the gadget that emerged has far more exciting potentialities.

Early telephone effects were made by muffling people's voices with hats, reversed megaphones, tumblers, cups, pans and tomato cans. There was a haphazard period when someone was always dragging in something new for an actor to talk into.

Setting up an actual telephone circuit was too cumbersome for constant use. In seeking an easy substitute, it became clear that telephonic quality was not a *muffled* quality at all, but an incomplete, *filtered* quality.

A telephone just doesn't give you the whole voice.

What part of the voice does it remove? This is where experiments led radio into intriguing by-paths.

The variety of filters through which a voice may now be shunted create widely varying effects, depending on what parts of the voice are filtered out, and what propor-

tions of "highs" and "lows" are allowed to slip through this acoustical sieve.

One effect approximates the telephone voice; another, the radio and police-car voice; another, an old victrola record. But others, creating far more surprising disguises, make the voice sound as if it were coming from some tiny, infinitesimal creature the size of Queen Mab,

> No bigger than an agate stone
> On the fore-finger of an alderman. . . .

while another is clearly an inner Voice of Conscience; or a ghost, speaking from behind some cosmic veil.

These effects can be extremely satisfactory fairies, ghosts and consciences. They have an unreal, often weird sound to begin with. But it will be clear, from a reading of earlier chapters, that here again the collaboration of the listener is called upon. This collaborator is capable of excellent ghosts — if you give him a start in the right direction. In other words, just as in the case of non-self-identifying sound effects, the right idea must be planted. It is the right idea *plus* the right effect that makes the grand illusion.

If the listener knows the filter is a ghost, it can be the world's best ghost.

The *Shadow*, played on a filter, is without doubt an invisible man. Ariel, on a very thin filter, can be an airy sprite without question, capable of riding on a summer breeze.

Observe in the following quotation from the *Shadow* the sort of preparation this particular illusion receives. The *Shadow* is really Lamont Cranston, a well-to-do hero who has the power (a mental power) of rendering himself invisible. He uses this for the foiling of evil.

As Cranston, we hear his voice normally transmitted.

It is usually not till the emergency appears that he takes his role of the invisible *Shadow*, talking through a filter. In the present episode, a certain Gorlin has boarded a transatlantic plane, carrying a mysterious chemical he intends to put into the hands of unscrupulous European militarists. The plane is about to take off. No time for Cranston to buy a ticket. He is with his girl friend, Margot, the only person who knows the identity of "that master of other men's minds . . . the Shadow."

(HUM OF PLANE MOTORS)

CRANSTON: (YELLS) How soon is she going?

VOICE: (OFF) Four more minutes!

MARGOT: Lamont! What are you going to do?

CRANSTON: Get on board, Margot.

(BRING IN ROAR OF THE MOTORS A LITTLE LOUDER)

MARGOT: But what if he isn't aboard?

CRANSTON: There's no time to find out! Have to take a chance!

MARGOT: But, Lamont! A flight to Europe!

CRANSTON: Got to be done! Goodbye! (FADE) Wish me luck!

MARGOT: (DOWN) Good luck, Lamont...(TEARFULLY) Luck...

(BRING UP ROAR OF PLANE'S ENGINES AS TRANSITION FOR FEW SECONDS, THEN FADE BACK CONTINUING BEHIND:)

STEWARD: Stop—what—who is it?

OFFICER: (FADE IN FAST) Steward! What's the matter?

STEWARD: I—I don't know! Someone pushed past me--up the steps into the ship!

OFFICER: Eh? What are you talking about? No one went up these steps.

STEWARD: But—but I saw someone—

OFFICER: Get to your post! (SCORNFULLY) I've been standing right here. Are you drunk or crazy?

(BRING UP ROAR OF PLANE MOTORS FULL, THEN FADE BACK SLOWLY AND CONTINUE BEHIND:)

CRANSTON: I beg your pardon, steward.

STEWARD: At your service, sir.

CRANSTON: Gorlin—is there a passenger on board by the name of Gorlin?

STEWARD: Yes! Mr. Gorlin is in Cabin Three on the corridor to the left. If you wish, I would be pleased to take him (BREAK OFF IN SURPRISE) Good Lord! (IN AWE) Gone! Corridor empty! But there was someone standing—talking— (IN CLOSE) I _must_ be crazy.

(BRING UP THE HUM OF THE PLANE'S MOTORS, THEN FADE FAR, FAR BACK BEHIND)

(MUFFLED KNOCKING ON DOOR)

GORLIN: Eh? Who is it? Who is there?

(KNOCKING ON DOOR AGAIN, AS BEFORE)

(IMPATIENTLY) All right! I'm coming!

(BOLT BEING THROWN BACK, DOOR OPENING)

(IRRITABLY) Yes, yes, what do you— (BREAKS OFF AS HE SEES NO ONE THERE) Huh. Nobody here!

(IN DISGUST AS HE CLOSES THE DOOR...BOLT BEING THROWN)

(STRETCHES SLEEPILY) Ahh! I am tired... (CHUCKLES) Well, I can have a good rest now. (WITH SLOW ANTICIPATION) Tomorrow—

SHADOW: (THROUGH FILTER) Where is the liquid?

GORLIN: (GASPS IN SURPRISE) Ah! (SHARPLY) Who said that? Who spoke?

SHADOW: Why don't you answer?[1]

Uses of the filter:

(1) Naturalistic: telephones, radio, victrolas, police broadcasts.

(2) Supernaturalistic: ghosts, goblins, invisible people, inner voices, God.

In some of these cases, the *echo chamber* may be used effectively in combination with the filter. These effects are discussed in the section THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS.

(3) Special uses of the filter.

The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet. In the CBS sustaining series *The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet,* the Ghost himself, a whimsical fellow, talked with a normal voice. So did his companion ghosts. But since mortals were, to them on their weekly hauntings, creatures of another world, it seemed reasonable

[1] *The Shadow.* Series written by various writers. Sponsor: Delaware, Lackawanna, & Western Coal Company (Blue Coal). Agency: Ruthrauff & Ryan, Inc.

that Sweet and his fellows should hear them with a strange filtered quality, as we hear ghosts. Hence, while the ghosts spoke normally, human beings and their affairs were heard over a filter. The experiment, discarded all too soon, was interesting and imaginative.

Strange Interlude. Another promising possibility is the use of the filter to adapt to radio the *Strange Interlude* device, in which characters' thoughts as well as words are made vocal. On radio, filtered speech is made to represent inner monologue, inaudible to other characters. The convention, once planted, can become compelling. Here is the experiment applied to a wedding scene. The filter is only used in a few lines late in the quotation:

MINISTER: ...and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

JOHN: I will.

MINISTER: Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love him and honour him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

JANET: (SLIGHT PAUSE; THEN, ON FILTER) No! No! I haven't had time to think! It's all happened so suddenly! I don't love him! I'm only doing this because— (FILTER OUT. SELF-CONTROLLED NOW) I will.

MINISTER: Repeat after me...[1]

[1] *I Janet Take Thee John*, audition script by Philo Higley.

The same reversed. Now we might carry all this one step further and, as in *The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet,* reverse the whole process. In a specially-written sketch, we might transmit thoughts normally, and things said via filter. This would throw the focus on the inner world, with the small talk of the outer world becoming a shadowy unreality. This method might need some preliminary explanation. It might be extremely useful, however, in adapting to radio one of those short stories in which we spend most of the time with the hero's thoughts. In such a story the thoughts may be the paramount reality, and any dialogue the hero may engage in with others, something hazy, insubstantial and of another world.[1]

A further variation. Another use of the filter for thoughts was exemplified by Arch Oboler's sketch, *Mr. Important,* in which the leading character had the power, for one magic half hour, of hearing the thoughts of others. The thoughts were filtered.

Phil Baker. The use of a mild filter on the Phil Baker program is familiar to most listeners. Baker is "haunted" by an invisible person called Beetle, whose voice is filtered. In vaudeville Baker used the device of a heckler in a box. In an attempt to adapt the humor of this device to radio, a filter was used.

The Phil Baker radio formula is that of the *Shadow,* applied to comic purposes.[2]

[1] This is an "experimental" suggestion by William Sweets.

[2] Beetle's filtered voice is also put through a public-address system. This is chiefly for the sake of the studio audience. For the radio audience, the effect is primarily a filter effect.

Sound over filter. In some cases sound effects are shunted through a filter. Here Steve is talking over the phone:

STEVE: Yes, this is Steve Wilson. (BREATHLESSLY) Joe! Where are you? What happened?

JOE: (THROUGH FILTER) I can't talk now. Be in front of the Lafayette Statue in the park—in ten minutes!

STEVE: But, Joe—where are you phoning from—what are you going to—

(CLICK OVER FILTER)

Joe! Joe!

LORELEI: What'd he say?

STEVE: He hung up.[1]

In such cases the ear can distinguish clearly between a filtered click, from the other end of the line, and the unfiltered click of a phone in the scene itself.[2]

Note that the use of an audible voice at the other end of a phone conversation is optional. The voice may be heard, or not heard.

Summary on filters. Naturalistic uses of the filter are common on all types of programs. Supernaturalistic uses are more characteristic of experimental programs, but not entirely confined to them. For instance, in the daytime serial the *Romance of Helen Trent,* the men in Helen Trent's past life appeared to her in a dream, all talking on filters.

[1] A *Big Town* script by Maxwell Shane and Frank Dolan. Sponsor: Lever Brothers Corp. (Rinso). Agency: Ruthrauf & Ryan, Inc.

[2] The click at the other end of the line is sometimes rendered by a special mechanism.

(2) THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS

The echo chamber is another device that has achieved more importance than its original purpose.

It was invented, of course, for scenes in caves, canyons, railroad terminals, large halls and courtrooms. But other interesting, non-naturalistic uses have been found for it.

In radio stations equipped with an echo chamber, the engineer desiring an echo simply shunts whatever is going over a microphone into this quite separate chamber, which may be in an entirely different part of the building, and may have a tunnel-like or labyrinthine construction. Actually, the material is *broadcast* into this chamber, tunnel, or labyrinth, picked up there a split second later by another microphone, sent back to the engineer, and rebroadcast to you *in combination with the original sound.* Thus you hear the original sound twice, with a slight time lag: This creates the echo.

Through possible variations in the acoustics of the chamber the echo may be a fairly pure one, or may acquire a complex *reverberation.* We shall use the word *echo* to include the full range of effects possible.

The echo chamber may appear in a script simply as follows: The Guide is narrating, something about Egypt:

GUIDE: ...They still had a task exploring the secret passageways which were plugged with huge blocks of granite. But finally on March 2, 1818, they became the first modern archaeologists to enter Khafra's funeral chamber in the Second Pyramid...! (FADE)

BELZONI: (USE ECHO CHAMBER) This way, Frediani, this must be the chamber...![1]

In scene-shifts. In all the naturalistic uses of the echo chamber, the device's particular effectiveness is at the moment of transition. The rather sudden realization of acoustic change can give an effective jolt to the beginning of a scene.

Thus, *any* shift from a muffled locality (a home) to a place of brittle acoustics (a police station, courtroom, Senate chamber) can be given a quickening emphasis.

This scene-shift from *The O'Neills*, already quoted as an example of a pause transition, might be accented excitingly with this device:

KAYDEN: Mother...Clifton is about to pull a fast one: Why, who knows but it's a trick he's cooked up with the D. A. (START FADE) and right now I wouldn't be surprised if he was down there with Edwards...(BOARD FADE OUT)

(FADE IN WITH SLIGHT ECHO CHAMBER)

CLIFTON: All right, all right, Edwards. You can believe as you like, and being the district attorney, you can act as you like.

Transitions from dialogue to sound profit even more from the added echo. When the prisoner has heard his sentence, "twenty years," and we have faded out the judge's calm words, the presently faded-in (UNLOCKING OF PRISON CELL WITH GREAT ECHO) can be a particularly grim and gripping effect.

[1] *Have You Heard?*, by Marguerite Bair Felber. NBC sustaining.

Once the picture is clear, it's often best, as with sound-effect backgrounds, to reduce slightly the degree of echo.

Expressionistic uses. The echo chamber, like the filter, has other than naturalistic uses. For example, an opening of *Believe It or Not* had a startling moment of echo chamber, which was used in this case to convey no actual echo, but merely the *idea* that Ripley's slogan was "heard round the world."

```
FORD BOND: (WITH TREMENDOUS ECHO FOLLOWING) Believe it
           or not!
             (ECHO...BELIEVE IT OR NOT...BELIEVE IT OR
             NOT.)
(MUSIC:    WAKE UP AND LIVE)[1]
```

Similarly, in Alfred Kreymborg's poetic drama, *The Planets*, the voices of the planets, which were in a way identified with the corresponding Roman gods, were rendered with enormous echo. This gave them an all-pervading, omnipresent, huge quality. They seemed to fill all space.

Dramatic representations of the Deity in Bible dramatizations sometimes make this same expressionistic use of the echo chamber.

Combinations of the filter and echo chamber. In some of the above-mentioned cases, such as gods of various types, echo and filter may be effectively combined in various degrees. Such combinations have other uses also.

The Ghost in *Hamlet*, in Act I, is apparent to everyone present. Perhaps here his filtered voice should also have an echo, and become *omnipresent.*

[1] *Believe It or Not*, by Robert L. Ripley and associates. Sponsor: General Foods Corp. (Post's Bran Flakes). Agency: Benton & Bowles, Inc.

But in Act III, the Closet Scene, the Ghost's words to Hamlet are not heard by Hamlet's mother; neither is the Ghost visible to her. Perhaps here the Ghost should be an *un*echoed filtered voice, suggesting an *inner* voice.

Although shadings of this sort may not reach the conscious realization of the listener, the sharpening of the unconscious illusion serves a real purpose. An echo chamber can give a voice a cosmic spaciousness; filtering can give it a deathly, insubstantial, disembodied quality. In fantasy and poetic drama such suggestions may make priceless contribution to the mind's image-making processes.

Other echoes. There are other devices for creating echo and reverberation effects. Sliding wall panels; removable curtains; the use of adjoining rooms and hallways; the construction of studios with a *live end* and a *dead end* [1] all enable the producer to utilize the dramatic values of acoustic variation and acoustic symbolism.

On *Buck Rogers*, and on *Renfrew of the Mounted*, actors sometimes talked down into a microphone which was inside a grand piano. The sympathetic vibration of the strings gave a long and lingering death to every note, creating a complex, weird, musical and unearthly echo.

Further acoustic tampering. In addition to echoes, directors have worked out various *confined-space* effects, but they are less useful and less exciting than echoes.

The March of Time has at various times had its actors talking inside large cardboard packing boxes.

CBS in New York has something it calls a *dead booth,* for completely dead acoustics — a foggy night, for instance.

The writer should merely know that if he has any acousti-

[1] See Appendix B: The Writer's Guide to Radio, *dead end.*

cal tampering of this sort in mind, the desired effect can usually be obtained.

Summary on echo chamber. The echo chamber is useful in naturalistic drama, in suggesting scenes where echo or reverberation are to be expected; it is particularly effective at a scene-shifting moment.

In addition, the mind is easily persuaded to attach a symbolic, non-naturalistic, often supernatural significance to echo effects.

(3) MONTAGE

This is a movie term. Its use in radio is best explained by an example:

```
(MUSIC:       JUMPS TO GOSSIP THEME)

1st GOSSIP:  Psst...(MUSIC "YOO HOO")  Psst...(MUSIC
             "YOO HOO")  Psst...

(MUSIC:       UP BRIEFLY)

2nd GOSSIP:  Why it's the most scandalous thing I ever
             heard of.  They ought to run them out of
             town.  All of them.

(MUSIC:       UP BRIEFLY)

3rd GOSSIP:  Catch me letting my child even so much as
             speak to that Beth O'Neill.

(MUSIC:       UP BRIEFLY)

4th GOSSIP:  I wouldn't want it repeated, but I heard
             that...psst...psst...psst...

(MUSIC:       UP AND TO NEXT SCENE) [1]
```

[1] *Court of Human Relations*, by William Sweets. Sponsor: Macfadden Publications (*True Story*). Agency: Arthur Kudner, Inc.

This is not a *scene*. The listener doesn't conceive these speeches as related either in time or in place.

On the contrary, he grasps them at once as scattered flashes, connected only in subject matter. No characters are identified, no time or place established.

Some montages, more closely resembling the screen's photo-montage technique, use a succession of *overlapping* effects. This needs tasteful and strenuous direction, with exact gauging of relative volumes at every point. The radio montage quoted below, which its writer calls a "phono-montage," would need at least an hour's rehearsal.

A girl is missing from home, and her brother and sister have been told by the mother and father to ring "every bell in the neighborhood."

The two columns are simultaneous — a constant dual effect. The voices are quiet. The numbers refer to actors:

(DIFFERENT DOORBELLS AT VARYING DISTANCES THROUGHOUT. ALSO DOORS OPENING AND CLOSING)

MARY: I'm Mary McCarthy...I'm looking for my little sister, Peggy McCarthy...she's lost...I thought maybe you'd seen her.

1. (cue: "Lost") I'm Peggy McCarthy's brother, have you seen my sister?	8. (cue: "seen her") We haven't seen her.
3. She hasn't been here.	4. She hasn't been here.
9. I haven't seen her.	2. I'm Mary McCarthy.
1. I'm Peggy McCarthy's brother.	6. When did you last see her?
5. I'm sorry.	6. No, I'm awfully sorry.

7. We'll help you look for her if you like.	2. I'm Peggy McCarthy's sister.
9. Nope, not here.	10. Oh, isn't that too bad.
1. I'm Peggy McCarthy's brother.	4. Sorry.
3. I'm awfully sorry.	6. Not here.
5. Haven't seen her around here.	8. I haven't seen her.
1. I'm Peggy McCarthy's brother.	2. I'm Peggy McCarthy's sister.
7. No, I'm sorry.	10. Hasn't she been home at all?

(MUSIC UP) [1]

The montage is a very rapid device, which can cover a lot of background narrative in a graphic, concise manner. It is a chance for radio to splash quickly over a large canvas.

It definitely smacks of showmanship, and is usually taboo on serials. It lends itself particularly to historical and expository scripts.

An editor of the *Aunt Jenny* series said: "I shoot any writer who springs a montage on me." *The March of Time* uses it often.

(4) CHORAL SPEECH

We have seen that radio directors and writers tend to think of actors' voices in musical terms, especially in the selection and grouping of characters according to voice pitch.

[1] *The Line-Up*. Audition script by Stewart Sterling.

Some experimenters, notably Norman Corwin, creator and director of *Words Without Music*, have gone a step farther and actually applied to speech some of the rhythms, counter-rhythms, and interweaving patterns of group singing and orchestral music.

The following quotation from a radio arrangement of Browning's *Pied Piper of Hamelin* opens with a solo narration, a sort of statement of theme. Presently the spotlight is taken over by a multi-voiced narration (a "split narration" in *first person plural*). Then these voices become a chorus, speaking all together.

Then follows a truly musical pattern. One group of voices repeats in slightly altered form a part of the story already told while the remaining group, in a rhythm accompaniment, keeps alive the "Rats!" theme.

The radio version opens:

```
NARRATOR:   Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
            By famous Hanover City;
            The river Weser, deep and wide,
            Washes its wall on the southern side;
            A pleasanter spot you never spied;
            But, when begins our ditty,
            More than five hundred years ago,
            To see the townsfolk suffer so
            From vermin was a pity.
              (LIGHT RAT EFFECT IN)
CHORUS:     Rats!
1st MAN:    They fight our dogs and kill our cats!
```

1st WOMAN: And bite our babies in their cradles!

2nd MAN: And eat the cheese out of our vats!

2nd WOMAN: And lick the soup from my cook's own ladles!

3rd MAN: Split open my kegs of salted sprats!

MEN OF CHORUS: Make nests inside our Sunday hats!

WOMEN OF CHORUS: They even spoil us women's chats
By drowning our speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

ALL: Rats! (THESE VOICES TO BACKGROUND
Rats! AND CONTINUE)
Rats!
Rats!
(MEANWHILE IN Rats!
FOREGROUND:) Rats!
Rats!

CHORUS: They fought the dogs and killed the cats Rats!
And bit the babies in their cradles Rats!
And ate the cheese out of the vats Rats!
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles Rats!
Split open the kegs of salted sprats Rats!
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats Rats!
And even spoiled the women's chats Rats!
By drowning their speaking Rats!

With shrieking and squeaking Rats!

In fifty different sharps and flats. Rats!

(CUT ON CUE)

1st MAN: There has ceased to be any fun about this.

2nd MAN: Something will have to be done about this![1]

In *Interview with Signs of the Times*, an original radio poem, Norman Corwin used the same devices, with variations. This time the voices all represented electric lights in Times Square signs. First we heard them "winking," "twinkling," "wriggling," "blinking," in various patterns, such as:

1st MAN: We blink

2nd MAN: And twinkle

3rd MAN: Wriggle and wrinkle...

But soon the voices, men's and women's both, formed themselves into two antiphonal groups:

3rd WOMAN: And some go around

1st CHORUS: And round

2nd CHORUS: And round

1st CHORUS: And round

Now once more we find one theme moving to the background, to provide rhythm accompaniment for a new narration. This time we have one voice narrating, behind it the two antiphonal groups:

	(FOREGROUND)	(BRIGHTLY BUT NOT TOO FAST)
MAIN VOICE:	We offer you shows	And round
	And vend you clothes	And round

[1] *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, as adapted for *Words Without Music* by Norman Corwin. CBS sustaining.

Advertise booze	And round
And flash you news	And round
Sell you tires	And round
And make you buyers	And round
Of coffee and gum	And round
And toffee and rum	And round
And sugars and spices	And round
And flavored ices	And round
Tobacco and wood	And round
And ham and cotton	And round
Goods that are good	And round
And goods that are rotten...	And round[1]

These devices emphasize the importance of relative volume in radio, discussed in the chapter, THE THREE TOOLS. Radio's ability to place one element squarely in the aural spotlight, and remove another element to a background level, is one reason for the often extraordinary effectiveness of well-handled choral speech in radio.

Archibald MacLeish, with his *Fall of the City* and *Air Raid*, and Alfred Kreymborg, with the *Planets* and *Fables in Verse*, showed the exciting possibilities of rhythmic speech on the air. These two men alone started a new and rapidly snowballing movement — a *radio poetry*. This movement has brought to networks and stations a stream of verse manuscripts, dramatic, lyric, and lyrico-dramatic, that seems little likely to stop.

Norman Corwin, the first of the radio poets with a thorough knowledge of both radio and poetry, taught the

[1] *Interview with Signs of the Times*, by Norman Corwin. From *Words Without Music*. CBS sustaining.

new art how to enrich its repertoire of techniques and devices. He showed it how to develop radio's multi-voiced narration, its montage and its use of background effects into a sort of orchestration of human speech. The rhythms of this choral speech are now part of the technique of radio poetry.

Postscript on PART II: TECHNIQUE. We have examined, so far, structures and devices of radio writing as they might appear anywhere in the world.

But the radio writer works nowhere in a vacuum.

In the United States the radio writer lives in a complex business world in which he finds himself and his work the target of innumerable secondary forces, not inherent in his medium but stemming from advertising, merchandising, government, law, audience research and all the pressure groups, organized and unorganized, that feel they have a stake in America's broadcast schedules.

PART III: MARKET MUSTS will examine one by one the leading program types that make up American radio. In doing so, it will give special attention to the "secondary forces."

PART III: MARKET MUSTS

1. In the Open Market.
2. On Staff.
3. Under Contract.

Tailor-made writing. The radio writer in the United States is soon made forcibly aware that he is not merely working in a *medium* (of great fascination), but also in a *market* to whose requirements he must to some extent tailor his wares.

This market presents itself to him as an array of fairly well-defined *types* of programs. These types have not grown up accidentally or by anyone's caprice. They are the product of the particular complex of forces to which radio broadcasting is subjected in the United States. These forces are very numerous. The American radio writer is heckled by a stranger and wider variety of special pressures than any other species of writer. It should be said that not all these pressures are evil and distasteful; some in fact are extremely interesting and worthwhile in their final effect.

This book turns now to a program-type-by-program-type examination of radio writing in the United States. We shall discuss, in each case, the *Background* of the type, with attention to the special influences; then, the *Requirements*, in technique and subject matter, that emerge from this background.

Our survey of the market is presented in three divisions, already familiar: In the Open Market; On Staff; Under Contract. Thus we shall begin at a possible beginning, and end at the most usual goal, of a script-writing career.

At the end of each division certain *Marketing Notes* and *Taboo Notes* will be added.

Our discussion will omit any program types that do not involve special factors, and which therefore have been

sufficiently covered by preceding chapters. It will also omit types which are not properly the concern of a writer. These would include programs ad libbed in part or in entirety, such as the quiz program, the amateur hour, the street interview and the description of public events. All of these may involve preliminary written material, but this is likely to be a performer's, not a writer's, problem.

1. IN THE OPEN MARKET

The five principal types of opportunities in the open market will be briefly surveyed: (1) *The Ten-Minute Sketch;* (2) the sustaining *Quality Sketch;* (3) material for the commercial *Framework Program;* (4) *The Special-Occasion Sketch;* (5) *Syndicate Material.*

(1) THE TEN-MINUTE SKETCH
(for variety programs)

BACKGROUND

An advertising agency producing a variety hour, having hired a guest movie star at $3500 for one performance, has the thorny problem: "Now what on earth shall we do with her?"

The interview, with answers cute or grave, solves part of the problem, but only part. The climax scene of a movie or play is more the thing: It gives a chance for histrionic display, and lends a sense of "body" to the program as a whole, most of which is necessarily fluffy. The drama fragment is a toothy nucleus.

But — there aren't enough of these climax scenes, holding any novelty, to fill the need.

This ushers in the original ten-minute sketch, which has become a standardized form, and exists purely for the variety hour. It is radio's *short-short.* Most variety hours, though not all, sooner or later buy ten-minute sketches. Many are written "on assignment"; an occasional few are bought unsolicited. It is probably an expanding market.

REQUIREMENTS

Surrounded by fifty minutes of froth, the sketch with some excitement or suspense is preferred to the too trivial.

Being primarily a "vehicle" for a star of stage or screen, it must spotlight this star. No one else may overshadow him or her in interest.

You may be writing a sketch for two stars. In this case, they should share the spotlight equally. Man-and-woman would be best, though man-and-man and woman-and-woman are also sometimes used. A third, less important character, is admissible. Any fourth active factor is definitely undesirable, though "waiters," "cab drivers" and other people having only momentary existence may be used.

In other words, two or three characters in tense conflict are the ideal substance of the ten-minute sketch.

The star's role should be glorious, witty, tragic, villainous — anything but tame, flabby. The flabby role tears down public interest; it is therefore a menace to any star.

The shortness of the sketch requires usually a straight plunge into conflict. The ideal pattern is a steady rise from a tense opening to a more tense crisis. A pleasant boy-meets-girl opening may turn out to be too leisurely. These ten-minute sketches resemble the climax scene of a three-act play which is their prototype. Start close to the climax.

There is hardly time for frequent scene shifts. However, there's no theoretic objection to trick devices, if essential to your story. Surrealistic sketches have been used.

Endings may be tragic or happy. Wide range of subject matter is used, but nothing attacking the existing social order is acceptable.

Best length, 1500 to 1800 words.

Prediction of any future policies is impossible; however, the ten-minute sketch seems here to stay, and seems to be developing a tradition of its own.

Producers who have hitherto made the most use of ten-minute sketches: J. Walter Thompson; Benton & Bowles; NBC.

Important influence summarized: the guest-star system of the variety hour, and its constant demand for good acting vehicles.

(2) THE QUALITY SKETCH
(half hour, sustaining)

BACKGROUND

Every station's operating license, issued to it by the Federal Communications Commission, requires it to serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." This is generally interpreted as meaning that it must devote part of its time to broadcasts of an educational, cultural nature. Stations and networks are apt to regard this not only as an obligation but also as good business, in conformity with the best principles regarding the maintenance of favorable "public relations."

The public-service tradition is evident in the spectacular symphony series, the covering of special events, the many educational broadcasts, series of the *America's Town Meeting of the Air* type; it affects also the choice of much sustaining dramatic material.

All in all, the half-hour sketch for the sustaining market is the sketch with the "worthwhile" quality. The sustaining personnel wants to, and must, do something a little different from the commercial fare.

REQUIREMENTS

The sustaining thirty-minute sketch is the *Harper's*, the *Atlantic Monthly* of radio. Originality is preferred to the too conventional plot pattern.

"Experimental" techniques are welcome. On CBS, such scripts are usually shunted to the *Columbia Workshop* series.

The *Columbia Workshop* has experimented with interesting techniques; with filters and echo chambers; with verse, surrealism and the expressionistic use of music; it has developed the *Ghost of Benjamin Sweet;* it has produced Archibald MacLeish's *The Fall of the City* and *Air Raid* and numerous worthwhile documentary broadcasts.

Controversial matter is not shuddered at as it is in the commercial market. When connected with any established name, like MacLeish, Irwin Shaw, Pare Lorentz or Leopold Atlas, a Leftist leaning may be welcome, as proof of a free-speech policy.

Verse plays by unknowns, as well as known writers, have appeared on CBS and NBC.

The thirty-minute sketch of worthwhile aspirations has become a radio institution. There are no rigid requirements. Literary merit holds weight. It is a real opportunity. For the imaginative drama, the medium itself gives infinite promise.

Some individual stations have a sustaining policy similar to the networks: Part of the sustaining programs are being groomed for commercial sale; other programs have no such purpose.

Best length: 30 minutes — 4500 to 5000 words.

Important influence summarized: the cultural and prestige-building functions of the sustaining service.

(3) THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAM

(half hour, commercial)

BACKGROUND

What the public wants, not what it should want, is the concern of this quite different market.

The "framework" of a drama series is often a mere device for utilizing unrelated sketches — whether by one writer or by many. *First Nighter* (a supposed Broadway First Night each week), *Grand Central Station* (dramas that pass through a railroad terminal), *On Broadway* (dramas of Broadway), *Grand Hotel* (dramas that pass through a hotel), are catch-all devices. Most modern stories of melodramatic plot can, without much difficulty, at some point, be routed through Broadway, Grand Central Station or an unlocalized Grand Hotel.

In practice, some *Grand Hotel* stories have had no connection with a hotel.

Some framework series (*Death Valley Days*) are written by one writer under contract. Others (*Big Town*,[1] *Cavalcade of America*) have sought their material from a limited number of established writers. Some series have changed their methods during their run.

A very few, with good results, have consistently welcomed scripts from a large variety of writers.

REQUIREMENTS

A framework show that is "open" sometimes has itemized, mimeographed INSTRUCTIONS TO WRITERS, to be given to anyone showing promise.

The *First Nighter* [2] instructions are interesting, and fairly typical.

[1] This one keeps the same characters as well as the same actors. No plot continuity exists, however.

[2] For further data on this program, see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *FIRST NIGHTER*.

First Nighter, like many such series, keeps to the same lead actors. The script must be a vehicle for them.

The producers point out that the program seeks a family audience: nothing profane, controversial, risqué. No drunk scenes; preferably no drinking. Happy endings preferred, not required. Sketches may be romance, mystery, adventure, drama, comedy. Other framework series are slightly less rigid in moral requirements, but the conservative, conventional viewpoint is behind them all.

In other words, series of this type are definitely the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *Collier's* of radio. They want fresh plots, of a familiar type.

First Nighter wants its sketches in three segments, each with a climax. The first and second segments should end on strong suspense, to hold an audience through a commercial. Other series want two segments, rather than three.

The success of *First Nighter*, *Grand Central Station*, etc., means there will be more framework series. Some will be "open." To learn if a program is "open," one may write and ask.

Length: framework sketches vary in length according to the individual requirements of the series. For *First Nighter*, 2600 words is the preferred length. Most other series desire longer sketches, up to 4000 words. Such differences are due to the different lengths of commercials and framework material.

Important influence summarized: the advertiser's desire to get a maximum family audience without offending anyone, anywhere.

(4) THE SPECIAL-OCCASION SKETCH

(various lengths; sustaining or commercial)

BACKGROUND

Special-occasion scripts are radio's feature stories, its Sunday Supplements.

Washington's Birthday, Fourth of July, Christmas, Armistice Day, bring an annual script supply to stations, networks and agencies. Some are used. Some, revived again and again, like the *Christmas Carol* adaptation for Lionel Barrymore, become radio classics. Sketches of this sort may find a commercial market, usually on variety hours, or a sustaining market.

REQUIREMENTS

The more obvious anniversaries and occasions should be avoided, unless something really original can be done. Network files groan with celebrations of Christmas. This is not to say that a Christmas sketch of genuine literary merit will not find a place.

The combining of dramatizations with actual events — dedications and unveilings — is a popular trick of the networks. A Robert Burns birthday program, for example, combined prepared dialogue scenes with switches to an actual Scottish celebration, on a steamer in New York Harbor. It was atmospheric and very interesting.

Another typical if curious combination: a Lincoln's birthday program, mostly about Lincoln's early life, included a switch to Hollywood, for a reading of the *Gettysburg Address* by John Barrymore.

Networks occasionally prepare for the deaths of world figures, by having biographical sketches ready in advance. Such writing is usually a staff writer's macabre privilege. In general, both free-lance and staff writers engage in special-occasion scripts.

Length: 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 30 minutes, or other 15-minute units. A 30-minute sketch probably has the best chance. This is not an extensive market. Large individual stations may also accept special-occasion sketches.

Important influence summarized: the desire of networks and stations for timely novelties.

(5) MATERIAL FOR SYNDICATION TO LOCAL STATIONS

BACKGROUND

This fairly new market has been a pain to most who have dabbled in it, but holds real importance for the future.

Years ago writers began to have the notion: "Suppose I write a series of scripts, and mail a sample or two to a couple of hundred U. S. A. stations, and ask them if they want to subscribe to the series at a ridiculously low rate."

If fifty stations subscribe, thinks the writer, at two dollars per script, that would be $100 per script. Not bad. Minus expenses.

The trouble is that if only a handful subscribe you have to supply the series anyway. Promotion and large mimeograph costs may find you ending with a profit of $6.50 per script — if any.

Numerous companies working from various cities have tried to make a go — and are still doing so with varying success — of the syndicate idea. Some offer individual sketches, some offer series of thirteen [1] scripts, of various types suitable for local sponsorship. The prices charged for these may run as low as ten dollars for thirteen scripts — even less. The price may vary with the wattage and time rate of the station. The writer usually gets 25–50 per cent of the proceeds.

Circumstances holding back the script syndicate market: (1) Inadequate production equipment, sound effects, studio facilities, etc., at many local stations. (2) Inadequate

[1] Radio contracts are usually in terms of 13-week (¼-year) periods.

acting and directing talent in some local communities. (3) The convenience and economy of recorded programs. (4) Some competition from material supplied free by various concerns as part of promotion or propaganda campaigns.[1]

But the syndicates, and the free script services too, are among the forces slowly building up in innumerable communities the production groups that should eventually make the script syndicates thrive. From amateur, semi-amateur and professional activities in several hundred stations, local radio drama is slowly coming into an active and promising existence. It is the great training ground for tomorrow's radio talent.

REQUIREMENTS

Chief requirement at present is simplicity of production. Small casts, few sound effects.

A few companies have specialized in half-hour scripts, not unsimilar to those used in framework programs, though easier to produce. Most syndicates offer various series of limited length — thirteen to twenty-six scripts.

Some syndicates have had best results by confining themselves to "Service Programs" — that is, series of short talks or dialogues on beauty culture, cooking, care of babies. Such programs can be handled by one or two staff voices. Example: a *Make Up and Live* series.[2]

[1] Example of free propaganda programs: the National Association of Manufacturers for some time sent to stations, for free use, a recorded serial called the *American Family Robinson*. The philosophy advanced by the program was opposed to "isms." Example of free promotion scripts: Before a Victor Herbert anniversary, M. Witmark & Sons, music publishers, sent commemorative scripts to stations, without charge, presumably to be used with Victor Herbert music. See also APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

[2] Promoted by Gags, Inc.

Many companies calling themselves Radio Program Producers, or Program Agencies, or Independent Producers, also handle a syndicate business. Some translate scripts and syndicate them abroad. Example: Conquest Alliance Co.

Profits for the writer are still usually small in the syndicate field.

Important factors summarized: the budget and production problems of local broadcasting.

Marketing Notes on the Open Market

Where to send scripts. A single-shot script intended for the sustaining market should be addressed to the "Script Department" of the network or station.

A single-shot script intended for a commercial series should usually be submitted to the advertising agency involved. In some cases, the network script departments relay promising commercial material, received by them, to the appropriate agency.

The shifts in sponsors from one advertising agency to another are fairly frequent. The only way one can keep track of such shifts is through the reading of a trade publication.

Appearance of script. On the first page, put your name and address in the top left-hand corner, or in the top right-hand corner. In the middle of the page put the title of the sketch, and under it simply *list* the names of the characters:

FRED

ANGELICA

TOM

DOORMAN

Add, if you care to, brief identifying phrases after the names.

On the second page, start right in with the script, in the page format reproduced on p. 35.

A listing of sound effects, sometimes found in the final version of a script as used for broadcasting, is not recommended to the writer; it will seem over-anxious rather than professional. The practice of numbering speeches or lines, also found in some broadcasting scripts, is not recommended to the writer; this is something that can be added by the stenographer copying the script for the network, station or agency, if it happens to be the company's policy; for the writer to contribute this painful detail will seem like a nervous apprehension about trivialities.

A final broadcast script may also contain various hieroglyphic headings connected with network, station or agency filing systems; also legal form statements prepared by a company lawyer. None of these features should be in any way reproduced by a writer.

In other words, though a writer does well to make the general appearance of his script resemble standard practice, he should not seem over-finicky, or suggest that he has fretted about the appearance of his script. For this reason, elaborate bindings should be discouraged. A single paper-clip is best. A fairly good paper is to be preferred to cheap paper, or a *too* expensive paper. Unruled, $11 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ typewriting paper is recommended. A clear, dark typewriting ribbon makes a more favorable impression than a dim ribbon.

Rights. When a station, network, sponsor or transcription company "buys" a sketch, just what does it "buy"? What does the author relinquish? The answer may depend on the company or program in question, and on the status of the author.

In early radio days a sale generally included all broadcasting rights, or even all rights. Thus many companies hold scripts which they have the right to re-use ad infinitum without extra payment to the author. Many sketches have been so re-used. At present there is a trend toward limiting the original sale to "first broadcast rights." The more firmly established writers now often insist on this arrangement, which gives the writer some chance to profit from the success of an initial broadcast, by selling subsidiary rights. In some cases a single ten-minute sketch has been re-used, with payment each time, on several different variety hours.[1] The writer may also derive some added profit from the syndication of already-used scripts to local stations. Foreign rights may also yield some revenue. American sketches have been re-used in Australia, South Africa, Canada and England, and have also been translated for use in other countries.

Since the retention of subsidiary rights may become an increasingly important financial factor, radio writers attempt generally to extend the practice of limiting the initial sale to "first broadcast rights." The Radio Writers' Guild, the radio-writing branch of the Authors' League of America, has made this one of its objectives.

See APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, for further information on: RADIO WRITERS' GUILD; *advertising agencies; independent producers; networks; radio stations; syndicates; trade publications; protection of literary property.*

[1] Arch Oboler, one of the most prolific radio writers, particularly of ten-minute sketches, has in some cases received a higher price for the re-use of a successful sketch than for its "first broadcast rights."

Taboo Notes on the Open Market

Morality. "Don't let your hero and heroine set up housekeeping without matrimony." These words are quoted from a "continuity acceptance editor." This particular sin radio will not even hold up as a bad example, though murder and arson are usually admissible material. The general taboo on sex matters, enforced in deference to the feeling that radio is the new world's hearthside, is sometimes circumvented by elaborate understatement.

Shakespeare is exempt from some moral taboos. *Cymbeline* went on with no implications veiled.

Special groups. "Don't offend any racial or religious groups." This offense goes beyond the layman's comprehension. A mystery sketch by Peter Dixon, in which the villain turned out to be the Irish character, was hotly protested by telephoning Irishmen. Japanese are usually ready with protests. In "Western" plots, villains are often prudently made "half breeds," not "Mexicans." Generalizations about any race, such as "Negroes are innately superstitious," may be protested. Networks dislike protests. In general, Russians, Chinese, Englishmen are less touchy than Germans, Italians, Japanese. The safest villains are 100 per cent Americans.

Institutions. "Don't offend any institution." A bank-crash plot may "shake the people's confidence in banks." A plot about an election fraud may "shake the people's confidence in the Senate." In general, radio is fed by business, and does not want to bite the hand that feeds it.

Taboo words. "Oh, Lord" is usually permissible, but not "God." "Darn" may be allowed, not "damn." People are

generally far more afraid of words than of ideas. A vaguely "immoral" script has a better chance of escaping protest than a script containing one supposedly objectionable word.

Special perils. There are rules restricting the use of coded SOS signals that might be misinterpreted. Also rules limiting the use of supposed news flashes in drama, when such news flashes might be misunderstood as actual news, as in the case of the Orson Welles *War of the Worlds* program, during which many listeners fled from their homes in fear of an invasion from Mars.

Taboo subjects. Different programs and stations are likely to have their own ideas about what subjects an author should avoid. These will usually include matters of sex morality; all crimes of the more nightmarish sort, such as kidnaping; "controversial" political questions, unless the program is avowedly devoted to them; scenes of suicide, especially of highly dramatized types that may lead depressed listeners to do likewise.

2. ON STAFF

We survey briefly the four chief occupations of radio's staff writers, whether working for networks, stations, advertising agencies, or other intermediaries. These are: (1) *Commercials;* (2) *Continuities, Talks and Other Scripts of Information, Discussion and Persuasion;* (3) *Local Interest Programs;* (4) *Adaptations.*

It will be noticed from this list that staff writing tends to call for *technique* more strongly than for original plot making. It consists to a large extent of converting into radio form prescribed material — a certain message, a given body of data or a literary classic. For this very reason staff work is the best of all training for any type of radio writer. It leads to a thorough knowledge of the tools of the trade.

(1) COMMERCIALS
(advertising matter)

BACKGROUND

Radio's advertising matter displays today a great variety of forms, each of which is a remnant of one of the numerous fashions through which radio advertising has passed in its brief existence. A historical sketch of these various fashions will therefore serve at the same time as an enumeration of present techniques.

The "fashions" follow in rapid outline:

(1) *The commercial theme song.* The theme song with special lyrics, promoting the sales message with a sort of college spirit, dotted the land in the 1920's. For instance, a Chiclets

program featuring the singing team of Reis & Dunn opened with:

```
REIS & DUNN:    When you're feelin' kinda blue
(singing duo)   An' you wonder what to do
                Chew...Chiclets, and cheer...up!
                When you've lost your appetite
                Here's the way to set it right
                Chew Chiclets, and cheer...up! [1]
```

These fascinating toys of the lyric-minded copywriter were once the spearhead of many radio campaigns. Sponsors who today would consider themselves too dignified had them in those days. Today commercial theme songs survive largely on comedy and children's programs.

Particularly on the latter, they may serve a valuable purpose. They whip up a communal jollity between program and listener, promoting a clubby feeling.

Occasionally the song is semi-dramatized, like the catchy *Billy and Betty* theme, which was a miniature 30-second operetta. The "chorus" is composed of the children of the cast:

```
CHORUS:   Here comes the milkman,
          Hooray, hooray!
          He's bringing milk from Sheffield Farms,
          It's Sealed Sealect Grade A.
          Here comes the milkman,
          He's ringing at your door....
            (DOORBELL)
```

[1] Reis & Dunn. Sponsor: American Chicle Company (Chiclets). Agency: Erwin Wasey & Co.

```
BETTY:    Come in!

            (DOOR OPENS)

MILKMAN: (FADING IN)

          Here's the milk you always drink!

CHORUS:   It's Sealect Grade A!

MILKMAN: Yea!

CHORUS:   It's Sealect Grade A! [1]
```

(2) *The it's-all-in-fun spirit.* The continuity writer of the '20s spent a good deal of his time writing jovial introductions to the next number, and dragging in a product by the heels:

```
ANNOUNCER: "Nothing could be finer than to be in Caro-
             lina in the morning" is what the boys offer
             next.  Of course, they mean with a bowl of
             Post Toasties for breakfast!
```

At first, many people involved in radio were really mildly shocked about injecting advertising into entertainment, and tried to apologize for it by this slightly embarrassed jocularity, which seemed to imply, "It's all in the spirit of fun, folks."

Jocular advertising is still used on most comedy programs. It no longer springs from embarrassment, but definitely tries for the humor of inappropriateness. A danger is that if this humor turns out to be non-humorous, the "egg" seems to have been laid squarely at the feet of the sponsor.

On Jack Benny's program, which handles the gag commercial with a real relish, it serves partly to root the con-

[1] *Billy and Betty*, by Charles D. Morris and associates. Sponsor: Sheffield Farms Co. (Sealect). Agency: N. W. Ayer & Son.

nection between comedian and sponsor very firmly in the listener's mind. Notice, however, that it is usually re-enforced with some "straight selling." This is now the case on most comedy programs.

(3) *High-pressure salesmen.* In the late '20s and early '30s, the cheery commercials, with their good intentions toward the listener, were gradually being drowned out by hard-driving announcers, very loud and noisy. The reason for the rise of this type of selling was simply that the public responded to it, and bought what it had to offer. The public thus encouraged the rise of advertising that was no longer good-natured. The climax of zealous salesmanship was probably "Thundering" Thorgensen. Thorgensen, who did not want to thunder, had to do it to please Lucky Strike. A quip had it, "They don't have to send that program out on the transmitter. They just open the window."

Some programs still maintain the soap-box tradition.

(4) *The personality.* During the 1920's, almost all the "selling" was done by the announcer. It was not generally considered suitable to contaminate the star with advertising talk.

The subsequent shift in policy may be exemplified by the case of the poem-reading Tony Wons, who in 1931 was engaged for the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's *Camel Quarter Hour* — partly to recite a daily poem, but chiefly to read commercials in a soothing voice.

Tony Wons had built a vast feminine audience on his morning program, on which he murmured very close to the mike and had become a sort of ideal to women coast to coast. Many advertising men, on learning that Wons had been engaged to handle commercials, predicted that the sacrilege would be a boomerang, that the women wouldn't stand for it.

But, instead of being horrified at his commercialization, the womenfolks seemed to do what Tony Wons told them. Discoveries of this sort were turning points in radio advertising.

Through the early '30s, radio was learning to throw the weight of a trusted, admired personality behind its sales message. Whenever possible, this personality was the star of the program himself.

This had two advantages: (*a*) increased identification of program and sponsor, (*b*) the weight of affection and authority behind the message.

Thus, Singin' Sam began to sell Barbasol, Boake Carter Philcos. Today, David Harum himself steps from his program to promote a premium offer. Fred Allen converses on Ipana and Sal Hepatica. Even Ed Wynn's skepticism has had the effect of putting his name squarely behind the sales messages of his programs.

In other words, the star became salesman.

(5) *The dialogue.* The use of the star as a selling factor led quickly to dialogue forms, which have remained popular on many star programs.

In the following, for example, Fred Allen and Harry Von Zell are planning a visit to the circus.

ALLEN: Now me—I go for the high wire walkers... even if they do worry me.

VON ZELL: How, Fred?

ALLEN: I can't help but think, every time I see them way up there...what in the world they would do if they ever sneezed! I wouldn't know.

VON ZELL: I don't think I would either, Fred. But I do know what any man with both feet on the

ground should do when he sneezes. He should put two teaspoonfuls of...[1]

Often such dialogues have the advantage of *associating* the star with the product and with the commercial, while still permitting the announcer to do the heavier part of the selling.

(6) *Radio tricks.* The dialogues led in turn to multi-voiced devices, split narrations and montages. These were all part of a general discovery of "radio technique." Here is an example of several years ago:

ANNOUNCER: Mel O rol hits the spot.

VOICE: Mel O rol Ice Cream makes grand sodas!

2nd VOICE: Mel O rol makes the best sundaes you ever tasted.

3rd VOICE: Any way you eat it, anywhere you eat it...

ANNOUNCER: Mel O rol certainly does hit the spot!

(THEME: "YOU HIT THE SPOT"—FADING FOR)

ANNOUNCER: The makers of Mel O rol—M-E-L-O-R-O-L... [2]

All these changes of voice have an undoubted value simply because they are arresting. They may, of course, be more bewildering than persuasive. These many-voiced montages have more generally given way to —

(7) *Dramatized commercials.*

The announcer says: "Here is Mr. Jones, coming home tired and logy." We hear Mr. Jones greeting his wife, and he is very logy. She makes him drink something she fixes

[1] *Town Hall Tonight.* Sponsor: Bristol-Meyers Co. (Ipana & Sal Hepatica). Agency: Young & Rubicam.

[2] *The Mel O rol Jamboree.* Sponsor: Mel O rol. Agency: Pedlar & Ryan, Inc.

for him. At first, he won't take it, but then he discovers "Say, it tastes good!"

"Why sure it tastes good," intercepts the announcer, "Now let's see how Mr. Jones feels the next day." Sure enough, in the next episode Mr. Jones is an office dynamo.

On *One Man's Family*, which handles the dramatized commercial with considerable artistry, the personnel of the program itself is used — again putting the weight of affection and authority behind the product.

This completes, for the moment, the commercial's roster of forms. The writer of commercials has a wide variety of devices to play with, from lyric to dialogue, from straight selling to montage or dramatization. And his dramatizations may be in one episode, or in two or three quick ten-second dialogues, linked by a swift narration. Act I: the problem. Act II: the solution proposed. Act III: next day. It all takes one minute.

REQUIREMENTS

Commercials tend to have these functional divisions:

(1) The teaser.

(2) The message.

(3) The compulsion.

The *teaser's* job is the crucial one of creating an appetite for the message. It determines whether the listener will listen. This corresponds to the job done in the printed advertisement by the headline or art work.

The *message* is the actual data on the product, its virtues and uses.

The *compulsion* is the name here used for that frequent final effort to convert the persuasive message into *action* of some form: if not an immediate purchase, then at least an immediate visit to a dealer.

(1) *The teaser.* It is in the teaser — the bait, the snare, the approach, the invitation, the promise — that the writer has most chance to display an individual touch.

The teaser may be a single sentence:

```
ANNOUNCER: With spring coming on, you won't want to be
           shut up at home doing housework.  Then why
           not...
```

Sometimes a premium offer takes the place of the teaser. Occasionally the writer goes "cold" into his message, without benefit of teaser.

There are many conventional formulas by which the teaser may be made to seize immediate interest. Among the most frequently recommended: (1) *Timeliness.* Reference to date, season, holidays, weather, sports, income tax, etc. (2) *Newness.* Emphasis on the feeling of novelty, with words like "new," "novel," "latest," and such phrases as "have you heard . . .," "have you seen . . ." (3) *Personal touch.* The attempt to suggest a person-to-person relationship, often through use of words like "I," "you," "we"; through mention of names of people connected with the program or the product ("Fred and I think that . . ."; "Mr. Ford has said . . ."); or through the use of chatty rhetorical questions ("Did you know that it's very difficult to . . .," or "Have you ever felt that . . ."). (4) *Romance.* Any possible tie-up with America's Subject No. 1. (5) *Other basic interests:* financial problems, the home, security, health, one's job. (6) *Flattery.* "Every true American —," "Every intelligent man knows —"

All these formulas are different ways of saying that the teaser must seize the immediate interest of the listener. They also all emphasize another vital factor: the importance of establishing an *emotional contact* with the listener.

The advertising writer knows, instinctively or consciously, that the best attention-getting start is one that will bring some sort of emotional reaction. Not mere mental curiosity, but an emotional receptivity for the coming message, is what he must create.

This is the dramatized commercial's specialty. Drama, more rapidly than any other approach, can make us feel sorry, worried, annoyed, sympathetic, angry, anxious, ambitious. Drama can turn on emotion like a faucet.

This points out the power of the dramatized commercial, and also its danger. Modern advertising has looked for its punch more and more in awakening the pitiful mirages of frustrated emotions. Thus, the girl is urged to buy soap, not to be clean, but to live happily ever after. The not-so-young male is urged to use a certain shaving cream, not for the sake of a good shave, but expressly so that younger women will "go for" him.

The mirage is combined with a nightmare threat: smells, bad breath, social ostracism.

If the usual immediate reaction to such advertising is a snicker, the snicker itself proves that the attack is effective.

It is the dramatic episode's ability to create in the listener a strong if momentary emotional dislocation, which *may* be disguised with derision, that is the chief reason for the dramatized commercial's steady use by some sponsors.

No one likes this overwrought advertising, with its constant play of hope against fear. The reason for its prevalence, as with the soap-box announcing of a few years back, is that the public responds to it.

Carried to its current and logical conclusion, this type of advertising insists that the advertisement's promise *should* be an *undeliverable promise*. Everyone knows how to get clean — so that's no real bait. No one knows the magic formula

for romance. Therefore, that *is* a bait. This is the conscious theory behind many campaigns.

Meanwhile, some advertisers still promote their silver polish on the basis that it will polish silver.

(2) *The message.* In actual practice the message — the information on and recommendation of the product — is too often a jigsaw puzzle of clients' *musts*, or obligatory phrases. This is because commercials are often threshed out in conferences and debated to a pulp. A certain phrase that pleases an executive is promptly added to the future *musts*, and passed on to the writer in a memorandum. Typical *musts* might include a set package description — "the orange-and-blue bull's eye box of Oxydol"; a business boast — "the magazine with the largest news-stand circulation in the world"; or a price-mentioning formula:

VOICE: Did you say 10 cents?

ANNOUNCER: Yes, I said 10 cents![1]

The writer's contribution to the message can often be little more than an ingenious, graceful weaving-together of required phrases, with an occasional surprise word for color, novelty, charm, zest.

(3) *The compulsion.* The compulsion sometimes takes the form of a brief concluding "action line," a "buy line," with emphasis on words like "now," "today," "buy."

Sometimes the whole job of forcing action is taken over by a contest or other merchandising plan. The merchandising plan may therefore do double service, first as teaser, later as action-compeller. In this latter role it may try to bring about an immediate purchase (for the sake of a

[1] *Pipe Smoking Time, with Pick and Pat.* Sponsor: U. S. Tobacco Co. (Dill's Best and Model Tobacco). Agency: Arthur Kudner, Inc.

valuable box top) or sometimes a visit to a dealer (for a contest entry blank).[1]

In an "institutional" campaign the commercials will seldom contain any action-compelling element. In the promotion of drug products, foods, magazines, etc., the compulsion is usually considered an important factor.

Music behind commercials. Should music be used as a background to commercials? Some advertising agencies never use it, as a matter of policy. Others almost always *do* use it, as a matter of policy. The most effective compromise between the two is the practice of starting a commercial with a background melody, but presently sneaking out the melody. This has a double advantage. The important part of the message is not disturbed by a division of attention; also, the unfinished melody may create a sort of feeling of need to continue listening. This need is often fulfilled at the end of the commercial by a returning sneak-in of the background.

Brevity in commercials. Brevity is almost impossible in a complex and technical sales message. But when it is possible, it is often a priceless weapon. Take as an example the good-by of the Ford program: "Until then, watch the Fords go by!" The very brevity of this makes it an extraordinarily effective jab, which would only be weakened, dissipated, if more words were added. Thus the elaboration of a simple statement often becomes, in radio, not a strengthening but a dilution of its power. Imagine "Watch the Fords go by" elaborated and amplified by other and similar statements.

[1] Some gift offers are not primarily merchandising plans, but information-getting research ventures. See *audience research* and also *merchandising* in APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO.

You would be trading one smart punch for a period of feeble arm-waving.

The lawyer in advertising. In big-time campaigns the role of the lawyer becomes increasingly important. Commercials promoting contests and give-aways are often routed via a lawyer's desk, especially by advertising agencies, to make sure no lottery laws or other laws are violated, and that no commitments are made which may later prove embarrassing or expensive.

Commercials not involving contests or give-aways may have to be checked by a lawyer to make sure no Federal Trade Commission regulations have been infringed.

Market Notes on Staff Writing and *Taboo Notes for the Staff Writer* will be found at the end of this chapter; these taboos result partly from station and network regulations, partly from the indirect influence of the Federal Communications Commission.

Important influences summarized: advertising and merchandising theories; clients' musts; *the influence of lawyers, the Federal Communications Commission, trade codes, network and station policies.*

(2) CONTINUITIES, TALKS AND OTHER SCRIPTS OF INFORMATION, DISCUSSION AND PERSUASION

BACKGROUND

The script types which, because of a similarity in their problems, are grouped under this heading, are to a great extent staff-written; a few are more generally written under contract; others, such as political and educational matter, may be prepared gratis, and therefore do not fit exactly under any of our three markets.

Material for one-voice delivery. Any one-voice scripts must be tailored not to any business background, but chiefly to the personality who is to speak them.

The purple phrases that are fine for Edwin C. Hill are not for H. V. Kaltenborn. Alexander Woollcott's connoisseur-like sipping and tasting of phrases are not for sober Lowell Thomas.

The headlong speed of the Voice of Experience is not right for Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The same is true of announcers. Milton Cross has a charming pomposity that is all his own, and very pleasant. George Hicks is intelligent and conversational and can't possibly "sell hard." Paul Douglas, who is also effective, makes a specialty of high-pressure selling.

When a writer knows the voice he's writing for, he tailors to it alone. If he doesn't, he can't possibly do a good job.

Other forms. The writing of all scripts of "information, discussion, and persuasion" involves the same "selling" problem as the writing of commercials.

Whether you are promoting a charity, a political candidate, or trying to stimulate interest in a symphony to be played presently, you are a salesman with something to sell. And your job, like the job of the commercial, is (*a*) to create a *desire*, an *appetite* for what you are about to propound; (*b*) to give the data you wish to present; and sometimes (*c*) to follow this with an element of persuasion, perhaps an implied or expressed appeal to action — to contribute to a cause, vote for a candidate, listen attentively. (*Note:* the *teaser*, the *message*, the *compulsion*.)

In view of this fundamental similarity of function between the selling of refrigerators, candidates, charities, educational information, guest stars and symphonies, it isn't

surprising to find these various types of scripts going through similar evolutions of form. As we found "straight" commercials developing into dialogue, split narration, montage and dramatization, so we find the educational talk developing forms of dialogue and interview, round-table discussion and the lecture narration with dramatic flashbacks.

The use of several voices in debate and discussion certainly helps in many cases to dramatize the presentation of facts and ideas. The very division of functions between the several voices conveys a meaning, and helps in the mental sorting and cataloguing of the ideas presented.

And, as in the case of commercials, the presentation of material requiring an *emotional* appeal finds a most powerful lever in the use of dramatic episodes, whose character conflicts can so rapidly tap the listener's emotional reservoirs.

Again, we find a great danger in this very power.

During the 1936 election campaign, when the Republican party announced its decision to "take advantage now of modern radio technique to convey our message," by which was meant the presentation of political issues with dramatized episodes, the major network organizations decided to bar such techniques, on the ground that "we are convinced that dramatizations would throw the radio campaign almost wholly over to the emotional side," and that "the turn of national issues might well depend on the skill of warring dramatists rather than on the merits of the issue debated." [1]

These statements seemed to imply recognition of the fact that the wars of Lux *vs.* Ivory, Rinso *vs.* Oxydol, Maxwell

[1] Quotations are from an exchange of letters between the Columbia Broadcasting System and the Republican National Committee, as published in a pamphlet entitled *Political Broadcasts*, issued by Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

House *vs.* Chase & Sanborn have long ago become battles of "warring dramatists."

The taboo on dramatized political arguments does not extend to local broadcasting, except where stations have made regulations similar to those of NBC and CBS.

But one great significance of the network ruling is its very accurate appraisal of the power, the enormous emotional potentiality, of the dramatized argument.

REQUIREMENTS

The writer dealing with the presentation of facts and ideas should develop an awareness of the wide variety of devices at his disposal. Educational broadcasts, particularly, need all the force and versatility of those devices.

Important influences summarized: the supreme importance of the personality involved; the essential "selling" function of all factual or discussional broadcasts.

(3) LOCAL-INTEREST PROGRAMS
(for local production)

BACKGROUND

Local programs compete with network programs. They must compete for the same audience under the same listening conditions. How can a local program, with the comparatively modest finances of local broadcasting, compete with schedules offering entertainment costing often $10,000 to $20,000 per program?

How can local staff talent, often fresh from college and making perhaps $15 to $40 per week, make headway against such big-time opposition?

The local program finds one weapon in being able to capitalize on special local interests, utilize local talent, appeal to local pride.

This may extend to programs for special groups, such as foreign-language groups. Almost half of America's stations accept foreign-language broadcasting in some form.

An interesting example of appeal to a special group was heard on WEVD, a New York non-network station. This station ran a serial which used, throughout, both Yiddish and English. Sometimes a scene presented a strange and fascinating mixture of both languages: A boy making love to a girl might use mostly Yiddish, except that certain standard English idiomatic phrases, from movies or advertisements, might suddenly creep into the dialogue. "I'm simply crazy about you, Anna," might be sandwiched in the middle of Yiddish phrases. A character going into a store might address the storekeeper in English or Yiddish, whichever might be more appropriate. This bilingual technique not only gave an accurate picture of a transitional social phenomenon: It also was excellent showmanship because of its powerful appeal to people living on the same linguistic borderline. It was an example of local broadcasting using its strongest weapon.

REQUIREMENTS

Any considerable local group, religious, linguistic, racial or otherwise, or any special local interest or institution may be the nucleus for a program of deep interest — often intensified by its specialization.

Important influence summarized: the local station's opportunity to capitalize on local factors.

(4) ADAPTATIONS

(from stage, screen, novels, stories)

BACKGROUND

Commercial programs using adaptations (e.g., *Lux Radio Theater*) generally contract them to individual writers; a

very few sustaining adaptations (e.g., for *Columbia Workshop*) have been bought in the open market; most adaptations are written by staff employees: writers, directors or producers.

The special problems of the adaptor spring solely from the divergences between the methods of radio and those of other media. While such divergences have been referred to throughout this book, it may be useful to classify them here in brief form.

REQUIREMENTS

The adaptor usually finds he must make up his mind about the following problems:

(1) *The number of characters.* In adaptations from plays, movies, novels, the adaptor will usually need to eliminate and combine characters. In adapting a short story, he may not need to do so. In some adaptations from the printed page, he will need to add one or more "stooge" characters, or confidants, to bring out the emotions and aims of his leading persons. If a first-person-singular narration-and-dialogue technique is to be used, such expository characters will usually *not* be needed.

(2) *The number of scenes.* In adaptations from the modern stage, the radio writer will very often want to un-sew scenes ingeniously stitched together into acts, and place them in more natural localities and in a more natural time sequence. This may involve rearrangement, and the breaking up of acts into scenes, with separating transitions of various kinds. In adaptations from the Elizabethan stage, such un-sewing will not be necessary, since these plays have a very natural narrative structure, characteristic in some ways of radio. In adaptations from films, the radio writer will invariably want to consolidate and "telescope" many scenes, reducing

them in number. In adaptations from the printed page, similar consolidation may be necessary.

(3) *Plot.* In adaptations from plays, novels and movies, plot simplifications will usually be necessary. Subplots may have to be untwined from the main plot and eliminated. In adaptations from the short story no simplification may be needed.

(4) *Dialogue.* In general, the rhythm of stage and screen dialogue may have to be speeded. This will often come about naturally by the omission of lines that are connected with decorative "business" that no longer serves any purpose. Additional cutting may be needed. In adaptations from novels, a good deal of new dialogue may have to be invented, or it may not, depending partly on the style of the novel. If the radio program is to use a narration-and-dialogue form, the adaptor may be able to find a good deal of both the needed narration and dialogue in the original; again, this will depend on the novel.

A certain amount of dialogue, or sometimes merely occasional words, may have to be *added*, in adaptations from stage and screen, for the purpose of: identifying characters speaking; identifying characters spoken to; breaking up long speeches in order to keep other characters alive; identifying actions; identifying scenes.

Important influences summarized: radio's need for simplicity, speed, compression.

Market Notes on Staff Writing

Advertising agencies. There are close to a thousand advertising agencies in the United States listing an executive "in charge of radio." In smaller agencies, however, the actual writing of commercials may be done in the copy department

by the same men or women who handle the writing of magazine and newspaper copy; or this may be delegated to a station or network staff writer.

Larger advertising agencies may have one or more writers specializing in radio commercials, usually under the radio department, occasionally under the copy department.

For more detailed data see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *advertising agency*.

Networks. The major networks maintain script departments at their key stations. The size of such staffs varies from time to time. At NBC *production men* handle most adaptations.

A network staff writer usually has had previous writing experience, often in a local station.

See further data under APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *network*.

Stations. A 250-watt station may have one full-time staff writer at $15 to $30 a week, turning out commercials for local department stores and beauty shops, probably doing a little acting and production work, and often writing an occasional sketch. A station usually needs one such whirlwind writer. He or she may be of local origin, perhaps a product of high-school or college dramatics.

At 50,000-watt stations, with heavy local schedules, writers may reach the aristocracy of doing nothing but writing, at $20 to $75 a week, and even higher. But announcers and production men still share in the writing, especially of announcements, continuities and adaptations.

Taboo Notes on Staff Writing

Manners toward competitors. Running down competitors or competing products is expressly taboo, but is impossible to eliminate. In practice, it merely requires a certain etiquette. This would probably not be allowed, as being an attack on a fellow advertiser: "Coffee contains the dangerous drug caffeine, which keeps millions awake at night! Sleep soundly by drinking . . ." The following would probably be all right, though it says virtually the same thing: "Millions who lie awake at night, injuring their health, would find sound sleep by drinking . . ., the caffeine-free coffee."

Politeness to public. Names of "innards" and bodily functions are generally discouraged on the major networks. Local station policies vary considerably. Words most frequently banned: "intestines," "elimination," etc. Also disliked: "pimples," "bad breath" — anything in bad taste in parlor conversation.

Length of commercials. Those stations which are members of the National Association of Broadcasters have agreed to hold the length of commercial copy, including that devoted to contests and offers, to the following number of minutes and seconds:

Daytime	*Nighttime*
Fifteen-minute programs 3:15	Fifteen-minute programs 2:30
Thirty-minute programs 4:30	Thirty-minute programs 3:00
Sixty-minute programs 9:00	Sixty-minute programs 6:00

The limitations do not apply in the case of "participation programs, announcement programs, 'musical clocks,' shoppers' guides and local programs falling within these general classifications."

3. UNDER CONTRACT

Among the programs written under contract, we'll take up: (1) *Comedy;* (2) the very important *Women's Serial;* (3) *The Evening Serial;* (4) *The Children's Serial;* (5) *Drama from the News.*

(1) COMEDY

BACKGROUND

In the early '30s, radio, which until then had been content to develop talent of its own, suddenly went big-name hunting. From vaudeville it took comedians and their gag routines. Radio's comedy gag routines were for some time vaudeville without the funny pants. Comedians who once spent months polishing a new routine now had to throw a new act together every week.

The gag writer was the outcome of the attempt to transfer vaudeville methods to radio on a mass-production basis.

David Freedman was the Dean of Gag Writers. He developed a joke file variously rumored as containing 60,000 to 300,000 jokes. He subscribed to all European and American magazines that published jokes. Joke translators, joke analyzers and joke filers looked after the sorting and cross-indexing of every joke, so that a single joke might be filed under "Snappy come-back," "Boy-Girl," "Saturday Night," "Flivver" and "Black Eye." From Freedman's filing staff have come several established gag experts.

The gag file's stardom is over; but it still has a supplementary role.

The comedy writer may now write a "situational" comedy "spot" that contains not one gag. But, to be safe, it is then usually gagged up by a joke expert.

The teaming of writers who vary in their specialties is common. One is good at "situations"; one at "gagging them"; one merely has a talent for the perfect demolishing phrase. Jack Benny is assisted by a writing "team."

The fighting out of the final draft, word by word, in a smoke-filled room, is an established radio institution.

Comedy writing is the most meticulous branch of all radio writing. The shift of one word is crucial.

The studio audience. The need for this meticulousness, and for the whole complex and expensive system of gag experts, gag teams, gag libraries, springs from the studio audience.

Comedy is, in essence, an alternating storing-up and releasing of the feeling of comic tension.

Without the studio audience, the moment of release would be, for each listener, an individual matter. The release moments would probably vary considerably with different people.

But the studio audience, with its fairly unified crowd reactions, exercises a partial regimenting control over the reaction rhythms of the home listener. His periodic releases from comic tension are partly precipitated by the studio audience.

This probably puts more joviality into the home listener's laugh, but it also heightens the peril of the anticlimax. For if the "big laugh" in a sequence of jokes comes too soon, and the tension is dissipated before the sequence is finished, the remaining jokes of the sequence may be very dead weight.

It becomes of vital importance to make the "big laughs" come at prepared, predestined climaxes.

In the theater, or in vaudeville, delicate tinkering with a joke routine may be carried on for months; even then, some audiences are unpredictable and go off at the wrong moments. But on the whole, a routine in the theater or in vaudeville may gradually be so adjusted that most audiences will react in the right rhythms of tension-storing and release, up to a final climactic release, the big laugh.

In radio, with no such long tinkering period possible, prediction of probable crowd reactions must fall to an "expert." It is his job to gauge the probable crowd behavior rhythms.

REQUIREMENTS

No other branch of radio writing pays as lavishly per word as gag writing. No other branch is so limited in its opportunities.

Unlike all other radio writers, the comedy writer works usually not for any agency, station or network, but for the comedian himself, who is king of his program. It is no use going to an advertising agency and saying: "I want to write material for your comedian." The agency probably has little to do with the matter.

Is it any use sending material to a comedian? No. He probably won't look at it. He has been threatened with suit too often.

A lady threatened Eddie Cantor because he ran a comedy routine about St. Valentine's day. That was just her idea: a series of jokes about St. Valentine's day.

If you can get to know a comedian, and arouse his interest in your work, you may be getting somewhere. Such personal contact is the only possible road to the rare but juicy plums of radio comedy writing.

Important influence summarized: the studio audience.

(2) THE WOMEN'S SERIAL

BACKGROUND

The advertiser's liking for serials, one of the most promising of radio's forms, is due to their cumulative effect.

The woman listener often may not think much of a serial at first hearing — just as she may not have thought much of her husband the first time she met him. But somehow it suddenly begins to grow on her.

The scorn of the casual listener and the loyalty of the steady listener are both closely connected with the very nature of the daytime serial.

Unlike radio's evening programs, which are usually *entertainment* for the small group, daytime radio is often *company* for the alone.

Evening radio takes the place of small talk, chatter, games. Daytime radio often takes the place of daydreaming. It is much more private.

The most important fact about the daytime serial is that it is meant for solitude, and tries to embody the half-voluntary fantasy-ing — product of suppressed hopes and fears — that goes with it.

The daytime serial might even be too embarrassingly, absurdly distressful to listen to in company. If company arrives, it's often natural to switch to a crooner, orchestra, talk or comedy. These are the more natural group escapes.

REQUIREMENTS

Trouble. The first time you find yourself not turning off a certain serial, it may be simply that one of the voices attracts you.

But what really begins to bind you to the people in the sketch is the Trouble.

The main character is either (*a*) in a jam, or (*b*) trying to help someone in a jam. Anyway, there is trouble.

The contriving of the trouble, the menace, predicament, jam, dilemma, fix, woe, is the core of all serial writing.

"We've got to get her behind the 8-ball," says the writer. This borrowed pool phrase is another way of expressing the constant search for the beloved Trouble.[1]

Just what kind of dilemmas are choicest we shall leave aside for the moment.

Construction of the serial. The serial's closest relative is the newspaper comic strip. These two forms alone are not constructed from any beginning nor toward any end. The concepts "beginning" and "end" have no particular meaning for the serial. The beginning is whenever you start to listen; there is no attempt to let you know what has been going on for the last five months. The end is when you stop listening, or the sponsor stops sponsoring.

Within this elastic period, the writer thinks in terms of "sequences."

Rhythm I: the sequence. This, if there is any, is the script writer's unit of construction. "I'll do a sequence on Emma falling in love with a married man," he says. Or: "I'll do a sequence on Joe disappearing."

In other words, a "sequence" is the name given to a succession of scripts working toward their own climax, and more or less unified by one dilemma.

During the most famous of all sequences, *Amos 'n' Andy*'s [2] breach-of-promise suit, the surveys of the listening audience

[1] This script-writing phrase has no connection with the fact that a certain kind of microphone is called an *8-ball microphone.*

[2] Evening serials differ in mood, not in technique, from daytime serials. We'll use them as examples occasionally throughout the following.

reflected an unmistakable, gradual increase in the daily number of listeners. This meant partly new listeners, partly more faithful attention from intermittent listeners. The rising curve reached its peak at about the time of the climax of the sequence; then the audience edged off. As a new sequence gathered headway the rise would set in again.

In other words, the audience curve may reflect, in a well-written serial, its division into sequences. In actual practice, the curves are nowadays obscured by the competition of other, similarly constructed programs.

The advantage of the sequence is obvious. The slow build-up to a climax, over a period of a few days to several weeks, causes a corresponding audience build-up, a tightening of audience attention, not possible in series of unrelated scripts.[1]

The division into sequences is sometimes obscured by the introduction of a new dilemma even before the resolution of the old. In such cases, the sequences overlap. This is often the preferred method.

In general, it is true that a serial writer is working toward a sequence climax that may be a few days, or may be several weeks, away.

Rhythm II: the week. The writer is usually, at the same time, working toward an end-of-the-week climax.

By current theory, this should be the sort of crisis that will leave the listener panting for Monday — or Tuesday, as the case may be.

The Friday climax is like the theater's second-act climax. It is supposed to sharpen the following intermission, or weekend, with the pleasant torture of anticipation.

[1] *Vic and Sade*, with its excellent dialogue and characterization, is one of the few serials that does not work toward any sequence climax. If it did, its listening audience might be even larger than it is. It uses unrelated episodes.

It should make it impossible, theoretically, *not* to tune in next week.

Since Monday's script inherits Friday's crisis, the week may begin and end in high tension. If during the week there is a temporary easing of the Trouble, it is most apt to be on Tuesday or Wednesday; that is, after the last crisis has resolved itself, and before the new one has worked up a lather. This rhythm, too, may be detected in a study of audience curves.

Rhythm III: the script. The rhythm of the complete play or sketch is exactly reversed in the serial episode.

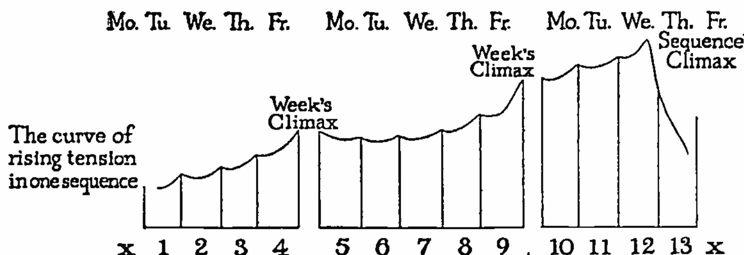
As in the case of the week as a whole, a crisis ending is recommended for the individual episodes. Thus scripts often begin and end in crises. There *may* be a momentary lull in the middle.

The complete sketch: fair — storm — fair.

The serial episode: storm — fair — storm.

Some serial writers even feel that the clearing up of one sequence and the start of a new one should come in the middle of a script, so that the new Trouble can get started by the end of the script.

Rhythmic summary. Here follow a chart and a synopsis of one sequence. It begins on a Tuesday, in the middle of a script.



Synopsis. A mother is horrified, deeply troubled, to find her daughter in love with a young wastrel, who is no good: (1, 2). Various friends give the mother conflicting advice: (3).

Trying to discuss it with the daughter quickly convinces the mother that criticism will be the surest way of driving the girl into rash action and tragedy: (4).

New facts convince her all the more that the young man is no good: (5, 6). She tries again to discuss it with her daughter, but finds her genuinely and hopelessly in love: (7). Various friends warn the mother of possible consequences. The daughter, expected home, doesn't arrive: (8). The daughter still doesn't arrive: (9).

The next few scripts concentrate on the mother's rising agony and uncertainty. The police are summoned: (10). The mother pleads for action, but the police advise waiting: (11). The daughter returns: (12). In (13) we learn she started elopement, but changed her mind because of some episode. She is heartbroken, but has come to her senses.[1]

Time element. Note that successive scripts need not at all have a day-by-day relation. Thus 1, 2, and 3 might happen on successive days. But 10, 11, 12 and 13 might all happen on the same day.

The unchanging characters. Most serial producers today — not all — attach great importance to the unchangingness of the serial protagonist.

Perhaps our feeling of *knowing* Amos and Andy, of *knowing* Pepper Young, of *knowing* Jane Ace well enough to anticipate her cyclic annihilation of all common sense, is the very basis of our affection for them.

[1] The following sequence might well revolve around the mother's problem: how to heal her daughter's broken heart.

Perhaps the fact that every sequence is a *reaffirmation*, under new circumstances, of our essential notion about these people, is one of the supreme satisfactions we get from them.

A sequence that violates our idea of their characters might stir our resentment. We appreciate their eternal reassurance. We like their permanence in a changing world.

The *changing* of characters is more the novelist's business. The gradual transmutation of a character from one sort of creature into something entirely different is often the very essence of a novel or short story. Perhaps this is satisfactory because a novel or story is only a temporary companion.

With the infinite serial's day-by-day companionship, perhaps the permanence of characters is the essence of satisfaction.[1]

The unchanging core of the characters, and the often unchanging core of their interrelationships, is what is referred to as the *formula* of a serial.

Formula. We describe a serial not in terms of plot, as we do a novel, but in terms of formula.

Don't say: "I want to write a serial about a girl who, one day, takes a ferry to Staten Island and . . ."

But: "I want to write a serial about an intelligent, middle-aged father, who is hopelessly perplexed by his modern children." This is a formula on which a ten-year serial can be constructed.

[1] On some serials characters grow older, on others they do not. Little Orphan Annie, for example, is kept at the same age, partly to harmonize with the policy of the comic strip. But even in cases where characters have been allowed to age, their relationship to other characters has undergone no great change, so that this apparent exception does not contradict the above discussion.

The infinite serial would never cure the man of his perplexity. The novel might cure him.[1]

What sort of formula? That some formulas have an intrinsically wider appeal than others, few writers would doubt.

David Harum, which has changed authors several times, keeps each time about the same audience rating. The formula, which is quoted on each program, is: "The little country philosopher who makes life worth living by helping those who need help, and by outwitting those who are too clever and scheming in helping themselves."

A psychologist might point out that this formula satisfies a basic human desire for protection. David Harum is a sort of Freudian father-image. He embodies the father-image of the listening woman.

Big Sister started out with this formula: "A *young girl* who goes around helping people in trouble." This *seems* almost the same. But while the program pursued this formula it had a constantly low audience rating.

Can it be that the helpfulness of a young girl is not as fundamentally satisfying to a woman audience as the protection offered by a fatherly, homey man?

When it was decided by Ruthrauff & Ryan, Inc., the advertising agency, to change the *Big Sister* formula to "A girl who is always herself in a jam," and the heroine was given the Jane Eyre woe of being in love with a man married to an insane woman, its audience rating jumped for a while to first place among daytime serials.

Possibly the Big Sister role, fine for Ma Perkins, David Harum or Scattergood Baines, was presumptuous and

[1] Some *evening* serials are launched with the intention of only a short, seasonal run. Such serials (e.g., *The New Penny*) have no need of unchanging formulas. They resemble the finite magazine serial, aimed toward a finish, rather than the unending radio serial.

annoying in one so young, though the same girl's suffering might arouse an enjoyable maternal affection. At least, that was the conclusion of the producers of this program.

We may say this: Some programs start out with a widely satisfying formula. Others labor under formulas less universally satisfying.

If with excellent dialogue, sound characterization and other good qualities, a serial still brings no results, it may be the formula that holds it back. Psychoanalyze your formula; see what you've got.

What Troubles are best? Many people insist that "universal" Troubles are most apt to create pleasurable responsive emotions in a listener.

But is murder a *universal* experience? Is catching counterfeiters universal? Is it universal to be a *Backstage Wife?*

In a way, yes. A girl — any girl — who is daydreaming on the subject Man, might or might not project these reveries into a more glamorous environment. She might find herself making up stories about an actress, a tobacco heiress, or even about a dismally poor girl — all facing the Man problem.

A man who would like to be more important around the office, and dislikes his boss, may in his spare time find himself writing ingenious fiction about a G-Man trapping a very nasty public enemy.

So fiction reaches universal emotions sometimes in a very roundabout way, in all sorts of disguises.

It is hard to make rules about what is universal. Instead, it is best for the writer merely to remember that the listener has to *feel* something about the story or the characters in order to enjoy himself.

Whether the Troubles seem everyday or exotic, can they become a sort of projection for private hopes and fears — as do dreams and daydreams?

This is the criterion for all popular writing.

Example. Backstage Wife is fantasy. There never was such a theater world, or if there were, the average listener would not know about it. Why is it popular? Where does it establish contact with private emotions of housewives?

The answer — it touches their emotions because it records (*a*) the fears of a wife that she will lose her husband, who moves in a larger world than herself, and (*b*) her desperate hopes of being, in spite of this, the cornerstone of his life.

The women's serial leans to Troubles that bear at least this symbolic relationship to home life and love, and the threats that might beset them.

The writer listens to his actor. Writing day by day for the same good actor or actress is among the most stimulating pleasures of the serial writer.

Watching some radio writers writing you can guess what character they are at any moment writing for, by the way they twist the mouth or raise an eyebrow to catch a certain remembered intonation.

But the good actor almost always surprises the writer just a little when the line is on the air. And very often that faintly unexpected contribution may give the writer a new little idea, a new nuance for his character, even a notion for a new plot.

One moment might suddenly reveal, "This fellow is the kind who organizes picnics and gets people singing." Or, "This is the kind of girl who would enter a beauty contest."

The developing of a character becomes, then, the unending exploration of a voice. The character is built *on* the voice, and partly *by* it.

That a character plays a formulized role need never, as *Amos 'n' Andy* and *Vic and Sade* and others have shown us, prevent a character from developing a rich complexity of delightful overtones.

Writing for an actor or actress who is merely a set bag of tricks is as disheartening as the genuine and suggestive voice may be stimulating.

Writing under pressure. The writer of a five-a-week serial writes the equivalent of a three-act play every two weeks.

If the thought of this is sometimes frightening, the experience itself may be a revelation.

For the first time, there is no possibility of delay or self-doubt; no time for fussing with too many revisions. There is nothing to do but write, and write fast.

The writer who is working rapidly, under pressure, will often find himself working more spontaneously, and revealing a more individual touch, than he would in slow writing, which may be a constant covering up of the individual. Radio wants better writers, more precise writers, but it wants them fluent.

The lead-in. The radio writer who thinks of the lead-in as resembling the story-thus-far of a magazine serial usually writes very bad lead-ins.

The lead-in is one of the serial writer's most ticklish problems. A common misapprehension is that the lead-in exists "to tell what happened yesterday."

But a listener who did her washing Monday, played bridge Tuesday and visited her sister in the hospital

Wednesday — listening may be very sporadic — does not want to know specifically, "What happened yesterday?" but, "What's going on?"

The purpose of the lead-in is to make the present script clear.

To do this you *may* decide to tell what happened yesterday, or you may ignore yesterday entirely.

You may, and often should, explain merely the basic Trouble of the sequence, perhaps in terms of something that happened two weeks ago.

Sometimes the opening dialogue makes the main conflict so clear that the lead-in can confine itself to effective scene-setting.

Here are two successive lead-ins from the electrical transcription serial: *The Heart of Julia Blake*. Notice that each lead-in covers about the same ground; also, that the lead-in for #28 apparently adds nothing of what happened in #27.

Episode #27

ANNOUNCER: Ever since Julia Blake opened her tea room in Woodmont, the suburb of the city of Hinsdale, attempts have been made to intimidate her, so that she will join the Restaurant Owners' Protective Association. In a fire that was undoubtedly of incendiary origin, one wing of her home has been destroyed, and her five-year-old son Tommy has been injured. We find Julia with Joe Lawrence, her lawyer and childhood sweetheart, in the waiting room of the hospital.

Episode #28

ANNOUNCER: Julia Blake's five-year-old son Tommy has been injured in a fire that destroyed a wing in the Preston Place, Julia's home and tea room. Joe Lawrence, her lawyer, thinks that the fire was caused by one of the racketeers who call themselves the Restaurant Owners' Protective Association. Tommy is now at the Hinsdale Hospital recuperating, and Maggie, Julia's partner, is calling on him.[1]

For quick understanding and interest, the serial writer working on a lead-in can take a tip from the advertising writer: the approach through an emotion jabs quicker to the awareness than the recital of cold facts.

"Ariadne was *furious* when Martha told her that . . ." makes much quicker interest than "Yesterday Martha, visiting Ariadne, told her that . . ."

The lead-in, then, exists solely for the sake of today's episode. To make facts "stick," an emotional content may be more effective than a factual recital.

The closing tag or lead-out. To crystallize the anticipation of the listener is the closing tag's main purpose. The tag also serves to bring the listener back to earth.

The usual method is a question, or two questions; sometimes three, sometimes four:

ANNOUNCER: Is Charley's repentance as short-lived as it would seem? And what is the real meaning of

[1] *The Heart of Julia Blake.* By Kenneth Webb. Sponsor: Armstrong's Quaker Rugs. Agency: Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn.

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his strange telegram? Listen tomorrow to
David Harum.[1]
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Some agencies insist that the sentence "Listen tomorrow to . . ." should be postponed till *after* the commercial, since it is equivalent to saying "So long."

Quite frequently the functions of the closing tag are spread over two segments, one *before*, the other *after* the commercial.

Sometimes the part after the commercial is dramatized. In the following example from *The O'Neills*, this closing segment is labeled the "tease":

```
MRS. O'NEILL: Danny, what's happened to Mayme?
DANNY:        She didn't tell me, Mom.
MRS. O'NEILL: But where is she?
DANNY:        Right in there, in that little room.
              And, gosh, I hate to say it, but she
              looks awfully upset.
ANNOUNCER:    Be sure to hear Mayme's story as you
              visit The O'Neills on Monday![2]
```

Merchandising. One of the serial's chief attractions for advertisers is in its merchandising possibilities.

One of your characters has invented, let's say, a fine new can opener.

For days he's been working mysteriously in the attic; everybody has been trying to find out what he's doing. At last: the revelation — a sensational can opener!

[1] *David Harum*, dialogue by John de Witt. Sponsor: B. T. Babbitt, Inc. (Bab-O). Agency: Blackett-Sample-Hummert.

[2] *The O'Neills*, by Jane West. Sponsor: Procter & Gamble Co. (Ivory Soap). Agency: Compton Advertising, Inc.

A merchandising scheme is well under way, but the audience won't know it for several weeks yet.

The invention sequence keeps on. The patenting of the invention, fears about the patent lawyer, attempts to finance the invention, the feared theft of the designs — and finally, the big day!

The day when the imaginary can opener is supposedly put on the market, the listener learns, through the commercial, that it is not an imaginary can opener at all, but a real one which will be available for a box top and ten cents.

Offered "cold" without this build-up, a can opener might fail dismally as a premium offer. But a can opener with a glamorous background can be "tremendous."[1]

The script writer who is asked to write a sequence on a can opener is sometimes a trifle scornful. But he may soon find himself enjoying the assignment.

This is tailor-made writing to the last stitch. Like all tailoring it can have an artistry of its own.

The power of the serial. No writer can dabble in serial-writing without acquiring some awe for the aliveness of what he is working with.

If, let us say, David Harum should have a "birthday," and if it is only mentioned the day before: "Tomorrow is David's birthday" — then there might not be a national earthquake at all.

But if, three weeks before, two characters start to plan, secretly, a birthday party for David, saying, "Let's not tell David; he doesn't like a fuss made over him"; and if these secret plottings and plannings are continued, not baldly, of course, but quite insistently, until the great day —

[1] Something like this was used on *Clara, Lu 'n' Em.*

It is possible that David will receive a truckload of birthday cakes, pies, cookies, water colors, needlework, boxes, candy, fudge, religious medals, snapshots, homemade root beer and birthday cards. Addressed to: *David Harum, NBC.*

To say simply that "these people must be goofy" is too glib an explanation.

All listeners know these programs come from a radio station, and are played by actors. If they wish to inquire of the sponsor, the network, or a radio fan magazine, they could quickly learn that the voice of David Harum is that of Wilmer Walter.

But who cares? They send the cake and the cards to: *David Harum, NBC.*

Here is something psychologically quite different from the idolization of matinée idol or movie star, whose roles never usurped their identity in this way.

Here is something quite different in kind from a literary figment like Mr. Pickwick, who, alive as he is and was, probably never received a birthday pie.

The compelling reality of the imaginary serial character is one of radio's prodigies. He is built on a human voice, which, life-size, pervades the room. He visits daily, at a certain time, while you work, dust, clean. You are not constrained in his presence; in fact, your hair is down. His presence has a warmth, ease and reality that cannot be disturbed even by the unreality of announcer, theme songs and commercials. His *formula* fills some need in you.

Books have been companions for a long time. But books were never as alive as this.

Criticism usually accuses the serial of being "hokey," "old stuff." But the old stuff has always been new the minute an artist retells it.

Radio serial writing is new and arduous. At new tricks the superficial hack is often quicker than the artist.

The artists may follow. They will find, in the radio serial, whether or not they change the details of its present methods, a power over the audience's imagination hardly afforded by any other medium.

New directions. Possible new lines of development in the radio serial have already appeared. *Doc Sellers* and *Central City* have made extensive use of narration. The writing of a serial in the *first person singular* should be an effective development: a sort of autobiographical serial.

Wilderness Road, a children's serial, pointed out the possibilities of historical serials, unified by their period perhaps more than by their formula. The pioneer period, the Revolutionary period, the Civil War period, the Gay Nineties, the War and Post-War periods, should all supply stimulating backgrounds for across-the-board serials.

Important influences summarized: advertising; merchandising; the findings of audience surveys; the psychological needs of the solitary housewife; the irregular listening of the serial audience.

(3) THE EVENING SERIAL

BACKGROUND AND REQUIREMENTS

Evening serials are less numerous than formerly.

Those that stay use the same technique as the daytime serial, but are gauged to a family, not a lone audience. *Amos 'n' Andy* and *Lum and Abner* are more cheery than the daytime fare; *Easy Aces* approaches a comic-strip atmosphere.

With evening time scarce and competition severe, five or three good fifteen-minute periods are hard to secure. This means there may be more half-hour serials, once a

week, aiming at the success of a *One Man's Family* or *Second Husband.*

There will probably be less quarter-hour evening serials, more half-hour evening serials.

It is likely that henceforth neither type will often be launched without an established sure-fire personality. The competition during evening hours makes this almost essential.

Important influences summarized: the family audience; the severe competition during evening hours.

(4) THE CHILDREN'S SERIAL

BACKGROUND

Radio's power over the imagination has been as well demonstrated by the children's serial as the women's serial.

On radio's *Buck Rogers* program, imagined journeys through interstellar spaces and into the twenty-fifth century became more real than any other medium has succeeded in making them. The screen's *Flash Gordon* adventures are, as a result of their visibility, tame in comparison. *Buck Rogers* was a masterpiece in the creation of imagined worlds through sound; for a time it was blamed for the nightmares of innumerable children.

But *Buck Rogers* did nothing that has not been done at least as violently by generations of boys' adventure books that brought no strenuous complaint.

Radio had to learn to be afraid of its own reality.

Treasure Island, *Kidnapped*, and other children's classics highly recommended, contain scenes that a script writer would be afraid to use.

When protests against children's programs became vociferous, CBS announced various policies, such as that "the

exalting, as modern heroes, of gangsters, criminals, and racketeers will not be allowed." Also "Cruelty, greed and selfishness must not be presented as worthy motivations."

These statements gave a sort of public reassurance, but were actually, in their phrasing at least, beside the point. It would not be easy to find, among all the sketches ever written for radio, a children's sketch that made a gangster a noble figure, or cruelty a virtue.

But the trouble is that *any* scene of cruelty, though acceptable in print, can become, in radio, too unbearably vivid. It is this that makes the child's nightmare. The moral is a pale thing in comparison.

It was not the radio writer's morals that needed reforming; these were always pretty good. He chiefly needed to learn that he did not have to "pull out all the stops" to satisfy the child's need for exciting adventure.

REQUIREMENTS

Structure. The structure of the children's serial is exactly the same as that of the women's serial. The writer may be working toward an end-of-the-day climax, an end-of-the-week climax and a sequence climax.

Exceptions. Serials aimed at youngish children avoid long sequences. They usually use plots that can be completed in a few, or even one episode.

Tom Mix uses very short plots. *Jack Armstrong*, with an older audience, uses longer sequences.

The crisis ending is often deliberately toned down, when too unsettling. Though the hero is dangling from the cliff, there is at least someone on the way to help him.

Sometimes the closing tag, whose usual aim is to sharpen anticipation, adds a dash of reassurance. Some producers insist on this. The following is an example.

ANNOUNCER: I don't like the idea of leaving Phil and Jack in that cave until Friday, but I guess we won't be able to find out about them until then. Well, anyhow, if anybody ever could take care of themselves, it's those two![1]

The Trouble. A protagonist is always, as is the heroine of the daytime serials, "behind the 8-ball." But the dilemmas are less mental. The hero must hunt a mountain lion, find water in the desert or trap a counterfeiter.

A serial thus often turns out to be extraordinarily educational.

If you find a child with a surprising knowledge of the habits of mountain lions, the finding of water in the desert or the tricks of counterfeiters, it is probably because he learned them under some emotional stress at the crisis of a Trouble.

The educator, here, can learn something from the serial, which, of course, he can also learn from the advertiser. A certain background of emotion is the most fertile soil for the planting and growing of information.

In the contriving of new menaces and dilemmas for the children's serial, the script writer often goes, surprisingly perhaps, to Boy Scout Manuals and other sources of odd information.

If he learns of an obscure way for curing a rattlesnake bite, he sees good reason for introducing a plot in which someone will be bitten by a rattlesnake.

This sort of procedure provides the young listener with vicarious hazards and adventures which he craves, and

[1] *The Treasure Adventures of Jack Masters*, by Gene Stafford. Sponsor: Maltex Cereal Co. (Maltex). Agency: J. M. Mathes, Inc.

which are probably a part of normal development. To a certain degree, the hazard is a pleasure in itself. And because of it, the clever solution may be remembered forever.

Merchandising. Many children's serials exist to a large extent for their merchandising possibilities.

The most effective procedure is exactly as in the women's serial. That is, although no advertising matter enters the story itself, the gift to be offered does have a connection with the story, and is often given a build-up in a lengthy sequence.

The following closing commercial comes after a battle which Jerry and Sola have had with a man-eating shark. The announcer comments on the battle, and then:

ANNOUNCER: Have you ever seen a large tiger-shark's mouth? If you have, you know why the natives were so excited. There are several rows of teeth, sharp as razors and hard as rock.... We've been able to get hold of some real teeth, from real tiger-sharks killed in the Caribbean...we'll be glad to send one of these genuine shark's teeth to you. All you have to do is...[1]

Bobby Benson, a "Western" serial, used a sequence about Bobby's ranch going broke, and turning itself temporarily into a dude ranch to recoup its losses. The result, which was not intended, and not at all anticipated, suggests the extent to which the serial can become a part of the listener's reality.

[1] *Treasure Adventures of Jack Masters.* Sponsor: Maltex Cereal Co. (Maltex). Agency: J. M. Mathes, Inc.

Letters came in, saying: "Please tell me how much does it cost to come to your dude ranch . . . ?"

H-O Oats, sponsoring this program, for a while considered starting a dude ranch, but abandoned the idea.

Maps, pictures, models of all kinds and "newspapers" form part of the constant stream of premium offers, used not only for quick sales but to extend the reality of the program into the life of the child.

As is generally known, groups of children in schools often come to consider box tops and labels a sort of legal tender, whose relative values fluctuate with current gifts offered. A Wheaties box top may be down one week and soar the next.

The danger of the children's serial may be, once more, its too great effectiveness. At times, the child's loyalty to a product can become so exaggerated as to definitely antagonize the parent.

The parent will decide, in the end, where legitimate promotion ends, and the exploitation of a child begins.

Stunts. The children's serial is fertile territory for stunts. Example: the *Howie Wing* program had a scene, in which the hero was in a plane, actually relayed by short-wave from a plane flying over New York with the leading actor. The manner of producing the scene was widely publicized.

The characters. The characters, and the formula that knits them, raise the same sort of problems as in the women's serial.

For instance, there's reason to believe that a child hero of the listener's approximate age cannot safely be given the infallibility of an older hero like Tom Mix. The child hero — there usually is one — may achieve dazzling moments,

but an occasional blunder and a jam that necessitate rescue by the older hero endear him all the more.

The young listener apparently prefers his young hero to get into jams, just as the women liked Big Sister better in a jam.

If there must be a character to be admired without reservation, and to be counted on for fortitude and wisdom, like the father in *Swiss Family Robinson*, the child may prefer to give this admiration to an older hero — as the women to David Harum.

These two types of heroes, the adult and the kid, the infallible and the fallible, are common to children's serials.

Age of hero. The young hero's age seems to place a sort of upward limit to the age of listeners.

That is, a listener of fourteen is not generally enthusiastic about living adventures through a hero of ten. But a hero of fourteen makes a satisfactory contact with boys of ten as well as fourteen.

Thus, Wheaties abandoned the quite young *Skippy* for the older *Jack Armstrong*, partly to win an older audience that did not seem to be listening to *Skippy.*[1]

Villains and comedy. Slightly ludicrous comedy elements, even injected into the midst of melodrama, may be a great joy to the child. The children's serial writer has not realized sufficiently the attractions of comedy.

It may well involve the villain. To a child, a villain loses none of his satisfactoriness as a villain by being touched by absurdity. And it may take some of the sting out of fear.

A child can, in a way sometimes incomprehensible to adults, enjoy drama with his tongue in his cheek, laugh at it and be thrilled by it, all at the same time.

[1] Also partly to save the royalties on *Skippy.*

Future. The fairy-tale needs of younger children are filled to the satisfaction of parents, teachers and children alike by various series, mostly non-serials, such as the admirable *Singing Lady* and *Let's Pretend.*

The call of the teens for more lurid adventure introduces the disturbing note. For now the parent, who doted on the fairy tales, no longer shares the child's literary enthusiasms.

The mother who, a few years back, could have accepted without horror her boy's absorption in the *Boy Allies in the Trenches*, which she could not hear, is disturbed by his radio adventures, partly because she must live through them too.

As far as the child goes, radio is such an interesting adventure medium, so unfettered by prosaic limits of vision, that he has found in it what he wants.

Future serials will probably be less horrifying, perhaps more humorous, but certainly not less imaginative or adventurous.

Important influences summarized: the child's need for vicarious perils; the protests of parent-teacher associations; the effectiveness of merchandising schemes addressed to children.

(5) DRAMA FROM THE NEWS

BACKGROUND

This program classification is taken up here because it brings to the fore another of radio's special influences, already mentioned in connection with the writing of commercials: the lawyer.

Both sponsors and broadcasting companies are particularly anxious to avoid lawsuits of any sort. Sponsors feel this way because lawsuits, won or lost, may damage the sale and reputation of products. Broadcasting companies feel the same way; a station's license, as issued by the Federal Com-

munications Commission, requires that the station shall serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." An unpleasant public dispute may conceivably jeopardize the renewal of such a license. Publications, with no such explicit public-service duty, have no corresponding death sentence hanging over their heads.

Radio's anxiousness to avoid legal tangles is reflected in the broadcaster's and sponsor's extreme caution in the dramatizing of any events involving living people. Scripts of this type receive careful supervision from people with a knowledge of legal pitfalls. On a few programs, scripts are automatically routed via a lawyer's desk, and must receive his O.K. before being broadcast.

As an example of the lawyer in action we cite the following incident in the preparation of a popular network program which dramatized actual human-interest episodes.

The producers of the program decided to dramatize a murder case, as reported in a newspaper. The newspaper account was backed up by signed statements from the reporter who had covered the case. It was the story of a woman who had witnessed the murder of her husband. She had made no attempt to prevent the murder; however, the court did not convict the woman of being an accessory after the fact.

When the writer of the program dramatized the story as it appeared in the newspapers, the lawyer refused to O.K. it. For the story definitely implied, in the woman's presence, a technical complicity.

Yet the presence of this person was essential to the story.

The lawyer would not permit the story to be broadcast until the following dramatic license had been taken: The woman was replaced by a non-existing and completely unidentified boy.

Thus, if a "true" program occasionally exercises wide dramatic license, it may be because of a lawyer's insistence.[1]

Important influence summarized: the lawyer's job of avoiding possible suits.

Marketing Notes on Series

Sample scripts. The usual requirement for offering a serial is two or three scripts and a synopsis. In offering a non-serial series, one script may be sufficient.

The sample scripts in the case of serials should be typical; not necessarily in succession.

Synopsis. The synopsis submitted with a serial might cover thirteen or twenty-six weeks. Two or three pages of readable narrative are better than something detailed and incomprehensible.

The purpose of the synopsis is to show that you have a workable formula that will not be confining, but offer sufficient plot scope.

Length of script, lead-in, closing tag. A fifteen-minute serial episode should be about 2000 words long. The lead-in, 2–12 lines. The closing tag, 1–6 lines.

Don't add imaginary commercials. Indicate, if you like, where they fit in.

Merchandising angles. In presenting a serial or any non-serial series, you may suggest briefly, in an accompanying statement, the merchandising possibilities. It is not a good idea to go into details on this; the advertising agency will have ideas of its own.

[1] This case history contributed by Jack Johnstone, writer and director of *Thrill of the Week*, *Front Page News* and other programs.

The chances of local dramatic series. If you can write a good serial or other series, a local station may invite you to do so at no or practically no salary, while they "try to sell it."

Some people have gained valuable experience and even sponsors from such arrangements. Others have reached the conclusion that it was merely a good way for a station to get an inexpensive sustaining program.

Selling dramatic series and serials locally is difficult, but it has been done. *Easy Aces* got its start in Kansas City at fifty dollars per week, for the whole program, acting and all.

Network sustaining series. These are usually paid for on the major networks.

The chance of selling a serial for sustaining use is very small, but it exists. Though network schedules literally groan with sponsored women's serials, NBC, for example, is usually grooming one or two sustaining serials for possible future sponsorship. This policy is forced on it by the fact that some of its best customers, including its biggest, Procter & Gamble, prefer to buy programs of proved pulling power — "tested" programs. This is the sole reason for the existence of most sustaining serials.

Network commercial series. Some series have been sold by a writer direct to a sponsor. There are quite a few success stories of this kind, but they are probably less frequent than formerly. A writer must usually work through the sponsor's advertising agency. However, the advertising agency has a receptionist whose specialty is getting rid of people.

Advertising agencies may be chary of dealing direct with writers because (1) they're afraid of suits and accusations of theft; (2) too many bad writers waste too much time; (3) an agency sometimes prefers to think up its own ideas and then pick the right writer.

Hence the peddling of series can often be done more conveniently through a *program agency* or *independent producer.* These agencies try to sell a series to advertising agencies "as a package"; occasionally they sell direct to sponsors; in either case, they usually have better entrée than the writer. The result is that much weeding out of good writers from bad writers is done by program agencies rather than by advertising agencies.

The sample scripts of a series are often the best way for a writer to exhibit his abilities. Many established radio writers will tell you that although they never actually sold any series offered in this way, the sample scripts netted them a job writing *another* series, conceived usually by an advertising agency, a transcription company or a program agency.

Rights. A highly successful radio series may bring in subsidiary revenue from such sources as: (1) The re-use of the same scripts at a later time, over the same or over different facilities, by the same or by a different company. (2) The sale of foreign rights. (3) Adaptations of the series, or of the idea, to book form, story form, or to screen, stage, television, facsimile, comic strip or any other medium. (4) The sale of licenses to reproduce the characters of the program on toys, dishes, articles of clothing, games and innumerable other products. (5) Exploitation of the program through personal appearances.

The disposition of such possible profits is a subject for negotiation between the writer and the station, network, transcription company, sponsor or agency employing him, and should be stipulated in any contract made between them.

The important factor in the division of the possible

profits is usually the origin of the program. Did the writer conceive and initiate the series, or was he merely called in to supply dialogue for a program conceived and organized by the station, network, transcription company, sponsor or agency in question?

The subsidiary rights, usually of little importance, have in a few cases acquired enormous value.

See also APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, for remarks on: *advertising agency; independent producer; network; transcription network; radio station; protection of literary property; copyright; release;* RADIO WRITERS' GUILD.

Taboo Notes on Series

Women's serials. The taboos against anything of doubtful propriety are exactly the same as in the Open Market. The facts of life are always handled in the same vague language used by the popular song. E.g., "You belong to me" means anything you want it to mean. The handling of delicate matter through extreme understatement is frequent on serials. The network is often a bit nervous about this.

Children's programs. That the plots should be on the side of law, justice and virtue is obvious. But the overwrought depiction of any scenes of fear or persecution is a greater danger. While it is probably true that all fiction writing is somewhat sadistic, since it is its purpose to make an audience concerned about someone it has been persuaded to take an interest in, the degree of sadism must be tempered to the audience. Where enjoyable apprehension ends, and unhealthy terror begins, is something for a child psychologist to decide. CBS, some time ago, secured the services of a child psychologist.

APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR

Explanation. This appendix is intended to illustrate in tangible form many of the principles, practices and devices analyzed in the foregoing volume. The notes accompanying the following script discuss briefly matters of radio technique exemplified by the script, and refer the reader to pertinent sections and paragraphs in the foregoing text.

A *Macbeth* adaptation was selected for this illustrative task chiefly for three reasons:

(1) *Macbeth* presents such a wide range of effects, naturalistic and supernaturalistic, that its translation into radio form brings into action a stimulating array of radio techniques, involving such varied principles and practices as: radio's limitation in the size of casts; its elimination of subplots; its enlistment of the imaginative collaboration of the listener; its development of narration; its constant selectivity; its custom of identifying sound effects and characters; its expressionistic uses of sound effects and music; its use of background effects; its transitional devices; its restrictions in word choice and name choice; its use of filtered voices and echo chambers; and many other aspects of radio storytelling.

(2) *Macbeth*, told by Shakespeare in immortal dramatic form, was also told effectively by Holinshed in his *Chronicles*, in a chiefly narrative, printed-page form. The adaptation here used is almost entirely a combination of dramatic passages from Shakespeare and narrative passages from Holinshed. It thereby illustrates in concrete terms one of radio's most interesting characteristics: its adoption of both stage and printed-page forms. The use, in the following radio script, of materials drawn from these other media, and the rearrangement of these elements whenever necessary, will give us occasion to compare and contrast in some detail characteristic practices of stage, printed page and radio.

(3) World classics adapted to an effective radio form provide stimulating material for the use of non-professional radio production groups, in schools, colleges and clubs. Such material may be culturally valuable as well as instructive of radio technique. The acting of *Macbeth* in a form and medium close to the student's own life may allow him to discover, in an exciting way, the aliveness of the characters and the reality of the dramatic situations. Such discovery can be a priceless introduction to further study of the play itself. For this reason the following script is made

available to all non-professional groups on a non-royalty basis. Also for this reason, occasional production notes are included in the following pages.

In the use of the present appendix, it is suggested that the script be first read through without pause, and then reviewed in conjunction with the notes. The length of the script is thirty minutes — radio's most typical dramatic length. The stories that radio tells in half-hour form often cover the same distance as a typical two-hour stage drama; but they do so less panoramically, in more simplified manner, with more rigid concentration on central plot thread and on central plot characters. APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR is meant once more to emphasize these essential radio characteristics.

This radio adaptation may be used without royalty payment by non-professional groups only. If the adaptation is to be broadcast, written permission should be obtained in advance, by writing to Erik Barnouw, in care of the publisher. For use in classrooms, or over school or club public-address systems, no permission need be obtained.

All rights not specified herein are reserved.

MACBETH

ANNOUNCER

HOLINSHED

FIRST WITCH

SECOND WITCH

THIRD WITCH

MACBETH

BANQUO

LADY MACBETH

MESSENGER

PORTER

MACDUFF

MALCOLM

DONALBAIN

MURDERER

SPIRIT

DOCTOR

GENTLEWOMAN

VOICES

NOTES

5. Holinshed. The practice of giving the narrator a personality, and a suitable role in life, is a popular one in radio. It has advantages over the personalityless announcer. Examples in radio: the Old Ranger on *Death Valley Days;* Warden Lawes in his various crime series.

See *The development of narration*, p. 21. Also, NARRATION, p. 49.

7. (PEN--SCRATCH IN). A scene-setting sound effect.

See *A scene-setting sound*, p. 76.

13–28. In the year...rising waters. The adaptation freely rearranges the material taken from Holinshed. Occasionally scattered phrases are put together into a sentence or paragraph. However, the adaptation keeps closely to Holinshed's word choice, which not only has the perfect period flavor, but also, in its economy and directness, is admirably suited to radio narration.

The effectiveness of this sixteenth-century prose as radio narration is probably due to the fact that it belongs to a period in which the ideals of written English were still, at least in many writers, closely related to those of spoken English. Holinshed shows no trace of "literary" prose style, which in later periods came to have only a faint relationship to spoken language. Holinshed's prose reads as if it were made for the human tongue.

For discussion on radio style see *The rapid getaway*, p. 13. Also *Choice of words*, p. 66.

ANNOUNCER: The story of Macbeth—from Shakespeare's play and the Chronicles of Holinshed.

(MUSIC: BRIEFLY. FADE OUT UNDER FOLLOWING)

ANNOUNCER: About the time Shakespeare was born, the historian Raphael Holinshed, work- 5 ing hard on his famous Chronicles of Scotland, (PEN-SCRATCH IN) came after many pages to a year buried deep in history: 1046.

(FADE IN FOLLOWING, WITHOUT PAUSE. 10 PEN-SCRATCH DROPS OUT AFTER A FEW WORDS)

HOLINSHED: ....In the year after the birth of our Saviour 1046, in the reign of Duncan King of Scotland, word was brought that 15 a new fleet of Norwegians was arrived in the kingdom, (MUSIC IN LOW) and was already landed, and busy spoiling the country. Macbeth and Banquo, valiant captains, were sent with the King's 20 authority, and having with them a convenient power, encountered the enemies, (MUSIC GROWS OMINOUS) and a mighty battle ensued. Throughout these days were many wonders and strange sights 25 seen through all Scotland, as earthquakes, and great winds, and rising waters....

36–37. `When shall we three...or in rain?` Modern editions and theater programs often label this scene as occurring in "A Desert Place." This is an invention of post-Shakespearean editors, and is not to be found in the First Folio of 1623. To the Elizabethan theater-goer the scene merely happened in thunder, lightning and rain; in radio too we can present the scene not tied down to any spot, but merely as part of the storms and wonders "seen through all Scotland." This is an example of a scene in which the notion of *locality* — practically inescapable on the screen and on the modern stage — really has no meaning, and may profitably be avoided by radio.

See *The shifting mind-world*, p. 23 and *The selective spotlight*, p. 24.

46. `...Macbeth.` Wherever possible, the radio writer lets the end of a scene foreshadow something of the *where*, *when* and *who* of the next scene. The adaptation leaves the first scene at the word "Macbeth" because this point throws the mind forward in exactly the right manner. The original has an additional four lines which would dissipate this value. We quote the lines:

FIRST WITCH: I come, Graymalkin.
ALL: Paddock calls anon:
Fair is foul, and foul is fair,
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

The two lines beginning "Fair is foul" are very attractive. But their function in the stage play is really only that of "getting the witches off." This is not necessary in radio, where the thunder and the rising of the music to full volume instantly remove the witches from the mind's spotlight. With the functional need for the exit lines removed, we do best to take full advantage of the foreshadowing word "Macbeth," and not to return to matters of "fog," and "filthy air." The weather and atmosphere have already been well established; hence these drag the mind back, not forward.

The foreshadowing of a new scene at the end of the previous scene is discussed at various points in the section on SCENE-SHIFTING, p. 81.

49. `The Scots having won a notable victory...` The original Scene 2 of Act I is omitted entirely. It is a purely expository scene, whose essential information is conveyed here in the first two narrations from Holinshed. This is the type of data more suitably narrated than translated into dialogue. Shakespeare's scene tends to become a disguised narration, with Duncan acting as proxy listener, or stooge.

This is an example of radio's tendency to banish lengthy expository dialogue in favor of narration.

See NARRATION, p. 49.

(MUSIC: UP WITH STORM FURIOSO)

(WITH MUSIC: WILD WIND, THUNDER, RAIN. AFTER A FEW SECONDS EFFECTS AND MUSIC FADE DOWN, AS WE HEAR, ALMOST IN UNISON, CACKLING LAUGH OF WITCHES. NO THUNDER DURING SPEECHES. WINDS AND MUSIC IN LOW BACKGROUND.) 30 35

FIRST WITCH: When shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH: When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost, and won.

THIRD WITCH: That will be ere the set of sun. 40

FIRST WITCH: Where the place?

SECOND WITCH: Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH: There to meet with....

ALL: (IN INTIMATE SINISTER UNISON, CLOSE TO MIKE:) 45
...Macbeth.

(THUNDER)

(MUSIC: UP, THEN DOWN UNDER:)

HOLINSHED: The Scots having won a notable victory, Macbeth and Banquo gave thanks to almighty God, and then journeyed in the storm through woods and fields towards Forres, where the king then lay. 50

(MUSIC: CONTINUES IN FAINT BACKGROUND THROUGH PART OF SCENE, BUT SHOULD BE PROMINENT 55

58-85. `So foul and fair...what are you?` In the original most of this passage is given to Banquo; Macbeth speaks only the first line, and part of the last. In spite of this division, the physical presence of both characters on the stage would, in a theater presentation, insure a fairly equal amount of attention for both characters. Macbeth's taciturnity might even attract a certain special notice. But in radio the unequal apportioning of the dialogue would cause Macbeth's very existence to be shadowy and doubtful, and only Banquo to be fully "alive." The adaptation concentrates on creating for Macbeth a thorough, immediate existence, by giving him most of the dialogue. He *must* be made thoroughly real to us before the arrival and prophecy of the witches. The adaptation at first brings Banquo into only tentative existence, with the interpolated line, "I do not know, my lord." His fuller development is left till a minute later.

See *The vanishing character*, p. 56.

66. `Stay.  Hark.` Interpolated. This is an example of reactions probably pantomimed on the stage, but necessarily made vocal in radio.

67-69. `Hail...hail!` The witches are made to speak earlier than in the original simply to "bring them to life." This is accomplished in the theater by their mere appearance on the stage. Some of the witches' later cacklings are interpolated in order to "keep them alive."

See *The vanishing character*, p. 56.

72-85. `What are these...what are you?` A typical example of Shakespeare apparently writing expressly for radio. The frequent clarification of costume, action, characters and settings through dialogue is one of the factors that make Shakespearean drama so attractive to the radio adaptor.

ONLY AT MOMENTS INDICATED. WITCH MUSIC TO BE TIMED TO DIALOGUE.)

MACBETH: (STRUGGLING INTO WIND) So foul and fair a day I have not seen.
How far is 't called to Forres? 60

BANQUO: (DITTO) I do not know, my lord.

(MUSIC BRINGS IN WITCH-THEME, FAINTLY)

(AT SAME MOMENT WE HEAR DISTANT LAUGHTER OF WITCHES.) 65

MACBETH: Stay. Hark.

FIRST WITCH: (FAR OFF) Hail, Macbeth!

SECOND WITCH: (MUCH NEARER) Hail!

THIRD WITCH: (ON) Hail!

(MUSIC RAPIDLY WAFTS WITCHES TO FOREGROUND) 70

(THEY CACKLE)

MACBETH: What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth, 75
And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,

[MORE]

95-97. `I' the name of truth...outwardly ye show?` The original passage runs as follows:

> B: Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
> Things that do sound so fair? I' th' name of truth
> Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
> Which outwardly ye show?

These words themselves cannot unmistakably indicate to the listener that Banquo, on "I' th' name of truth . . .," stops addressing Macbeth and turns to the witches. The theater audience *sees* this fact. In radio, tone of voice cannot convey it in this case. The radio adaptor who says to himself, "Oh well, the audience will realize a moment later that he wasn't saying that to Macbeth," makes a serious mistake, for he burdens his listener with an annoying readjustment, a forced thinking back. The audience should know *now*, not *later*, whom Banquo is addressing. The adaptation tries to make it clear by placing a witch cackle at the moment of change, to spotlight the witches in the listener's mind, and then letting Banquo use the interpolated word "creatures."

See AN EXPERIMENT ON RADIO DIALOGUE, p. 67.

By each at once her choppy finger lay-
ing 80
Upon her skinny lips: you should be
women,
And yet your beards forbid me to inter-
pret
That you are so. Speak if you can;
what are you? 85

(MUSIC CREATES SOME TENSION FOR:)

FIRST WITCH: All hail, Macbeth, that shall be king
hereafter!

(SUDDEN MUSICAL FIGURE TO EXPRESS
SOMETHING OF THE IMPACT THIS AN- 90
NOUNCEMENT MAKES ON MACBETH.)

BANQUO: Good sir, why do you start; and seem to
fear
Things that do sound so fair?....
(WITCHES CACKLE) I' the name of truth, 95
Are ye creatures fantastical, or indeed
What outwardly ye show?....My noble
partner
You greet with royal hope and great
prediction 100
That he seems rapt withal. (WITCHES
CACKLE)

FIRST WITCH: (JUST OFF) Hail!

SECOND WITCH: (FURTHER OFF) Hail!

106–118. (SOME SORT OF MUSICAL FLIGHT THEME...MUSIC OUT.) The use of music indicated here and throughout the preceding scene is not essential, and some directors may prefer to omit it. It is, however, an excellent opportunity to experiment with action-portraying music. The connection between the music and the witches is suggested to the listener at the introduction of the witches, when the distant music starts at the same instant as the witches' distant laughter (lines 62–65). It is further emphasized by the simultaneous approach of the music and the witches (lines 67–70). It is still further emphasized by the musical "build-up" for the witches' prophecy (line 86).

Now, at the departure of the witches, their fading "hails" once more clinch the connection, and point out the meaning of the fading "flight theme." Here the music becomes particularly valuable, for it makes it possible to retain the picture of the rapidly vanishing witches throughout the speech in which Macbeth is calling after them (110–117). The music has by this time *become* the witches. This fact should also give the moment at which the music stops a particular effectiveness, for this says clearly and dramatically, "They're gone."

See *Music as action*, p. 47.

119. (ONLY WIND NOW). During the chief portion of the preceding scene, the wind should probably be kept very faint and unobtrusive. At this point its volume should be increased very slightly.

See *Sounds as backgrounds*, p. 42.

THIRD WITCH: (FAR OFF) Hail! 105

(SOME SORT OF MUSICAL FLIGHT THEME TO WHISK THEM AWAY. MUSIC CARRIES THEM FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY THROUGHOUT FOLLOWING SPEECH.)

MACBETH: Stay, you imperfect speakers! Say from whence 110
You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way 115
With such prophetic greeting? (CALLING) Speak, I charge you!

(MUSIC OUT)

(ONLY WIND NOW)

BANQUO: Whither are they vanish'd? 120

MACBETH: Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO: (DAZED) Were such things here as we do speak about? 125
You shall be king.

MACBETH: This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If good, 130

[MORE]

140. `Come`. The original has, "Come, friends." Two additional characters, Ross and Angus, have entered a moment before, with news that Macbeth has become Thane of Cawdor. The adaptation eliminates this thread of plot, and sidesteps the extra characters it involves.

This is the first of several plot simplifications introduced in the adaptation. The original play's successive unfolding of various parallel prophecies gives it the long-range rhythm and complex pattern characteristic of the stage, but not of radio, which demands greater simplicity.

By confining the scene to Macbeth, Banquo and the Witches, we have so far kept the aural pattern of the voices entirely clear. Macbeth should undoubtedly be a baritone, Banquo a tenor. The witches will be easy to differentiate from them, and do not need to be differentiated from each other.

See *Smaller casts*, p. 15. *The number of characters*, p. 59.

143. `LADY MACBETH: ...` Here the adaptation omits Act I, Scene 4, which revolves about the king and the honors he pays to Macbeth. The stage version naturally seizes the opportunity for pomp and retinue. The scene gives us "flourish," "attendants," and is filled with extra characters who do not speak. The movies would, in the same way, utilize the grand canvas. But the scene makes no important contributions to the story of Macbeth, his rise and fall. It tells us only that King Duncan honored Macbeth; this can be established briefly in a later narration, and is also referred to by Macbeth in a later scene.

It will be noted that the adaptation never uses the voice of the king. This is because he is a completely passive figure in the story. Radio drama tends not to permit such figures to crowd its very limited spotlight; instead radio focuses as much as possible on those characters which actually influence the course of the story. The only exceptions are occasional figures necessary for expository reasons — messenger, gentlewoman-in-waiting, etc.

143–156. `They met me...and farewell`. Here the letter is used to establish that close connection between successive scenes which we have found to be a factor in the effectiveness of many radio transitions. The letter is rearranged and adapted so as to place first any data that strongly establishes this connection. For the sooner the listener feels on firm ground in this respect, the sooner will he be ready to absorb the *new* elements of the present scene.

For this reason the adaptation adds, near the start of the letter, "As we journeyed toward Forres." The parts of the next sentence "These Weird Sisters saluted me," and "Hail King that shalt be," are moved from later positions in the original letter.

The adaptation adds "dearest wife" to identify Lady Macbeth without question. The original play foreshadows her identity in Act I, Scene 4, which is omitted in the adaptation.

Why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my
ribs,
Against the use of nature?....Let's 135
toward the king,
And, at more time, speak upon what hath
chanc'd.

BANQUO: Very gladly.

MACBETH: Come. 140

(MUSIC: FULL, THEN FADE OUT AS FOLLOWING IS
FADED IN:)

LADY MACBETH: (READING; BOARD FADE IN) They met me
in the day of success, as we journeyed
toward Forres. Then, dearest wife, 145
these Weird Sisters saluted me with,
"Hail King that shalt be." When I
burned in desire to question them fur-
ther, they made themselves air, into
which they vanish'd. This have I 150
thought good to communicate to thee
(my dearest partner of greatness) that
thou mightst not lose the dues of re-
joicing by being ignorant of what
greatness is promis'd thee. Lay it to 155
thy heart and farewell.

[MORE]

157. thou shalt be... In the original Lady Macbeth uses the names "Glamis" and "Cawdor" several times for "Macbeth." This is perilous practice in radio. The adaptation sidesteps these extra names throughout.

See *Choice of names*, p. 66.

176–178. (KNOCKING ON DOOR) Ay! (DOOR OPENING). The use of doors, knocking, etc., is not essential in depicting the entrances of characters. The radio writer or adaptor merely uses them when he feels a value in doing so. In the present instance, the knocking and the doors establish a certain privacy for Lady Macbeth, which seems in keeping with the nature of her soliloquies.

See *Further selectivity*, p. 42.

O, thou shalt be
What thou art promis'd: yet I do fear
thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human 160
kindness
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst
be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it. Hie 165
thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine
ear;
And chastise with the valour of my
tongue 170
All that impedes thee from the golden
round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth
seem
To have thee crown'd withal. 175
(KNOCKING ON DOOR)
Ay!
(DOOR OPENING)
What is your tidings?

MESSENGER: The king comes here tonight. 180

LADY MACBETH: Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were
't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

195. (DOOR CLOSING). Here the closing of the door is a particularly necessary adjunct to the Messenger's departure, since it emphasizes Lady Macbeth's privacy for the following bloodthirsty speech.

See *Further selectivity*, p. 42.

MESSENGER: So please you, it is true: our thane is coming: 185
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more 190
Than would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH: Give him tending;
He brings great news!

MESSENGER: (FADING) Yes, Madam.

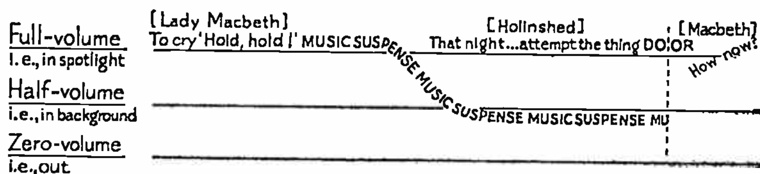
(DOOR CLOSING) 195

LADY MACBETH: The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, 200
And fill me from the crown to the toe top full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse, 205
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between

[MORE]

225. `That night the King...` The adaptation skips Act I, Scene 6, another scene featuring King Duncan.

233. `(DOOR CLOSES SHARPLY)`. It is often effective practice to cut off the music at the instant of a door closing. A director might phrase this direction to the orchestra leader or organist as follows: "Let the door closing cut off the music." This device lends an added dramatic suddenness to the closing of the door. This transition might be charted as follows:



For the value of starting the scene with the closing of the door, see *A scene-setting sound*, p. 76.

Th' effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts, 210
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night, 215
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes, 220
Nor heaven peep the blanket of the dark,
To cry "Hold, Hold!"

(MUSIC: SUSPENSE THEME, SLIGHTLY MYSTERIOSO)

HOLINSHED: That night the king, visiting Macbeth's castle, gave liberally to Macbeth of lands, livings, and offices; and Macbeth was troubled herewith, for his wife, burning in unquenchable desire to bear the name of queen, lay sore upon him to attempt the thing. (MUSIC OUT) 225, 230

(DOOR CLOSES SHARPLY)

MACBETH: How now! What news?

LADY MACBETH: He has almost supp'd: why have you left the chamber? 235

247–258. `Was the hope...art in desire?` In a speech of this sort, in which one character throws a series of questions at another character, the silence of this latter character soon becomes uncomfortable. A director may want to "keep Macbeth alive" through this speech with one or two interpolated ad lib. sounds. Such interpolations are difficult to handle convincingly, but sometimes seem essential.

See *The vanishing character*, p. 56.

MACBETH: Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH: Know you not he has?

MACBETH: We will proceed no further in this business: 240
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, 245
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH: Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale 250
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afear'd 255
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire?

MACBETH: Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man; 260
Who dares do more is none.

272–274. Have pluck'd...dash'd the brains out. A typical example of a passage permissible on the air only because of Shakespeare's authorship. If written by any other writer, ancient or modern, the passage would probably meet an editorial blue pencil.

See *Morality*, p. 135, and *Taboo subjects*, p. 136.

LADY MACBETH: What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to
me?
When you durst do it, then you were a 265
man!
O, I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that
milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my 270
face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his bone-
less gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so
sworn as you 275
Have done to this.

MACBETH: If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH: We fail!
But screw your courage to the stick-
ing-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is 280
asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's
hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamber-
lains
Will I with wine and wassail so con-
vince 285

[MORE]

286–287. `That memory...shall be a fume.` The original sentence has an additional clause which is omitted because of its obscure word choice. The adaptation makes small cuts of this type throughout, wherever the original would be certain to cause the acute "lost" feeling so disastrous to listener enjoyment and interest. In the present instance, the word "limbeck" is not to be found in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Here is the original passage, with the cut words italicized:

> That memory, the warder of the brain,
> Shall be a fume, *and the receipt of reason*
> *A limbeck only:* when in swinish sleep
> Their drenched natures lie as in a death . . .

See *Choice of words*, p. 66.

That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume. When in swinish
sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a
death, 290
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan? what not put
upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear
the guilt 295
Of our great quell?

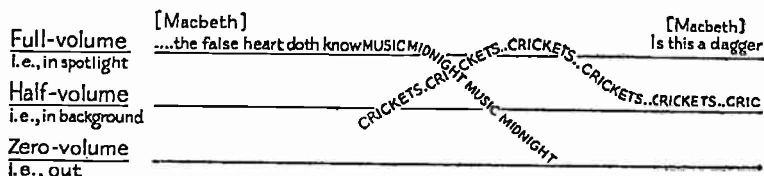
MACBETH: Bring forth men-children
only;
For thy undaunted mettle should com-
pose
Nothing but males. Will it not be re-
ceiv'd, 300
When we have mark'd with blood those
sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very
daggers,
That they have done 't? 305

LADY MACBETH: Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clam-
our roar
Upon his death?

317. (MUSIC: OMINOUS MIDNIGHT MUSIC. FADE OUT FOR:). Note that the adaptation, though it makes use of a narrator, freely suspends the use of this character in any transitions in which he would prove superfluous.

See *Consistency in use of devices*, p. 91.

The transition might be charted as follows:



318–319. (BACKGROUND OF CRICKETS; FEATURE SEVERAL SECONDS, THEN DOWN....) Crickets are one of the most successful background effects; a number of recordings are available for scenes of this type. Most of them are self-identifying, and highly atmospheric. Because of their even, placid rhythm, cricket backgrounds provide a cadence that is dramatically very meaningful, yet never too obtrusive.

For names of companies marketing recorded sound effects, see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *sound-effects records.*

For the use of the word "feature" in the above direction, and a general discussion on relative volumes, see THE THREE TOOLS, p. 29.

MACBETH: . I am settled, and bend up 310
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. 315

(MUSIC: OMINOUS MIDNIGHT MUSIC. FADE OUT FOR:)

(BACKGROUND OF CRICKETS; FEATURE SEVERAL SECONDS, THEN DOWN. KEEP TILL NEXT MUSIC) 320

MACBETH: Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still. 325
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation, 330
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee still:
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood, 335

[MORE]

339–343. Now o'er the one half-world...the curtain'd sleep. An example of "atmosphere dialogue," common to radio and to the sceneryless Shakespearean stage.

See *Atmosphere dialogue*, p. 76.

349–353. (MUSIC: STARTS IN TURBULENT...ON THE INSTANT.) An example of music portraying action. Here is a case in which a certain incident (i.e., a murder) could be depicted by any one of our three story-telling tools. It might be handled through dialogue alone, through sound effects alone, through music alone. See THE THREE TOOLS, p. 29. In the stage version, a soliloquy by Lady Macbeth is used to suggest what is going on offstage. In the adaptation the music bridge supplants this soliloquy in dramatic function.

The portraying of any action through music requires a clear, unmistakable pre-establishment of the meaning of the music. In this case the entire plan, the murder, etc., have been so thoroughly discussed that there is no doubt of the meaning of the music. The listener cannot fail to supply, to the rising tempo and anxiety of the music, the feeling of Macbeth approaching his crime.

The banging door this time serves a double purpose. (1) It provides the sound climax toward which the music has been building; in this role it should, if the music has done its job, have somewhat the same electrifying effect as if a shot were fired, or as if, in a movie version, the close-up of a dagger were seen plunging into the king. (2) It provides a sudden, scene-setting start for the new scene.

See *Music as action*, p. 47. Also, *A scene-setting sound*, p. 76.

354–362. My husband!...I? This passage has been slightly altered to avoid reference to material omitted in the adaptation.

Which was not so before. There's no such thing:

It is the bloody business which informs

Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world 340

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse

The curtain'd sleep.

(BONGGG...BONGGG...HEAVY GONG OR

BELL AS CLOCK STRIKES TWO.) 345

I go; the bell invites me.

Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell

That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

(MUSIC: STARTS IN TURBULENT MOOD: THEN MOUNTS

WITH RISING ANXIETY AND INCREASING 350

TEMPO TOWARD CLIMAX. AT THE VERY CLIMAX DOOR BANGS LOUDLY. MUSIC STOPS ON

THE INSTANT.)

LADY MACBETH: My husband!

MACBETH: I have done the deed. Didst thou not 355 hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH: I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

MACBETH: Did you not speak?

LADY MACBETH: When? Now? 360

MACBETH: As I descended.

363-376. `Methought I heard...life's feast.` In the original Macbeth has one uninterrupted speech here, a speech which for radio purposes is somewhat too lengthy at this tense moment; there is too much danger of Lady Macbeth "dying." We are dealing here with a crisis during which the constant, simultaneous awareness of both characters is important to the listener. Hence the long speech is broken in the adaptation by Lady Macbeth's short speech, originally placed before it. Rearrangements of this type are a frequent activity of the radio adaptor.

See THE RADIO CLIMAX, p. 95.

378-381. `Still it cried "...shall sleep no more."` The original has:

> Still it cri'd, Sleep no more to all the House:
> *Glamis* hath murder'd Sleep, *and therefore Cawdor*
> *Shall sleep no more:* Macbeth shall sleep no more.

The italicized words are those altered or omitted in the adaptation, partly to avoid the plot thread which has been eliminated, and partly to avoid the dual names.

See *Choice of names*, p. 66.

LADY MACBETH: I?

MACBETH: Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep." 365

LADY MACBETH: These deeds must not be thought after these ways.
So, it will make us mad.

MACBETH: The innocent sleep;
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, 370
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, 375
Chief nourisher in life's feast—

LADY MACBETH: What do you mean?

MACBETH: Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Macbeth hath murder'd sleep, Macbeth shall sleep no more." 380

LADY MACBETH: Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think 385
So brain-sickly of things. Go get some water,

[MORE]

408–409. (LOUD KNOCKING ON LARGE HEAVY DOOR, OFF). The use of a door actually made of heavy wood with heavy metal fixtures will be found particularly effective in a scene of this sort. Heaviness in a door effect cannot be suggested without heavy wood and metal; conversely, if heavy material is used, its heaviness is unmistakable, self-identifying.

Many stations now possess a considerable variety of doors, to fit a variety of locales.

The knocking at, and unbolting and opening of a heavy door are among those actions which are so clearly suggested by their sounds that they derive a particular excitement from being invisible.

See p. 17.

And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

Why did you bring these daggers from the place? 390

They must lie there: go carry them; and smear

The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH: I'll go no more: 395

I am afraid to think what I have done;

Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH: Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead 400

Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood

That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,

I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal; 405

For it must seem their guilt.

(LOUD KNOCKING ON LARGE HEAVY DOOR, OFF)

Hark! A knocking. 410

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts. 415

427. `A man might be porter at hell-gate.` The adaptation selects the lines that identify the new voice several times as the "porter."

Most of the humor of the porter is unsuitable to radio. However, the change of tone accomplished by the few lines that are retained is dramatically valuable.

430–434. `(KNOCKING, ON...UNBOLTING...HEAVY DOOR OPEN-ING)`. Since the banging on the door was heard *off-mike* during the dialogue between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, and the door effects are now heard *on*, a slight shift of locality is suggested to the listener. This feeling of a shift might be accentuated by the introduction of a slight echo, such as might exist in the hallway or court of the castle. The echo could be brought in during the porter's first speech. It would lend a particular effectiveness to the unbolting of the heavy door. The degree of echo should probably be reduced after line 448, when another slight shift in locality is suggested by the dialogue.

See THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS, p. 107.

435. `Was it so late, friend...` In the original Macduff and Lennox enter here. Lennox is omitted in the adaptation, his place in this scene being taken by Banquo. This change is advisable in radio not only because an additional, nonessential voice would tend to create confusion, but also because it is advisable to keep the voice and personality of Banquo clear to the listener, by re-using him at least once before his later reappearance as a ghost.

In addition to this change, the adaptation does some reapportioning and rearranging of speeches in this scene. Since two characters, one familiar, the other unfamiliar and as yet unlabeled in the listener's mind, are here brought into the scene, it seems advisable to utilize first the familiar voice, so as to permit the listener to identify "Banquo." It is well to grant the listener this much feeling of assurance before giving him a moment of uncertainty over an apparently new voice. As soon as possible after both voices have been used, their names are injected into the dialogue. The words, "Banquo — and good Macduff" are an interpolation of the adaptation.

Macduff should probably be a baritone. The possibility of voice confusion with Macbeth is minimized by the fact that, immediately after Macbeth's entrance, we have a stretch of dialogue (317–330) limited to the two baritones. This serves to emphasize whatever differences there may be between the respective rhythms, intonations and pronunciation habits of the two baritone voices.

See *The number of characters*, p. 59.

MACBETH: To know my deed, 't were best not know myself.

(MORE KNOCKING)

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! 420

LADY MACBETH: Come.

(FADE ON LAST FEW WORDS. NOW CRICKET BACKGROUND SNEAKS IN AGAIN. KEEP THROUGH REST OF SCENE.)

(KNOCKING REPEATED IMPATIENTLY.) 425

PORTER: (FADING IN) Here's a knocking, indeed....A man might be porter at hell-gate. But this place is too cold for hell....I'll devil-porter it no further.

(KNOCKING, ON) 430

PORTER: Anon, anon!

(STARTS UNBOLTING HEAVY DOOR)

I pray you, remember the porter.

(HEAVY DOOR OPENING)

BANQUO: (FADING IN) Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed, 435

That you do lie so late?

PORTER: 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

MACDUFF: Is thy master stirring? 440

MACBETH: (OFF, APPROACHING) Ah, good morrow, both.

453–458. `I'll bring you to him... This is the door.` Here, in very brief form, we find the mechanics of the "moving mike" technique. During this brief dialogue we are given the feeling that we are moving with Macduff and Macbeth, away from the front door, toward the king's quarters. "I'll bring you to him" sets us in motion. "This is the door" signals our arrival. These are both typical radio lines.

If an echo effect has been used for the previous dialogue at the front door, the feeling of moving away from this area can be accentuated by reducing and perhaps gradually eliminating this echo effect.

See *The moving mike*, p. 94.

BANQUO: Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

MACDUFF: Good morrow, noble sir. 445

MACBETH: (COMING IN) Good morrow, friends.
Banquo—and good Macduff.

MACDUFF: Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH: Not yet.

MACDUFF: He did command me to call timely on him: 450
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

MACBETH: I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF: I know this is a joyful trouble to you; 455
But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH: The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

MACDUFF: (FADING SLIGHTLY) I'll make so bold to call, 460
For 'tis my limited service.
(DOOR OPENING)
(DOOR CLOSING)

BANQUO: Goes the king hence today?

MACBETH: He does: he did appoint so. 465

BANQUO: The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,

[MORE]

482. (DOOR BANGING LOUDLY OFF-MIKE). Here again the door effect is utilized because it serves a dramatic purpose. In this case it is a sudden attention-getter for Macduff, giving him an effective send-off into his "O horror, horror, horror!"

See *Further selectivity*, p. 42.

Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death, 470
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confus'd events
New hatch'd to th' woeful time: the obscure bird 475
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH: 'Twas a rough night.

BANQUO: My young remembrance cannot parallel 480
A fellow to it.

(DOOR BANGING LOUDLY OFF-MIKE)

MACDUFF: (FADING IN) O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee! 485

BANQUO: What's the matter?

MACBETH: What is 't?

MACDUFF: Confusion now hath made his master-piece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope 490
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' th' building!

MACBETH: What is't you say? the life?

BANQUO: Mean you his majesty? 495

508. (BELL TOLLING. . . .) Effective recordings of heavy bells tolling are available, and are usually the most practical solution for scenes requiring, as does this one, a change in the volume of the bells. A recording can, of course, easily be faded to the very faint background needed for the following scene.

In first "featuring" the effect, and then fading it to a background, the adaptation follows a frequent radio practice.

See *Sounds as backgrounds*, p. 42. For names of companies marketing recorded sound effects, see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *sound-effects records*.

513–514. Now Malcolm and Donalbain...for their lives. The use of narration here is essential for identification of the characters. Note that neither time nor place need be stipulated, since both are sufficiently clear from the continued presence of the background "bell tolling."

515–530. What will you do...come. Both characters should of course be in the tenor range, and sound of young juvenile age. Since the scene is confined to the two tenors, there is little possibility of confusion.

See *The number of characters*, p. 59.

MACDUFF: Approach the chamber. Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves:
Our royal master's murder'd.

BANQUO: Woe. 500

MACBETH: Alas!
Ring the alarum-bell!

BANQUO: Murder and treason!

MACDUFF: Up!

(THEY FADE, REPEATING CRIES, OTHER 505
CRIES FROM OFF, "MURDER!," "TREASON!"
OVER THIS COMES:)
(BELL TOLLING. FEATURE THIS ALL
ALONE FOR FIVE TO TEN SECONDS, THEN
FADE DOWN UNDER FOLLOWING. KEEP 510
BELL THROUGH NARRATION AND THROUGH
NEXT SCENE.)

HOLINSHED: Now Malcolm and Donalbain, the sons of
King Duncan, feared for their lives.

MALCOLM: What will you do? Let's not consort 515
with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll
to England.

DONALBAIN: To Ireland, I; our separated fortune 520
Shall keep us both the safer: where we
are,
There's daggers in men's smiles.

535–537. `The flight of Malcolm...suspicion of the deed.` This element is taken from Act II, Scene 4, which the original play introduces at this point. It is a scene between two minor characters, "Ross" and "An Old Man," whose dialogue really constitutes a disguised Greek chorus. It is used to establish a few facts, and rouse anticipation, tasks for which radio more characteristically utilizes its "narrator."

See NARRATION, p. 49.

538. `(MUSIC TRIUMPHANT, BRIEFLY).` Throughout this narrative passage the music really shares in the job of narration. What we actually have is a sort of "split narration," divided between the narrator and the music.

See *Music as commentator*, p. 47.

543. `Especially did he fear Banquo.` The adaptation slightly modifies the original reason for Macbeth's fear of Banquo, and thus again sidesteps a subplot. Radio characteristically avoids sideline complications, keeping the spotlight as much as possible on the main theme.

548–549. `...at the hands of a certain murderer.` A typical example of scene-setting "by indirection." The more direct, unmistakable, "obvious" approach preferred on many programs would conclude with: "We now find Macbeth talking to a certain murderer."

While the latter type of approach is suited to the impersonal, objective announcer as used on the daytime serial, it is better avoided when the narration is given to a narrator with some sort of personality or role, like Holinshed.

See *Obvious versus implied scene-setting*, p. 77.

MALCOLM: This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way 525
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: come. 530

(QUICK MOUNTING, HORSES' HOOFS. TWO HORSES GALLOPING AWAY.)

(MUSIC: IN ON SOLEMN NOTE; THEN FOLLOW COURSE OF NARRATION)

HOLINSHED: The flight of Malcolm and his brother 535
putting upon them suspicion of the
deed, Macbeth was proclaimed King of
Scotland. (MUSIC TRIUMPHANT, BRIEFLY)
But—as it chances ever with such as
attain to any estate by unrighteous 540
means—the prick of conscience caused
him ever to fear. (MUSIC TO DARK
MOOD) Especially did he fear Banquo,
who with him had heard the witches'
prophecy. He willed therefore this 545
same Banquo to come to a supper—which
meant indeed, as he had devised, death
on the way to the palace, at the hands
of a certain murderer. (MUSIC OUT)

553. (FOOTSTEPS ON COBBLESTONES, FADING). An example of radio's selectivity. Heretofore the adaptation has ignored footsteps. It uses them this time because it finds special advantages in doing so. It is a device which gets the murderer well out of the way before the entrance of Lady Macbeth, and at the same time avoids the use of a long silent pause. Also, the surface is one of special interest. Footsteps on stone are interesting, picture-making.

See *No-good sounds*, p. 41. Also *Further selectivity*, p. 42.

MACBETH: It must be done tonight. 550

MURDERER: I shall, my lord, perform what you command. (FADING)

(FOOTSTEPS ON COBBLESTONES, FADING)

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

LADY MACBETH: (FADING IN) How now, my lord! Why do you keep alone, 555
Of sorriest fancies your companions making?
Things without remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done. 560

MACBETH: We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it.

LADY MACBETH: Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks, 565
Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.

MACBETH: So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.
Ay, be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown 570
His cloister'd flight there shall be done a deed
Of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH: What's to be done? 575

578–581. `So prithee, go with me... (LAUGHTER, CHATTER...).` This is a typical radio transition, in that the scene-setting elements have all been pre-established: "banquet," "jovial," "guests," "tonight." As a result the cheerful music has immediate meaning; similarly the first audible snatch of "laughter, chatter, clink of glasses" has immediate scenic value.

The pre-establishing of scene-setting elements is discussed at various points in the section on SCENE-SHIFTING, p. 81.

This transition might be charted as follows:

Full-volume
i.e., in spotlight
Half-volume
i.e., in background
Zero-volume
i.e., out

prithee, go with me MUSIC JOLLY MUSIC JOLLY CHATTER CLINK OF GLASSES Your majesty...most royal sir!
LAUGHTER JOLLY MUSIC
CHATTER CLINK
JOLLY MUSIC

590. MACDUFF: `May 't please your highness sit.` This line is originally spoken by Lennox. This character and others are, in this scene, absorbed into Macduff.

See *The number of characters*, p. 59.

MACBETH: Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. So prithee, go with me.

(MUSIC: TO BANQUET JOLLITY) 580

(LAUGHTER, CHATTER, CLINK OF GLASSES, DISHES. THEN, AD LIB WELCOMES TO MACBETH AND LADY MACBETH.)

VOICES: Your majesty....most royal sir....!

MACBETH: Good friends, my heartiest welcome; 585 welcome all!
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round.

MACDUFF: May 't please your highness 590 sit.

MACBETH: Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present; 595
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!

MACDUFF: Please 't your highness
To grace us with your royal company? Sit here. 600

MACBETH: (TROUBLED) Why—the table's full.

605-606. `All hail, Macbeth...hereafter.` In the original, Banquo's ghost does not speak. In radio, it is possible to create a non-speaking character through references in the speeches of others; occasionally, the very haziness of such a character may be made dramatically useful.

See *The vanishing character utilized*, p. 57.

However, the listener will have a much more instantaneous feeling of the reality of the character in question if some sort of voice is provided around which a mental picture may be built. Also, if the voice can be given a ghostly quality, the listener may actually experience a momentary shock or surprise, and thereby more closely *share* the feelings of Macbeth, as the spectator in the theater does at the appearance of the ghost on the stage.

The non-speaking ghost illusion would take more time to build up than this scene affords; also, it would require somewhat more definite references in the speeches of the others than the original play provides.

If the adaptor chooses to make the ghost vocal, he may find suitable speeches within the framework of the original play. In this case, the adaptation selects the witches' original prophecy to Macbeth, already well planted. The re-use of this particular speech has an added value, in that it reminds us of the prophecy, and of Banquo's presence at it.

Because the filter can be used for a variety of illusions, we have noted that the nature of the illusion requires a certain amount of "planting." In this case the adaptor finds available in the original exactly the right type of planting lines: "Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present" — "The table's full" — "Here is a place reserv'd, sir" — "Where?" The adaptation adds "Sit here," and a repetition of, "Here is a place," to emphasize the important chair.

For the use of the filter in ghost effects, see THE FILTER, p. 99; also, THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS, p. 107.

If a filter is not available, other voice-distortion effects may be tried, such as the use of a microphone inside a grand piano, suggested in the section on THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS.

MACDUFF: Here is a place reserv'd, sir.

MACBETH: Where?

MACDUFF: Here, my good lord.

BANQUO: (THROUGH FILTER) All hail, Macbeth, 605
that shall be king hereafter.

MACBETH: (A GASP)

MACDUFF: Here is a place. What is 't that
moves your highness?

BANQUO: (FILTER) All hail, Macbeth. 610

MACBETH: Which of you have done this?

VOICES: What, my good lord?
What is 't?

BANQUO: (FILTER) Macbeth....

MACBETH: There. Prithee, see there! 615
Behold, look, lo, how say you? Back,
back!

(GENERAL AD LIBBED ALARM)

MACDUFF: Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not
well. 620

LADY MACBETH: Sit worthy friends: my lord is often
thus,
And hath been from his youth; pray
you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought 625
He will be well again: if you much
note him,

[MORE]

630. `My lord, come hither.` This is interpolated, to make clear that the following dialogue takes place at some distance from the banquet table. The distant background of banquet effects is used to emphasize the same point. This is the fade-out, fade-in system of moving the dialogue within a scene, except that the new dialogue is allowed to start "at mike," the change of locality having been sufficiently emphasized through the use of the background.

See *Fade-out and fade-in*, p. 93.

648–649. `I will tomorrow...to the Weird Sisters.` Although the adaptation omits a large section of dialogue that follows the ghost's appearance, it salvages this particular speech for its value to the next transition. The radio adaptor necessarily keeps watching for material that may be useful for clarifying scene-shifts.

In the original the ghost scene is followed by a witch scene, Act III, Scene 5, which is generally thought to be of non-Shakespearean authorship. The adaptation omits this scene, jumping to the following witch scene. This involves the omission of a scene between "Lennox" and a "Lord," an expository scene whose essential facts can be established in a later narration.

You shall offend him.
Feed, and regard him not. (SUBDUED)
My lord, come hither. (FADE) 630

(AD LIB TALK OF BANQUET STARTS IN BACKGROUND; CLINKING OF GLASSES AND DISHES GRADUALLY STARTS AGAIN. KEEP DISTANT.)

LADY MACBETH: (SOTTO VOCE, AT MIKE) Are you a man? 635

MACBETH: Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

LADY MACBETH: O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear: 640
These flaws and starts would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame itself!
You look'd but on a stool. 645

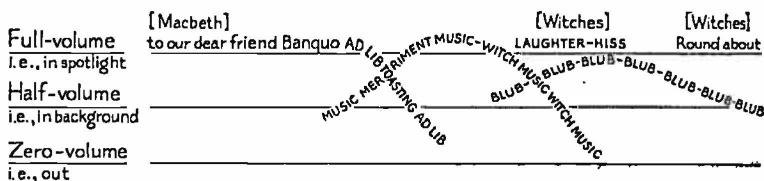
MACBETH: If I stand here, I saw him—Banquo.

LADY MACBETH: Fie!

MACBETH: What can this mean? I will tomorrow,
And betimes I will, to the Weird Sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know 650
By the worst means, the worst.

666. `(MUSIC: IN WITH MERRIMENT: THEN SEGUE TO SOME WITCH MUSIC).` This transition illustrates music's special power as a scene-shifter: its ability to transport us almost instantly from one *mood* to another, from one *atmosphere* to another.

See the discussion under SYSTEM 4: Music, p. 88. Also MUSIC, p. 45. This transition might be charted as follows:



673. `Round about the cauldron...` Since the noises connected with the cauldron and the fire may not be entirely self-identifying, the adaptation opens the scene with a line including an "implied identification."

See *Sounds needing identification*, p. 39.

676. `Eye of bat...` The list of ingredients is far longer in the original. Some of the ingredients are omitted because the words are difficult.

> Witch's mummy, maw and gulf
> Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark:
> . . . .
> Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
> . . . .
> Add thereto a tiger's chaudron . . .

Misunderstanding of some of these words and phrases may not matter greatly in a stage presentation, since the spectator has at the same time a visual entertainment, which may be of particular interest in this scene. In radio, if the words convey no meaning, there is literally no play. Hence the supreme importance of word clarity in radio.

See *Choice of words*, p. 66.

Some of the other lines are omitted because they are objectionable for radio purposes:

> Liver of blaspheming Jew,
> . . . .
> Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips . . .

Although numerous radio *mustn'ts* are waived for Shakespeare productions, most broadcasters would probably prefer to omit material such as the above.

See *Special groups*, p. 135.

LADY MACBETH: My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH: I do forget. 655
(LOUD) Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all; 660
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full!
I drink, to our dear friend Banquo!
(AD LIB TOASTING, MERRIMENT) 665

(MUSIC: IN WITH MERRIMENT: THEN SEGUE TO SOME WITCH MUSIC)

(CACKLING LAUGHTER OF WITCHES. WE HEAR ALSO A SUDDEN SHARP LONG HISS AS OF WATER BOILING OVER ONTO FIRE. 670 OUT OF THIS WE HEAR CRACKLE OF FIRE, AND BLUB-BLUB OF CAULDRON BOILING.)

WITCHES: (TOGETHER) Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw! 675

FIRST WITCH: Eye of bat...

SECOND WITCH: and toe of frog,

THIRD WITCH: Lizard's leg...

FIRST WITCH: and tongue of dog!

682-683. `Double, double...bubble.` This passage, in combination with the foregoing, might bc used for experiments in choral-speech effects, as described in the section on CHORAL SPEECH.

For example, the line "Double, double, toil and trouble" might be used as a rhythm accompaniment to a repetition of the ingredients, "Eye of bat . . . tongue of dog!"

See CHORAL SPEECH, p. 113.

SECOND WITCH: For a charm of powerful trouble 680
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL: Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

MACBETH: (FADING IN) How now, you secret,
black, and midnight hags! 685
What is 't you do?

FIRST WITCH: A deed without a name.

MACBETH: I conjure you, by that which you pro-
fess,
Howe'er you came to know it, answer
me: 690
Though you untie the winds and let
them fight
Against the churches; though the
yeasty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up; 695
Though castles topple on their ward-
ers' heads;
Answer me
To what I ask you!

FIRST WITCH: Speak. 700

SECOND WITCH: Demand.

THIRD WITCH: We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH: Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from
our mouths,
r from our master? 705

709. `What is this...` Note that the lines leading up to the use of the filter give a full explanation of the meaning of the filter effect; they tell the listener exactly what to imagine.

See THE FILTER, p. 99.

717. `Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be...` The original introduces in this scene three prophecies, and a "Show of eight Kings." The radio adaptation again seeks simplification by selecting one prophecy, the one most useful for threading together subsequent episodes.

MACBETH: Call him; let me see him!

(ANOTHER SUDDEN LOUD HISSING SOUND AS OF WATER THROWN ON FIRE.)

MACBETH: (AMAZED) What is this
That rises like the image of a king? 710

FIRST WITCH: Listen, but speak not to 't. He knows thy thought.

SPIRIT: (THROUGH FILTER) Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are: 715
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. 720

(ANOTHER LOUD HISSING SOUND, FADING QUICKLY.)

MACBETH: (RAPT) That can never be:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree 725
Jnfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and move to Dunsinane! 730
Then live, Macbeth!

737–745. `By this prophecy...the murdered king.` Act IV, Scene 2, in which Macbeth's cutthroats come to murder Lady Macduff and her son, is omitted here, since it throws the spotlight for too long a period on minor characters. The radio adaptation leaves the Macbeths for only a brief scene to depict rapidly the rising opposition. This scene telescopes Act IV, Scene 3, and Act V, Scene 2, bringing together lines often widely separated in the original.

It is characteristic of radio that the adaptation avoids the detailed exploration of the character of Malcolm found in the original Act IV, Scene 3. It is enough that he is the legitimate leader of the opposition; that he is a good and vigorous young man. This is the full extent to which he affects the story of the Macbeths' rise and fall, which is the exclusive concern of the adapted sketch.

Here we see exemplified the "fairy-tale simplification" which we have found inherent in the radio medium, which results partly from radio's need for a faster rhythm, but chiefly from its insistence on small, compact casts.

See *The number of characters*, p. 59.

753–754. `VOICE...ANOTHER.` Only Malcolm and Macduff are identified in the narration leading into this scene; hence the remaining characters are nameless in the listener's mind. Such characters are usually labeled "voices" in radio.

In radio, it is desirable and right that such subsidiary characters should not achieve any real identity. It is enough that the listener have Malcolm and Macduff firmly in mind, and clearly distinguished from each other. The remaining voices are merely symbols for Malcolm's growing army, and are used chiefly to make vocal its rising spirit.

Since Macduff is a baritone, and Malcolm a tenor, this scene will probably be aurally clear. The "voices" should be cast for contrast.

WITCHES: (QUIETLY IN UNISON) Double, double,
toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

(MUSIC: HARSHLY EXULTANT. BRIEFLY, THEN DOWN FOR:) 735

HOLINSHED: By this prophecy Macbeth supposed he
might do what he could, without any
fear to be punished. This hope caused
him to do many outrageous things, to 740
the grievous oppression of his sub-
jects. At length Macduff and others,
to avoid peril of life, passed into
England to join with Malcolm, the son
of the murdered king. (MUSIC OUT) 745

MALCOLM: O, good Macduff! My countryman, wel-
come hither!

MACDUFF: Alas, poor country.

MALCOLM: Stands Scotland where it did?

MACDUFF: Almost afraid to know itself. It 750
sinks
Beneath the yoke.

VOICE: It bleeds.

ANOTHER: Each day a gash
Is added to her wounds. 755

MALCOLM: How does the tyrant?

MACDUFF: Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:

[MORE]

775. (MARCH MUSIC IN SOFTLY). A typical example of the overlapping of music with the conclusion of a scene. This overlapping is briefly mentioned in the discussion under SYSTEM 4: Music, p. 88. Note that the music is generally brought in at the exact moment when the context will lend maximum meaning to the fading-in music. In this case "ten thousand warlike men" is the perfect moment for identifying the march theme as a sort of symbol for Malcolm's army.

Some say he's mad: others that lesser
hate him
Do call it valiant fury. 760

VOICE: Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his
hands.

ANOTHER: Those he commands move only in com-
mand,
Nothing in love. 765

MACDUFF: (A PLEA) O sir, your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women
fight
To doff their dire distresses.

MALCOLM: What I am 770
Is thine and my poor country's to com-
mand.
We are coming thither: gracious Eng-
land hath
Lent us ten thousand war-like men.
(MARCH MUSIC IN SOFTLY) Near Birnam 775
wood
Shall we well meet them. Come. Our
power is ready.
Our lack is nothing but our leave:
Macbeth 780
Is ripe for shaking! Make we our
march towards Birnam!

785. HOLINSHED: Now Lady Macbeth, too ... This narration passage is necessarily an interpolation, since the sleepwalking episode is not mentioned in Holinshed.

795. GENTLEWOMAN: I cannot say... The gentlewoman-in-waiting should be cast to contrast with Lady Macbeth. If Lady Macbeth is a contralto (leading woman), as seems most fitting, the gentlewoman should probably be a soprano (ingénue).

(MUSIC: MARCH SONG FOR REBELS UP. SEGUE TO ANOTHER THEME FOR:)

HOLINSHED: Now Lady Macbeth, too, learned that Macbeth had "murdered sleep." Her physician, and one of her gentlewomen-in-waiting, conferred one night concerning their queen's strange new custom, of walking in her sleep. 785 790

(MUSIC OUT)

(THE FOLLOWING IS CLOSE TO MIKE, IN UNDERTONES, BUT NOT WHISPERED.)

DOCTOR: When was it she last walk'd?

GENTLEWOMAN: I cannot say. 795

DOCTOR: A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching. Lo, here she comes!

GENTLEWOMAN: This is her very guise; fast asleep! 800

(PAUSE)

DOCTOR: How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN: Why, it stood by her; she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

DOCTOR: Her eyes are open. 805

GENTLEWOMAN: Ay, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR: What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

813. (SLIGHTLY OFF-MIKE THROUGHOUT SCENE). This scene offers opportunities for interesting experimentation. Placement of Lady Macbeth at some distance from the microphone will lend an interesting depth, a compelling three-dimensional feeling to the scene. The long-continued off-mike position would, however, be a strain on the listener, were it not for the fact that the doctor and the gentlewoman-in-waiting talk in undertones throughout the scene, while Lady Macbeth may speak in a full voice. This factor should make it possible to gauge the voices and microphone positions in such a way that, in spite of the differences in position, all voices register about equally on the volume indicator needle in the control room. In other words, all three characters will be equally in the aural spotlight, although two are *on-mike*, the third *off-mike*.

A further refinement could be added to this effect. If the scene is played in a studio built in such a way that one end is *live*, the other *dead* (see APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *dead end*), a worthwhile contrast could be obtained by placing Lady Macbeth in a more lively acoustic spot than the other characters. Or, a slight touch of echo chamber might be added to Lady Macbeth's voice.

See *Dialogue positions*, p. 61. Also THE ECHO CHAMBER AND OTHER ACOUSTICAL TRICKS, p. 107.

GENTLEWOMAN: It is an accustom'd action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour. 810

LADY MACBETH: (SLIGHTLY OFF-MIKE THROUGHOUT SCENE) Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR: Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her. 815

LADY MACBETH: Out, damned spot! Who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

DOCTOR: Do you mark that? 820

LADY MACBETH: Here's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR: What a sigh is there! Her heart is sorely charg'd. 825

LADY MACBETH: Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

DOCTOR: Even so? 830

LADY MACBETH: To bed, to bed! There's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone—To bed, to bed, to bed! (FADING) 835

842. HOLINSHED: On the following morning... Since the bell has sufficiently curtained the scene, and the running feet of the next scene sufficiently set the mood and tempo for that scene, the use of music may be dispensed with in this transition. However, the omission is entirely optional. Some producers might prefer to add music to the effects indicated.

See *Consistency in use of devices*, p. 91.

861–862. (MUSIC: REBEL MARCH...MARCHING FEET). An excellent opportunity for using the pleasing device of fading from music into a sound effect of similar tempo. This can always be made an interesting moment.

See the "Advantages" listed under SYSTEM 4: Music, p. 89.

DOCTOR: Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN: Directly.

DOCTOR: I dare not speak. God, God forgive us all. Look after her.

(BONGGG...BONGGG...OF HEAVY BELL OR 840
GONG AS CLOCK STRIKES TWO.)

HOLINSHED: On the following morning, a messenger came.

(FEET OF ONE MAN RAPIDLY RUNNING UP
STONE STAIRWAY, OR ALONG CORRIDOR. 845
OPEN AND BANG DOOR QUICKLY.)

MESSENGER: (BREATHLESS) My lord.

MACBETH: Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane, 850
I cannot taint with fear!

MESSENGER: But sir—there is ten thousand—

MACBETH: Geese, villain?

MESSENGER: Soldiers, sir. The English force, so please you. 855

MACBETH: Take thy face hence, cream-fac'd loon!

MESSENGER: (FADING) Yes, my lord.

(DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES HURRIEDLY)

MACBETH: I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane! 860

(MUSIC: REBEL MARCH IN QUICKLY. THEN:)

(MARCHING FEET)

867. MACDUFF: We doubt it nothing. This line is originally spoken by Menteith; other lines are spoken by Siward. Both these characters are here absorbed by Macduff.

876–882. It shall be done!... What is that noise? This transition might be charted as follows:

Full-volume
i.e., in spotlight
Half-volume
i.e., in background
Zero-volume
i.e., out

[Macduff]
It shall be done! CRACKING BOUGHS

MARCHING FEET MARCHING FEET

REBEL MARCH-SAD MUSIC

SAD MUSIC

CRIES... CRIES

[Macbeth]
What is that noise?

MALCOLM: (RAISING VOICE OVER MARCHING FEET)
Friends—I hope the days are near at hand 865
That chambers will be safe.

MACDUFF: We doubt it nothing.

(PAUSE; MARCHING FEET)

MALCOLM: What wood is this before us?

MACDUFF: The wood of Birnam. 870

MALCOLM: Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
And bear 't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host. 875

MACDUFF: It shall be done!

(CRACKING OF BOUGHS. CONTINUE MARCHING FEET.)

(MUSIC: REBEL MARCH BRIEFLY. THEN QUICK TRANSITION TO:) 880

(CRIES OF SEVERAL WOMEN, OFF)

MACBETH: What is that noise?

MESSENGER: It is the cry of women, my good lord.

(DOOR OPENS)

MACBETH: Wherefore was that cry? 885

GENTLEWOMAN: The queen, my lord, is dead. By her own hand.

MACBETH: (A MUFFLED GROAN) She should have died hereafter.

[MORE]

892. (MARCHING FEET VERY SOFTLY IN BACKGROUND). This effect is an opportunity for experiment, but may be omitted if desired. It is intended as an example of the expressionistic use of sound effects. The introduction of the marching feet background as Macbeth is saying

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace . . .

should lead the listener to attach a more than naturalistic meaning to the marching feet. The effect will perhaps convey a feeling of inexorably marching days. Careful timing is of course necessary, so that the effect sneaks in exactly at those words that explain its significance. The volume should be kept very low.

See *Expressionistic use of sound effects*, p. 43.

There would have been a time for such a word. 890

(MARCHING FEET VERY SOFTLY IN BACKGROUND)

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 895
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

(FEET FADING OUT) 900

Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage 905
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. 910

(DOOR OPENS, AND CLOSES)

MESSENGER: My lord.

MACBETH: Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

922. `The wood began to move.` Here, likewise, a faint background of marching feet might be introduced. It could be retained throughout the rest of the scene, symbolic of Macbeth's approaching doom.

The use of the marching feet in *both* the suggested places might be too repetitious, whereas its use in either one could be made effective. Some directors will prefer one place, some the other.

MESSENGER: Gracious my lord, 915
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

MACBETH: Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER: As I did stand my watch upon the hill, 920
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH: Liar and slave!

MESSENGER: Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so; 925
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH: If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive, 930
Till famine cling thee: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane": and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out! 935
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.

[MORE]

947–962. (MUSIC: BATTLE MUSIC...SERENE MOTIF.) In this climax sequence all three of the radio writer's storytelling tools perform characteristic functions. Though used together, each is spotlighted in turn. First music suggests the battle. Then the sound effects of the battle are briefly featured, as music retires to the background. Then the sound effects too retire to the background, as the spotlight is thrown on a brief dialogue. Then the sound effects are again brought momentarily to full volume, to be swallowed almost immediately by the rising music.

Note that the actual climax of the play is handled by the music alone. Since the listener has been told beforehand what is going to happen ("die with harness on our back," "Despair thy charm"), this symbolic representation of the crisis itself is entirely satisfactory. As the music-battle mounts to a furious peak, and passes into a more serene theme, we know that the inevitable has happened. This type of partial statement is the essence of many radio effects.

See *Music as action*, p. 47.

The sequence may be charted thus:

I 'gin to be aweary of the sun, 940
And wish th' estate o' th' world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back! 945

(MUSIC: BATTLE MUSIC)
(THROUGH MUSIC WE HEAR TRUMPETS, CROWDS, CLASH OF SWORDS, HORSES' HOOFS, HORSES SNORTING.) 950
(EFFECTS DOWN BRIEFLY FOR FOLLOWING:)

MACDUFF: Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH: Of all men else I have avoided thee.

MACDUFF: Despair thy charm!

MACBETH: Yet I will try the last. Lay on, Macduff, 955
And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"
(CLASH OF SWORDS ON-MIKE)
(BACKGROUND EFFECTS UP, WHILE:)

(MUSIC: BATTLE MUSIC COMES UP, GRADUALLY SWALLOWING EFFECTS. MUSIC TO CLIMAX. THEN SEGUE TO SERENE MOTIF.) 960

HOLINSHED: And Macduff slew him in that place.
And they brought his head to Malcolm, upon a pole. (MUSIC OUT) 965

989. (PEN-SCRATCH IN). An example of the re-use of an opening device, as a "framework" effect.

See *Frameworks*, p. 71.

990-992. And this was in...the same year. An example of the use of narration at a closing.

See *THE CLOSING*, p. 96.

MACDUFF: Hail, king! For so thou art: behold where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
Hail, King of Scotland! 970

ALL: Hail, King of Scotland!

(FLOURISH OF TRUMPETS)

MALCOLM: We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves. 975
My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour nam'd. What's more to do, 980
Call we now home our exil'd friends abroad,
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny 985
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen.

(MUSIC: SOLEMN. TO FINISHING CHORD.)

(PEN-SCRATCH IN)

HOLINSHED: And this was in the year of the incar- 990
nation 1057. And Malcolm was crown'd
at Scone in the same year.

993–994. (MUSIC: NEUTRAL...AS BACKGROUND TO:) This and the following musical passage provide a flexible "cushion" in the timing of the program. They can, if the program is "tight," be made as short as three or four seconds. If the program is short, they can be allowed to run half a minute each, or even longer.

See APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO, *cushion*.

(MUSIC: NEUTRAL, MORE MELODIC THEME. DOWN, CONTINUE AS BACKGROUND TO:)

ANNOUNCER: We have brought you the story of Mac- 995
beth, partly in the words in which
Holinshed told it in his Chronicles of
Scotland, where a young man from
Stratford was to read it with particu-
lar interest; but mostly in the words 1000
in which that same young man re-told
the tale at the height of his powers.

(MUSIC: FINISH THEME.)

APPENDIX B: THE WRITER'S GUIDE TO RADIO

Explanation. Use this as a combination glossary, guide and index. It lists and defines technical terms the writer is likely to meet; it identifies companies and types of companies, explaining their functions and operations; it refers to pages in this book whenever the subject mentioned is treated in the foregoing chapters or in Appendix A. The notation *q.v.* (*quod vide*, or *which see*) is used to denote that an entry under the subject indicated will be found in the present appendix.

Technical terms and subjects are listed in italics (*echo chamber, music*); names of organizations in capitals (RADIO WRITERS' GUILD); names of programs in capital italics (*MARCH OF TIME*); people are listed in normal type (MacLeish, Archibald).

Radio writers mentioned in the actual text are indexed; those mentioned only in footnotes are not. Programs quoted or discussed are listed under their titles, and also under the names of the advertising agencies producing them. Sponsors, though credited in footnotes for all quotations, are not listed here.

AAAA. American Association of Advertising Agencies. See *trade associations*.

account executive. Important pivotal figure in the usual large advertising agency setup. Each account executive supervises all work in connection with one or more accounts, depending on their importance. He acts as liaison man between agency and client; he must therefore have ambassadorial as well as organizing talent. He must keep the client "sold" on the agency's work, and keep the agency's work in line with the client's wishes. He is sometimes called a *service man*, or a *contact man*. Nomenclature varies.

In a large advertising agency each account executive reports to the President, or Vice President, or other partner or top executive, on the progress of his particular account or accounts. In a less complex agency, the President himself may *service* all accounts, absorbing in himself all the account-executive duties.

In the highly competitive field of the very large agencies, where the rivalry for big-time accounts has grown more and more intense in recent years, and tended to

become a carbon copy of international diplomacy, the account executive has grown increasingly important. He must be a natural negotiator, skilled in the human touch as well as thoroughly grounded in his own and his client's business.

For other advertising-agency positions, see *advertising agency*.

across the board. A term used to describe the scheduling of a program five or more days a week, usually Monday through Friday, at the same period. Thus: "We're scheduled at 11:45 A.M. across the board." The expression stems from the actual use, in station, network and advertising-agency offices, of large boards on which the entire week's program schedule can be surveyed at a glance.

action. Elimination of non-plot action, 16. Scene-setting action, 17, 76. Plot action, 17.

actor's fade. See *studio fade*.

adaptations. Usually written on staff, 6–7. Discussion of, 152–154. Adaptation of *Macbeth*, with notes, 189–269.

ad lib. Improvised, impromptu. An abbreviation of the Latin *ad libitum* (literally, at pleasure). The expression, also used in music, is used by the radio writer and director in directions to actors. A writer might write: "They greet each other *ad lib*." The expression is also used as a verb: "They *ad lib* good-bys."

advertising. Theories of radio advertising, 137–151. See also *advertising agency*.

advertising agency. An organization which, for a limited group of *clients* desiring to advertise their goods or institutions, plans advertising campaigns, prepares advertising matter, whether for publications, radio, billboards or other *media* (*q.v.*), and arranges the buying of the required space (in publications or on billboards) and time (on the air).

All this involves such a variety of activities that an advertising agency may have on its staff writers, artists, technical and medical advisers, researchers, radio directors, merchandising experts, publicity experts, accountants, legal advisers, as well as many types of executives.

The advertising agency makes its money by collecting fifteen per cent on most of its major transactions. If it buys, on behalf of a client, $100,000 worth of time from NBC, NBC gives the agency $15,000. If the agency buys $100,000 worth of magazine space, the magazine pays the agency the same commission. If the agency hires, on behalf of a client, a comedian for $5000 a week, it bills this sum to the client with an additional fifteen per cent. In other words, the more an advertising agency spends, the more it earns. But of course the expenditures are controlled by budgets, approved by the client. Also, it is to the advertising agency's advantage to make the budgeted money bring maximum results.

A writer does well to know any

of the following functionaries in a large advertising agency, all of whom may be involved in decisions concerning the hiring of a writer, for staff or free-lance work: (1) *Account Executive* (*q.v.*), sometimes known as a *Service Man*. An account executive supervises all work in connection with one large account, or several smaller accounts. (2) *Head of the Radio Department*. Sometimes called *Director of Radio*. He supervises all the radio activities of the agency, keeping in close touch with the account executives of the accounts using radio, and also, to some extent, making direct contact with clients. (3) *Continuity Chief*, or *Head of Continuity*. Only agencies large enough to employ several continuity writers have such a personage; he is usually responsible to the Head of the Radio Department. (4) *Production Man*, or *Director* (*qq.v.*). The man actually supervising and directing broadcasts. (5) *Head of Copy Department*, or *Copy Chief*. Sometimes radio continuity is written in the same department that turns out the magazine, newspaper, etc., *copy*. (6) *Personnel Manager*. In some agencies, even though the final selection of a staff writer is up to one of the foregoing, his actual employment must be routed through a personnel department.

Introductions through other important executives, or through clients, are often helpful.

There are close to 1000 advertising agencies in the United States listing an executive as "in charge of radio." Extensive lists of these may be found in the yearbooks published by *Broadcasting–Broadcast Advertising*, *Variety* and *Radio Daily* (*qq.v.*).

The following list of agencies includes some of those most consistently active in radio during past years:

Blackett–Sample–Hummert
J. Walter Thompson Co.
Lord & Thomas
Young & Rubicam, Inc.
Benton & Bowles, Inc.
Compton Advertising, Inc.
Ruthrauff & Ryan, Inc.
Batten, Barton, Durstine, & Osborn
N. W. Ayer & Son, Inc.
Newell–Emmett Co.
Ward Wheelock Co.
Wade Advertising Agency
Stack–Goble Advertising Agency
Lennen & Mitchell, Inc.
Erwin Wasey & Co.
William Esty & Co.
Pedlar & Ryan, Inc.
H. W. Kastor & Sons
Gardner Advertising Co.
Biow Co.
Roche, Williams & Cunnyngham
McCann–Erickson, Inc.
Arthur Kudner, Inc.
Maxon, Inc.
Neisser–Meyerhoff
Aubrey, Moore & Wallace
Warwick & Legler, Inc.
Hutchinson Advertising Co.
Albert Frank–Guenther Law, Inc.
J. M. Mathes, Inc.

Many of these have offices in several cities.

Most network commercial pro-

grams are produced by advertising agencies. The advertising agency's position in local broadcasting is much less dominant, since the profits here are not always large enough to support a middleman business. Local sponsored programs are very often negotiated direct between station and sponsor.

Advertising agencies should not be confused with *program agencies*, which are really *independent producers* (*q.v.*).

The activities of the advertising-agency staff writer, 7.

AFM. American Federation of Musicians. See *unions*.

AFRA. American Federation of Radio Artists. See *unions*.

age. Age of proxy listener as an audience focus, 51. Age of helping-hand characters in women's serials, 166–167. Age of the child hero in children's serials, 181.

agency. When a radio writer, director, or performer speaks of an *agency*, he usually means an *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), occasionally a *program agency*. These two types of company should not be confused; the *program agency* has nothing to do with advertising, but is a sort of *independent producer* (*q.v.*).

ALBERT FRANK-GUENTHER LAW, INC. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *YOUR UNSEEN FRIEND* (54).

Allen, Fred. Comedian, 43, 141–142.

amateur radio groups. Scripts for, 131, 189. See also OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES. See *trade associations*.

AMERICAN FAMILY ROBINSON, 131, footnote.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS. See *unions*.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF RADIO ARTISTS. See *unions*.

AMOS 'N' ANDY, 18, 161–162, 164, 169, 175.

ANA. Association of National Advertisers. See *trade associations*.

ARROWSMITH. Adaptation of Sinclair Lewis novel for *CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE*, 54, 78, 87.

ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ADVERTISERS. See *trade associations*.

AUBREY, MOORE & WALLACE. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*). Its programs have included *FIRST NIGHTER* (9, 127–128); *GRAND HOTEL* (9, 127–128). See also *FIRST NIGHTER*.

audience. Radio's audience unit usually an individual, 11–12. Psychological aspects of the home audience, 11–16; of the daytime listener, 160, 166–168, 173–174.

audience research. America's listening habits are the subject of continuous study by numerous organizations, including the research departments of advertising agencies, sponsors, networks and stations, as well as independent research organizations.

Studies are based on telephone surveys; door-to-door interviews; replies to mail questionnaires; analyses of fan mail; various other devices.

An objection to phone surveys is that less than half of America's radio owners are telephone subscribers, so that such surveys may tend to reflect the listening habits of higher-income brackets more clearly than those of lower-income brackets. However, the convenience, speed and relative economy of the telephone survey make it practicable and popular.

Two much-quoted telephone surveys, whose findings are issued periodically, and subscribed to by advertising agencies, networks, sponsors, etc., are the Clark–Hooper survey and the Co-operative Analysis of Broadcasting. The latter is generally referred to as the "C.A.B." or "Crossley Survey." The C.A.B. has been given a popular role of radio stars' scoreboard — a role out of proportion to its importance or intention. A star is known, in some radio circles, by his "Crossley rating."

The Clark–Hooper is based on the *coincidental* method: Its questions are variations on the theme "What are you listening to *now?*" The C.A.B. or Crossley is based on the *recall* method, in which the listener is asked to name programs he has listened to during an elapsed period, of several hours. This involves a memory hazard, and probably favors the more recent, and also the more spectacular, programs; however, it has the advantage of collecting much more information per phone call than the coincidental method.

Much interest is attached to the development of gadgets which can be installed in a listener's radio (with his permission) which automatically record the exact use made of the radio: when turned on, what station listened to, exact moment of switching from one station to another, etc. Mechanisms of this sort, already tried out, will probably be used more widely in the future. They yield invaluable information on audience reactions.

Interesting information is occasionally revealed in such figures as the consumption of electric power during special broadcasts. America's consumption of electric power seems to reach its highest peaks during championship heavyweight prizefights.

The construction of a serial sequence reflected in its audience curve, 161–162.

audition. A tryout for a performer. Or, a trial performance, for the benefit of a sponsor, agency, station or network, of a proposed program.

AUNT JENNY'S REAL LIFE STORIES, 9.

AUTHORS' LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC. Parent body of the Radio Writers' Guild (*q.v.*), and associated writers' guilds.

AYER & SON (N. W.). See *advertising agency.* Its productions have included: *THE SINGING LADY* (182); *ENO CRIME CLUES* (92); *BILLY AND BETTY* (138–139); *FORD SUNDAY EVENING HOUR* (147).

backgrounds. Sound-effect backgrounds, 42, 86–87. Music back-

grounds, 45, 147. Vocal counter themes in radio poetry, 113–118. Examples of sound-effect and music backgrounds will be found in APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR, 189–269.

BACKSTAGE WIFE. A daytime serial. Its formula discussed, 168.

Baker, Phil. Use of filter, 105.

balance. The relative volume of various elements, such as dialogue, music, sound effects, as mixed on the control-board panel. The balance is the concern of both the *engineer* and the *production man* (*qq.v.*). Discussion on relative volumes, 29–33.

baritone. Classification of actors according to voice pitch, 59–61.

bass. Classification of actors according to voice pitch, 59–61.

BATTEN, BARTON, DURSTINE, & OSBORN. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *MARCH OF TIME* (21, 49, 51, 90, 98, 110, 113), *CAVALCADE OF AMERICA* (9, 14), *THE HEART OF JULIA BLAKE* (170–171).

Battle, John Tucker. Writer of *HEROES WAS PEOPLE* (19–20), *DESIGN FOR HAPPINESS* (94–95), *BOBBY BENSON* (179–180).

BEAU GESTE. Adaptation of P. C. Wren novel for *CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE*, 48.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT. Robert L. Ripley program, 93, 97–98, 109.

Benny, Jack. Comedian, 43, 57–58, 139–140, 158.

BENTON & BOWLES, INC. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*). Its productions have included two series sponsored by Maxwell House Coffee: *SHOWBOAT* (19) and *GOOD NEWS*. Also *GANG BUSTERS* (17, 68–69, 75, 85); *ON BROADWAY* (9, 127); *MYRT & MARGE* (49–50); *YOUR TRUE ADVENTURES* (79–80); *BELIEVE IT OR NOT* (93, 97–98, 109); *RENFREW OF THE MOUNTED* (110). Use of ten-minute sketches, 125.

BIBLE, 109.

BIG SISTER. Serial, 166–167.

BIG TOWN. Program starring Edward G. Robinson, 17, 106, 127.

BILLY AND BETTY. Serial, 138–139.

BIOW CO. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included several series for Philip Morris cigarettes.

bit. A very small part, usually an unidentified voice, or the voice of a taxi driver, doorman, telephone operator or other character having sometimes only momentary existence in a radio drama.

BLACKETT–SAMPLE–HUMMERT. A leading *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), for many years at the top in radio expenditures. Its name is chiefly connected with the developments of the daytime serial, which it pioneered. Two thirds of its radio activity has been in this field. Under Frank and Anne Hummert it built up an extraordinary mass production of women's serials, which has been compared to the literary factory of Dumas the Elder. Following somewhat the

Dumas method, the Hummerts employ "dialogue writers" to expand into dialogue synopses written, in many cases, by the Hummerts themselves; or by their staff assistants. The system has developed dialogue writers capable of writing dialogue for three, four and, for a time, even five serials a week — a total of twenty-five episodes, or 50,000 words. The Hummert price has usually been twenty-five dollars per script, but in some cases more has been paid. The system permits rotation of writers, and frequent shifts of writers from one series to another.

B–S–H has been very successful in its *merchandising* (*q.v.*) of daytime serials. Since a merchandising offer on a daytime serial may draw close to a million responses, the agency has actually set in motion a number of fads and crazes. Example: The agency is able to buy 500,000 bracelets of a certain type at low cost. It offers these on a certain serial, in return for box tops. The sudden appearance of the gift bracelets throughout the country stimulates a sudden demand for similar bracelets on sale in novelty stores. But a few weeks later the fad has run its course; the market is glutted, and the sale of the bracelets subsides.

B–S–H avoids all *dramatized commercials* (*q.v.*). Its commercials are always *straight commercials* (*q.v.*). These are usually accompanied by this instruction to the director of the program: "Under no condition is any music to be played under the actual commercial credits on this show." (Note: There is a wide divergence of opinion on the wisdom of playing music behind commercials.)

B–S–H's first serials were the long-running *BETTY AND BOB* and *JUST PLAIN BILL* (5, 50). Among their other productions: *DAVID HARUM* (5, 63–66, 76, 141, 166, 171–174); *STELLA DALLAS* (77); *BACKSTAGE WIFE* (168); *LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE* (165 footnote); *MA PERKINS* (166); *CENTRAL CITY* (175); *SECOND HUSBAND* (176); *JACK ARMSTRONG* (177); *ROMANCE OF HELEN TRENT* (106).

Block, Hal. Comedy writer, 5.

BLUE NETWORK. See NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY.

board fade. A fade effected by the engineer, through the gradual diminishing of volume. It is not quite the same effect as the *studio fade* or *actor's fade*, in which the performer moves away from the microphone. The two types of fades are discussed under *fade*. Writers' directions to actors, directors and engineers regarding fades, 31–32, 61.

BOBBY BENSON. Children's serial, 179–180.

BRAVE NEW WORLD. Sustaining series on Latin America, 70.

BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE. Children's series, 61–62.

bridge. A *transition* from one scene to the next by any of various devices. The devices analyzed, 81–92.

BROADCASTING–BROADCAST ADVERTISING. See *trade publications.*

BUCK ROGERS. Children's serial, 17, 110, 176.

business. A term applied by actors, writers and directors to the small, nonessential activities of a drama. Discussion of radio's elimination of most *business*, 16–18. The use of scene-setting *business*, 16–20, 76.

CAMEL QUARTER HOUR. Music and continuity series, with Tony Wons's poems and commercials (140–141).

CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE. Drama series with Orson Welles, making extensive use of *first-person-singular* technique (21–22, 48, 54–55, 78–79, 87).

Cantor, Eddie. Comedian, 159.

Carter, Boake. Commercials handled by, 141.

cast. The necessary smallness of the radio cast, 15–16. The number of characters possible, 59–61, 153. The characters in a ten-minute sketch, 124.

casting, 59–61.

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA. Program dramatizing the story of America, 9, 14.

CBS. See COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM.

censor. Radio's self-censorship, 135–136, 156, 187.

chain. See *network.*

character. The necessity of few characters, 15–16. The vanishing character, 56–58. The proxy listener, 50–51. The number of characters, 59–61. The characters in a ten-minute sketch, 124. The characters in a women's serial, 164–165. In a children's serial, 180–181.

child psychologist. The psychologist and the children's serial, 187.

children's serial, 138–139, 176–182, 187.

choral speech, 113–118.

CHRISTMAS CAROL, 129.

clambake. A rehearsal that has turned into chaos, often due to a multiplicity of directors, is sometimes called a *clambake.* The word is also applied to an inept program. For causes of the multiple-director system, see *production man.*

CLARK–HOOPER, INC. A research organization which conducts one of the leading surveys on radio listening, which is subscribed to by advertising agencies, networks and sponsors. Its survey is based on the *coincidental* method. See *audience research.*

climax. Special aspects of radio climaxes, 95–96.

closing. Special aspects of the radio closing, 96–98.

closing tag. The paragraph spoken by the announcer or narrator at the conclusion of many sketches, particularly serial sketches. The paragraph usually brings the listener gently back to earth. In the serial it clinches the suspense element, occasionally sums up the situation and throws the listener's interest toward the next episode. Sometimes called *lead-out*, 171–172.

coincidental. Method of question-

ing in Clark-Hooper survey. See *audience research.*

collaborator. The collaboration of the listener, 12, 18, 22–24, 39, 100. For the collaboration system in daytime serials, see BLACKETT–SAMPLE–HUMMERT.

college groups. Radio material for, 189. See also OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

COLONIAL NETWORK. A regional network. See *network.*

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM. A coast-to-coast *network,* with headquarters at 485 Madison Avenue, New York City. The CBS staff writer, 7. CBS script format, 35. Sustaining policies, 125–126. Policy on dramatized political arguments, 150. Use of child psychologist, 187.

COLUMBIA WORKSHOP. A program originally intended for experiments in radio technique, but gradually becoming a series striving mainly for literary quality. Its scripts, all *one-time shots,* are bought from a large variety of writers, among whom have been Archibald MacLeish, Pare Lorentz. Requirements, 125–126. Excerpts, 41, 52–53, 72.

comedy. Salaries paid to comedy writers, 5. Discussion of comedy material, 157–159. Use of studio audience, 12 footnote, and 158–159.

commercial. 1. A sponsored program. "There's a commercial on from 8:00 to 8:30." 2. An advertising passage in a sponsored program. In this sense it is synonymous with *credit* and *plug* (*qq.v.*). The commercials on a network-sponsored program are usually written by an advertising agency staff writer; in the case of local programs, which are more often negotiated directly between sponsor and station, the commercials may be written by a station staff writer, or are sometimes supplied by the sponsor. The writing of commercials, 137–148.

COMPTON ADVERTISING, INC. See *advertising agency.* Among its programs: *THE O'NEILLS* (82, 108, 172), *VIC AND SADE* (21, 162 footnote).

confined-space effects, 110.

Conn, Harry. Comedy writer, 5.

conscience, voice of, 100.

contact man. In advertising agencies, this term is sometimes applied to those known also as *service men* and *account executives* (*q.v.*). In networks, stations, transcription companies and program agencies, the term may be applied vaguely to anyone whose job it is to maintain contact with leading sponsors and advertising agencies.

continuity. The script of a musical or variety program, comprising all the connective material. Or, more loosely, any radio script. Prices usually paid to staff continuity writers, 7. Continuities occasionally written under contract, 5. Discussion of continuities, 148–151. Commercial continuity, 137–148.

contract, under. Outline of programs written under contract, and of prices paid, 4–5. Discussion of types of programs written under contract, 157–187.

contralto. Classification of actresses according to voice pitch, 59–61.

control room. The glass-fronted booth occupied by the *engineer*, and usually by the *director* (*qq.v.*).

copy. The term usually applied in the advertising business to all written advertising matter. Spoken advertising matter is also occasionally known as copy ("radio copy"), but more generally as *continuity*, or else as *commercials* (*qq.v.*).

copyright. Radio scripts, published or unpublished, may be registered in the Copyright Office, and some radio writers seek to protect their property in this way. The writer should write to the Copyright Office, Washington, D. C., and ask for blanks and information for registering a "dramatic composition," or a "dramatico-musical composition," or a "lecture." He should state whether or not the work is reproduced in copies for sale. In the case of works not reproduced in copies for sale, the cost of the registration is one dollar. See also the discussion under *protection of literary property*.

Corwin, Norman. Creator of the program *WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC* (*q.v.*), 113–118.

costume. Radio's use and non-use of costume, 24.

COURT OF HUMAN RELATIONS. Drama series, 45, 88, 111.

coverage. This term sometimes refers to the area in which a station, network or program *can* be heard; sometimes to the audience it is actually reaching. See also *audience research*.

credit. An advertising passage in a sponsored program. Literally, refers to the part that *credits* the sponsor with sponsoring the program, but it is generally used to denote the entire advertising message, synonymously with *plug* and *commercial* (*qq.v.*). The writing of credits, 137–148.

CRIMINAL CASE HISTORIES. Drama series, 74–75.

cross-fade. The simultaneous fading in of one element and fading out of another. Cross-fades are illustrated by the charts on 90, 242, 264.

CROSSLEY, INC. A research organization which handles one of the leading surveys on radio listening, called the C.A.B. (Co-operative Analysis of Broadcasting), which issues its reports at semi-monthly intervals, and is subscribed to by advertising agencies, networks and sponsors. A program's C.A.B. rating, more generally called its "Crossley rating," is most often quoted as the index of the program's popularity. See *audience research*.

cruelty. The dangers of cruelty in children's programs, 176–177, 187.

cushion. A flexible factor in the timing of a program, minimizing the danger of running under or over. Thus a closing theme song, which might be played for only five seconds or be continued for forty-five seconds, would provide a *cushion* of forty seconds. Use of a cushion illustrated in APPENDIX

A: MACBETH ON THE AIR, 268.

cut-in announcement. See *tie-in announcement.*

cymbals. As curtain device, 92.

DAVID HARUM. A daytime serial. Cutting of dialogue demonstrated, 63–66. The serial's formula discussed, 166. Gifts to David Harum, 173–174. Also 5, 76, 141, 171–174.

dead area. The area next to, or behind, a microphone, from which sounds are picked up with a muffled or distant effect. Or, the dead part of a *dead end–live end studio.* See *dead end.*

dead booth, 110.

dead end, live end. Some studios are built in such a way that one end is *dead,* the other *live;* a sound at the dead end has little or no reverberation; a sound at the live end reverberates somewhat. Microphones are normally placed in the dead part; some sounds, most musical instruments and occasional voices are placed in the live part. The *dead end–live end* plan of studio construction offers a variety of effects. A possible use illustrated in APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR, 254.

DEATH VALLEY DAYS. Drama series, 5, 21, 50, 84.

decibel. Volume unit. The volume on the control engineer's *volume indicator* (*q.v.*) is shown in terms of decibels.

Denison, Merrill. Writer, 51.

DESIGN FOR HAPPINESS, 94–95.

dialogue. Points of importance in radio dialogue, 56–67. The vanishing character, 56–58. The number of characters, 59–61. The possible rhythms of dialogue, 62–66. Experiment on radio dialogue, 67. Transitions from narration into dialogue, 75–80.

director. The man who casts the program, directs the actors on matters of interpretation, pace, position, intonation, movement, etc. and exerts a similar authority over the sound-effect men, musicians and engineer assigned to the program. He usually does what *cutting* is needed, unless the author is present; but in any case the director is boss after the program goes into rehearsal. Unlike the stage director, the radio director's job does *not* terminate when the performance begins: he guides its pace, slowing or speeding the cast when necessary, sometimes giving cues. He sometimes works in the control room, sometimes in the studio, with earphones on which he hears the program as it is being broadcast. Some directors stand on a dais. In complicated setups, when they are directing a crowd scene, and meanwhile cuing in special lines, or special effects, they somewhat resemble an orchestra conductor at work.

In earlier radio days the words *director* and *production man* were used interchangeably. The tendency now is to confine the term *director* to the man directing a dramatic program, and to apply the term *production man* (*q.v.*) to the man

having charge of musical and other types of programs. The term *producer* (*q.v.*) is usually reserved for someone doing no actual direction, but having an executive and editorial supervision over a program.

disk. A phonograph record, *electrical transcription* (*q.v.*) or other disk-shaped recording.

Dixon, Peter. Radio writer, 135.

documentary. Programs dramatizing a subject, especially a sociological subject, are often loosely referred to as *documentary* programs. The term more properly belongs to film usage, from which it is derived, 52.

DON LEE BROADCASTING SYSTEM. A regional network. See *network.*

dramatic spot. A common name for the ten-minute sketch. Requirements discussed, 123–125.

dramatized commercial. A commercial involving the use of two or more voices, either in the form of a dramatic episode or as a *montage* (*q.v.*). The term may also be used to include commercials in interview form. 140–143, 145.

dress rehearsal. Final rehearsal. This is a holdover from the theater. In the same way a radio program is a "show," even if no audience is present.

dubbing. The re-recording of recorded music or sound effects onto another record, as part of a program being recorded. Thus, in making an *electrical transcription* (*q.v.*) of a program, the dubbing of recorded sound effects is common practice. The dubbing of music is limited by agreement with the musicians' union, the American Federation of Musicians.

EASY ACES. Serial, 185. Jane Ace, 164.

echo chamber. Also called *reverberation chamber.* Uses of the echo chamber, 107–111.

EDUCATIONAL RADIO SCRIPT EXCHANGE. See OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

electrical transcription. A disk recording, similar to a phonograph record. The term is generally restricted to recordings made especially for broadcast purposes. The majority of such recordings are made to revolve at a speed of $33\frac{1}{3}$ revolutions per minute, whereas phonograph records revolve at 78 revolutions per minute. The slower speed makes it possible to record a complete fifteen-minute program on one side of a 16-inch record.

Electrical transcriptions offer certain types of sponsor advantages over network broadcasting. For instance, the manufacturer whose distribution area does not coincide with the listening area of any readymade *network* (*q.v.*) can buy time individually from the stations he really wants, and place his transcribed program on these. Another advantage: Faulty programs can be done over, until satisfactory. However, a completed record cannot be *edited*, as can sound-on-film or *tape-recording* (*q.v.*).

Payment on transcription series, 5 footnote.

engineer. The radio writer's di-

rections to the control engineer, 30–33.

ERWIN WASEY & CO. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *REIS AND DUNN* (138), *SINGIN' SAM* (141), *CAMEL QUARTER HOUR* (140), *VOICE OF EXPERIENCE* (149).

establish. As a direction to the engineer, 31–32.

ESTY & CO. (WILLIAM). See *advertising agency*.

evening serial, 175–176.

experimental drama, 98–118, 125–126.

expressionism. Expressionistic use of sound effects, 43–44. Of music, 47–48. Of the *echo chamber*, 109.

facial expression. The listener's pleasure in reconstructing facial expressions, 22–23.

facsimile broadcasting. The invention by which printed matter, charts, photos, etc. may be transmitted by radio waves and recorded in facsimile in the home radio. The radio needs, from time to time, to be replenished with a new supply of paper. The distribution of newspapers in this way, via the ether, may become more practicable than the custom of printing them in a central plant and carrying them via truck, train, delivery man and newsstand to widely scattered points.

fade. The word *fade* is used to denote two types of effects, which are somewhat similar, and are sometimes used interchangeably: (1) the *mechanical* or *board fade*, which is done by the engineer, and consists of a mechanical diminution of volume; and (2) the *actor's fade*, or *studio fade*, which is done by the performer in the studio, and consists of movement away from the microphone. The difference between the two effects is that the actor's fade involves a change in the room tone surrounding the voice, whereas the board fade does not. To the listener, the actor's fade gives the feeling that the character is *leaving*, while the board fade gives somewhat the feeling that he is *dissolving*. The former is a naturalistic effect, familiar in life, while the latter is an artificial effect, a convention. The actor's fade is useful chiefly for the departures of characters; the board fade is useful for curtaining the end of a scene. For use in transitions, especially the *pause transition* (*q.v.*), the board fade is usually the more effective.

Some writers specify which type of fade they have in mind, but the majority do not.

When a writer writes, "The music fades," he sometimes means that it fades *out*, sometimes that it merely fades *down* to a background volume. To avoid confusion it is often well to specify, using the words *fades out*, or *fades down*. The opposites of these are the expressions *fades in*, *fades up*.

Further directions on volume changes, 31–32; on movements, 61, 93.

FALL OF THE CITY. A verse play for radio by Archibald MacLeish, 9, 117, 126.

FCC. See FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

fear, the advertising appeal to, 145.

feature. As a direction to the engineer, 31–32.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION. The government commission which controls the issuing and renewing of broadcasting licenses. These licenses contain the clause that the broadcaster shall serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity" which the Commission has interpreted as meaning that a radio station shall be expected to provide its listeners some educational, culture-promoting broadcasts, and other programs of public, civic value. This interpretation has had a wide influence on American broadcasting. The law which created the Federal Communications Commission specifically denies it the power of censorship. However, the power of not renewing a station's license gives the Commission a strong indirect influence over station policies, 125, 182–183.

filter. A device used to distort voice quality by eliminating upper or lower frequencies, or both. The device has a wide variety of dramatic uses, 99–106.

first broadcast rights, 133–134.

FIRST NIGHTER. A drama series which has for some time purchased half-hour scripts in the open market. Plays submitted are read by a script-reading jury. To make certain the jury shall not be influenced by established names, scripts are considered by the jury with authors' names deleted. The jury knows the script only by its "assignment number" and title. The program pays on acceptance. Address: First Nighter, Aubrey, Moore, & Wallace, 230 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. Discussion of script requirements, 127–128.

first person singular. Radio's use of this mode of storytelling, 22, 53–56.

fluff. A slip or garbled pronunciation by an actor.

foreign-language programs, 152.

foreign rights, 134, 186.

form. Radio's freedom of form, 20–22.

format. Recommended radio script format, 34–35.

framework. The use of frameworks, 71. Framework programs, 127–128.

Freedman, David. Comedy writer, 5, 157.

free-lance writer. Any writer who is not a *staff writer*. The term includes writers under contract, as well as those merely contributing occasional unsolicited scripts to the *open market* (*q.v.*).

frequency. When an engineer talks about the upper or lower *frequencies* of a voice, sound effect or musical instrument, he means simply the upper or lower tones (overtones and undertones) of the sound in question, which are distinguished for him by the difference in their frequency of vibration.

gag writers. Salaries paid to, 5. Discussion of comedy and gag

material, 157–159. Use of studio audience in gag programs, 12 footnote, 158–159.

GANG BUSTERS. Drama series, 17, 68–69, 75, 85.

GARDNER ADVERTISING CO. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *TOM MIX* (51, 177, 180).

GENNETT RECORDS. A company specializing in the making of sound-effects records, 36–37.

GHOST OF BENJAMIN SWEET. A program making interesting use of the filter, 103–105. Also 29.

ghosts. Use of filter for, 100, 103–104. Combination of filter and echo chamber, 109–110. Banquo's Ghost, 238–239.

Gibbons, Floyd. Radio performer and writer, 79–80.

give-away. A premium offer. See *merchandising.* Also 172–173, 179–180.

GOLDBERGS, THE. Women's serial, 18.

GOLD GROUP. See *transcription network.*

gong. As curtain device, 92.

GRAND CENTRAL STATION. Drama series, 71, 127–128.

GRAND HOTEL. Drama series, 9, 127.

GREAT PLAYS. Adapted drama series, 72–74.

guest star. Influence of the guest-star system on the requirements of the ten-minute sketch, 123–125.

half-hour dramas. Types written under contract, and salaries paid, 5. Types written in the open market listed, 9. Discussed in detail, 125–130.

HAMLET, 24. Effects for the Ghost, 109–110.

HAVE YOU HEARD? Educational series, 107–108.

HEART OF JULIA BLAKE. A women's serial, 170–171.

heavy. Classification of actors, 59.

HENRY BROCKEN. Radio play by Walter de la Mare. Use of music, 47.

HER HONOR NANCY JAMES. A women's serial, 69–70.

HEROES WAS PEOPLE. Series of Negro comedy sketches, 19–20.

historical drama. On the air, 24. Serial possibilities, 175.

HONEYMOONERS, THE. Serial with music, 83.

hook. 1. In advertising-agency parlance, a premium offer involving proof-of-purchase — a box top, can label etc. 2. In script writers' language, a suspense ending in a serial script. Suspense endings discussed, 162–163, 177–178.

hook-up. A *network* (*q.v.*).

HOWIE WING. Children's serial, 180.

Hummert, Frank and Anne. See BLACKETT-SAMPLE-HUMMERT.

HUTCHINSON ADVERTISING CO. An advertising agency (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *TODAY'S CHILDREN* (76–77).

identification. Importance of identifying dubious sound effects, 37–41. Identifying the purpose of sym-

bolic music, 47; examples in APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR, 218, 264. Identifying the meaning of *filter* (*q.v.*) tricks, 100–103. Pre-identification of settings in scene-shifts, 82, 86.

imagination. Radio drama's existence in the imagination, 12, 18–20, 22–24.

independent producer. A man who assembles prospective radio series, and, through auditions, recordings or sample scripts, tries to interest advertising agencies, sponsors, networks, stations or transcription companies in these series. If any series is sold the independent producer usually *produces* it for a stipulated weekly sum; from this he pays such writers, actors and other artists as are involved, and retains the difference.

An independent producer who has an office and a secretary, or a more elaborate organization, may become known as a *program agency*. Or he may prefer one of these designations: *program producer*, *program builder*, *radio consultant*, *program service* or just plain *producer*. Some avoid any designation, and simply put on the door: RADIO PROGRAMS.

The independent producing business is frequently combined with other activities, such as the making of *transcriptions* (e.g., Grombach Productions, Inc.); a script *syndicate* (e.g., Radio Events, Inc.); artist representation (e.g., William Morris Agency, Inc.). See *electrical transcriptions; syndicate*.

The literary agent as known in other writing fields, who markets literary property on a percentage basis, is scarce in radio. Organizations of any of the above types may operate this way in special instances, but almost always they prefer to market programs "as a complete package," becoming the author's employer, not his agent.

Some literary agents, play brokers, etc., attempt to expand into the radio field.

The independent producer's role in the marketing of serials, 186.

ingénue. Actress classification, 60.

institutional advertising. A general trade term for the type of advertising that does not attempt to elicit immediate action, but rather tries to build an atmosphere of importance or distinction around the name of a company or product. Thus Ford's steady use of a symphonic program is meant primarily to build up an association between "Ford" and "quality," "reliability," "importance." This is an *institutional campaign*. A program devoted primarily to acquainting the public with new technical features would *not* fall under this heading, 147.

insults. Insults to foreign nations, 135.

INTER–CITY BROADCASTING SYSTEM. A regional network. See *network*.

INTERVIEW WITH SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A script by Norman Corwin, first heard on *WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC*, 116–117.

interviews, 122, 123, 150.

JACK ARMSTRONG, ALL-AMERICAN BOY. Children's serial, 177, 181.

JACK MASTERS, THE TREASURE ADVENTURES OF. Children's serial, 178–179.

Jonah. Radio-drama episode of Jonah in the whale's stomach, 19–20.

JUST PLAIN BILL. Serial, 5, 50.

juvenile. Classification of actors, 59–60.

KASTOR & SONS (H. W.). See *advertising agency.*

Kreymborg, Alfred. Poet, 109, 117.

KUDNER, INC. (ARTHUR). An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*). Its programs have included various *True Story* series, among them the *COURT OF HUMAN RELATIONS* (45, 51, 88, 111).

lateral recording. A type of *electrical transcription.*

Lawes, Lewis E. Prison warden, writer, radio star, 5, 21, 49, 74–75, 98.

lawyer. The importance of the lawyer in the dramatization of episodes involving living people, 182–184. The lawyer in the writing of commercials, 148.

lead-in. The paragraph spoken by the announcer or narrator at the beginning of most programs, usually with a scene-setting function. The term is applied particularly to the serial, in which the lead-in also, in most cases, does some recapitulation of past events. 72–75, 169–171.

lead-out. See *closing tag.*

leading man, leading woman. Actor and actress classifications, 59–60.

LENNEN & MITCHELL, INC. See *advertising agency.*

LET'S EXPLORE OHIO. Dramatic series, on *electrical transcriptions,* 51–52.

LET'S PRETEND. Children's program, 182.

level. The volume level, as shown on the volume indicator in the control room.

line charges. The cost of leasing telephone transmission lines to carry programs from one station to another on a specially organized network; or from an exceptional origination point to a regular network; or from a broadcasting studio to the offices of a client or agency (in the case of an audition).

LINE-UP, THE, 112–113.

live end. See *dead end.*

Livingstone, Mary. Comedienne, 58.

local program. A program broadcast by only one station. As contrasted to a *network program.*

The local program, though hampered by small budgets, finds some special opportunities in being able to aim at local interests, 151–152.

Scripts for local programs come from various sources: 1. Station staff writers (6–7). 2. Local free-lance writers, professional, semi-professional, and amateur — including college and school groups and classes. 3. Syndicates. Scripts supplied by these may have been

written specifically for local use (130–131), or may be scripts used on the network, and available for re-use at low rate. 4. Educational and propaganda services, supplying scripts free of charge. The OFFICE OF EDUCATION (*q.v.*) of the Department of the Interior, for example, has an excellent service of educational scripts. See also footnote, 131.

local station. Technically, the name applies to a station licensed to operate only at low power, and hence serving only a local community. The term is used loosely to denote any station in one's own locality.

Lord, Phillips. Actor, writer, *independent producer* (*q.v.*). Creator of *SETH PARKER*, *GANG BUSTERS* (17, 68–69, 75, 85), *WE THE PEOPLE.*

LORD & THOMAS. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included several Lucky Strike series, among them *DESIGN FOR HAPPINESS* (94–95).

LUM AND ABNER. Evening serial, 175.

lyric. Use of commercial lyrics in theme songs, 137–139.

MACBETH ON THE AIR. Radio adaptation of *Macbeth*, with notes, 188–269.

MacLeish, Archibald. Poet, 9, 117, 126.

MAKE UP AND LIVE. A syndicated one-voice program, 131.

MARCH OF TIME. Famous program of news dramatizations, 21, 49, 51, 90, 98, 110, 113.

market, for radio scripts. Outlined, 3–10. Examined in detail, 121–187.

MASON–DIXON RADIO GROUP. A regional network. See *network.*

master control. The central control room of a broadcasting station. Programs pass through master control on their way from the studio *control room* (*q.v.*) to the transmitter (*q.v.*).

MATHES, INC., J. M. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included *THE TREASURE ADVENTURES OF JACK MASTERS* (178–179).

MAXON, INC. See *advertising agency.*

MBS. Mutual Broadcasting System. See *network.*

m.c. Master of ceremonies.

McCANN–ERICKSON, INC. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*). Its programs have included *DEATH VALLEY DAYS* (5, 21, 50, 84), *LET'S EXPLORE OHIO* (51–52).

mechanical fade. See *board fade.*

medium, media. When the advertiser speaks of *media* he means *advertising media*, which include: newspapers, magazines, radio, car cards, outdoor advertising, direct mail, skywriting, match covers, theater programs, commercial movies and other methods and devices for reaching the public with a sales message. When a writer speaks of a *medium*, or of *media*, he usually means media of expression: theater, films, radio and the printed page in its various forms.

Advertising agencies usually have a *media department*. See *advertising agency*. Radio as an advertising medium, 137–148; radio as a medium of expression, 11–26.

merchandising. The use of any of a large variety of methods employed for increasing the sales-effectiveness of a sponsored program. These methods include mention of the radio program in car cards, magazine ads, newspaper ads, billboards; reminders in the form of window displays and counter displays in stores where the sponsor's products are sold; personal appearances of radio stars at dealers' meetings, salesmen's conventions, theaters (with lobby displays); gifts offered over the air, with or without the sending in of box tops, can labels, etc.; contests; clubs; pictures of radio stars on cartons, can labels, wrappers; mention of program on stationery of sponsor, in house organ of sponsor, in window stickers and car stickers; special buttons; broadsides to dealers; direct mail promotion.

Merchandising is handled to some extent by sponsors themselves; by advertising agencies; by stations, either as a free supplementary service or for a slight fee; and by special merchandising organizations or experts. Special contests, for instance, may be handed over to independent organizations.

Merchandising in women's serials, 172–173; in children's serials, 179–180; merchandising angles in presentations, 184.

MICHIGAN RADIO NETWORK. A regional network. See *network*.

microphone, or *mike*. The writer uses a few directions specifying the actor's position in relation to the microphone. *At mike* and *on mike* are synonymous. *Off-mike* simply means at a distance from the microphone. The amount of distance is always left to the director, unless the writer wants to specify relative changes, e.g.: *further off-mike; still further; closer, but still off;* etc.

The number of microphones used, 32 footnote. Microphone position further discussed, 61–62.

mike. See *microphone*.

mind-world. Radio drama's existence in a mind-world, 12, 18–19. The shifting nature of the mind-world, 23–24.

montage. A succession of very short scenes, or effects, or statements, used for rapidly reviewing, or suggesting, a complex situation or series of events. Sometimes the flashes are overlapped; sometimes they are threaded together on a background of music or sound; sometimes they merely follow each other in fairly crisp succession.

Narration developing into montage, 51–52. Montage in drama, 111–113. Montage in commercials, 142–143.

mood music. The use of mood music in radio drama, 45–49, 88–89.

movement. Radio's freedom of movement, 19–20. Depiction of scenes in movement, 92–95. Movement to and from microphone, 61,

93. Shifts from one locale to another, 81–92.

movies. See *screen*.

moving mike. Method of writing or directing a scene so that characters will seem in motion. Despite its name, it involves no movement on the part of the microphone, 94–95.

muddy. An effect which is confused, possibly due to faulty *balance*, is sometimes described as *muddy*.

music. Classification of mood music, 45–47. Music to portray action, 47, 218, 264. Music as narrator and commentator, 47–48, 232. Music in scene-shifting, 88–89. A music experiment, 49.

musts. Market musts, 121–187. Clients' musts, 146.

MUTUAL BROADCASTING SYSTEM. See *network*.

MYRT AND MARGE. Serial, 49–50.

NAB. National Association of Broadcasters, 156. See also *trade associations*.

names, choice of, 66–67.

narration. Early use of narration, 18, 21. Development of narration, 21–22, 49–56. Devices for varying narration, 50–56. The first narration, 72–75. Narration into dialogue, 75–80. Narration in scene-shifting, 84–85. Narration at the closing, 96–98.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS. See *trade associations*.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS, 131 footnote.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY. The NBC operates two *networks* (*q.v.*), the NBC–Red, and the NBC–Blue. Both offer complete *coverage* (*q.v.*) of the country. NBC headquarters are at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. The NBC staff writer, 7, 155. NBC script format, 34–35. Sustaining policies, 125–126. Policy on sustaining serials, 185.

nationalistic protests, 135.

NBC, NBC–BLUE, NBC–RED. See NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY.

NEISSER–MEYERHOFF. See *advertising agency*.

network. There are four coast-to-coast networks: the NBC–Red and the NBC–Blue, of the National Broadcasting Company; the CBS or Columbia Broadcasting System; and the MBS, or Mutual Broadcasting System.

In addition there are numerous *regional networks*. Stations that are members of one of the major networks are very often also affiliated, at various periods, with these smaller chains. Some *regional networks* and their headquarters: Colonial Network (Boston), Don Lee Broadcasting System (Los Angeles; San Francisco), Inter–City Broadcasting System (New York City), Mason–Dixon Radio Group (Lancaster, Pennsylvania), Michigan Radio Network (Detroit), Texas State Network (Fort Worth), Yankee Network (Boston).

NBC and CBS *own* but a handful of the stations comprising their networks. MBS, and all the other

networks, own *none*. Nor do networks own the lines used to carry programs from one station to another; these are leased from the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

In other words, a network is chiefly a business organization, built on a tissue of contracts. These contracts give the network an option (within certain limits) over the time of its member stations. The network sells this time to advertisers at one rate, paying the stations at another, lower rate. In return the member station receives certain advantages, such as free *sustaining* (*q.v.*) programs, and the prestige of expensive productions from New York, Hollywood, Chicago, etc.

Advertisers buying time on CBS or NBC are generally required to take a minimum *basic* group of stations. Additional stations are optional, but must in some cases be taken in groups. Essentially complete coverage of the entire country can be obtained through 90–100 stations.

The sponsor wanting smaller coverage than that given by the CBS or NBC minima, or desiring to cover only certain selected markets, has various alternatives: he may use the Mutual Network, or one of the regional networks; he may record his program on *transcriptions* (*q.v.*), placing these on whatever stations he desires, possibly on a group of stations organized as a *transcription network* (*q.v.*); or he may hook up the desired stations in a temporary network of his own, if he can secure identical time on each of the stations, and leases the necessary transmission lines to carry his program from one station to another. This involves *line charges*, which in the case of the organized networks are generally absorbed by the network organization.

Among the numerous departments of a network, the writer may come into contact with the Script Department or Continuity Department (or "Division"); the Production Department; the Sales Department; he may also run into people with titles like Director of Talks, Educational Director, Director of Children's Programs, or various censoring or "advisory" figures, such as CBS's child psychologist, and NBC's "Continuity Acceptance Editor." See also *radio station*. The network staff writer, 6–7, 129, 137, 153, 155.

NEWELL–EMMETT CO. See *advertising agency*.

non-plot action. Radio's virtual elimination of non-plot action, 16–18.

obituary sketches, 129.

Oboler, Arch. Radio writer and producer, 55–56, 105, 134 footnote.

OFFICE OF EDUCATION, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. This division of the Department of the Interior operates the EDUCATIONAL RADIO SCRIPT EXCHANGE, which was originally established by

the Federal Radio Education Committee, a committee organized by the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (*q.v.*). The Script Exchange provides scripts of an educational nature, free of charge, for the use of schools, colleges, radio stations or other organizations interested in educational broadcasting. It also offers certain useful handbooks on production and sound effects.

off-mike. At a distance from the *microphone* (*q.v.*).

ON BROADWAY. Drama series, 9, 127.

ONE MAN'S FAMILY. Evening serial, 143, 176.

one-time shot, or *single shot*. The writer's name for a script complete in one installment: a non-serial sketch. Types of *one-time shots*, 9; discussed, 123–129.

O'NEILLS, THE. Women's serial, 82, 108, 172.

on mike. At the *microphone* (*q.v.*).

on the nose. On time. A broadcast that is proceeding exactly as scheduled, and is likely to end neither too early nor too late, is said to be *on the nose*.

open market for radio scripts. Outlined, 8–9. Examined in detail, 123–136.

opening. Radio's fast openings discussed, 13–14. Various opening techniques, 68–72.

parents. Their attitude toward children's serials, 176, 180, 182.

patriotic protests, 135.

pause transition, 82–83.

payment. Range of payment to writers under contract, 5; to staff writers, 7; for scripts in the open market, 9.

pay-off. The plot solution, especially when it takes the form of an O. Henry ending: a surprise finish, liquidating an entire dramatic situation with startling brevity. The expression is used chiefly of short sketches.

peak. Engineer's term for the jumps made by the needle in his *volume indicator*, which he watches throughout a broadcast, so that he can maintain the broadcast within its proper volume range. Explosive sounds, moments of intensity, etc., cause sudden *peaks* in the volume.

PEDLAR & RYAN, INC. See *advertising agency*. Its productions have included *PEPPER YOUNG'S FAMILY* (5, 78, 164); *MELOROL JAMBOREE* (142).

PEPPER YOUNG'S FAMILY. A daytime serial, 5, 78, 164.

period drama. On the air, 24. Serial possibilities, 175.

pick up the cues. As in the theater, a direction to actors to shorten or eliminate the slight gaps between speeches. This serves to create an impression of speed, even though the speeches themselves are not speeded.

PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN. As adapted by Norman Corwin for *WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC*, 114–116.

pipe, to. To wire. An audition is *piped* to the Clients' Room. The President's speech is *piped* from the White House.

PLANETS, THE. Poetic drama by Alfred Kreymborg, 109, 117.

platter. An *electrical transcription* (*q.v.*).

plug. An advertising passage in a sponsored program. Synonymous with *credit, commercial* (*qq.v.*). The plugs on a network-sponsored program are usually written by an advertising-agency staff writer; in the case of local sponsored programs, which are more often negotiated directly between sponsor and station, the plugs may be written by a station staff writer, or are sometimes supplied by the sponsor. The word *plug* sounds disrespectful to the layman, but is used freely in radio without such intention. The writing of plugs, 137–148.

poetry. Use of choral speech in radio poetry, 113–118. Market for poetic drama, 125–126.

politics. The dramatization of political issues, 150.

POP-EYE. Children's serial. Its use of musical sound effects, 47.

POST OFFICE SHOW, 35, 79.

presentation. A statement on the nature, purpose, authorship, merchandising possibilities, etc., of a prospective radio series. An *independent producer* (*q.v.*) attempting to interest an advertising agency or sponsor in a new series usually submits a presentation along with one or more sample scripts. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*) proposing a series to a sponsor may also submit a presentation, either before or at the time of an audition, or occasionally without any audition. The presentation may be a simple typed statement bound in a folder; but frequently it becomes an elaborate volume, in some cases of huge size, impressive with charts, graphs, sketches of merchandising ideas, etc. Large volumes of this kind are usually for use at committee or board meetings.

It is not always a good idea for a *writer* to submit a presentation. It makes a somewhat pompous and finicky impression — unless the series has very unusual technical aspects. The writer, approaching, as he does, stations, producers and advertising agencies, is presumably dealing with people who know a good script when they see one; the script is what they are interested in. They are not impressed by presentations; they make them themselves. A short one-page description of what the writer proposes to do is, however, an advisable accompaniment to a submitted script, 184.

pressure groups. Religious, national, racial and political pressure groups, and their influence on radio, 25–26, 121–122, 135–136, 176, 182.

producer. The supervisor of a program. The term is sometimes used synonymously with *director* and *production man* (*qq.v.*), but more correctly applies to someone having an executive or editorial control over a program, but not engaged in actual direction.

production man. The man who times, cuts and generally supervises any non-drama program. He

determines the correct orchestral balance, by moving musicians' chairs, by causing the engineer to move microphones, by altering the acoustical conditions of the studio through drapes, screens, movable wall panels, etc. and by other methods.

The term *production man* is also used in a wider sense to denote the man in charge of *any* program, whether musical or dramatic, etc.

On network sponsored programs there are sometimes two production men, one representing the network, one representing the advertising agency. In such cases the advertising agency's production man usually takes precedence, as being closer to "the client." If the program is a dramatic one, and if the agency man does the actual directing, he is apt to be considered the *director*, and the other man, who sits by and occasionally brings up matters of station or network policy, the *production man*. If the agency man lets the network man do the actual directing, the latter is considered the *director*, the agency man possibly the *producer*. Occasionally, when there is also an *independent producer* (*q.v.*) in the picture, there may be three directors or production men present.

A multiple-director setup may run into the danger of producing a *clambake* (*q.v.*).

program agency. See *independent producer*. For the program agency's role in the marketing of serials, 186.

A *program agency* should not be confused with an *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), which is a very different type of organization.

program director. See *director*.

program library. See *syndicate*.

protection of literary property. Current interpretations of the writer's rights over what he has written are based on a variety of laws — some recent, others dating back to the eighteenth century — and on innumerable court interpretations of laws.

The writer may be the victim of three distinguishable types of theft: theft of a *title;* of an *idea;* of a particular *expression of an idea*. (1) *Title*. No advance steps can be taken for protecting a title. Copyrighting gives a writer no rights over his title. However, if a title is appropriated, redress is sometimes possible under laws relating to unfair trade practices. In such cases the writer must be able to prove that the title in question has achieved a definite value, and that the use of the same title by others is injurious to that value. Such redress is therefore generally possible only for titles actually used over a period of time. (2) *Idea*. Again, the copyright laws do not protect the *idea* of a literary work. However, redress for theft is sometimes possible, if the uniqueness of the idea can be established, and evidence of the theft can be presented. To establish evidence as to when an idea was conceived, some writers make a practice of mailing an outline of a proposed series or project in a sealed envelope, registered, to a

responsible third party or company, the envelope to be left unopened unless and until needed in court action. Similar evidence may be established by use of the Authors' League of America's Registration Bureau (see RADIO WRITERS' GUILD), in which "synopses, scenarios, ideas, and outlines" may be registered in sealed, dated envelopes. (3) *Expression of an idea.* Whether or not a work is registered in the Copyright Office, the writer owns his particular expression of an idea. The theft of any substantial portion of dialogue, narration, or other sequence of words can be prosecuted if satisfactory evidence can be presented. The best method of establishing certain evidence, such as the fact that a script was written not later than a certain date, is the use of the Copyright Office, which accepts radio scripts for registration. A radio script may be registered as a "dramatic composition," a "dramatico-musical composition," or a "lecture." See *copyright.*

Very few radio scripts are protected in advance by any of the practices here described. However, when presenting for consideration any series of unique interest, some protective action seems advisable.

See also *release,* and 133–134, 186–187.

protest. The influence of protests on radio taboos, 135–136.

proxy listener, 50–51.

psychology. Psychological aspects of the armchair audience, 11–16. The child psychologist and children's programs, 187.

public interest. Broadcasters required to serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity," 125, 183. See also FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

quality sketch. Bought in open market, 125–126.

Radio Annual. See *Radio Daily.*

Radio Daily. National trade publication covering every phase of radio broadcasting. See *trade publications. Radio Daily* also publishes a valuable yearbook, the *Radio Annual,* containing statistics, personnel, addresses and other information on the radio world.

radio-script market. See *market.*

radio station. A radio station is licensed to operate by the Federal Communications Commission. Its license stipulates that it shall serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." This is usually interpreted to mean that it shall provide its community with informational, educational, culture-promoting broadcasts, and that if it does not do so the periodic renewal of its license shall be in doubt. Thus a station's license to profit from commercial broadcasting is made vaguely contingent on its contributions to public service. (See The Quality Sketch, 125–126.)

The United States has in the neighborhood of 750 radio stations; the number changes constantly,

due to new licenses, refused renewals, financial difficulties.

The writer approaching a radio station may deal with people of widely varying titles; he may meet: Station Manager, Program Manager, Head of Continuity (or Script) Department, Continuity (or Script) Editor, Head of Production, Production Director, Sales Manager, Program Director, Personnel Manager and others.

Functions of the station staff writer, 6–7, 137–156.

RADIO WRITERS' GUILD. One of the component guilds of the Authors' League of America, Inc. These are: Authors' Guild, Dramatists' Guild, Radio Writers' Guild. The Screen Writers' Guild is an affiliated, not member, guild.

The Authors' League publishes, for its members in all Guilds, the *Authors' League Bulletin*, containing articles of interest to writers, market digests, lists of "managers in good standing," etc. It also maintains a Registration Bureau, in which "synopses, scenarios, ideas, and outlines" may be registered in sealed, dated envelopes, so as "to give the author proof of the priority of his work over any pirated version."

The headquarters of the Authors' League of America are at 6 East 39th Street, New York, N. Y.

Among the objectives of the Radio Writers' Guild are: wider air-credit for the radio writer; termination of nonpayment for audition scripts; clarification of subsidiary rights (133–134, 186–187); standard contracts and working conditions for certain types of staff writers; standardization of relationships with agents; miscellaneous local and regional objectives.

rebroadcast. See *repeat*.

recall. Method of audience research based on memory of listener. See *audience research*.

RED NETWORK. See NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY.

reference recordings. An inexpensive recording made for reference or filing purposes.

regional network. See *network*.

register. As a direction to the engineer, 31–32.

release. The writer submitting to a station, advertising agency or other company a radio idea, script, presentation or series, is often obliged to sign a release meant to protect the company from opportunistic lawsuits. A typical release: "In submitting to —— my script, idea, plot, story, series, continuity, play or synopsis [hereafter referred to as the 'work'], I realize that other works on the same theme may already have been submitted to them. I realize that in such cases —— must judge the work submitted on the basis of the creative ability shown by the writer, rather than on the idea itself, which cannot be protected. In view of the above I accept full responsibility in submitting this work, and will in no way present a claim against —— should they at any time in the future make use of an idea

similar to any embodied in my work. Signed, ——."

While a company must of necessity take steps to protect itself against nuisance suits, the signing of such a release is only advisable if the writer has full confidence in the company or person with whom he is dealing.

remote. A broadcast coming from a place other than the studio, as a theater, a hotel, a stadium.

RENFREW OF THE MOUNTED. Children's serial, 110.

repeat, or *repeat broadcast*, or *re-broadcast*. The repetition of a broadcast that is made necessary by any of various factors, such as the difference in time between California and New York. A program broadcast from New York in the early evening is frequently not sent to the West Coast because it would not arrive there at a suitable listening time. Instead, the program is repeated in the very late evening or early morning, and this time not broadcast in the East but carried to the West Coast by wire, and broadcast there. Performers are usually paid extra for repeat broadcasts.

research. See *audience research*.

reverberation chamber. See *echo chamber*.

rhythm. The fast rhythm of radio drama, 13–15. The possible rhythms for dialogue illustrated, 63–66.

rights. As regards single-shot scripts, 133–134. As regards series, 186–187.

ROCHE, WILLIAMS & CUNNYNGHAM. See *advertising agency*.

RUTHRAUFF & RYAN, INC. See *advertising agency*. Producers of *BIG SISTER* (166–167); *BIG TOWN* (17, 106, 127); *THE SHADOW* (100–103).

RWG. See RADIO WRITERS' GUILD.

salaries. Paid to writers under contract, 5; to staff writers, 7; in the open market, 9.

scenery. The suggesting of scenery, 18–20.

scene-setting, 20, 75–80.

scene-shifting. Devices classified and illustrated, 81–92.

school radio groups. Scripts for, 188. See also OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

SCIENCE AND LIFE. An educational program, 91–92.

screen. Differences between screen technique and radio technique, 12, 15–18, 20–21, 152–154.

script, *script writer*. The market for radio scripts classified, 3–10; analyzed, 119–189. Recommended script format, 34–35.

script library. See *syndicate*.

SECOND HUSBAND. Evening serial, 176.

segue. A musical direction to proceed to a new theme without a break, 32, 45. Use of this direction in APPENDIX A: MACBETH ON THE AIR, 242–243.

selectivity. Radio's selectivity, 24, 42.

self-censorship. Radio's taboos, 135–136, 156, 187.

sequence. Unit of serial plot construction, 161–164, 177.

serial. Prices paid to serial writers, 9. Discussion of women's serials, 160–175. Children's serials, 176–182. Evening serials, 175–176. Marketing notes, 184–187. Taboo notes, 187.

series. Non-serial dramatic series sometimes written under contract, 4–5; sometimes written in the open market, 8–9. The marketing of series, both serial and non-serial, 184–187.

service man. Term occasionally applied to an *account executive* (*q.v.*).

setup. The arrangement of the orchestra, cast, sound effects and their respective microphones.

SHADOW, THE. Drama series making interesting use of the filter, 100–103.

Shakespeare. Use of "chorus," 49. Use of atmosphere dialogue, 77. *Hamlet*, 24, 109–110. Special privileges, 135. Adaptation of *Macbeth*, 189–269.

SHOWBOAT, 19.

signature. Identifying theme song. Commercial signatures, 137–139.

SINGING LADY. Children's program, 182.

SINGIN' SAM. Commercials, 141.

single shot, or *one-time shot.* The writer's name for a script complete in one installment: a non-serial sketch. Types of single-shot scripts, 9; discussed, 123–129.

SKIPPY. Children's serial, 181.

slide whistle. As scene-shift device, 91–92.

snapper. The *pay-off* (*q.v.*) of a script. Or, the climactic line of a comedy routine.

sneak, sneak in, sneak out. Very gradual *fades* (*q.v.*) whose beginnings or ends are hardly noticeable, 31–32.

soap opera. A colloquial name for the daytime serial. The name is in honor of the soap manufacturers who have been consistent sponsors of daytime serials.

soprano. Classification of actresses according to voice pitch, 59–61.

sound effects. An all-sound-effect drama, 29. Methods of creating sound effects, 36–37. Importance of identifying dubious effects, 37–41. Self-identifying effects, 39. No-good effects, 41–42. Timing of effects for stylization, 43. Sound effects for expressionism, 43–44. Sound-effect backgrounds, 42–43. Sound-effect experiments, 44–45. Sound effects for scene-setting, 76; for scene-shifting, 86–87.

sound-effects man. The man who operates *sound effects* (*q.v.*). He is sometimes merely called the *sound man.*

sound-effects records. Recorded sound effects are marketed by Gennett Records (36–37), Richmond, Ind.; Masque Sound Recording Corporation, New York; Standard Radio Company, Inc., Chicago; Speedy–Q–Sound Effects, Los Angeles; Charles Michelson, New York, and others.

sound man. See *sound-effects man.*

special-occasion sketches. Sometimes written on staff, 7. Some-

times bought in the open market, 9. Discussion of special-occasion sketches, 128–130.

speech. Narration, 49–56. Dialogue, 56–67. Talks, 148–151.

split narration. Device for breaking up narration, 51–53.

spot. A very elastic word, having a variety of meanings in the radio and advertising worlds. (1) Any segment of dialogue, such as a joke sequence. The producer of a variety hour might say, "After the first number we'll have a comedy spot." (2) A sketch, particularly a *ten-minute sketch* (*q.v.*). A ten-minute sketch is often called a "dramatic spot." (3) Any period in a station's program schedule. "This client wants to shift to the 7:30–8:00 spot Tuesday nights." (4) An individual station or local market, as opposed to a network market. Thus a *spot campaign* is a radio advertising campaign in which stations (and markets) are selected individually. Such a campaign might utilize locally produced programs, but in most cases would use *electrical transcriptions* (*q.v.*). Hence the expression *spot campaign* is sometimes used synonymously with *electrical-transcription campaign.* Similarly *spot broadcasting.*

STACK–GOBLE. See *advertising agency.* Its productions have included *THATCHER COLT MYSTERIES* (40, 86).

staff writer. For outline of programs written by, and range of salaries paid to, staff writers, 7. Discussion of types of material written on staff, 137–154. Market notes for the staff writer, 154–155. Taboo notes for the staff writer, 156.

stage. Radio's stage the imagination, 12. Differences between radio and stage technique, 11–24, 152–154.

Standard Advertising Register. A special service tabulating information about advertisers and their advertising agencies.

station break. The pause between programs, or in the middle of an hour program, made for the purpose of station identification.

station-break announcement. A ten or fifteen-second announcement sometimes sandwiched into the station-break period. It is often built around a time signal, and sponsored by a watch company; or built around a weather forecast, and sponsored by a cough or cold remedy.

station identification. Announcement of call letters of the station broadcasting, which must be made at certain intervals, by Government ruling.

STELLA DALLAS. Serial, 77.

Sterling, Stewart. Radio writer, 43, 67, 112–113.

stooge. Radio uses a variety of stooge characters: the *proxy listener* as *stooge* to the narrator, 50–51; the announcer as stooge to the star in commercials, 141–142.

straight commercial. A commercial delivered by one person, generally the announcer. A commercial is usually considered either *straight* or *dramatized,* the latter applying loosely to all commercials involv-

ing two or more voices, whether in interview, drama, or montage (*q.v.*) form. Most commercials are written by staff writers, 6–7. The writing of commercials, 137–148.

STRANGE INTERLUDE. The *Strange Interlude* device of letting characters speak their thoughts, adapted to radio, 104.

stream of consciousness, 54–56.

strip show. A serial. The name is probably connected with the radio serial's close relationship to the comic strip. Many of the earliest serials were derived from comic strips: *Skippy*, *Little Orphan Annie*, etc. Serial writing, 160–182.

structure. Structure of the serial, 161–164.

studio fade. Sometimes called *actor's fade.* A fade accomplished in the studio, by the actor's movement away from the microphone. The expression is used to distinguish it from a *board fade*, or *mechanical fade*, which is accomplished by the engineer. The two types of fades are discussed under *fade.*

stylization. Stylization through the unreal timing of sound effects, 43.

subsidiary rights. In single-shot scripts, 133–134; in series, 186–187.

surveys. See *audience research.*

sustaining. Unsponsored. A station *must* operate throughout the period it is licensed to operate. It is therefore obliged to continue its program service throughout all unsold periods. These filling-in programs are called *sustaining* programs. They serve, however, many more important purposes than merely filling in. They serve as a laboratory for the developing of new program ideas and new talent, possibly for future sponsorship. They include also important prestige-building and audience-getting programs, such as special-event broadcasts. They also give the station its best opportunity to fulfill the clause in its license which requires it to serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." It does this usually with programs of educational, cultural, civic, social and political value. 5, 8–9, 125–126, 128–130, 132, 185.

Sweets, William. Radio writer, 45, 88, 105, 111.

syndicate. Functions and operations of script syndicates, 130–132. Script syndicates are sometimes known as *script libraries.* Some syndicates in New York City: Radio Events, Inc. (a program agency whose syndicate service is called The Script Library); Gags, Inc.; Star Radio Programs; Universal Radio Programs. In Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Radio Writers' Laboratory.

Transradio Press Service is, in a sense, a specialized type of script syndicate.

Some organizations syndicate recorded programs, rather than scripts. In Hollywood: Earnshaw Radio Productions and many others. In New York: NBC Thesaurus Program Library, World Broadcasting System and others.

Many companies combine syn-

dicate activities with other program services. See *independent producer*.

Some organizations have distributed scripts and recorded programs free of charge, for educational and propaganda purposes. See OFFICE OF EDUCATION, and 131 footnote.

synopsis. Synopsis of a serial *sequence*, 163–164. The practice of including synopses with presentations of series, particularly serials, 184.

taboos. Offenses to morality, 135; to special groups and institutions, 135. Taboo words, 135. Taboo subjects, 136. Advertising taboos, 156. Child-psychology taboos, 187.

tag, tag line. By *tag* is usually meant the *closing tag*, the paragraph spoken by the announcer or narrator at the conclusion of many sketches, particularly serial sketches. Sometimes the word is used synonymously with *tag line*, which means the last line of a sketch, especially if it is of the kind known as a *pay-off* (*q.v.*). Discussion of *closing tag*, 171–172.

talk-back microphone. The microphone by which the production man or the engineer can talk from the control room to those in the studio.

tape recording. A method of recording radio programs that offers advantages over disk recording. As in sound-on-film recording, a tape-recorded program may be cut up and repasted, thus enabling the writer and director to make cuts, revisions and rearrangements even after the actual recording.

teaser. The opening words of a commercial, 143–146. Also the *closing tag* (*q.v.*) of a serial, 171–172. Sometimes *tease*.

telephone. Telephone effects, 99–100, 103, 106.

television. Television borrows its forms and methods much more from screen and stage than from radio. In most respects its technique follows exactly that of the screen, but with a tendency toward shorter entertainment units because of the isolation of the home listener (11–15). Television is certain to find its existence alongside sightless radio, with somewhat different functions. Variety hours, musical comedies, special events and education and propaganda programs using demonstration techniques will find in television many advantages over radio. But to music, to most speakers, to the radio serial and to many types of imaginative drama, television has less to offer.

ten-minute sketches. Sometimes bought in open market, 9. Discussion of, 123–125.

tenor. Classification of actors according to voice pitch, 59–61.

tentative cut. A possible cut marked in a script, which may or may not be put into effect, depending on the timing during the broadcast. The final decision, as to whether the marked material should be cut or restored, is in such a case communicated to the performers during the actual

broadcast, by signal or other message from the director or producer. The practice of marking *tentative cuts* is a generally inadvisable one, useful in emergencies. For discussion of cutting, 62–66.

TEXAS QUALITY NETWORK. A regional network. See *network*.

THATCHER COLT MYSTERIES. Drama series, 40, 86.

theater. Differences between radio and theater technique, 11–24, 152–154.

theme. Melody used to identify a program. Sometimes called *signature*, *theme song*. Commercial theme songs, 137–139.

THESAURUS, NBC. A *syndicate* (*q.v.*) service, offering transcribed programs.

THOMPSON CO. (J. WALTER). Important *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), and a leading producer of hour programs. It created the *VALLEE VARIETIES*, and the various Chase & Sanborn programs. The Vallee program has been a valuable laboratory for the testing and developing of promising material. Charlie McCarthy established himself first on this program. The program has also been a leading market for ten-minute sketches, 123–125.

J. WALTER THOMPSON has done comparatively little in daytime radio, identifying itself mostly with evening productions built around interesting personalities. Other J. WALTER THOMPSON programs: *LUX RADIO THEATER* (152); *KRAFT MUSIC HALL; ONE MAN'S FAMILY* (143); *HOWIE WING* (180).

tie-in announcement. An announcement made locally, at the conclusion of a network program, or injected into the middle of it, and related to the subject matter of the network program. Thus, a network program promoting a brand of groceries might be accompanied by local *tie-in* or *cut-in announcements* in various localities, mentioning local sales and specials of the products advertised, and in some cases also the names and addresses of dealers.

tight. A program which is slightly too long, and likely to run over unless cut or hurried, is sometimes said to be *tight.*

title. The title for a commercial series raises a special problem. It is advisable to contrive a title which by its very nature will become associated in the listener's mind with the product. (E.g., *OXYDOL'S OWN MA PERKINS; SINGIN' SAM, THE BARBASOL MAN*). On the other hand, a title which actually *contains* the name of the product will not be printed in newspaper listings, because of the newspapers' desire to avoid giving free advertising. Thus, many papers do not list the *MARCH OF TIME* by its proper name, especially not when *Time* is sponsoring it; instead they print, possibly, *Dramatic Program.* This is a handicap to the program. Hence the best solution is often a dual title,

which in its short form can appear in the newspaper listings, but can be used in its full form on the air. Thus the program which on the air was called *MAXWELL HOUSE SHOWBOAT* appeared in the newspapers as *Showboat*. Titles of this type, in which title and product become one phrase for the listener, but can be dissociated for the newspapers, have an advantage over: (1) titles which contain the product, but cannot be dissociated (e.g., *MARCH OF TIME*); (2) titles which cannot be linked to the product in one phrase (e.g., *DEATH VALLEY DAYS*).

Of course in many cases the value of the linking title becomes insignificant. Jack Benny and Jell-o became linked in the public mind not through any title but through the use of the brand name within the comedy routine.

TODAY'S CHILDREN. Daytime serial, 76–77.

TOM MIX. Children's serial, 51, 177, 180.

tools of the radio writer, 29–67. Sound effects, 36–45. Music, 45–49. Narration, 49–56. Dialogue, 56–67.

TOWN HALL TONIGHT, 141–142.

trade associations. Advertising agencies are organized in the AAAA, often referred to as the *4 A's* (American Association of Advertising Agencies). Radio stations are organized in the NAB (National Association of Broadcasters). The major sponsors have formed the ANA (Association of National Advertisers). The NAB regulations on the length of commercials, 156.

trade publications. Some writers find it useful to read a trade publication, to keep track of: shifts of accounts from one advertising agency to another; changes in personnel at advertising agencies, stations, networks, program agencies and transcription companies; new programs and experiments; new station policies; new union regulations; new companies. Such information may be obtained from any of the following: *Variety* (*q.v.*), a weekly which carries news on the entire entertainment world; *Radio Daily* (*q.v.*), which carries all kinds of news affecting broadcasting; *Broadcasting–Broadcast Advertising*, which emphasizes the business side somewhat more than the showmanship side of radio; *Radio Art*, *Tide*, *Advertising and Selling*, *Billboard*, *Film Daily* and many others.

The first three mentioned publish very valuable yearbooks, full of statistics, addresses and other worthwhile information.

Also useful is the *Standard Advertising Register* (*q.v.*).

transcription. See *electrical transcription*.

transcription network. A group of stations which are offered to advertisers under the following inducement: If the advertiser places an *electrical-transcription* (*q.v.*) series on all the stations in the group, or on a required minimum

number of these, the network organization will absorb the mechanical costs of the transcriptions. The WORLD BROADCASTING SYSTEM has organized the GOLD GROUP on such a basis.

transmitter. The tower or other apparatus from which broadcasts are actually thrown into the air. A station's transmitter may be many miles from the studio.

The *portable transmitters* used in the broadcast descriptions of golf matches, floods, Easter parades, etc., are short-wave transmitters, whose waves are picked up by a short-wave receiver at the station, then re-broadcast by the main transmitter.

Famous among portable transmitters is the *top-hat transmitter* used by NBC for Easter–Parade descriptions on Fifth Avenue. The top hat, worn by the announcer, contains almost the entire apparatus. A short rod projects from the top.

TREASURE ADVENTURES OF JACK MASTERS. Children's serial, 178–179.

tricks. Filter tricks, 99–106. Echo chamber and other acoustical tricks, 107–111. Montage, 111–113. Choral speech, 113–118.

trouble. The importance of trouble in the serial, 160, 167–168.

turntable. The apparatus on which *electrical transcriptions* (*q.v.*) or sound-effects records are played.

unions. Union organization of writers, performers and technicians in the broadcasting field has developed rapidly in recent years. Important unions: AFM (American Federation of Musicians), affiliated with the AFL; AFRA (American Federation of Radio Artists), affiliated with AFL; RWG (Radio Writers' Guild), a division of the Authors' League of America; AGRAP (American Guild of Radio Announcers and Producers), unaffiliated. There are several engineers' unions. See RADIO WRITERS' GUILD.

VALLEE VARIETIES, 19.

vanishing character. Sometimes a danger, sometimes an advantage in radio dialogue, 56–58.

Variety. Trade weekly of the entertainment world, with sections on *Pictures*, *Radio*, *Music*, *Vaude–Night Clubs*, *Legitimate*, *Literati* and *Outdoors.* Its steady readers appreciate it for its terse, zestful reporting and criticism; others know it for its curious language, which achieves a good deal of color and brevity through abbreviations and made-up words. A *Variety* headline: STICKS NIX HICK PIX. It means that the hinterlands are turning thumbs down on movies of rural theme. See also *trade publications.*

Variety publishes a valuable yearbook of radio statistics, personnel, addresses and other information.

variety programs, 5, 8–9, 123–125.

vehicle. A role suitable for a star; often, for some particular star. Or, the play containing the

suitable role. Thus: "This sketch is a great vehicle for Claudette Colbert." 124, 128.

verse. Use of choral speech in radio poetry, 113–118. Market for verse drama, 126.

vertical recording. A type of *electrical transcription*.

v.i. Abbreviation for *volume indicator* (*q.v.*). The mechanism is referred to by its abbreviated name more often than by its full name.

VIC AND SADE. Daytime serial. Not constructed in *sequences*, 21, 162 footnote.

villain. Offenses to foreign nationalities through foreign villains, 135. The comic touch for a villain, 181.

volume. The importance of volume as radio's spotlight, 30–33.

volume indicator. Often called *v.i.* The dial mechanism watched by the engineer throughout a broadcast. The movements of the *v.-i. needle* indicate to him the volume being sent out, in terms of *decibels*. The volume must be kept within a certain range.

WADE ADVERTISING AGENCY. See *advertising agency*.

WAR OF THE WORLDS. Influence on taboos, 136.

WARWICK & LEGLER, INC. An *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), whose productions have included various Warden Lawes series, among them *CRIMINAL CASE HISTORIES* (74–75).

Washington, George. Washington on the air, 24.

week. The week as a unit of serial plot construction, 162–163.

Welles, Orson. Actor, director, producer, writer. His importance in the development of narration, 21–22, 48, 78, 87, 136.

WEVD. New York non-network station, 152.

WHEELOCK CO. (WARD). See *advertising agency*. Its accounts include Campbell's Soup, sponsors of the *CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE* (21–22, 48, 54–55, 78–79, 87).

WILDERNESS ROAD. Serial of pioneer period in America, 175.

WLW. Important high-powered station in Cincinnati, 7.

women's serial, 160–175.

Wons, Tony. Poem-reader. Delivery of commercials, 140.

words. The number of words used per minute in radio dialogue, 62, 184. Choice of words, 66.

WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC. An experimental program created by Norman Corwin, pioneering in the development of radio as a medium for poetry and verse, 113–118.

WORLD BROADCASTING SYSTEM. *Electrical transcription* (*q.v.*) studio, transcription *syndicate* (*q.v.*) and organizers of the GOLD GROUP, a *transcription network* (*q.v.*).

Wynn, Ed. Comedian, 141.

YANKEE NETWORK. A regional network. See *network*.

YOUNG & RUBICAM, INC. A leading *advertising agency* (*q.v.*), and one of the most consistent users

of radio. Their programs usually have been built around well-established personalities: Fred Allen (43, 141–142), Jack Benny (43, 57–58, 139–140, 159), Phil Baker (105) and others.

YOUR TRUE ADVENTURES. Program featuring Floyd Gibbons, 79–80.

YOUR UNSEEN FRIEND. Drama program of inspirational nature, 54.