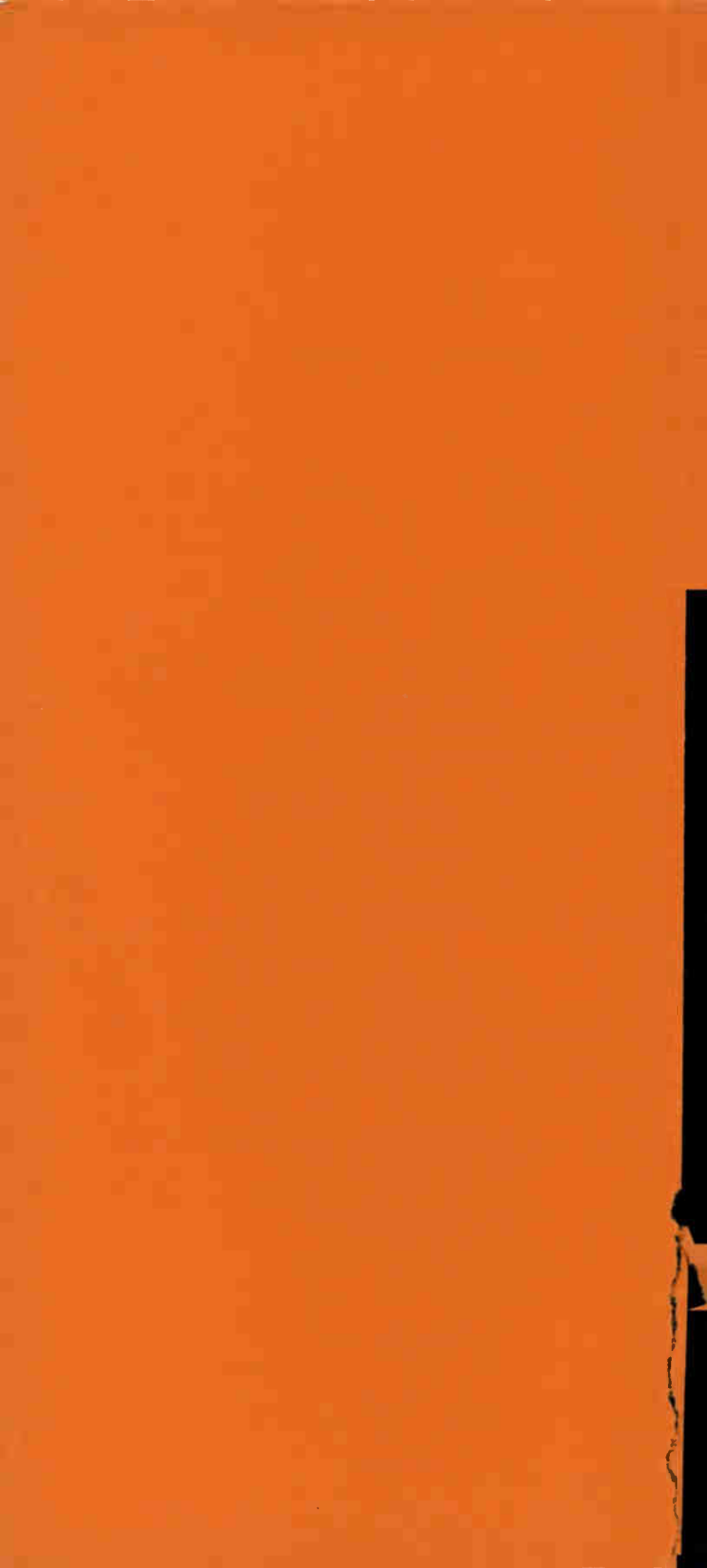


*Evie Foreman*

# **The Television Code**

National Association of Broadcasters  
Fourteenth Edition, September 1969





# **The Television Code**

of the National Association of Broadcasters

With Regulations and Procedures

Fourteenth Edition, September 1969

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National Association of Broadcasters

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NAB Code Authority  
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## Preamble

**T**ELEVISION is seen and heard in every type of American home. These homes include children and adults of all ages, embrace all races and all varieties of religious faith, and reach those of every educational background. It is the responsibility of television to bear constantly in mind that the audience is primarily a home audience, and consequently that television's relationship to the viewers is that between guest and host.

The revenues from advertising support the free, competitive American system of telecasting, and make available to the eyes and ears of the American people the finest programs of information, education, culture and entertainment. By law the television broadcaster is responsible for the programming of his station. He, however, is obligated to bring his positive responsibility for excellence and good taste in programming to bear upon all who have a hand in the production of programs, including networks, sponsors, producers of film and of live programs, advertising agencies, and talent agencies.

The American businesses which utilize television for conveying their advertising messages to the home by pictures with sound, seen free-of-charge on the home screen, are reminded that their responsibilities are not limited to the sale of goods and the creation of a favorable attitude toward the sponsor by the presentation of entertainment. They include, as well, responsibility for utilizing television to bring the best programs, regardless of kind, into American homes.

Television and all who participate in it are jointly accountable to the American public for respect for the special needs of children, for community responsibility, for the advancement of education and culture, for the acceptability of the program materials chosen, for decency and decorum in production, and for propriety in advertising. This responsibility cannot be

discharged by any given group of programs, but can be discharged only through the highest standards of respect for the American home, applied to every moment of every program presented by television.

In order that television programming may best serve the public interest, viewers should be encouraged to make their criticisms and positive suggestions known to the television broadcasters. Parents in particular should be urged to see to it that out of the richness of television fare, the best programs are brought to the attention of their children.



## **I. Advancement of Education and Culture**

1. Commercial television provides a valuable means of augmenting the educational and cultural influence of schools, institutions of higher learning, the home, the church, museums, foundations, and other institutions devoted to education and culture.
2. It is the responsibility of a television broadcaster to call upon such institutions for counsel and cooperation and to work with them on the best methods of presenting educational and cultural materials by television. It is further the responsibility of stations, networks, advertising agencies and sponsors consciously to seek opportunities for introducing into telecasts factual materials which will aid in the enlightenment of the American public.
3. Education via television may be taken to mean that process by which the individual is brought toward informed adjustment to his society. Television is also responsible for the presentation of overtly instructional and cultural programs, scheduled so as to reach the viewers who are naturally drawn to such programs, and produced so as to attract the largest possible audience.
4. The television broadcaster should be thoroughly conversant with the educational and cultural needs and desires of the community served.
5. He should affirmatively seek out responsible and accountable educational and cultural institutions of the community with a view toward providing opportunities for the instruction and enlightenment of the viewers.
6. He should provide for reasonable experimentation in the development of programs specifically directed to the advancement of the community's culture and education.
7. It is in the interest of television as a vital medium to encourage and promote the broadcast of programs presenting genuine artistic or literary material, valid moral and social issues, significant controversial and challenging concepts and other subject matter involving adult themes. Accordingly, none of the provisions of this Code, including those relating to the responsibility toward children, should be construed to prevent or impede their broadcast. All such programs, however, should be broadcast with due regard to the composition

of the audience. The highest degree of care should be exercised to preserve the integrity of such programs and to ensure that the selection of themes, their treatment and presentation are made in good faith upon the basis of true instructional and entertainment values, and not for the purposes of sensationalism, to shock or exploit the audience or to appeal to prurient interests or morbid curiosity.

## II. Responsibility Toward Children

1. The education of children involves giving them a sense of the world at large. It is not enough that only those programs which are intended for viewing by children shall be suitable to the young and immature. In addition, those programs which might be reasonably expected to hold the attention of children and which are broadcast during times of the day when children may be normally expected to constitute a substantial part of the audience should be presented with due regard for their effect on children.
2. Such subjects as violence and sex shall be presented without undue emphasis and only as required by plot development or character delineation. Crime should not be presented as attractive or as a solution to human problems, and the inevitable retribution should be made clear.
3. The broadcaster should afford opportunities for cultural growth as well as for wholesome entertainment.
4. He should develop programs to foster and promote the commonly accepted moral, social and ethical ideals characteristic of American life.
5. Programs should reflect respect for parents, for honorable behavior, and for the constituted authorities of the American community.
6. Exceptional care should be exercised with reference to kidnapping or threats of kidnapping of children in order to avoid terrorizing them.
7. Material which is excessively violent or would create morbid suspense, or other undesirable reactions in children, should be avoided.
8. Particular restraint and care in crime or mystery episodes involving children or minors should be exercised.

### III. Community Responsibility

1. A television broadcaster and his staff occupy a position of responsibility in the community and should conscientiously endeavor to be acquainted fully with its needs and characteristics in order better to serve the welfare of its citizens.
2. Requests for time for the placement of public service announcements or programs should be carefully reviewed with respect to the character and reputation of the group, campaign or organization involved, the public interest content of the message, and the manner of its presentation.

### IV. General Program Standards

1. Program materials should enlarge the horizons of the viewer, provide him with wholesome entertainment, afford helpful stimulation, and remind him of the responsibilities which the citizen has towards his society. The intimacy and confidence placed in television demand of the broadcaster, the network and other program sources that they be vigilant in protecting the audience from deceptive program practices.
2. Profanity, obscenity, smut and vulgarity are forbidden, even when likely to be understood only by part of the audience. From time to time, words which have been acceptable, acquire undesirable meanings, and telecasters should be alert to eliminate such words.
3. Words (especially slang) derisive of any race, color, creed, nationality or national derivation, except wherein such usage would be for the specific purpose of effective dramatization such as combating prejudice, are forbidden, even when likely to be understood only by part of the audience. From time to time, words which have been acceptable, acquire undesirable meanings, and telecasters should be alert to eliminate such words.
4. Racial or nationality types shall not be shown on television in such a manner as to ridicule the race or nationality.
5. Attacks on religion and religious faiths are not allowed. Reverence is to mark any mention of the name of God, His attributes and powers. When religious rites are included in other than religious programs the rites shall be accurately presented. The

office of minister, priest or rabbi shall not be presented in such a manner as to ridicule or impair its dignity.

6. Respect is maintained for the sanctity of marriage and the value of the home. Divorce is not treated casually as a solution for marital problems.
7. In reference to physical or mental afflictions and deformities, special precautions must be taken to avoid ridiculing sufferers from similar ailments and offending them or members of their families.
8. Excessive or unfair exploitation of others or of their physical or mental afflictions shall not be presented as praiseworthy. The presentation of cruelty, greed and selfishness as worthy motivations is to be avoided.
9. Law enforcement shall be upheld and, except where essential to the program plot, officers of the law portrayed with respect and dignity.
10. Legal, medical and other professional advice, diagnosis and treatment will be permitted only in conformity with law and recognized ethical and professional standards.
11. The use of animals both in the production of television programs and as part of television program content, shall at all times, be in conformity with accepted standards of humane treatment.
12. Care should be exercised so that cigarette smoking will not be depicted in a manner to impress the youth of our country as a desirable habit worthy of imitation.
13. Criminality shall be presented as undesirable and unsympathetic. The condoning of crime and the treatment of the commission of crime in a frivolous, cynical or callous manner is unacceptable.  
The presentation of techniques of crime in such detail as to invite imitation shall be avoided.
14. The presentation of murder or revenge as a motive for murder shall not be presented as justifiable.
15. Suicide as an acceptable solution for human problems is prohibited.
16. Illicit sex relations are not treated as commendable.

Sex crimes and abnormalities are generally unacceptable as program material. The use of locations closely associated with sexual life or with sexual sin must be governed by good taste and delicacy.

17. Drunkenness should never be presented as desirable or prevalent.  
The use of liquor in program content shall be de-emphasized. The consumption of liquor in American life, when not required by the plot or for proper characterization, shall not be shown.
18. Narcotic addiction shall not be presented except as a vicious habit. The administration of illegal drugs will not be displayed. The use of hallucinogenic drugs shall not be shown or encouraged as desirable or socially acceptable.
19. The use of gambling devices or scenes necessary to the development of plot or as appropriate background is acceptable only when presented with discretion and in moderation, and in a manner which would not excite interest in, or foster, betting nor be instructional in nature.
20. Telecasts of actual sports programs at which on-the-scene betting is permitted by law should be presented in a manner in keeping with Federal, state and local laws, and should concentrate on the subject as a public sporting event.
21. Program material pertaining to fortune-telling, occultism, astrology, phrenology, palm-reading, numerology, mind-reading, or character-reading, is unacceptable when presented for the purpose of fostering belief in these subjects.
22. Quiz and similar programs that are presented as contests of knowledge, information, skill or luck must, in fact, be genuine contests and the results must not be controlled by collusion with or between contestants, or any other action which will favor one contestant against any other.
23. No program shall be presented in a manner which through artifice or simulation would mislead the audience as to any material fact. Each broadcaster must exercise reasonable judgment to determine whether a particular method of presentation would constitute a material deception, or would be accepted by the audience as normal theatrical illusion.

24. The appearances or dramatization of persons featured in actual crime news will be permitted only in such light as to aid law enforcement or to report the news event.
25. The use of horror for its own sake will be eliminated; the use of visual or aural effects which would shock or alarm the viewer, and the detailed presentation of brutality or physical agony by sight or by sound are not permissible.
26. Contests may not constitute a lottery.
27. The costuming of all performers shall be within the bounds of propriety and shall avoid such exposure or such emphasis on anatomical detail as would embarrass or offend home viewers.
28. The movements of dancers, actors, or other performers shall be kept within the bounds of decency, and lewdness and impropriety shall not be suggested in the positions assumed by performers.
29. Camera angles shall avoid such views of performers as to emphasize anatomical details indecently.
30. The use of the television medium to transmit information of any kind by the use of the process called "subliminal perception," or by the use of any similar technique whereby an attempt is made to convey information to the viewer by transmitting messages below the threshold of normal awareness, is not permitted.
31. The broadcaster shall be constantly alert to prevent activities that may lead to such practices as the use of scenic properties, the choice and identification of prizes, the selection of music and other creative program elements and inclusion of any identification of commercial products or services, their trade names or advertising slogans, within a program dictated by factors other than the requirements of the program itself. The acceptance of cash payments or other considerations in return for including any of the above within the program is prohibited except in accordance with Sections 317 and 508 of the Communications Act.
32. A television broadcaster should not present fictional events or other non-news material as authentic news telecasts or announcements, nor should he permit

dramatizations in any program which would give the false impression that the dramatized material constitutes news. Expletives (presented aurally or pictorially), such as "flash" or "bulletin" and statements such as "we interrupt this program to bring you . . ." should be reserved specifically for news room use. However, a television broadcaster may properly exercise discretion in the use in non-news programs of words or phrases which do not necessarily imply that the material following is a news release.

33. Program content should be confined to those elements which entertain or inform the viewer and to the extent that titles, teasers and credits do not meet these criteria, they should be restricted or eliminated.
34. The creation of a state of hypnosis by act or demonstration on the air is prohibited and hypnosis as an aspect of "parlor game" antics to create humorous situations within a comedy setting cannot be used.

## **V. Treatment of News and Public Events**

### **News**

1. A television station's news schedule should be adequate and well-balanced.
2. News reporting should be factual, fair and without bias.
3. A television broadcaster should exercise particular discrimination in the acceptance, placement and presentation of advertising in news programs so that such advertising should be clearly distinguishable from the news content.
4. At all times, pictorial and verbal material for both news and comment should conform to other sections of these standards, wherever such sections are reasonably applicable.
5. Good taste should prevail in the selection and handling of news:  
Morbidity, sensational or alarming details not essential to the factual report, especially in connection with stories of crime or sex, should be avoided. News should be telecast in such a manner as to avoid panic and unnecessary alarm.
6. Commentary and analysis should be clearly identified as such.

7. Pictorial material should be chosen with care and not presented in a misleading manner.
8. All news interview programs should be governed by accepted standards of ethical journalism, under which the interviewer selects the questions to be asked. Where there is advance agreement materially restricting an important or newsworthy area of questioning, the interviewer will state on the program that such limitation has been agreed upon. Such disclosure should be made if the person being interviewed requires that questions be submitted in advance or if he participates in editing a recording of the interview prior to its use on the air.
9. A television broadcaster should exercise due care in his supervision of content, format, and presentation of newscasts originated by his station, and in his selection of newscasters, commentators, and analysts.

#### **Public Events**

1. A television broadcaster has an affirmative responsibility at all times to be informed of public events, and to provide coverage consonant with the ends of an informed and enlightened citizenry.
2. The treatment of such events by a television broadcaster should provide adequate and informed coverage.

#### **VI. Controversial Public Issues**

1. Television provides a valuable forum for the expression of responsible views on public issues of a controversial nature. The television broadcaster should seek out and develop with accountable individuals, groups and organizations, programs relating to controversial public issues of import to his fellow citizens; and to give fair representation to opposing sides of issues which materially affect the life or welfare of a substantial segment of the public.
2. Requests by individuals, groups or organizations for time to discuss their views on controversial public issues, should be considered on the basis of their individual merits, and in the light of the contribution which the use requested would make to the public interest, and to a well-balanced program structure.



3. Programs devoted to the discussion of controversial public issues should be identified as such. They should not be presented in a manner which would mislead listeners or viewers to believe that the program is purely of an entertainment, news, or other character.
4. Broadcasts in which stations express their own opinions about issues of general public interest should be clearly identified as editorials. They should be unmistakably identified as statements of station opinion and should be appropriately distinguished from news and other program material.

#### **VII. Political Telecasts**

1. Political telecasts should be clearly identified as such. They should not be presented by a television broadcaster in a manner which would mislead listeners or viewers to believe that the program is of any other character.

(Ref.: Communications Act of 1934, as amended, Secs. 315 and 317, and FCC Rules and Regulations, Secs. 3.654, 3.657, 3.663, as discussed in NAB's "A Political Catechism.")

#### **VIII. Religious Programs**

1. It is the responsibility of a television broadcaster to make available to the community appropriate opportunity for religious presentations.
2. Telecasting which reaches men of all creeds simultaneously should avoid attacks upon religion.
3. Religious programs should be presented respectfully and accurately and without prejudice or ridicule.
4. Religious programs should be presented by responsible individuals, groups and organizations.
5. Religious programs should place emphasis on broad religious truths, excluding the presentation of controversial or partisan views not directly or necessarily related to religion or morality.
6. In the allocation of time for telecasts of religious programs the television station should use its best efforts to apportion such time fairly among the representative faith groups of its community.

## **IX. General Advertising Standards**

1. This Code establishes basic standards for all television broadcasting. The principles of acceptability and good taste within the Program Standards section govern the presentation of advertising where applicable. In addition, the Code establishes in this section special standards which apply to television advertising.
2. A commercial television broadcaster makes his facilities available for the advertising of products and services and accepts commercial presentations for such advertising. However, a television broadcaster should, in recognition of his responsibility to the public, refuse the facilities of his station to an advertiser where he has good reason to doubt the integrity of the advertiser, the truth of the advertising representations, or the compliance of the advertiser with the spirit and purpose of all applicable legal requirements.
3. Identification of sponsorship must be made in all sponsored programs in accordance with the requirements of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
4. Representations which disregard normal safety precautions shall be avoided. Children shall not be represented, except under proper adult supervision, as being in contact with, or demonstrating a product recognized as potentially dangerous to them.
5. In consideration of the customs and attitudes of the communities served, each television broadcaster should refuse his facilities to the advertisement of products and services, or the use of advertising scripts, which the station has good reason to believe would be objectionable to a substantial and responsible segment of the community. These standards should be applied with judgment and flexibility, taking into consideration the characteristics of the medium, its home and family audience, and the form and content of the particular presentation.
6. The advertising of hard liquor (distilled spirits) is not acceptable.
7. The advertising of beer and wines is acceptable only when presented in the best

of good taste and discretion, and is acceptable only subject to Federal and local laws. (See *Television Code Interpretation No. 4*)

8. The level of cigarette advertising on television will be reduced in progressive steps so that effective September 1, 1973, all cigarette advertising will cease on subscriber stations and networks.

The base year of July 1, 1968-July 1, 1969 will be the measuring point for cigarette commercials. Each subscriber station and network will compute the total minutes of commercial time devoted to cigarette advertising during the base year.

Beginning January 1, 1970, each station and network will limit the total number of minutes available for sale to cigarette advertisers to the percentages of the base year minutes listed below:

Period Commencing	Percentage
January 1, 1970	90%
September 1, 1970	75%
September 1, 1971	50%
September 1, 1972	25%
September 1, 1973	0

Each subscriber station and network will be required to file with the NAB Code Authority the total minutes of commercial time in its base year and to file periodic reports of cigarette commercials carried in the succeeding years.

The advertising of cigarettes shall not state or imply claims regarding health and shall not be presented in such a manner as to indicate to youth that the use of cigarettes contributes to individual achievement, personal acceptance or is a habit worthy of imitation.

No cigarette commercials shall be permitted in or adjacent to any program primarily directed to youth audiences.

9. Advertising by institutions or enterprises which in their offers of instruction imply promises of employment or make exaggerated claims for the opportunities awaiting those who enroll for courses is generally unacceptable.
10. The advertising of firearms/ammunition is acceptable provided it promotes the product only as sporting equipment and conforms to recognized standards of safety as well as all applicable laws and

regulations. Advertisements of firearms/ammunition by mail order are unacceptable. The advertising of fireworks is acceptable subject to all applicable laws.

11. The advertising of fortune-telling, occultism, astrology, phrenology, palm-reading, numerology, mind-reading, character reading or subjects of a like nature is not permitted.
12. Because all products of a personal nature create special problems, acceptability of such products should be determined with especial emphasis on ethics and the canons of good taste. Such advertising of personal products as is accepted must be presented in a restrained and obviously inoffensive manner.
13. The advertising of tip sheets, race track publications, or organizations seeking to advertise for the purpose of giving odds or promoting betting or lotteries is unacceptable.
14. An advertiser who markets more than one product should not be permitted to use advertising copy devoted to an acceptable product for purposes of publicizing the brand name or other identification of a product which is not acceptable.
15. "Bait-switch" advertising, whereby goods or services which the advertiser has no intention of selling are offered merely to lure the customer into purchasing higher-price substitutes, is not acceptable.
16. Personal endorsements (testimonials) shall be genuine and reflect personal experience. They shall contain no statement that cannot be supported if presented in the advertiser's own words.

#### **X. Presentation of Advertising**

1. Advertising messages should be presented with courtesy and good taste; disturbing or annoying material should be avoided; every effort should be made to keep the advertising message in harmony with the content and general tone of the program in which it appears.
2. The role and capability of television to market sponsors' products are well recognized. In turn, this fact dictates that great care be exercised by the broadcaster to prevent the presentation of false, misleading or deceptive advertising. While it

is entirely appropriate to present a product in a favorable light and atmosphere, the presentation must not, by copy or demonstration, involve a material deception as to the characteristics, performance or appearance of the product.

3. The broadcaster and the advertiser should exercise special caution with the content and presentation of television commercials placed in or near programs designed for children. Exploitation of children should be avoided. Commercials directed to children should in no way mislead as to the product's performance and usefulness.

Appeals involving matters of health which should be determined by physicians should not be directed primarily to children.

4. Appeals to help fictitious characters in television programs by purchasing the advertiser's product or service or sending for a premium should not be permitted, and such fictitious characters should not be introduced into the advertising message for such purposes.

5. Commercials for services or over-the-counter products involving health considerations are of intimate and far-reaching importance to the consumer. The following principles should apply to such advertising:

- a. Physicians, dentists or nurses, or actors representing physicians, dentists or nurses shall not be employed directly or by implication. These restrictions also apply to persons professionally engaged in medical services (e.g., physical therapists, pharmacists, dental assistants, nurses' aides).
- b. Visual representations of laboratory settings may be employed, provided they bear a direct relationship to bona fide research which has been conducted for the product or service. (See *Television Code, X, 10*) In such cases, laboratory technicians shall be identified as such and shall not be employed as spokesmen or in any other way speak on behalf of the product.
- c. Institutional announcements not intended to sell a specific product or service to the consumer and public service announcements by non-profit

organizations may be presented by accredited physicians, dentists or nurses, subject to approval by the broadcaster. An accredited professional is one who has met required qualifications and has been licensed in his resident state.

6. Advertising should offer a product or service on its positive merits and refrain by identification or other means from discrediting, disparaging or unfairly attacking competitors, competing products, other industries, professions or institutions.
7. A sponsor's advertising messages should be confined within the framework of the sponsor's program structure. A television broadcaster should avoid the use of commercial announcements which are divorced from the program either by preceding the introduction of the program (as in the case of so-called "cow-catcher" announcements) or by following the apparent sign-off of the program (as in the case of so-called trailer or "hitch-hike" announcements). To this end, the program itself should be announced and clearly identified, both audio and video, before the sponsor's advertising material is first used, and should be signed off, both audio and video, after the sponsor's advertising material is last used.
8. Since advertising by television is a dynamic technique, a television broadcaster should keep under surveillance new advertising devices so that the spirit and purpose of these standards are fulfilled.
9. A charge for television time to churches and religious bodies is not recommended.
10. Reference to the results of bona fide research, surveys or tests relating to the product to be advertised shall not be presented in a manner so as to create an impression of fact beyond that established by the work that has been conducted.

#### **XI. Advertising of Medical Products**

1. The advertising of medical products presents considerations of intimate and far-reaching importance to the consumer because of the direct bearing on his health.
2. Because of the personal nature of the advertising of medical products, claims that a product will effect a cure and the indiscriminate use of such words as "safe",

"without risk", "harmless", or terms of similar meaning should not be accepted in the advertising of medical products on television stations.

3. A television broadcaster should not accept advertising material which in his opinion offensively describes or dramatizes distress or morbid situations involving ailments, by spoken word, sound or visual effects.

## **XII. Contests**

1. Contests shall be conducted with fairness to all entrants, and shall comply with all pertinent laws and regulations. Care should be taken to avoid the concurrent use of the three elements which together constitute a lottery—prize, chance and consideration.
2. All contest details, including rules, eligibility requirements, opening and termination dates should be clearly and completely announced and/or shown, or easily accessible to the viewing public, and the winners' names should be released and prizes awarded as soon as possible after the close of the contest.
3. When advertising is accepted which requests contestants to submit items of product identification or other evidence of purchase of products, reasonable facsimiles thereof should be made acceptable unless the award is based upon skill and not upon chance.
4. All copy pertaining to any contest (except that which is required by law) associated with the exploitation or sale of the sponsor's product or service, and all references to prizes or gifts offered in such connection should be considered a part of and included in the total time allowances as herein provided. (*See Television Code, XIV*)

## **XIII. Premiums and Offers**

1. Full details of proposed offers should be required by the television broadcaster for investigation and approved before the first announcement of the offer is made to the public.
2. A final date for the termination of an offer should be announced as far in advance as possible.

3. Before accepting for telecast offers involving a monetary consideration, a television broadcaster should satisfy himself as to the integrity of the advertiser and the advertiser's willingness to honor complaints indicating dissatisfaction with the premium by returning the monetary consideration.
4. There should be no misleading descriptions or visual representations of any premiums or gifts which would distort or enlarge their value in the minds of the viewers.
5. Assurances should be obtained from the advertiser that premiums offered are not harmful to person or property.
6. Premiums should not be approved which appeal to superstition on the basis of "luck-bearing" powers or otherwise.

#### **XIV. Time Standards for Non-Program Material**

In order that the time for non-program material and its placement shall best serve the viewer, the following standards are set forth in accordance with sound television practice:

1. Non-Program Material Definition: Non-program material, in both prime time and all other time, includes billboards, commercials, all credits in excess of 30 seconds and promotional announcements. Public service announcements and promotional announcements for the same program are excluded from this definition.
2. Allowable Time for Non-Program Material.
  - a. In prime time, non-program material shall not exceed 10 minutes in any 60-minute period.  
Prime time is a continuous period of not less than three consecutive evening hours per broadcast day as designated by the station between the hours of 6:00 PM and Midnight.
  - b. In all other time, non-program material shall not exceed 16 minutes in any 60-minute period.
3. Program Interruptions.
  - a. Definition: A program interruption is any occurrence of non-program material within the main body of the program.



- b. In prime time, the number of program interruptions shall not exceed two within any 30-minute program, or four within any 60-minute program.  
Programs longer than 60 minutes shall be pro-rated at two interruptions per half-hour.  
The number of interruptions in 60-minute variety shows shall not exceed five.
- c. In all other time, the number of interruptions shall not exceed four within any 30-minute program period.
- d. In both prime time and all other time, the following interruption standard shall apply within programs of 15 minutes or less in length:  
5-minute program—1 interruption;  
10-minute program—2 interruptions;  
15-minute program—2 interruptions.
- e. News, weather, sports and special events programs are exempt from the interruption standard because of the nature of such programs.
4. No more than four commercial announcements shall be scheduled consecutively within programs, and no more than three commercial announcements shall be scheduled consecutively during station breaks. The consecutive commercial message limitation shall not apply to a single sponsor who wishes to further reduce the number of interruptions in the program.
5. A multiple product announcement is one in which two or more products or services are presented within the framework of a single announcement.  
A multiple product announcement shall be counted as a single announcement provided the products or services are so treated in audio and video throughout the announcement as to appear to the viewer as a single unit. Multiple product announcements not meeting this definition shall be counted as two or more announcements under this section of the Code. This provision shall not apply to retail or service establishments.
6. The use of billboards, in prime time and all other time, shall be confined to programs sponsored by a single or alternate

week advertiser and shall be limited to the products advertised in the program.

7. Reasonable and limited identification of prizes and donors' names where the presentation of contest awards or prizes is a necessary part of program content shall not be included as non-program material as defined above.
8. Programs presenting women's service features, shopping guides, fashion shows, demonstrations and similar material provide a special service to the public in which certain material normally classified as non-program is an informative and necessary part of the program content. Because of this, the time standards may be waived by the Code Authority to a reasonable extent on a case-by-case basis.
9. Gratuitous references in a program to a non-sponsor's product or service should be avoided except for normal guest identification.
10. Stationary backdrops or properties in television presentations showing the sponsor's name or product, the name of his product, his trade-mark or slogan should be used only incidentally and should not obtrude on program interest or entertainment.

## **Interpretations Of the Television Code**

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### **Interpretation No. 1**

June 7, 1956, Revised June 9, 1958

#### **"Pitch" Programs**

The "pitchman" technique of advertising on television is inconsistent with good broadcast practice and generally damages the reputation of the industry and the advertising profession.

Sponsored program-length segments consisting substantially of continuous demonstrations or sales presentation, violate not only the time standards established in the Code but the broad philosophy of improvement implicit in the voluntary Code operation and are not acceptable.

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### **Interpretation No. 2**

June 7, 1956

#### **Hollywood Film Promotion**

The presentation of commentary or film excerpts from current theatrical releases in some instances may constitute commercial material under the Time Standards for Non-Program Material. Specifically, for example, when such presentation, directly or by inference, urges viewers to attend, it shall be counted against the commercial allowance for the program of which it is a part.

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**Interpretation No. 3**

January 23, 1959

**Prize Identification**

Aural and/or visual prize identification of up to ten seconds duration may be deemed "reasonable and limited" under the language of Paragraph 7 of the Time Standards for Non-Program Material. Where such identification is longer than ten seconds, the entire announcement or visual presentation will be charged against the total commercial time for the program period.

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**Interpretation No. 4**

March 4, 1965

**Drinking on Camera**

Paragraph 7, Section IX, General Advertising Standards, states that the "advertising of beer and wine is acceptable only when presented in the best of good taste and discretion." This requires that commercials involving beer and wine avoid any representation of on-camera drinking.

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*Note: From time to time the Code Authority issues advertising guidelines and clarifications expanding on provisions of the Code. Among areas covered are alcoholic beverages, acne products, arthritis and rheumatism remedies, bronchitis products, cigarettes, disparagement, hallucinogens, hypnosis, men-in-white, testimonials, time standards, toys and weight reducing products. Copies may be obtained from any NAB Code Authority Office.*

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Regulations and Procedures of

# **The Television Code**

National Association of Broadcasters



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- II Purpose of the Code
- III Subscribers
- IV Affiliate Subscribers
- V Rates
- VI The Television Code  
Review Board
- VII Code Authority Director

## **Regulations and Procedures**

The following Regulations and Procedures shall obtain as an integral part of the Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters:

### **I**

#### **Name**

The name of this Code shall be *The Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters*.\*

### **II**

#### **Purpose of the Code**

The purpose of this Code is cooperatively to maintain a level of television programming which gives full consideration to the educational, informational, cultural, economic, moral and entertainment needs of the American public to the end that more and more people will be better served.

### **III**

#### **Subscribers**

##### **Section 1. ELIGIBILITY**

Any individual, firm or corporation which is engaged in the operation of a television broadcast station or network, or which holds a construction permit for a television broadcast station within the United States or its dependencies, shall, subject to the approval of the Television Board of Directors as hereinafter provided, be eligible to subscribe to the Television Code of the NAB to the extent of one subscription for each such station and/or network which it operates or for which it holds a construction permit; provided, that a non-television member of NAB shall not become eligible via Code subscription to receive any of the member services or to exercise any of the voting privileges of a member.

##### **Section 2. CERTIFICATION OF SUBSCRIPTION**

Upon subscribing to the Code, subject to the approval of the Television Board of Directors, there shall be granted forthwith to each such subscribing station authority to use the "NAB Television Seal of Good Practice", a copyrighted and registered seal to be provided in the form of a certificate, a slide and/or a film, signifying that the recipient thereof is a subscriber in good standing to the Television Code of the NAB. The seal and its significance shall be appropriately publicized by the NAB.

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\* By-Laws of the National Association of Broadcasters, Article VI, section 8, C: "Television Board. The Television Board is hereby authorized:—(4) to enact, amend and promulgate standards of practice or codes for its Television members, and to establish such methods to secure observance thereof as it may deem advisable:—".

### Section 3. DURATION OF SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription shall continue in full force and effect until thirty days after the first of the month following receipt of notice of written resignation. Subscription to the Code shall be effective from the date of application subject to the approval of the Television Board of Directors; provided, that the subscription of a television station going on the air for the first time shall, for the first six months of such subscription, be probationary, during which time its subscription can be summarily revoked by an affirmative two-thirds vote of the Television Board of Directors without the usual processes specified below.

### Section 4. SUSPENSION OF SUBSCRIPTION

Any subscription, and/or the authority to utilize and show the above-noted seal, may be voided, revoked or temporarily suspended for television programming, including commercial copy, which, by theme, treatment or incident, in the judgment of the Television Board constitutes a continuing, willful or gross violation of any of the provisions of the Television Code, by an affirmative two-thirds vote of the Television Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting; provided, however, that the following conditions and procedures shall apply:

#### *A. Preferring of Charges—Conditions Precedent:*

Prior to the preferring of charges to the Television Board of Directors concerning violation of the Code by a subscriber, the Television Code Review Board (hereinafter provided for) (1) Shall have appropriately, and in good time, informed and advised such subscriber of any and all complaints and information coming to the attention of the Television Code Review Board and relating to the programming of said subscriber, (2) Shall have reported to, and advised, said subscriber by analysis, interpretation, recommendation or otherwise, of the possibility of a violation or breach of the Television Code by the subscriber, and (3) Shall have served upon the subscriber by Registered Mail a Notice of Intent to prefer charges, at least twenty days prior to the filing of any such charges with the Television Board of Directors. During this period the Television Code Review Board may, within its sole discretion, reconsider its proposed action based upon such written reply as the subscriber may care to make, or upon such action as the subscriber may care to take program-wise, in conformance with the analysis, interpretation, or recommendation of the Television Code Review Board.

#### (i) Notice of Intent

The Notice of Intent shall include a statement

of the grounds and reasons for the proposed charges, including appropriate references to the Television Code.

(ii) Time

In the event that the nature of the program in question is such that time is of the essence, the Television Code Review Board may prefer charges within less than the twenty days above specified, provided that a time certain in which reply may be made is included in its Notice of Intent, and provided that its reasons therefor must be specified in its statement of charges preferred.

*B. The Charges :*

The subscriber shall be advised in writing by Registered Mail of the charges preferred. The charges preferred by the Television Code Review Board to the Television Board of Directors shall include the grounds and reasons therefor, together with specific references to the Television Code. The charges shall contain a statement that the conditions precedent, hereinbefore described, have been met.

*C. Hearing :*

The subscriber shall have the right to a hearing and may exercise same by filing an answer within 10 days of the date of such notification.

*D. Waiver :*

Failure to request a hearing shall be deemed a waiver of the subscriber's right thereto.

*E. Designation :*

If hearing is requested by the subscriber, it shall be designated as promptly as possible and at such time and place as the Television Board may specify.

*F. Confidential Status :*

Hearings shall be closed; and all correspondence between a subscriber and the Television Code Review Board and/or the Television Board of Directors concerning specific programming shall be confidential; provided, however, that the confidential status of these procedures may be waived by a subscriber.

*G. Presentation; Representation :*

A subscriber against whom charges have been preferred, and who has exercised his right to a hearing, shall be entitled to effect presentation of his case personally, by agent, by attorney, or by deposition and interrogatory.

*H. Intervention :*

Upon request by the subscriber-respondent or the Television Code Review Board, the Television Board of Directors, in its discretion, may permit the intervention of one or more other subscribers as parties-in-interest.

*I. Transcript:*

A stenographic transcript record shall be taken and shall be certified by the Chairman of the Television Board of Directors to the office of the Secretary of the National Association of Broadcasters, where it shall be maintained. The transcript shall not be open to inspection unless otherwise provided by the party respondent in the proceeding.

*J. Television Code Review Board; Counsel:*

The Television Code Review Board may, at its discretion, utilize the services of an attorney from the staff of the NAB for the purpose of effecting its presentation in a hearing matter.

*K. Order of Procedure:*

At hearings the Television Code Review Board shall open and close.

*L. Cross-Examination:*

The right of cross-examination shall specifically obtain. Where procedure has been by deposition or interrogatory, the use of cross-interrogatories shall satisfy this right.

*M. Presentation:*

Oral and written evidence may be introduced by the subscriber and by the Television Code Review Board. Oral argument may be had at the hearing and written memoranda or briefs may be submitted by the subscriber and by the Television Code Review Board. The Television Board of Directors may admit such evidence as it deems relevant, material and competent, and may determine the nature and length of the oral argument and the written argument or briefs.

*N. Authority of Presiding Officer; of Television Board of Directors:*

The Presiding Officer shall rule upon all interlocutory matters, such as, but not limited to, the admissibility of evidence, the qualifications of witnesses, etc. On all other matters, authority to act shall be vested in a majority of the Television Board unless otherwise provided.

*O. Films, Transcriptions, etc.:*

Films, kinescopes, records, transcriptions, or other mechanical reproductions of television programs, properly identified, shall be accepted into evidence when relevant.

*P. Continuances and Extensions:*

Continuance and extension of any proceeding or for the time of filing or performing any act required or allowed to be done within a specific time may be granted upon request, for a good cause shown. The Board or the Presiding Officer may recess or adjourn a hearing for such time as may be deemed necessary, and may change the place thereof.

*Q. Findings and Conclusions:*

The Television Board of Directors shall decide the case as expeditiously as possible and shall notify the subscriber and the Television Code Review Board, in writing, of the decision. The decision of the Television Board of Directors shall contain findings of fact with conclusions, as well as the reasons or bases therefor. Findings of fact shall set out in detail and with particularity all basic evidentiary facts developed on the record (with appropriate citations to the transcript of record or exhibit relied on for each evidentiary fact) supporting the conclusion reached.

*R. Reconsideration or Rehearing:*

A request for reconsideration or rehearing may be filed by parties to the hearing. Requests for reconsideration or rehearing shall state with particularity in what respect the decision or any matter determined therein is claimed to be unjust, unwarranted, or erroneous, and with respect to any finding of fact shall specify the pages of record relied on. If the existence of any newly-discovered evidence is claimed, the request shall be accompanied by a verified statement of the facts together with the facts relied on to show that the party, with due diligence, could not have known or discovered such facts at the time of the hearing. The request for rehearing may seek:

- a. Reconsideration
- b. Additional oral argument
- c. Reopening of the proceedings
- d. Amendment of any findings, or
- e. Other relief.

*S. Time for Filing:*

Requests for reconsideration or rehearing shall be filed within ten (10) days after receipt by the respondent of the decision. Opposition thereto may be filed within five (5) days after the filing of the request.

*T. Penalty, Suspension of:*

At the discretion of the Television Board, application of any penalty provided for in the decision may be suspended until the Board makes final disposition of the request for reconsideration or rehearing.

*U. Disqualification:*

Any member of the Television Board may disqualify himself, or upon good cause shown by any interested party, may be disqualified by a majority vote of the Television Board.

**Section 5. ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES**

When necessary to the proper administration of the Code, additional rules of procedure will be established from time to time as authorized by



the By-Laws of the NAB; in keeping therewith, special consideration shall be given to the procedures for receipt and processing of complaints and to necessary rules to be adopted from time to time, taking into account the source and nature of such complaints; such rules to include precautionary measures such as the posting of bonds to cover costs and expenses of processing same; and further provided that special consideration will be given to procedures insuring the confidential status of proceedings relating to Code observance.

#### **Section 6. AMENDMENT AND REVIEW**

Because of the new and dynamic aspects inherent in television broadcast, the Television Code, as a living, flexible and continuing document, may be amended from time to time by the Television Board of Directors; provided that said Board is specifically charged with review and reconsideration of the entire Code, its appendices and procedures, at least once each year.

#### **Section 7. TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS**

All subscribers on the air at the time of subscription to the Code shall be permitted that period prior to and including the earliest legal cancellation date to terminate any contracts, then outstanding, calling for program presentations which would not be in conformity with the Television Code, provided, however, that in no event shall such period be longer than fifty-two weeks.

### **IV**

#### **Affiliate Subscribers**

##### **Section 1. ELIGIBILITY**

Any individual, firm or corporation, which is engaged in the production or distribution, lease, or sale of recorded programs for television presentation, subject to the approval of the Television Code Review Board as hereinafter provided, shall be eligible to become an affiliate subscriber to the Television Code of the NAB.

##### **Section 2. CERTIFICATION OF SUBSCRIPTION**

Upon becoming an affiliate subscriber to the Code, subject to the approval of the Television Code Review Board, there shall be granted forthwith to each such affiliate subscriber authority to use a copyrighted and registered seal and declaration, in a manner approved by the Television Code Review Board, identifying the individual firm or corporation as an affiliate subscriber to the Television Code of the NAB. Such authority shall not constitute formal clearance or approval by the Television Code Review Board of specific film programs or other recorded material.

### **Section 3. DURATION OF AFFILIATE SUBSCRIPTION**

The affiliate subscription shall continue in full force and effect until thirty days after the first of the month following receipt of a written notice of resignation. The affiliate subscription to the Code shall be effective from the date of application subject to the approval of the Television Code Review Board.

### **Section 4. SUSPENSION OF AFFILIATE SUBSCRIPTION**

Any affiliate subscription and the authority to utilize and show the above-noted seal may be voided, revoked, or temporarily suspended for the sale or distribution for television presentation of any film or other recorded material which by theme, treatment, or incident, in the judgment of the Television Code Review Board, constitutes a continuing, willful or gross violation of any of the provisions of the Television Code, by a majority vote of the Television Code Review Board at any regular or special meeting. The conditions and procedures applicable to subscribers shall not apply to affiliate subscribers.

### **Section 5. REPRESENTATION OF AFFILIATE SUBSCRIBERS**

Any affiliate subscriber or group of affiliate subscribers may authorize an individual or association to act for them in connection with their relations with the Television Code Review Board by filing a written notice of such representation with the Board. Such representation, however, in no way will limit the right of the Television Code Review Board to suspend individual affiliate subscribers in accordance with the provisions of Section 4.

## **V**

### **Rates**

Each subscriber and affiliate subscriber shall pay "administrative" rates in accordance with such schedule, at such time, and under such conditions as may be determined from time to time by the Television Board (see Article VI, section 8, C. Television Board (3) and (4), By-Laws of the NAB); provided, that appropriate credit shall be afforded to a television member of the NAB against the regular dues which he or it pays to NAB.

## **VI**

### **The Television Code Review Board**

#### **Section 1. COMPOSITION**

There shall be a continuing committee entitled the Television Code Review Board to be composed of not more than nine members, all of whom shall

be from subscribers to the Television Code. They shall be appointed by the President of the NAB, subject to confirmation by the Television Board, and may include one member from each of the subscribing nationwide television networks. Members of the Television Board shall not be eligible to serve on the Review Board. Due consideration shall be given, in making the appointments, to factors of diversification of geographical location, market size, company representation and network affiliation.

No person shall continue as a member of the Television Code Review Board if the station or entity he represents ceases to subscribe to the Television Code. In such case a vacancy occurs in the office immediately, and a successor may be appointed to serve out the unexpired term.

All terms shall be for two years, commencing at the close of the annual meeting of the membership following appointment.

*A. Limitation of Service:*

No person shall serve for more than two terms of two years each, consecutively, as a member of the Television Code Review Board; provided, however, this limitation shall not apply to network representatives.

Serving out the unexpired term of a former member shall not constitute a term within the meaning of this section.

*B. Meetings:*

The Television Code Review Board shall meet at least twice in each calendar year on a date to be determined by the Chairman. The Chairman, or the Code Authority Director, may, at any time, on at least five days written notice, call a special meeting of the Board.

*C. Quorum:*

For all purposes, a majority of the members of the Television Code Review Board shall constitute a quorum.

## Section 2. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Television Code Review Board is authorized and directed:

(1) To recommend to the Television Board of Directors amendments to the Television Code; (2) to consider, in its discretion, any appeal from any decision made by the Code Authority Director with respect to any matter which has arisen under the Code, and to suspend, reverse, or modify any such decision; (3) to prefer formal charges, looking toward the suspension or revocation of the authority to show the Code seal, to the Television Board of Directors concerning violations

and breaches of the Television Code by a subscriber; (4) to be available to the Code Authority Director for consultation on any and all matters affecting the Television Code.

## VII

### **Code Authority Director**

#### Section 1. DIRECTOR

There shall be a position designated as the Code Authority Director. This position shall be filled by appointment of the President of NAB, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

#### Section 2. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

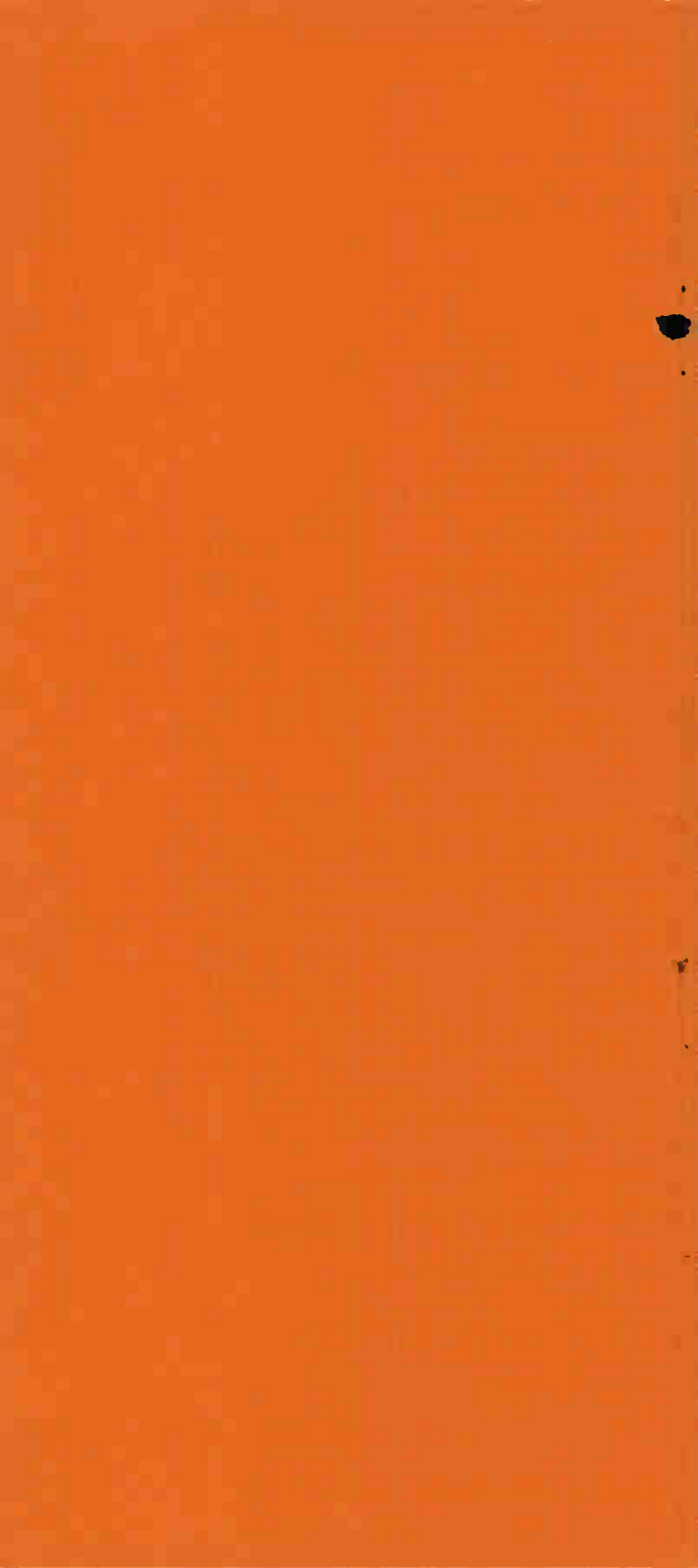
The Code Authority Director is authorized and directed: (1) To maintain a continuing review of all programming and advertising material presented over television, especially that of subscribers to the Television Code of NAB; (2) to receive, screen and clear complaints concerning television programming; (3) to define and interpret words and phrases in the Television Code; (4) to develop and maintain appropriate liaison with governmental agencies and with responsible and accountable organizations and institutions; (5) to inform, expeditiously and properly, a subscriber to the Television Code of complaints or commendations, as well as to advise all subscribers concerning the attitudes and desires program-wise of accountable organizations and institutions, and of the American public in general; (6) to review and monitor, if necessary, any certain series of programs, daily programming, or any other program presentations of a subscriber, as well as to request recorded material, or script and copy, with regard to any certain program presented by a subscriber; (7) to reach conclusions and make recommendations or prefer charges to the Television Code Review Board concerning violations and breaches of the Television Code by a subscriber; (8) to recommend to the Code Review Board amendments to the Television Code.

##### *A. Delegation of Powers and Responsibilities:*

The Code Authority Director shall appoint such executive staff as is needed, consistent with resources, to carry out the above described functions, and may delegate to this staff such responsibilities as he may deem necessary.

### **Television Code**

Effective March 1, 1952  
Second Edition, March 1954  
Third Edition, July 1956  
Fourth Edition, March 1958  
Fifth Edition, March 1959  
Sixth Edition, July 1960  
Seventh Edition, May 1962  
Eighth Edition, September 1963  
Ninth Edition, April 1964  
Tenth Edition, August 1965  
Eleventh Edition, August 1966  
Twelfth Edition, October 1967  
Thirteenth Edition, August 1968  
Fourteenth Edition, September 1969



## **Revised Multiple Product Announcement Standard**

*(The following standard was recommended by the Television Code Review Board and adopted by the NAB Television Board of Directors in June, 1970 to be effective no later than February 1, 1971.)*

### **XIV. Time Standards for Non-Program Material**

5. A multiple product announcement is one in which two or more products or services are presented within the framework of a single announcement.

A multiple product announcement shall be counted as a single announcement provided the same voice(s), setting, background, and continuity are used throughout so that the announcement appears to the viewer as one single announcement. Multiple product announcements not meeting this definition shall be counted as two or more announcements under this section of the Code. This provision shall not apply to retail or service establishments.

8460 SW 8<sup>th</sup> St

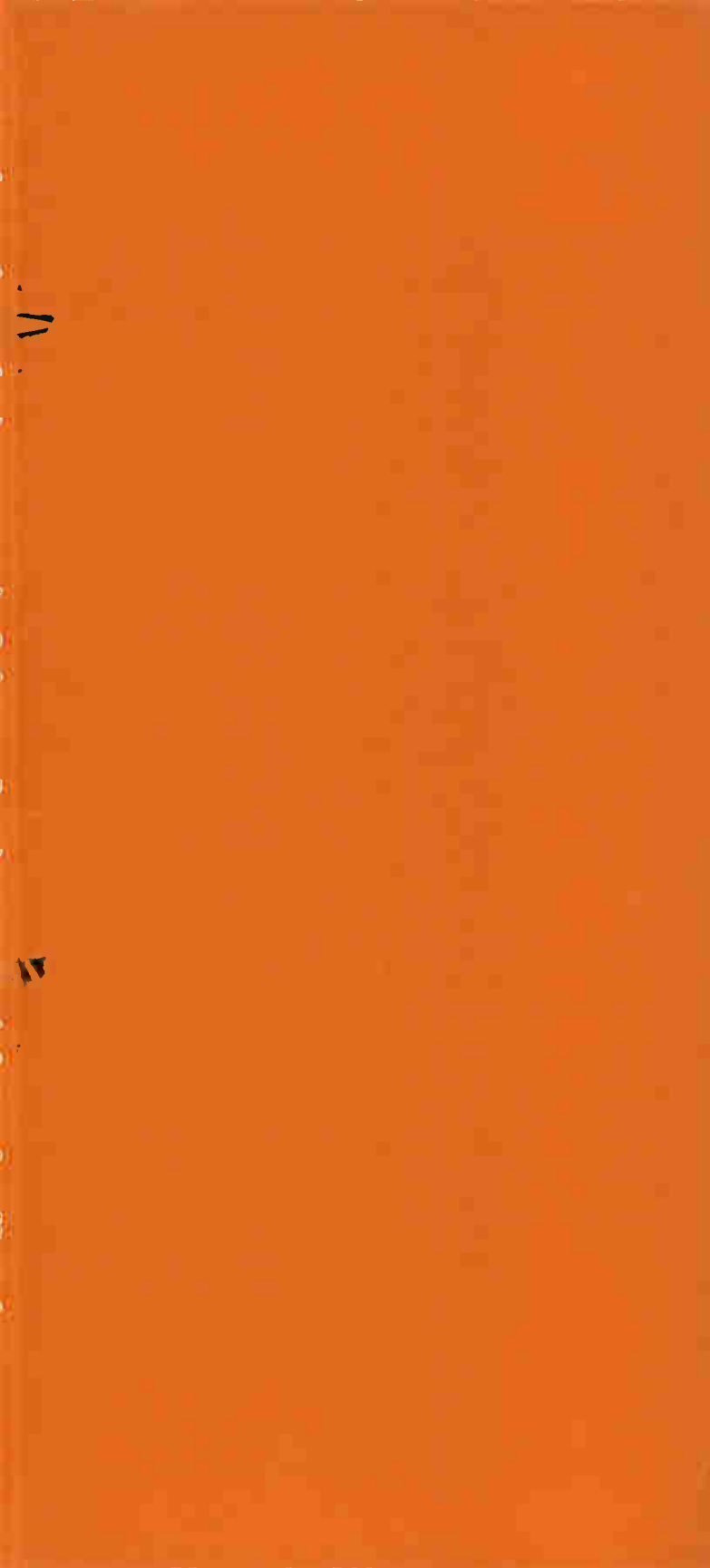
US 1 to Keyhole ✓

~~8857~~ Right turn to  
83-84 Ave.

271-8137

1165-051





Code Authority  
National Association of Broadcasters  
1771 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036



485 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022  
1717 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90028