

looking  
forward  
to a career

# RADIO and TELEVISION

BY BILLI HAEBERLE



looking  
forward  
to a career

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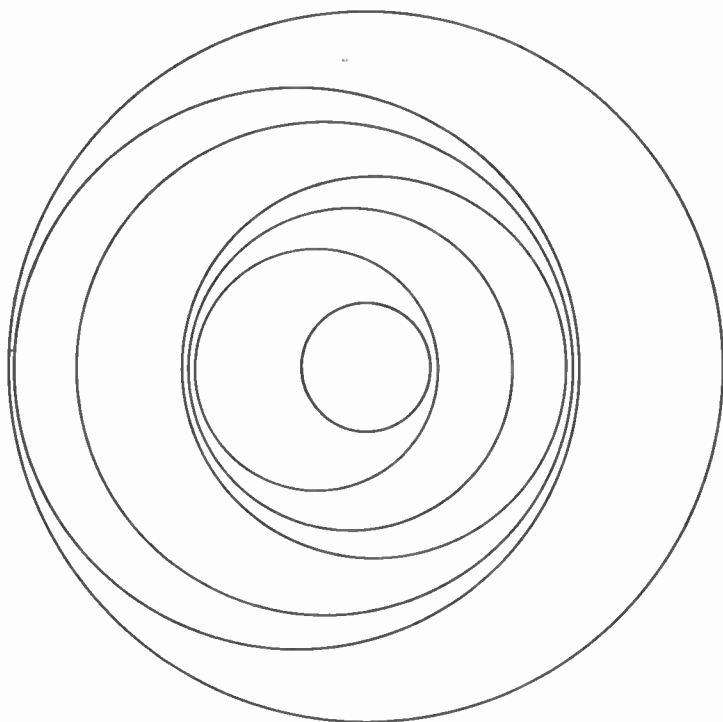


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LOOKING  
FORWARD  
TO A  
CAREER

# RADIO and TELEVISION

BY BILLI HAEBERLE



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## Meet the Media

**IF YOU ARE LOOKING** for a nice, well-ordered, neat job or career, just close this book now and go on to another type of life work. But if you want to be in the center of all that is happening—no matter what part of the job you are doing—read on and find out about the most stimulating, exciting business in the modern world. Can you imagine what it would have been like if Christopher Columbus could have sent pictures of the new worlds home to Queen Isabella as he discovered them, as our current day space explorers do?

Radio and television are very young industries. They need more and more young people who believe in them to help them grow into even greater and more meaningful parts of our culture.

No doubt when you first think of working for one of these communications industries, you think of the people you see and hear every day on your local stations or on the big network programs. These performers have glamorous jobs, love what they are

doing, and make good money doing it. When they walk down the street, total strangers recognize them and often greet these performers like old friends because they are so used to seeing them or hearing them in their own homes. In a way, they really become friends. Performers are happy that people recognize them because that is what keeps them working—the acceptance of the audiences that they work for every day.

But these well-known people represent only a very small part of the men and women working in radio and television. Their appearance on camera requires thousands of people to make it all possible. These are some of the things we will be discussing in the following pages.

Let us go back to the statement about a nice, neat job. Radio and television stations operate at least eighteen hours a day in most cases. Some stations even stay on the air twenty-four hours a day. Now that requires at least three shifts of employees to keep everything running smoothly. You can see right away that it is not a job that starts at 9:00 A.M. and is all over by 5:00 P.M. so that you may go home and have dinner and work in the garden and forget all about it. No, you do not forget about it no matter when you go home, because radio is with you in the car, in the garden, and even in the bathtub. And television, while not in the car, is almost every place else these days.

Radio and television stations come in all sizes. The size is determined by the size of the town where each is located and the number of other stations in that town. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) gives permission for a radio or television station to be in business. It keeps careful watch to see



*Radio and television — where the action is*

that the rules established for the operation of each station are obeyed. Every three years the FCC reviews the operation of each station and then issues a license for continuation if all things are proceeding correctly. The FCC determines whether or not the operation of each station is in "the public interest, convenience, and necessity." The FCC has also set a limit on the number of radio and television stations in different areas and also on the number of stations an individual or company can control. The maximum number of radio stations one company can control is seven, and the number of television stations is five. You may control a radio and television station in the same town, but you may not own two radio or two television stations in the same town.

To protect free broadcasting, the FCC does not exercise censorship over the stations. There are regulations, however, regarding operating standards and certain other matters such as treatment of controversial issues, political broadcasts, and editorializing.

When you realize that almost every home in America has a radio set (in fact, three or four) and at least one television set, and that people watch television from four to six hours every day and listen to the radio many more hours, you understand the great responsibility that is involved in working in this giant industry. News and weather are two basic products that have to be fast and accurate. There is no room for carelessness of any kind or for, "I think so." What goes on the air could, in extreme cases, be a matter of life or death to someone.

As many as 700 thousand people watch local news, and that is a lot of people! Just imagine the largest football or baseball crowd you have ever seen, and

multiply that to make up 700 thousand. You will then have some idea of all the people you could communicate with every day.

In radio and television, the stations do not have anything to sell that people can use or wear or take home. They only have the image of their station that is in the mind of the viewer or listener. So it is particularly important that everyone on the staff be careful, courteous, friendly, and, most of all, involved in the world around them.

When you consider radio and television careers, there are three basic areas: engineering, program-talent, and sales-administration. It is good to know something about all the various jobs. Even if your interest lies in programming, you cannot make the most of a program if you do not have an understanding of what can and cannot be done from a technical standpoint. Or if you are interested in engineering, you must know what the programming people would like to accomplish because it is your job to put their program on the air by the fastest, most economical method. And the sales department has to know about almost everything because that is where the profit and loss takes place.

If you work for a very large station, there could be as many as 250 to 300 people on the staff. The jobs would be very specialized in many cases. However, smaller stations may have a staff as small as twenty to thirty. You would then be doing several jobs combined.

Radio and television are the people that work at them every day—learn to know those people and how they think. Learn what they do and how they like it. Remember, too, that it is one business in which you just

do not start at the top. Even after school and study there is a whole new vocabulary to learn and use. And every station is different. You have to learn how it does things—and why.

Perhaps the oldest gag in the business is still the truest. To work in radio and television, “You do not have to be crazy, but it helps.” If crazy means to be flexible and good-humored and ready to take on a little extra work just when you are about to go home—or if it means that nothing really ends up exactly the way you planned it but, combined with the ideas of others on the staff, a little better—if it means that no one is an island but everyone is very dependent on every other member of the staff—or if it means that no two days will ever be alike or dull or predictable, then you will understand why so many people would not have it any other way. Once they have a job in radio and television, many people just cannot work any place else because they want to be where the action is twenty-four hours a day.

Now on to specifics and some idea of what makes it all work out.



## 2

# You Will Like the Work and the People

**BROADCASTING EMPLOYEES**, for the most part, like their work and are happy with their careers. Several years ago the National Association of Broadcasters made a survey of people working in this field and 94 percent reported that they were well satisfied with their salaries, fringe benefits (which included pension plans, hospitalization and, many times, free tickets to entertainment events in town), working conditions, and the policies under which they operated. Fellow employees are usually friendly and stimulating because they are outgoing people who like to make friends.

In small stations wages are moderate but generally higher than in other businesses. And even in small towns, on-the-air people with a large and loyal following can earn substantial amounts of money.

In large towns the potential is even greater because the performers and top sales representatives are virtually in business for themselves. Their earnings depend on how hard and how long they work, and all wages are above average in the higher bracket jobs.

Starting jobs are in the same salary range as comparable jobs in other industries. They are often much more fun and more interesting than other entry level jobs for the young person just starting to work.

There are some special traits that employers look for beyond the usual characteristics of honesty, loyalty, and hard work. But a word for loyalty here: broadcasting is a very competitive business and sometimes even the slightest word can tip off a competitor to station plans—and be disastrous to the future success of some program or promotion of the station you work for.

Now here are some special qualities that are especially desirable in all employees, be they stenographer, sales representative, maintenance worker, or manager. Remember the work is creative, always in the public view, and—when there is an emergency in programming, technical, or news departments—nothing in the world can move as fast. You have to be enthusiastic; if you do not like the challenge of the business and do not really want to be in it, you will be unhappy. You have to see the need for your job and your part in the whole picture.

In no other industry is public relations so important to every staff member. When you work for a station, you are that station to all you meet. They will tell you what they think of the programs, and what they like and do not like. This not only includes time on the job, but during your social hours and at home as well. For the people you meet, you may be all they know of station WXXX in everyday life.

You need a sense of humor and a balanced temperament. Someone once said broadcasting is “show business with a stopwatch.” Everything is geared to quick



decision and quick action. Frequently you are working under pressure from that clock and you cannot just stop it and get caught up. You are working with others under the same pressure and there is no room for sulks or pouts or self-importance. The only important thing is to get the show on the air on time and off on time—and get it all in without error. There are no erasers once something has been said or shown. An entire station can be jeopardized if an emergency is mishandled, so a reliable person is a very valuable one.

Initiative and creative ability are most important, but they have to be tempered to work well with others. No one can plunge ahead without coordinating all phases of an idea with others. That idea might well be changed for the better after talking it over. And one more thing—commercial broadcasting is an advertising medium. Sponsors pay the bills and salaries that make it all possible. Their interests have to be considered at all times.

We will go into educational preparation more thoroughly with each job exploration. However, a word here might set it all in place. You can get a job in radio or television without a college education but, unless you are very good at learning on your own, you will go farther and faster if you have one. Sales and management skills are becoming more sophisticated every year. The people you contact in business are largely at the management level with higher education as a part of their background.

You are also communicating with audiences that demand more and more educational know-how. In order to supply these needs, you have to have unlimited sources. The more things you know about—



*The cast of "The Electric Company" uses imaginary characters to help children all over the United States learn to read*

but are not necessarily talented in—the better equipped you will be for the exciting future of radio and television. In no other business is there such a future for the “jack of all trades,” for the person who likes everything and wants to know about it. In that audience of 700 thousand people we mentioned earlier, there is everything from a student to a physics professor, to a chess champ, to a construction worker, to a seamstress, to a graphologist. You have to reach each of them at some time—in their language.



# 3

## Electronic Journalism

EVER SINCE THE FIRST news editor sent out a reporter, telling him it was not news if the dog bit the man—but it was if the man bit the dog—young reporters have been scurrying around trying to find the big “scoop.” In radio and television news there is no time lag. It is not necessary to wait to print the newspaper and spend long hours writing and rewriting. In broadcasting, the viewer or listener sometimes shares the news as it is happening with the reporter on the scene. However, most news is gathered during the day and night and reported in news programs at regularly scheduled times. For most stations, these times are early morning, at noon, at 6:00 P.M. and at 10:00 or 11:00 P.M., depending on what part of the country you live in. The 10:00 P.M. newscast is regarded as the major newscast of the day at all stations. It is usually longer and more detailed than the others, which are intended to keep everyone up to date but not as fully informed as the final wrap-up. Many stories will be used on all four programs, but rewritten for each new audience.

The news department is the most exciting place in the station. And here, most of all, the "big rush" is on all the time. In large stations many people are scurrying around writing, editing, and timing the stories. In small stations the news department may be one person and a teletype machine that gives local, national, regional, and international news ready to put on the air. This works only for very small radio stations with no competition in the town.

News reporters and photographers have to go to legislative sessions, unveilings, queen crownings, civic luncheons, fires, murders, hold-ups, wars, and auto accidents. Before you decide on this job, look into your own mind and be sure you have the stomach for it. Yes, stomach. A lot of news is not very pretty. If you cannot stand blood, the sight of a child writhing in pain, an old man burned beyond recognition but still alive, or the great sorrow in everyday tragedy, forget it now. In addition to your own strength, you have to practice good taste in the extreme and not play on a moment of personal suffering to get an exciting story for your station.

You must know the laws regarding invasion of privacy and the laws on alleged acts of violence that can affect the future trials of accused criminals. More and more television and radio stations are having news stories and film footage subpoenaed for courtroom use by attorneys for the defense as well as for the prosecution. The job of accurate reporting becomes more important every day.

There are always people waiting in the bushes to sue your station if they feel you have damaged their reputation. Therefore, if you should uncover a story about some company or person who is cheating the town or

the state, you have to be sure it is true before you put it on the air. And to make sure, you must have a pile of documents that back up your story or you will have trouble. Rounding up these documents sometimes takes a long time.

For most reporters, however, the rewards of the job far outweigh the problems. Susan Anderson, a television reporter in Chicago, says in *Women in Television*: "I love the possibilities of my job. I love working on the streets. I really don't think I'd like being an anchorperson. I love shooting film. I am crazy about the visual aspect of the business."

More and more television and radio stations are requiring a journalism major for their reporters. Depending on the size of the station, experience is very important. Reporters go out and get the story, usually working with a camera operator in the case of television. Then they come back and write it for broadcast. Many stations do "on the spot" film reporting. That means the reporter researches the story before covering it and then reports on film right at the scene—and only writes opening and closing material after returning to report to the news director.

The news director is in charge of the entire news operation. He or she schedules the stories to be covered and assigns the reporters and photographers to work on them. News directors usually come up through the ranks and can cover a story as well as any reporter. They have the last word in all decisions.

News directors work with station management on policy and future planning. They are responsible for the expenses of their department and the income of their staff. All news phases of the operation clear through the director.

In television, you have a news photo department that is part of the news operation and reports to the news director. There is usually a chief who is responsible for processing the film, editing it, and running that part of the department. The chief hires photographers who have a good background in 16mm film and video tape. They have to know color work and be able to shoot "takes" every time. Film is very expensive and time is even more valuable, so the television news photographer has to get the picture on the first try. You cannot run that fire or crash through a second time. Most stations have photographers in cruise cars eighteen hours a day who can get to the scene of a story in short order and get back to the station with the film. Colleges are now offering courses in news photography. As the field becomes more sophisticated, it will be increasingly necessary to have that college degree to go into the career.

When a photographer comes rushing back from a story, the film is immediately developed in large processors. These machines have cut down the time to develop color film to about fifteen minutes. The person who operates this equipment has to be highly skilled because if the film is ruined, that is it!

In recent years the portable video-cassette recorder, otherwise known as the "mini-cam," has been widely used in television news photography. As many as half of all news stories at some stations are now recorded on video cassettes. Stories recorded on "mini-cam" do not need to be developed in the processors and are ready to go on the air as soon as they have gone through computerized editing.

For a local station, absolutely nothing is sweeter than to have a story of national importance and to get that

call from the network. Then the local film story is either air-expressed to New York or Chicago or is fed from the local station to the network for the national news. The photographer and the reporter on the story become network correspondents for that day, and their work is seen all over the country.

The strange and sometimes amusing thing is that the weather is the subject of most local stories going national. There is nothing as newsworthy as a bad flood, tornado, or snowstorm. In season, politics run a close second when candidates for federal offices are campaigning around the country and say something locally of national interest.

For many, many years newspapers have had an editorial page that you can read or skip depending on your age and interest in community affairs. It gives the newspaper an opportunity to express an opinion on an issue of current interest. And this is a luxury enjoyed only on the editorial page. Good reporting does not allow for opinion—only the facts. Now radio and television stations have been encouraged to include editorials. For this they hire people who are familiar with the problems of the city, county, and state and have wisdom in moral issues. These people write and, usually, present one or two minute editorials during or just after the regularly scheduled news programs. What the editorial writer says must be approved by the management of the station because the management has to be prepared to stand behind the opinion expressed.

Dorothy Fuldheim, a television news commentator in Cleveland for thirty years, prepares three editorials and two news commentaries each day. She has talked about everything from inflation to the difference be-



tween leaded and unleaded gasoline. During her long career in radio and television, she has interviewed Hitler, Mussolini, Nelson Rockefeller, and Bob Hope.

Like editorials, documentary programs also can accomplish good things. Documentaries are normally produced in the news department. They take a problem and explore it in depth. This requires a great deal of research and frequently means interviewing many people to learn all sides of the question. Documentaries have to present different viewpoints and do it honestly. They often feature the most outspoken people who have taken sides on the issue in question. If the station is large enough, it usually has a special section of the news department devoted to these programs and again it includes a highly skilled reporter, camera operator, and research assistant. Many times they prepare all the elements essential to the program and then work with the top newscasters to narrate and put the entire thing together.

The days of the dull documentary program are gone. Now they have to be dramatic and interesting as well as informative. Why? Because if you put out a dull product, the viewer or listener will just turn it off; you will be talking to yourself and maybe a relative or two who knows how hard you worked. Here, more than any other place, show business comes out in the news area. A documentary has to be well done and well produced to keep the attention of the audience so they will stay with you and help do something about the problem you are presenting—or at least understand and be aware that the problem exists.

In parts of the country where farming is an important industry, the larger stations usually have a farm director. This job is more likely to be found at a radio

station than a television station. Farm directors usually have degrees in agriculture and have worked in some phase of the county or state agricultural extension system.

They write and present their own copy and know the farmers and their problems in their area as well or better than anyone around. Farm directors usually have their programs in the early morning hours—would you believe 5:00 A.M.? They must be able to talk at luncheons and dinners and communicate with the farm people and their suppliers. If there is an important farm story, they frequently present it on a regular newscast as the “authority in residence.”

With increased interest in the stock market and things financial, there is a growing place in broadcasting for someone familiar with that field. While the Securities and Exchange Commission has very strong regulations on what reports can be given on radio and television, it still allows for much information on local companies such as personnel changes or expansion plans. Added to this are the ticker tape reports of stock prices in a given day, and an analysis of the economy of the country and how it affects the viewer's pocketbook. Again financial reports are most often a part of the regular news programs or follow them immediately, depending on the town and its interest in the subject. For example, it is more likely that New York City would have this type of program than a town with five thousand people.

And then there is the sports department. Sports people are attached to the news department and have one big advantage. They usually know when something is going to happen and can plan on being there. However, if a baseball player takes his glove and resigns or if a

manager is fired, the sports department probably will not know ahead of the actual event.

For the most part, sportscasters report on game scores and highlights of games and interview stars and coaches during regular sports news shows. They also do play-by-play reports of football, hockey, baseball, basketball, and everything else that comes along from golf to soccer to jai alai. So, the people that work in this department have to be interested in all sports. If they show the least preference for one sport over another, they probably will have a whole group of fans down on their heads waving arms, bats, and hockey sticks.

There is usually a star sportscaster and a "color commentator." This is true for both radio and television. It helps sportscasters to have a good memory for facts, faces, and little-known details. If you know what year the Yankees won or lost the pennant and who pitched in the third game of the Series in 1943 and can recall it from your memory when you need it—you are in great shape. The ability to think and to talk on your feet without a script or notes is merely standard equipment. A colorful vocabulary is absolutely essential. Even giving scores becomes a workout for verbs; you cannot simply say New York beat St. Louis, Minnesota beat Kansas City, etc. It has to be New York "sneaked past" St. Louis, Minnesota "clobbered" Kansas City, etc. Listen to the men and women in the business and listen carefully, not only for their knowledge of the sport they are reporting but for the variety and color of the words they use. The people in the sports department are constantly asked to act as master of ceremonies for civic luncheons and dinners and for groups interested in sports. Many times they are the principal speakers, which is good for their careers and for their

stations. The people in the audience are used to seeing and hearing them, and they like to meet sportscasters in person now and then to talk to them and exchange some little bit of information.

In *Women in Television*, Lee Arthur, a television sportscaster in Pittsburgh, has some advice for women interested in getting into the field. "Go through college. Do the college radio or television station trips. Cover your college sports. If you decide to go into sportscasting in junior high or high school, start writing little reports. Just learn it, learn it, and learn it."

The only reason a lot of people turn on a newscast is to get the weather for the next day, perhaps to see if the picnic they planned for that afternoon is going to be rained out. And for that reason, the weather reporter—or meteorologist—is quite an important part of the staff. He or she works closely with the city, state, and federal weather bureau people. Some stations have their own radar equipment to back all this up, and include a shot of the radar screen in their forecast programs. Probably no one on the air takes more good-natured kidding than the weather reporter. People cannot resist reporting that they just shoveled four inches of "partly cloudy" off their sidewalk . . . and why didn't they have a clue it would happen?

And what about the top job in the news department—the person on camera—the Barbara Walters or Walter Cronkite types? Every station in the nation has at least one newscaster and many have a whole stable of them. They usually have a background in journalism, speech, and public speaking. Many have theater backgrounds. They are the first to admit that without a whole crew of reporters, photographers, editors, etc., they would look pretty bad. But without the star, all



*News reporters often interview people in government. Here correspondent Barbara Walters questions former President of the United States Gerald Ford*

©1978 American Broadcasting Companies, Inc.

the work of the background people is down the drain, too. Nowhere else is it so important to please the audience. The audience has to believe, like, and quote the newscaster. He or she has to be their friend, report bad and good news, share a chuckle or a tear, and most of all never, never misinform them.

Where do you start to work in a radio or television newsroom? Usually as a dispatcher—a person who monitors the police and fire department radios twenty-four hours a day. The dispatcher also is in constant communication with the news department's cruise cars and relays information and assignments to them. It is a low person-on-the-totem-pole job—but if the dispatcher misses a fire or a murder, and the competition gets there first, he or she might as well take up disappearing. Or you can start as a secretary or file clerk. No matter what job you end up with in news, do not apply unless you can type. Get that little skill into your head early and keep it in good practice because there is no room for a reporter who cannot write a story fast and accurately.

News, weather, and sports—and all related jobs—are the bread and butter product of television and radio.



# 4

## Sales and Advertising Information

**RADIO AND TELEVISION** salespeople sell time. They sell it in various sizes: ten seconds' worth, twenty seconds, thirty seconds, one minute, five minutes, ten minutes, thirty minutes, and an hour's worth. The price depends upon the time of day and the popularity of the program. It sounds almost as ridiculous as trying to explain baseball to someone from Mars. Customers who buy the time have nothing to show for their money on the day of the sale except a contract and some written copy. And that copy explains in glowing words the wonderful product the customer is trying to sell to the large number of people listening to radio or watching television.

Customers measure the success of their purchases by the number of items they sell, or the inquiries they receive, as a result of their advertising. Billions of dollars are spent each year by customers (including the largest corporations and the furniture store on the suburban corner) to advertise and promote their products. Each year radio and television are claiming

a larger slice of the advertising pie, which also includes magazines, billboards, and newspapers.

Every station has a sales manager; very small stations have only a sales manager. Large and medium-size stations have a general sales manager, a local sales manager, and a national sales manager as well as a staff of salespeople.

People in sales have to have a complete knowledge of their station and its programming. They must also know a great deal about their market area and the general make-up of the people in it.

The sales department can mean the difference between a station making money or losing money. Remember that good business practices are particularly important in radio and television because the product—time—is not something that customers can hold in their hands and judge for themselves. While a super salesperson might be able to sell the worst program time on the station to a customer and be delighted at the sale, he or she would damage the reputation of the station. Customers have to get good results from the time they buy.

One of the most valuable tools of the sales department is good research, and we will cover that in the next chapter. Research methods now tell us what sort of people listen to what programs. Salespeople have to advertise their customer's product to the right audience. If their customer wants to advertise banking services, the salesperson should sell time on a program watched by people interested in finances, such as the nightly news. Another good example is the beer commercials that are shown during sports events.

All sales personnel report to the general sales manager. He or she makes sure that the correct price—or rate—





*A television salesperson must be able to match a customer's product to the right program audience*

is charged for the time. General sales managers are responsible for hiring and firing their staff. They also have a hand in the station's program decisions because if a program is not successful in getting an audience, they cannot sell it. It will not do the job for their advertisers, and they care about that. They have to look at the total sales picture and keep overall management and ownership informed.

National sales managers work with the national sales representatives who sell time for their stations and other stations to nationwide advertisers. Nationwide advertisers sell their products—such as shampoo, automobiles, or soft drinks—all over the country. National radio and television sales representatives have offices in the major advertising centers—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, or Detroit.

Local sales managers are responsible for the local sales staff. Their job is much the same as that of the general sales manager except on a local level. Usually they deal with accounts within a fifty-mile radius of their stations. These accounts might include nearby restaurants, department stores, florists, supermarkets, and furniture stores.

Local salespeople are assigned a list of accounts to call on. They submit schedules and prices to their customers and work within the advertising budget of their clients. In this way they service the account. The most successful local salespeople almost become members of their customers' staffs.

Backing up the salespeople and managers is the sales service department. These men and women keep careful watch so that competitive accounts do not immediately follow each other. Two toothpaste sponsors do not want their commercials one right after the other.

The sales service department keeps track of what is sold, and what is for sale. This is a place for people with great attention for detail and an aptitude for math. Mistakes here can be very costly, especially at a large station with high rates for time. One thirty-second announcement missed could cost the station as much as fifteen-hundred dollars. On a national network a one-minute commercial can cost as much as 250 thousand dollars. Once the time is gone, it is gone. You cannot stockpile it.

Some stations have a merchandising department working with the sales department. These people back-up the time sale by writing letters to the customer's retail outlets, for example. Merchandising lets retailers know that a certain product will be advertised on the station in the next few weeks. If a nationally distributed soft drink is to be advertised, merchandising tells local supermarkets, drugstores, and other retail outlets where the product is sold. Then the retailers can display it and be sure that they have a good supply of the product on hand. Merchandising also provides signs to be displayed in the stores to call attention to the product as advertised on their station. Many times they arrange contests or public appearances for the actor in the commercials for the product. They have to be creative, write well, and work closely with both sales and the customer. Their efficient operation can increase sales in many instances. It is what is called a "supporting operation."

Radio and television sales personnel are becoming more and more efficient. Improvements in research are supplying them with more and better information—and sales personnel are taking greater responsibility every year.



# 5

## Who Is Listening, Who Is Watching?

RADIO AND TELEVISION are first of all for entertainment—right? When you go to a baseball game or a football game or a movie, you judge the success of the event by the number of people there. If no one attends, the sponsors of that event soon give up. It is the same way with radio and television programs: if no one—or we should say very few—tunes in, the program is dropped.

But how do you find out if you have an audience? There are two major services that supply this information to the station. It is their job to provide stations and networks with accurate audience information. Several methods are used to do this. Many of you have had what is called a “diary” in your home. You fill in the programs you watched or listened to and who in the family watched or listened.

There is another method called a “coincidental survey.” Translated that means the research firm has hired people in towns and suburbs to call many different homes during certain hours, usually 8:00 A.M.

until 10:30 P.M. The callers ask what the people are watching or listening to. This type of survey has become less popular in recent years and is considered to be less reliable by some research people.

With the help of computers the information gained from these surveys has become highly specialized. You can find out some very specific information about the audience, such as how many are adults, how many are women between the ages of eighteen and forty-nine or eighteen and thirty-four, how many are teens, and how many are children. Further studies can reveal the income of the viewers. In addition, you can determine their education level.

The very complicated name for all that information is demographics. And these facts and figures have become important sales tools for stations around the country. Most radio and television stations have at least one person in the research department. Many have a large staff that supplies management with information taken from the various surveys we mentioned earlier. This information helps management decide what programs to show at what times.

Now advertisers can pick the program that appeals to the people who will buy their product. They have much better aim. For example, a newscaster on a news program makes a great deal of difference as to who will watch that station. One station might have a newscaster who appeals to the younger audience—and also to the college graduate viewer, while the competition, with an equally high rating, appeals to the over-fifty audience and the less educated. Research can guide the time buyer into the proper audience selection.

To be a research specialist you should have a good, sound background in math, statistics, and research



*The use of computers has made sales research a highly specialized job*

methods. Accuracy is again very important. It might be absolutely fascinating to a researcher to find, for instance, that more women watch "60 Minutes" than "Charlie's Angels." And that information could be a tremendous help to a hard working salesperson who is having a hard time selling announcements for "60 Minutes"—even though they are much less expensive than the "Angels" time.

On the other side of the coin—you cannot build up a story when there is not an audience. One researcher has been quoted, "It won't do you any good to have the biggest midget."

Research is just beginning to realize the job it can do. It is a field that has far to go.

Many independent research companies are being established to provide information "in depth" to both stations and advertisers and their ad agencies. One company hires out its staff to local stations. Staff members do nothing but travel from city to city, interviewing the audiences of stations that have hired them. The interviewers attempt to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each station by talking with the people who listen to or watch it. This research has changed some stations' practices and attitudes completely, resulting in higher billing and skyrocketing ratings for the stations involved.

Research is not a place for someone who would rather be a performer, but for someone who likes details it is particularly rewarding. The salary is good to start with and can grow and grow.



# 6

## An All Electric Job

OF ALL THE JOBS available in broadcasting, probably the only one that you absolutely have to have advance training in is that of technician. One false move and the station is off the air. Working with such high voltage could also put you out of the picture for good, or at least for awhile, if you were not sure what you were doing. This job has been done mainly by men—but women are entering the field in increasing numbers.

In order to supply the best possible information on technical jobs we consulted with John Sherman, former director of engineering for WCCO radio and television in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is regarded as one of the leaders in the industry and has maintained the highest standards of operation. He earned his degree at Carnegie Institute of Technology and, after some time as an inspector for the FCC, joined the staff of the station in 1936.

His words are well worth careful attention if this phase of the industry is your cup of tea:

“To qualify for a position as television studio or trans-



mitter technician, there are three routes you can take: the college electrical engineering route, the television trade school route, or the personal experience route. If you are interested in a technical career and can afford to attend college, you should do so by all means. In college you should study electrical engineering, math, or any course leading towards electronics knowledge. During college, try to get a part-time job with a radio or television station or with a closed-circuit television activity. If you cannot afford college, the next best path is attending a trade school that specifically teaches television and radio equipment operation and procedures. If in high school you are especially eager and have aptitude and interest for electronics or other radio equipment, you may decide to train yourself for a technical career. This is often the most difficult way to get into this field.

“Any television or radio station has a chief engineer. He or she is responsible for the design, construction, and installation of transmitting equipment, antenna towers, and antennas at the transmitter building site—and for the installation of studio technical equipment, including cameras, projectors, studio and master control switching equipment, and studio lighting. The chief engineer also is in charge of supervising the technical staff.

“The chief has assistant engineers for the television or radio studio and its transmitter. In general, these assistant engineers are responsible to the chief engineer for the installation, operation, and maintenance of the radio or television equipment at their particular duty stations—including the work schedules for the technicians who work there.

“Working under the chief engineer and the assistant

engineers are various technicians including camera operators, remote camera operators, technical directors, audio technicians, projectionists, video tape technicians, transmitter technicians, and sound effects technicians.

“The camera operators know the design and operation of television cameras so that they can help the control room technician in the set-up of the cameras and, during an audition or a live program, operate the cameras smoothly. All camera movements during auditions or live programming are directed by the program director from the control room over an intercom system to ear-phones worn by the camera operators.

“Before a remote telecast such as a football or baseball game begins, the remote camera operator assists the technical supervisor with the installation of camera cables, microphones, and other remote equipment at the stadium. The camera operator also operates the camera during the telecast.

“Technical directors work mostly in the studio control room. They adjust the camera control units before a television audition or a live program to get the best color pictures from the camera. During an audition or live program, technical directors supervise the camera adjustments and selection of lenses. At other times they assist with the repair and maintenance of cameras and other studio television equipment.

“For every studio or remote television program, many microphones are used to pick up the voices, music, and other sounds of the program. On large-scale television productions, such as “Saturday Night Live,” as many as thirty microphones may be used. The audio technician must see to it that the microphones are set up at the proper places. Probably the most difficult

audio installation for current television programming is required by the Lawrence Welk Show. For this show, it must be possible to feature single instruments from the large orchestra when desired by the orchestra director or the program director.

“For the programming of feature film shows, news items, and commercial spots, the projectionist must load the proper film into one of the many projectors and notify the program technical director. He or she selects the controls for either magnetic or optical sound. It is also the duty of the projectionist to recommend the purchase of spare parts and repair equipment for the projectors so that, in the event of a failure, they are not out of service any longer than necessary.

“Most television stations have anywhere from two to a dozen very expensive video tape recorders and playback units for the prerecording of television programs, news items, and commercial spots. It is the duty of video tape technicians to be completely familiar with the operation of the expensive video tape recorders and playback units (each worth more than 100 thousand dollars). They must have full knowledge of the video tape timing methods used so that portions of a program may be located and re-recorded or played back as scheduled. In addition, video tape technicians must have full knowledge of the design and operation of these video tape recording units so that they may assist when necessary with their repair and maintenance.

“In smaller cities the radio studios and transmitters are almost always at the same location. This is usually not the case with television stations, particularly in the larger cities. The transmitters and antennas must be located on the tallest building available or on a



*One of the technical jobs in television is that of the video tape technician*

tall steel supporting tower on the outskirts of the city in an area called an 'antenna farm.' Transmitter technicians' duties include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the television or radio transmitters. The receiving end of the microwave equipment that transmits remote programs from the location to the studio also is usually at the transmitter location. The transmitter technician must be familiar with microwave equipment so that the remote picture will be properly received at the television studio.

"Except at large network headquarters and studios in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles, the sound effects—such as a phone ringing or a car honking—used on programs are generally obtained from pre-recorded records. However, on network television programs, particularly of the daytime 'soap opera' variety, a sound effects technician creates the sound effects 'live' using various gadgets. This position does not require a technical knowledge of television studio or transmitter equipment and is generally classified as a non-technical job."

There are many careers in the technical field—and perhaps one is waiting for you.



7

## Services Business Cannot Do Without

**THE FIRST CONTACT** the public has with radio and television on a person-to-person basis is with the switchboard operator or the receptionist. As was mentioned before, broadcasters have nothing to sell but goodwill and good treatment. These two people, then, are extremely important. It is the job of the telephone operator to be friendly at all times and as quick as possible in handling calls. Both parts of the job can be very difficult sometimes. Callers are not always friendly and their questions are not always easy to answer.

Unlike other businesses, telephone service is not limited to answering a call for Mr. Smith and transferring it to him. People call radio and television stations to find out the time, the temperature, and "will it rain?" They also want to know if the Kentucky Derby will be broadcast and at what time. Or if the station is carrying some special programming like a presidential news conference, they ask why you are not carrying their favorite soap opera. And these latter callers can get pretty worked up, so patience is a big asset.

In many stations these jobs are well paid and highly valued. The receptionist who can make the smallest advertiser feel like the biggest spender in town is a gem. He or she can be the difference in making a visitor to the station really feel welcome—instead of tolerated.

The mail room is an excellent place to start work in a very large station if you do not have any particular skills or really do not know what area you want to settle into. These people are responsible for sorting and distributing all the mail—and there can be car-loads of it.

Often the job involves going around the city to pick up copy and props from advertisers. Here again, the mail room people represent the station and their courtesy and good work is noticed.

Back to the large volume of mail. When a commercial invites viewers or listeners to write in for a recipe or booklet or free coupon, someone has to handle their letters. These letters must be carefully sorted and counted, and forwarded to the advertiser for answering. Many times a mail offer is used to tell how many people are in the audience of a program, so a careful count of the mail is necessary.

At the end of the day all outgoing mail has to be properly stamped and delivered to the post office. In the mail room everyone on the staff seems to be your boss, but it is good experience and you do get a look at the complete operation in the course of the day.

Another good starting point is as tour guide in a larger station. Tours are the school children's delight and a good guide can make it both fun and a good learning experience, too.

Then there are the "invisible people" who come on



*A friendly receptionist or switchboard operator can make all the difference*



duty late in the afternoon to empty overflowing wastebaskets and scrub up the well-used floors. Again they contribute a share to the total that cannot be undervalued. Management can pay out large sums of money for beautiful interior decorating and buy handsome office furniture, but it has to be maintained.

The purchasing department keeps the supply of paper, pens, pencils, etc., available. It is also interested in keeping track of the newest and the best products on the market. In the smaller stations this job is frequently combined with another. However, in a very large station or a network it can be very costly to the management if purchasing is not properly handled.

A print shop may seem out of place in the electronic broadcast business, but this can be a secret weapon for many stations. Frequently sponsors want to send out printed postcards and letters calling attention to their programs and seem to think this is something that the radio and television station should provide. They sometimes do. Schedules also have to be printed as well as stationery and special reports. When the volume of printing is great enough, it is much less expensive and much faster to have it done in your own shop.

In small stations some of the jobs outlined in this chapter are combined or do not exist at all—but in a large station they are good beginning experience.



# 8

## Tell Them You Will, Are, and Did

**THAT TITLE IS THE** formula for promotion. It is the best one around—mostly because it is so simple. If you listen and watch very carefully, you will see what it means. When some event is coming, you will hear all kinds of announcements calling it to your attention—“Tune in next Sunday for the Super Bowl Game,” for example. Sportscasters will guess who the winner will be, who will be the first string quarterback, and what the weather will be like. There will be ads in the newspapers as well as in *TV Guide* giving the time and station. At every possible chance the station will run announcements.

Then the big day arrives and you are tuned in—watching or listening from the warmth and comfort of your home. You are a part of the whole event. You are told everything possible about the game and shown all angles of the play—even instant replays in case you turned away from an important play.

After the game is over, people still talk about the forty-yard run on the sports programs. Even disc

jockeys have a word or two on the subject. And that is promotion—before, during, and after.

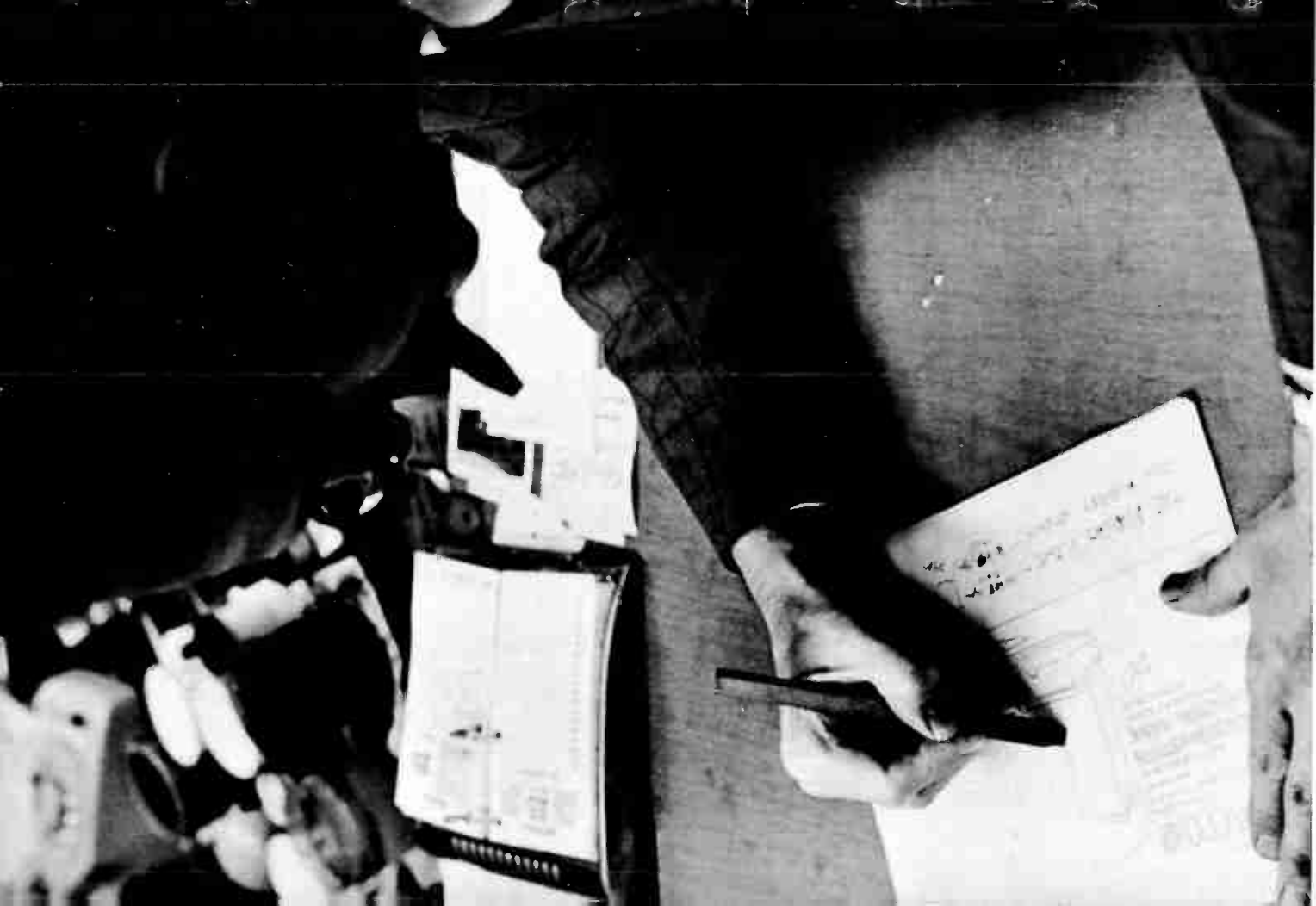
People working in this department have to be full of imagination and good humor. They have to believe in what they are selling to the audience. They should have some art background and a lot of journalism.

People in promotion design newspaper ads, produce announcements for radio and television promoting the station and its programs, and write what is called trade paper advertising. This last is for magazines and newspapers read by people in the business. And the trade paper readers are very smart about the whole thing and particularly hard to impress. Many times, these readers include possible sponsors, too.

Another job for the promotion department is to take care of visiting celebrities. A celebrity might come to a city for personal appearances or to participate in a sports event. This can be fun as well as a little different for the promotion department. If a visiting tennis star wants prune yogurt for her diet and her hotel does not have it and cannot get it, someone in promotion might have to track it down for her. Such thoughtfulness will help to insure a good interview on the weekly sports show.

If there is a city-wide project—such as a Winter Carnival or a Mardi Gras—the stations usually take part. If the radio or television stations decide to have a float in the parade, the promotion department has to get it designed, built, and staffed.

Promotion sets up booths at state fairs and lines up personalities from the station to be there to meet and talk with the public. They order useful giveaway items to pass out at these events and have the station's call letters tastefully imprinted on them.



*A promotion artist designs a newspaper ad*

Promotion works closely with the program department to be sure that any new programs are given good introductions. And the sales department regards promotion almost as a part of sales because they are so important in getting the message out to the audience.

In the past the promotion department was in charge of public relations, but this is no longer true at many stations. A good definition of public relations is keeping the station in touch with the community—and the community in touch with the station. Tom Cousins, Director of Community Affairs and Public Relations for WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, says that “everything you’re doing in the community is public relations.”

Basically public relations is playing a part in your community’s affairs. For a radio or television station, this requires even more activity than for the usual business. It is broadcasting’s job not only to do all the things that help its own good image, but to try to make sure that they contribute to the community as well.

At WCCO-TV, Cousins also is responsible for seeing that the station carries out an FCC requirement called “ascertainment.” This is an on-going survey of community leaders to find out what needs and problems can be answered through the station’s programming. When a need or problem is identified, it is usually dealt with through news and public affairs programs. At smaller television stations and in most radio stations, the station manager is often in charge of public relations and of meeting FCC public service requirements.

Informal public relations is something that everyone who works at a radio or television station has a part in. Taking an active part in community affairs and organizations helps the stations’ image and enables it to gain the trust of local citizens.



9

## Traffic in a Twenty-Four Hour Day

TRAFFIC TO MOST people means trucks and automobiles and stop signs and freeways. You might even throw in some horn honking. But to those in radio and television it means one thing—the daily operating schedule and all the details that go into putting the show on the road.

You start out with the basic schedule of programs that combines the network programs and the local programs. You list the exact length—down to the second—of each program and indicate the sponsor, if there is one. You also show if the program is recorded or live in the case of radio—or on film, tape, or live if on television. Since each program is made for a special day, you have to be sure the dates match.

After the program blocks, the announcements are put on the schedule. This gets tricky. No sponsor has ever enjoyed the thought of a competitor's product coming on the air just before or after a scheduled ad, so one of the most important jobs is to keep competitors apart. That is not always easy, especially if you do not think

milk and pop are competitive but your best milk sponsor does. Sponsors tend to speak out loudly and clearly sometimes.

In the announcement area, again you check to see if the ad is live or film or recorded and indicate which one of a series will run that day. After the commercials are placed, the public service announcements (such as Smokey the Bear) are scheduled and last of all, the promotion spots.

As many as five people, and sometimes more, contribute to this making out of the schedule—each one double checking to be sure there are no errors. After the final check is made, the schedule is printed and distributed to programming, engineering, continuity, film, and music—the entire staff. That schedule then becomes the work plan for each day for the whole operation. So you can see why a mistake could be annoying, not to mention costly.

In most television stations the daily schedule is now fed out by computer. All the information is programmed in advance, along with any last-minute changes, and the computer takes care of the rest. Key-punchers and computer programming experts are needed to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

The next step for the traffic department is to make up books that are used by directors and announcers and engineers. These contain all advertising copy, some program material, and what are called formats. Formats are the plan of a particular program. They contain the time for each part, the opening and closing announcements or introduction, and all instructions.

A production coordinator checks for sound effect records, music backgrounds, slides, and props. In television, signs to be shown on the screen sometimes have



*The production coordinator made sure all the props were there*



to be made up. Last minute copy changes have to be checked and all copy has to be read for acceptance. Contests may seem very exciting to the audience, but if they contain even a hint of a lottery they cannot be advertised on radio or television. All these things come under this thorough check before they go on the air.

During a political campaign, candidates' speeches and announcements are checked for libel, which in this case is a false statement about a candidate's political opponent. Announcements are preceded by the familiar phrase—"The following announcement was bought and paid for by the XYZ Volunteer Committee." Otherwise the station would be in great danger of seemingly endorsing a candidate.

More and more stations have one person, the operations manager, in charge of the whole traffic and continuity department. A good student with a high school diploma can be well placed in this area. Course work in English and math will be very helpful, and again some art and music is good. A general curiosity about the world around you is the most important educational tool.



10

## Seen Any Good Movies Lately?

ONE OF THE MORE popular programs on television seems to be the feature-length movie. Movies have an attraction for the mass audience that goes on and on. Full-length movies have become so popular that networks have been broadcasting “made-for-TV” movies in the past few years and have put on even longer ones that keep TV audiences tuning in for several nights of prime time.

Aside from regularly scheduled network movies, movies for TV are bought and scheduled by the film department directors of local stations. If they know their show business, they are 95 percent of the way there. If they spent their youth in the theater, it helps a lot, too.

Movies are bought in large blocks. That means in one block or package there can be some movies that are excellent, some good, some fair, and some just plain bad. In order to get the excellent ones to run during prime time, film directors buy the lesser numbers to run in fringe time—that means usually after 11:00

P.M. Film directors determine what the people in their market prefer. They must work within their budget.

One of the things they consider in buying is the cast. If the stars in a mediocre picture are good box-office, the movie will still attract a large audience. Foreign films and documentaries usually have limited appeal. Comedies and westerns are almost sure-fire—but there can be some clinkers that guarantee a flip of the dial.

Film directors negotiate and sign the contracts for these film packages and keep careful track of when they will run and how many times they are scheduled. Since the films are not kept at the studio—but usually in New York, Chicago, or California—the film director makes sure they arrive in time for checking, cleaning, and editing. After they have been run, they are shipped back or forwarded to another television station. In addition to movies, film directors contract for program series. These can be five, ten, fifteen, thirty, or sixty minutes long. They are quiz shows, comedies, network reruns, or information shows (such as programs on how to sew, garden, cook, build things, or even fish). Some “specials” are also bought this way. Variety shows featuring a name star or a background news program that gives all the details on a current event are offered.

Film directors also find the “kid shows.” Popeye and Mickey Mouse might be on the shelf right now, waiting for a new generation of kids that has not seen them. Cartoon shows seem to spring up everywhere. They can be very expensive, and film directors have a difficult job deciding which ones will appeal to that young audience. If they make a mistake in judgment, they have a long term contract in the files and a lot of money being spent for a bad series.

Sometimes old movies like Charlie Chan or Laurel and Hardy are made into serial form for young viewers. Film directors make sure that each program stops at a "cliff-hanging" spot. Cliff-hanging is an old show biz term meaning, "You're not sure the hero is going to live through this adventure, so tune in tomorrow and find out."

Then there are the shelves full of commercial announcements. Advertisers make from one to as many as thirty different commercials. They are ten, twenty, thirty, and sixty seconds long. Careful numbering identifies what each one is selling. It is in the film department that these are sorted out and put together and taken apart. Sound confusing? It is.

First of all, the filmed commercials are sent into the station. Each one is in its own special little box and, hopefully, clearly marked. Commercials then have to be checked for copy acceptance. Remember, that means to check for anything not in accord with the policy of the station or the area. At the same time, the quality of the film is given careful study. In some cases, the film has been around awhile and is scratched or the sound is not in the same pattern as the picture. The picture may be underexposed or the color might not be true because of faulty processing in the making of the print. Anything that is not up to first quality is immediately reported to the sponsor or advertising agency. They send a replacement or tell you what to substitute in its place.

After this first check, the films are filed for use as the daily schedule calls for them. Some stations put all the commercials and film shows and movies onto several huge reels. Others give them to projectionists in the control room who thread them one at a time.



*Film directors must know show business to be able to choose the right movies for the right audience*

The film department has one other basic job. That is editing movies and film programs. If a movie is too long, it has to be cut. Sometimes that means clipping out as much as twenty to thirty minutes. This requires a good sense of the plot so that nothing is lost that is necessary to tell the complete story.

All the work in the film department depends on accuracy. If the wrong commercial is shown, the sponsor will not pay for it. If a program runs over, the whole schedule is upset. These things must not be allowed to happen.

Background for these jobs should include some experience in photography and movie making, and even home movies help. A strong sense of what entertains people is necessary for the film director's job. This sense is one that is usually acquired after a good many years of experience in other departments or similar jobs.

The people working here have a good time. They can sing many of the commercials whether you want them to or not. They know how all the movies come out and the answers to the quiz questions.



11

## Programs Are the Product

**ALL THE EFFORTS OF** the people that work at a radio or television station are aimed at the final product—the program that goes on the air. While the actual planning and responsibility is in the program department, everyone contributes.

Stations put out all kinds of local programs. There are children's programs, religious programs with local churches, and interview programs that bring in civic leaders, artists, and visitors to discuss their field. Local universities provide many hours of program material.

Special sports events are important, too. Baseball and football are most popular, but basketball, track, hockey, and swimming are in there, too. Local events such as parades, state fairs, and festivals all contribute to community reporting.

Most radio and television stations are affiliated with one of the three major national networks. Stations without a network are called "independents" which means that they depend on local and film programming. Networks own some stations.

The same people who have worked in the local network affiliated stations frequently advance to the network level to produce much more expensive and elaborate programs. The network then sells the program to a sponsor and pays the local stations a part of the income. Once in a great while the network makes a portion of a program available for local sale. This gives a local sponsor the chance to be represented on a network show that is considered good.

The person in overall charge of programming is called the program director. Sometimes this job is really more like a committee of sales, production, and management. Program directors work closely with sales and management. Their job is to develop new programs, improve old ones, and put out the best mix of programs possible. They set up work schedules for directors, audition new talent, and work closely with the film director on syndicated film series. They also keep careful watch on news programming and special events.

On events of great national interest that take place locally, program directors work with the network and feed them either the event itself or coverage of the event by the local news team.

During football and baseball seasons, the station that is carrying the big league games has the added responsibility of feeding local games to the visitors' home station for viewing there. There is a great deal of detail in this job, and many staff members can be tied up for days on one broadcast.

Production or program managers usually have advanced from being a director or announcer and have been chosen for their sense of good programming and responsibility. They also have a very special ability to work with their own group of the staff.



Directors for radio programs are needed only on remotes—that is, programs broadcast from outside the studio—and the more complicated studio productions. For the most part, the engineer and announcer combine to put on a smooth running program format.

In the case of television, the director's job is more like a three-ring circus. They have to check everything on a local program before air time. Rehearsals are almost always part of the schedule. Commercial copy and props have to be there. Program content includes copy, sets, props, sometimes film clips, and a lot of people. Directors call all the shots and are in complete control once the little red light comes on. They are in constant contact with camera operators, floor workers, and talent through efficient intercoms and headsets worn by all the crew working the show. Instructions are relayed to the talent on camera by hand signals from the floor workers.

During a program using two or three cameras, the director controls the pictures that each camera is taking. Many of the shots have been planned during the rehearsal. The actual picture from a particular camera does not go on the air until the director calls for it. Directors need to be organized, calm, and cool at all times in the control room. Above all, they must maintain a tone of authority and coordinate all aspects of the program in their mind.

The invention of video tape has taken some of the stress and strain out of local productions. With its wonderful quality of instant replay, a station can put an entire program on tape, correct any errors, and run it within minutes of completion. This is very helpful for special effects and gives a sense of security against on-the-air mistakes.

Floor workers might be compared to stage hands in the theater, but their job goes farther. They are in charge of all props and sets. The sets are usually put away after each program. Sets are large flats that are like huge paintings the size of walls, only television rooms have just two or three walls. Flats are painted to look like walls full of books, or kitchen windows or living room windows or a lovely trout stream. The props and furniture for each show are put in separate bins or rooms and are not usually used for any other program.

After the floor workers set up a show, they check the powerful lighting that is required for television. The lights are controlled from one master light board after they have been properly placed and keyed. During the actual program the floor workers translate the director's instructions to the performer on camera. They indicate by hand signals whether to speed up or slow down or wind it up. They also put up signs for commercials and set up small props. If you have ever seen a coffee commercial with the table all nicely set and someone pouring a steaming cup of coffee, the job was done by a floor worker. And more than likely, he or she is pouring the coffee.

Floor workers also work on remotes. For example, when a station is doing a pickup of a football game, a floor worker is on the field—again relaying the director's instructions. Only this time, the director is in the remote truck and is trying to get the game in without missing a thing and keep the sponsors happy by showing commercials at the time-outs. The floor worker has to keep in touch with game officials to be sure the time-out does not suddenly end. Some football fans have a lot of fun in the stadium watching the person they have learned is the television floor worker.

All people working in this department should have some background in theater and stage production. They must learn the value of lighting. Poor lighting can make on-the-air performers look bad, and this can hurt ratings.

Part of the program department is the continuity department. At the network level, those in continuity write drama and comedy for the continuing shows such as "M\*A\*S\*H." They work almost as a committee, with several writers combining their talents to produce the total program. The soap opera writers work from day to day and sometimes are almost as surprised as the audience at a turn the plot might take.

In a daily series, produced almost a day at a time, there are some problems that a weekly series does not face. For example, if a member of the cast wants to take a vacation or has to leave suddenly, the soap opera writer has to write that character out of the script for a few days—and that is not always easy. Sometimes the actor doing the role gets a better offer from Broadway or the movies. The reaction is apt to be "thank you, it's been nice, but goodbye." The writer has to have the character killed or sent out of the country to explain why he or she is no longer part of the story. The writer has to be careful how this is done because the people who watch these soap operas become attached to the characters and can really whip up a storm of protest if their favorite is run over by a truck. They frequently vow never to watch the program or the station carrying it again.

At a local station the continuity department usually is limited to writing formats for programs and commercials.

A continuity writer has to know a little bit about a



*"Charlie's Angel" Cheryl Ladd introduces her husband, David Ladd, during her cohost week on "The Mike Douglas Show"*

lot of things and always be willing to learn more. Just imagine if you were called on to write a commercial for a computer. The client would supply you with pages of information and want you to use every word. It is your job to dig out the most important information and then say it in sixty seconds. Sixty seconds of copy is about one double-spaced page. That is not much when you have to make the product sound as if it is something that no one can live without.

In radio, copy and sound effects will do the job. In television you use visuals too. Visuals can be anything from a slide showing the name of the manufacturer to a film demonstrating the use of the machine. The saying "One picture is worth a thousand words" applies here. It is up to the continuity director to decide how much should be said and how much you, the viewer, should see and understand on your own.

Probably the most difficult commercials to write are the ten-second ones. Fortunately for the writers, these are used mostly for well-known products and are just reminders to customers to buy the product. They usually "sell" just one advantage of the product. There is not time for much else.

A good background in creative writing and art and a general interest are necessary for a job in continuity. And you do not start at the top. It takes a couple of years to know what will do the job—and then, even after ten years, you can be surprised sometimes.



12

## Talent Is Not Everything

**THE MOST GLAMOROUS** job—and the most difficult—is to be an on-the-air personality. Unlike the old-fashioned movie star or matinee idol, you have to live in the community day-in and day-out. You cannot appear only when you are shined up and in a perfect mood to charm the audience.

That is why television performers have to be real people. Nothing spots a phony as fast as a television camera. And radio personnel live under the microscope of a very revealing microphone.

Performers who do a daily show have to take good care of their health. Their private life becomes pretty much an open book. The audience recognizes them on the street and feels as if they are old friends. Frequently people forget for a minute that they have really never met and greet a performer from that standpoint. The best known personalities become like friends of the family. Viewers and listeners send birthday and Christmas cards and frequently call up to share a story or a joy in their lives.

It is really a twenty-four hour a day job. Great preparation goes into every program. No matter how small a part the performer plays, that part has to be complete. Rehearsals take time and are tiring. When the show is over, there is usually desk work such as answering mail and getting ready for the next day. And there are public appearances. Hundreds of luncheon and dinner clubs need guest speakers and more and more of them are going to the radio and television stations for those speakers.

Civic dinners have to have a master of ceremonies, and who could be better than the leading newscaster in town? A benefit talent show or a beauty contest needs someone to tie the whole thing together and make some small jokes. You guessed it—the guy who is Uncle Ned on the children's show would be great.

Sometimes there is a budget for speakers but more often there is not. When a performer is starting out, it is a good way to get into the community and meet the audience. It is also very good for the station when their people are in demand. Remember, they all mean the call letters to someone.

The first rung on the ladder is as a board announcer. That is the person who sits in the television or radio booth for an eight-hour shift and gives the station breaks, temperature, time, and commercials. He or she also keeps the station log for the FCC at many stations. This is the official report sent into the files and available for review. It is a very accurate record of everything that has gone on the air during a broadcast day, and lists times and content.

A good place for announcers to start is with a small station in a small market. Here they can get the most experience. Announcers must have a good background



*News commentators like Dan Rather become familiar to millions of Americans*



in speech and public speaking, and drama would be a wonderful addition.

Board announcers frequently step up to disc jockies at larger radio stations. They usually select their own music and have a variety of styles. Most often the friendly, small joke approach seems acceptable. In television board announcers step up to doing commercials on camera, their own shows, or the news. Many people have ideas for new programs, and they go to the program manager to set up an audition. It might be an idea for a travel show, hobby show, or children's show.

Right now the talk show is a popular program. The announcer takes phone calls from viewers and chats with them on any given subject. For audience protection, these calls are on a seven-second delay. This gives the station engineer an opportunity to cut off the broadcast if anything is said in bad taste. This would include swearing or libel on the part of the caller. Unfortunately these things can happen and it is the station's responsibility to see they do not get on the air.

Some announcers become newscasters or sports broadcasters. In sports, radio play-by-play is very different from television. Radio announcers have to describe everything. Many stations have two or three people covering a football, hockey, or baseball game. One announcer does the play-by-play, one gives the statistics, and one provides the color. Color means all the little newsy details and interviews with the players.

Two announcers may be used for a television sports broadcast, but the play-by-play announcer is just describing what the viewer sees on the screen.

In addition to play-by-play, sports announcers gather information for their daily sports show. This informa-

tion includes interviews with local or visiting celebrities, scores (and they better be right), banquets, and meetings of quarterback clubs. On a network the final step for an announcer could be to become a news commentator: the Dan Rather who tracks down interesting stories for "60 Minutes;" the Howard Cosell who covers and comments on sports events all over the world; or the Heywood Hale Broun who follows everything from horse races to moon shots.

These people must have assistants and researchers and secretaries, and such jobs can be fascinating. For the person who does not want to be a front runner, they are tailor made. There is a lot of fun and involvement, but not so many of the headaches in the backup role.

Larger stations have performers who host daytime shows aimed at the interests of local viewers. Usually the performers who have this job are on the air every day. Their show may be anywhere from five minutes to an hour long. Sometimes they work with a co-host. These programs include cooking tips, fashion, entertainment, and interviews on issues of current interest. They are good programs for public service announcements and events.

Many times there are interviews with visiting celebrities such as actors, singers, or civic leaders. Even dogs from the humane society find homes after being shown. These programs also explain problems in the town to the audience.

As a broadcast performer you can become well known in a little town or a big town. It depends on how hard you work. You have to respect the basic intelligence and judgment of your audience.

A good voice is the first requirement; it should be



# 13

## Accounting for Every Minute

**ACCOUNTING IS ACCOUNTING.** You have income and expenses. You have rent and salaries. You have a physical plant that has to be adjusted in value. That is all pretty standard—even to the profit and loss statement. However, in radio and television it is a little different.

Every announcement has a rate. If the announcement runs at 8:00 A.M., it costs less on television than if it runs at 8:00 P.M.—but on radio it costs more at 8:00 A.M. and less at 8:00 P.M. If it runs one hundred times in a year, it costs less per time than if it runs one time. These are small examples of the rather complicated billing problems.

All the ten seconds and thirty seconds and sixty seconds and fifteen minutes have to be priced, discounted, and commissioned. On anyone's first day in the accounting department, it must seem quite confusing. It settles down after about a week and begins to make sense.

**Bookkeepers and accountants are people who love**

warm and sincere. Unforced good diction is the next requirement. Correct English grammar and pronunciation are musts. The number of college graduates in these jobs is growing—graduates with backgrounds in history, public affairs, the arts, and government. A friendly personality is more important than being good looking.

Most of all you have to like what you are doing. If you do not, it shows instantly. No other communication form gets so close to the performer. When twenty-four inches of your face is in someone's living room or bedroom in living color, it better be the real you. Between the microphone, the camera, and the audience there is no room for less than your best.

playing the numbers game, but working in radio and television adds the spice of excitement. You run into the wildest things! Imagine meeting a llama in the elevator on its way to a children's TV program.

Part of the "no-product" problem is that the advertisers do not know if their commercials actually got on the air, unless they live in town and have nothing to do but watch and listen. A system has been set up called an affidavit of performance. These affidavits, listing all the times and dates that the service was on the air, are made up at the end of each month and sent out with the bill.

This information comes from the log that the announcer keeps and the daily schedule that comes from the traffic department.

Union negotiations have become almost a full-time job. Controllers or directors of finance include this in their job at many stations. But this varies and frequently includes not only finance personnel but high level management as well.

Insurance, also handled by the accounting department, takes on a bigger role than usual. All the normal fire, theft, building, and property damage policies apply. But what happens if there is a bad storm and the station is off the air? That is why stations have business interruption insurance, which is expensive but necessary. When a station is off the air, it means a loss of income for all the commercials that are not being shown. The expenses go on. Salaries have to be paid. This insurance provides some income to cover these costs. Well-known personalities are also insured in larger markets. Their disablement for a long period of time or death would be costly to the station until a suitable replacement could be found.



*Accounting is an important "behind the scenes" job. Computer programming has become an important part of the accounting operation at many stations*

“Negative attraction” sounds pretty weird the first time you hear about it, but when you give it more thought it makes sense. For some reason things we should not do seem to attract us. For example, we have to touch the paint to see if it is really wet. With the high voltage around transmitters, this insurance is another must—just in case someone has to see if he or she really will get a shock.

Many radio and television station accounting departments are now using computers for their operations. In the future there will be many jobs for people who are skilled in computer programming as well as book-keeping. This will be especially true in the larger television and radio stations.

Workers in a broadcast accounting department do account for every minute—half-minutes, too.



# 14

## Art Sets the Scene

WHEN YOU WATCH A television program, how often do you even notice the background? Think a moment if you can tell what is behind the newscaster on your family's favorite news program. It is very likely you cannot remember. But if there were nothing there at all, it would certainly seem empty to you.

The set department in a television station creates a setting or climate for a particular program. With the addition of color, it has become both easier and harder. The tones of grey ruled before. Now with color it is easier to set a mood with bright, neutral, or somber color. The hard part is being ready for whatever color the performer in front of the set might wear.

These sets are painted on flats that are made of fabric stretched over a light wood frame about nine feet high and from three to eight feet wide. A flat would remind you of a very large canvas for painting a picture. Standing with wooden supports from the back, they provide three walls of a room and are masterpieces of "fool the eye" art.





*Set designers fill in the background*

Most stations also have permanent kitchen sets—and everything really works. All this is the responsibility of set designers. If the station is a large local operation, they may have one or two assistants, but in a small station, they are alone. On the network level, the set staff is not only large but rather specialized.

A set designer has a good art background and usually some theater experience. This can be in the professional theater or the little theater group, in high school, college, or church. It all helps.

Working side by side with the set designer and builder is the art director. This job involves many things and gets pretty busy—especially on Friday. Friday is a busy day for everyone. Most of the staff for radio and television stations work five days a week. But the station operates a minimum of eighteen and up to twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The preparation for Saturday and Sunday and for Monday morning has to be crowded into Friday.

Back to art directors. Their job is to make the signs and slides that show the name and address of sponsors and how much their products cost. Anything that has to do with producing lettering or art is their responsibility. They have to be cheerful and creative. Art directors who can take a pretty foggy idea and come up with something better than you hoped for are highly valued. They are the ones who design and up-date the station's own identification. They know layout and are specialists in the use of color.

The art department is a wonderful world of colorful confusion. To get a job you must have some commercial art experience. It is of little use for beginners to stop in and apply until they have some good solid samples to show—and in color!



15

## Music Is Personality

**JUST AS THE ART DEPARTMENT** is the very special child of a television station, the music department is the pet of a radio station.

The basic job here is music librarian. It is a job for someone who likes music in all forms. It is also becoming a science, and a degree in library science will take you to the network level. All the records and tapes have to be filed and cross-filed. If you need Sinatra singing "Old Man River," you need it now and must know where it is.

In many stations the disc jockeys set up the program of records to be played during their own show. Other portions of the daily schedule that do not have a personality emcee are selected by the librarian. The programs most often have a particular theme such as jazz or classical music.

Radio stations take on special identity from the music they play and feature. There are the country western, jazz, rock, quality music, and classical stations. The most successful in many towns are the ones that just

play good, bright, and sometimes comedy records. These stations have the largest audience to attract because some kinds of music have only a limited appeal.

FM radio stations play series of operas and symphonies along with some lighter musical fare. The announcers have to be supplied with background information on composers and performers and some history as well. A really top-grade music librarian keeps files for this purpose.

It is now possible to buy libraries of sound effects that include everything from a cattle stampede to a rainy summer afternoon. These are on file in the music library.

Anyone going into this job will be happy and busy if he or she likes music.



16

## Administration Is Everybody

**THERE ARE SOME DAYS** in a well-run, successful station when you cannot tell the top anchor person from the board announcer. Everyone is up to their ears in work, all working toward a common goal of getting the show on the air. Of all the businesses in the world, broadcasting is very near the top in the quality of shoulder to shoulderness.

It is still a very young industry. Fresh ideas can come from a beginning researcher as well as from the program director. That is why a good station manager listens to everyone on the staff.

The road to that top office usually runs through sales, promotion, programming, engineering, or finance. And if you noticed that covers almost the whole business, good for you!

Ann Berk, station manager of WNBC-TV in New York, started out as a copywriter in radio. Within three years she was manager of the entire radio advertising department for NBC radio. Next she became manager of advertising and promotion for WNBC-TV, and finally, station manager.

Station managers have to have excellent business ability—but they also have to be creative, or at least recognize creativity. And they had better be patient. Theirs is the last word when the program department has a bright idea and sales says, “It won’t sell.” If the top disc jockey on the station has a problem at home that is making him or her grumpy on the air, the manager has to sit down with the deejay and talk it out. Station managers get all the problems on the brink of disaster.

Managers set the operating policies of the station and then make sure that others help carry them out. They have to encourage constant updating of programs and methods. The competition is always at their heels if their station is the leader. Listening habits can change overnight. The audience will listen to or watch a top show if it grows up on the least popular station in town. That is probably what makes the whole business so challenging. You never know when you might have a winner.

In addition to all their work running a station, managers are the best bet in town to be on civic committees and in public service organizations. A well-known station manager seems to make a wonderful chairperson for the United Fund drive or a special committee for clearing a slum area. All of his or her business friends are sure that the manager can get a top network performer to speak at their twenty-fifth high school reunion or some other equally worthy event—and for free, at that.

Since most managers have backgrounds in either announcing or journalism, they are good after-dinner speakers. And since they ask their staff to participate in the community, they usually set a good example by doing so themselves.



*Station manager Ann Berk started out as a copywriter in radio*

The station manager handles all FCC relations and supervises legal issues and all labor negotiations.

This is one business where it takes a while to get to the top. A college degree is a must now. Knowledge of as many subjects as possible combined with equal portions of humanity and wisdom is the most important thing of all.





17

## Public Service Is Everybody, Too

**THE PUBLIC SERVICE** department's job at a station is like sharing your big umbrella with a friend on a rainy day. Greater and greater importance is being placed on mass communication media taking an active part in the communities in which they operate. Each year at renewal time the FCC takes a close look at what radio and television stations had promised to do—and what they actually did.

Public service is not a job for a beginner. It requires experience in copywriting and news association of some sort. Good judgment and tact in dealing with the public are basic requirements. Some call it the "good deed" department—but with respect—because it deals with some pretty serious subjects.

Its function is to provide both announcement and program time without charge to recognized, worthy groups necessary to the community. Most often they are non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross, United Fund, Heart Fund, Seeing Eye Dogs, Fire Prevention, Chamber of Commerce, and on and on and on.

Usually broadcast help is requested by the organization. Many of them already have material prepared—especially national funds. They provide the copy and slides or film, or recorded announcements for radio. Then announcements are scheduled during the time periods when the audience they want to reach is tuned in. A report is made to the organization so that it may have a complete record, including the actual cost of the time that has been donated by the station.

For those causes that have no budget or experience in broadcasting but do have a great need for help, the public service department helps produce the material. They sit down and find out all they can about the problem. Let's take a real case for an example—the Association for Retarded Children. At one time ARC needed funds to care for the increasing number of children that were not getting the proper care or instruction needed to make them useful people. Station personnel visited the existing care and treatment centers. They met with executive in the ARC organization to find out the specific needs. They checked for local and national help available to them and then put together a campaign to accomplish several reasonable goals.

Announcements, written by the station, were scheduled. Film was taken to show the special problems of the retarded—problems that the general public would not know about. After a good deal of work, a special half-hour program revealing the great aid that was required in one town was written, filmed, approved, and presented. The film was so well done and informative that it was used all over the United States by other associations for retarded children.



*Public service may mean a visitor from the Animal Rescue League*

Public service special programs frequently go a little deeper than an appeal for money or volunteers. They try to present as dramatically as they can that something has to be done to make the community a better place to live and work.

The public service department does not stop with the people actually in that office. Practically everyone on the staff is encouraged to take part and report back.

This is the person to person part of the industry. When you are a staff member, you are that radio or television station to the people you meet. You join the Advertising Club or Rotary or a church group or the United Fund as a volunteer. If you are a good, active member, you are adding to the station's public service image. You are an important part of the whole sound or picture.



# 18

## A Look at the Future

**IN A VERY SHORT TIME** radio and television invaded the homes of the world. Americans now spend more time watching television than in any other leisure-time activity. According to the experts, this is only the beginning.

Scientists and inventors are working to improve and expand service and convenience. Already earth satellites are delivering round-the-world broadcasts. It has become standard procedure to broadcast from Cairo, Paris, Rome, or Peking—live and in color. And then there is always the moon for a big remote.

Cable television, which transmits television signals into homes through coaxial cables, has greatly expanded in recent years. According to 1977 A.C. Nielsen Company figures, cable television reaches more than 10 million American homes. It has brought television to rural areas that could not support local stations and to other places that had poor television reception. For many people it offers alternative programming not available on the commercial networks.

Another form of alternative programming is public television, which as a national network is known as the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Public television has developed into a "fourth network" that provides in-depth coverage of news and public affairs, as well as high quality drama and locally based programs. Instead of commercials, public television is supported by federal grants and private donations to local stations. Women hold a higher percentage of the jobs in public television than they do in commercial stations. In the future public television is likely to expand to meet the needs of many people who are not satisfied with the quality of commercial programs. As cable television makes more and more channels available to viewers, public television will reach a larger audience.

Radio and television receivers are becoming smaller and lighter as transistorized solid-state parts come into widespread use. Portable television sets and pocket-size radios are now commonplace everywhere from beaches to ski resorts. Using video-cassette recorders, viewers are recording their favorite programs for showing at the time of their choosing. One cable television company has set up a two-way television system that permits viewers to order products displayed on the screen by pushing a button. In the future the use of mini-computers may make it possible to balance your check-book and do your grocery shopping through a cable television hooked up to a push-button telephone.

The day that you can call up grandmother on Thanksgiving and see her as well as hear her during the phone conversation is fast approaching—and almost makes one a little worried that it is getting too well organized. So stay tuned and see how it comes out in the next thirty years. Better yet, come be a part of the action.

## Glossary

Here is a sampling of some of the terms used by people in the radio and television industries. As you read more books about broadcasting, you will come across more terms. Perhaps you should start your own notebook. Since communications is what broadcasting is all about, it's a good idea for you to learn the vocabulary you'll need to communicate with broadcasters!

*Across-the-Board:* A "board" refers to a week, so this is (a) any advertising or programming which is scheduled Monday through Friday, such as a soap opera; or (b) a program or announcement that is broadcast every day, Monday through Sunday, such as the news.

*Barn Doors:* Television studios are filled with lights—large bright lights with shades on the sides, top, and bottom. These shades are called barn doors, and they fit over the lights to narrow or widen the light beam coming from each light. Before a show is taped or broadcast live, the barn doors are adjusted to get rid of unwanted shadows on people's faces, for example.

**Billboard:** The list of credits at the opening or closing of a television show that names sponsors, talent, directors, producers, writers, and so on.

**Coverage:** Both radio and television stations are limited in the area they can reach. If you go on a vacation very far away from your home, you will not be able to watch or listen to the same television or radio stations. The area a station reaches is called its area of coverage.

**Crawl:** For a crawl effect, stations use a drum or large tube with a long strip of paper listing titles, credits, or artwork. The camera focuses on the drum, and as the drum revolves, the titles seem to crawl up the television screen.

**Cushion:** A “cushion” is a part of a program that can be dropped to be sure that the show will end on time.

**Dissolve:** In a dissolve, the picture starts to fade out as another picture starts to fade in, with the two pictures overlapping for a time. A dissolve can be produced either slowly or rapidly. Dissolves are often used to indicate that the story is going back in time, or that the actor is dreaming.

**Dolly:** Cameras are attached to movable platforms called dollies. The word is also used to describe the physical movement of the camera toward, or away from, the subject—such as “dolly in,” or “dolly back.”

**Down-and-Under:** When musicians or sound effects technicians are instructed to go down-and-under, they quiet down so that speech can be heard. When the actor has finished speaking, they’ll probably go up-and-over.

**Idiot Cards:** The cue cards on which the script is written out for a performer.



**Pan:** Short for “panorama”—when a camera sweeps over a scene by moving from side to side. It gives the same effect as if you turned your head to take in a scene.

**Piggyback:** Sometimes an advertiser will divide your advertising time to describe more than one product. For example, you may have seen a thirty-second commercial that told about a cake mix for the first twenty-seconds, with a ten-second piggyback commercial about a frosting mix. Each of the parts could stand alone and be run separately, if desired.

**Split Screen:** A screen divided to show two or more pictures at once; sometimes used for “before and after” pictures in commercials, or to show many products or services at the same time.

**Teaser:** At the beginning of a program, you might see a short and very exciting scene even before the titles are given. This is a teaser to get you to watch the show.

**Voice-Over:** The voice-over is an announcer who is heard but not seen. A commercial may use slides or a silent film with a voice-over. Often, when a station displays its call letters (the initials assigned to it by the Federal Communications Commission) a voice-over announces the local temperature, and encourages you to “stay tuned.”

## For More Information

If you would like more information on careers in radio and television, check with your teacher, school counselor, and your school and public librarian. They will be able to suggest other sources of information in addition to the books listed below.

Bendick, Jeanne. *Finding Out about Jobs: TV Reporting*. New York: Parents' Magazine Press, 1976. Describes the many different types of reporting jobs in television. For young readers.

Greenfield, Jeff. *Television: The First Fifty Years*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977.

Explains television's impact on the American way of life through a pictorial history of past programs and events and media stars. Highly recommended.

Klever, Anita. *Women in Television*. Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1975. Women who have chosen television as a career tell why they chose it, how they got into the business, and what their jobs are like.

Murray, John. *The News*. New York: McGraw, 1968. A week in the life of Joan Murray, news correspondent for WCBS-TV in New York. For young readers.

Rider, John R. *Your Future in Broadcasting*. New York: R. Rosen Press, 1971.

Tells about the many jobs open to people interested in broadcasting.

Stoddard, Edward. *Television*. Rev. ed. New York: Watts, 1970.

An easy-to-understand explanation of how television works and how programs are made and broadcast. For young readers.

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Billi Haeberle was administrative assistant to the chairperson of the executive committee of WCCO radio and television, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

During her career, she served as president of the Women's Advertising Club of Minneapolis, the American Women in Radio and Television, and the Twin City Chapter of Executive Secretaries, Incorporated. She was public relations director of the Campfire Girls, regional director of the Fashion Group, and a national trustee for the Educational Foundation of American Women in Radio and Television.

Ms. Haeberle's successful and happy career in radio and television was ended by her untimely death shortly after she completed this book.