



The Deejays

ARNOLD PASSMAN

How the tribal chieftains of radio
got to where they're at

"An electronic extension of the countless traveling salesmen and medicine men who crisscrossed America during its expansion, the 'faceless' deejay . . . the pop propagandist who is the American Dream—or a nightmare of a Knight Mercantile."

The Deejays is the first full story of the tribal chieftains who manipulate—possibly create—popular taste with every spin of their turntable. It is also the history of the countrywide radio stations and the recording companies and their role in the extravaganza.

The immense growth of radio in the United States since the Depression can be traced directly through the evolution of the deejay who played records, interspersed with announcements of time, weather, and news, and—most importantly—peddled merchandise. In the beginning, he often spied for dubious patent medicines or cut-rate clothing and furniture stores. Later, as national advertisers saw the possibilities for big profits from a small investment in air time, they began buying into the recorded music programs on the air nearly twenty-four hours a day from radio stations across the country.

At first, radio stations were reluctant to shell out cash just to play records. Recording firms, band leaders, and top singers feared an adverse effect on sales. The opposite happened, with every promoter
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eventually battling to get his discs released first on top shows, paving the way for huge incomes for major deejays, and the payola scandals that rocked the country late in 1959 when adoring fans saw many of their idols toppled in disgrace.

The individual stories of the deejays are fascinating. Many of the diskers are quoted directly, talking frankly and irreverently about their jobs and bosses, tunes and trends, frustrations and triumph. Just how powerful they were, especially in their influence on younger listeners, is a question Arnold Passman explores in depth. Looking to the future, he concludes that the day of the mass audience is over and that, increasingly, broadcasters will follow the lead of such listener-supported stations as KPFK, Los Angeles; KPFA, Berkeley; and WBAI, New York, in appealing to a selective audience through true community service programming.

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THE DEEJAYS

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Introduction

PROSPERO. Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes,
and groves,
And ye that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid
(Weak masters though ye be) I have bedimm'd
The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring war; to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory
Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
The pine and cedar; graves at my command
Have wak'd their sleepers, op'd, and let 'em forth
By my so potent art. But this rough magic
I here adjure; and when I have requir'd
Some heavenly music (which even now I do)
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book.

—SHAKESPEARE

The Tempest, Act V, Scene 1

Turn on, tune in, and drop out.

—TIMOTHY LEARY

"... Tumult, son of Thunder, self exiled in upon his ego..."

—JAMES JOYCE

THE JUDGMENT POPS out of *Finnegans Wake*, from which pungent Joyce scion and Media Mahound Marshall McLuhan improvises on the electronic revolution. The idiomatic epic written, like all good poetry, for the ear, was

begun in 1922. This was the year radio exploded on the world scene but most euphorically in the United States. Completed in 1939, the primal Post Hensile Tale may already have some Joyce scholar asking:

“Did he ever hear a deejay?”

McLuhan writes that radio is “the tribal drum.” And novelist-*auteur*-diplomat Romain Gary calls mass immediate America “the baiting society” (to explain why Lee Harvey Oswald and Sirhan Sirhan in their TV delirium wasted the beautiful brothers Kennedy).

Ergo, are our ever-present and peddling arch egoshuck disc jockeys her master baiters? Or, the mercurial microphone (“Does your mutter know your mike?” inquires Joyce) their Jacob’s Ladder, are they different (enough) drummers in truth beating Time?

Or, are they “cuckoo clocks in hell,” tragically just buying time by superselling it?

Blown by his own wind between the realities of the salesman and the songwriter, the jock (critically) asks the musical question: “Nu!?” But if “poems are made by fools like me, and only God can make a tree” (technologically invalid Now), and the poet is the unconscious legislator of the world, where *does* your normal, faceless, demagogic, schizophrenic, anal-constrictive, glassed-in deejay fit in?

According to tradition, the semimythical and moral Pythagoras alone could hear the music made by the orbiting heavenly bodies. (Although never a jock, Dick Cavett, whose tube essence is out of a classic mold—the satirical approach associated with the devastatingly successful morning personality—once likened himself to “a character in an existential story who was so aware of the passage of time that he became paralyzed by the very sound of it whizzing past his ears.”)

The followers of Pythagoras came to view the universe as a giant music box, the organism as a well-tempered instrument, and all material phenomena as a divine dance of numbers. This became the link in the mystic union between human thought and the everyday world. Its perfect

symbol was the Harmony of the Spheres—the Pythagorean Scale—whose musical intervals correspond to the lapse between the planetary orbits. From this, the starting point of mathematical physics, came a creative unified philosophy and highly religious code.

Not dissimilarly, the competition of the disc jockey is dizzying and everyday Olympian, and with the speciously cabalistic kingship of the ratings offers up that long-acknowledged mystical authority of music, mathematics, and the human voice. Moreover(!), while American mass communication cannot exactly be characterized by its imagination and courage, there is virtually nothing that has not been heard on radio as it has socked into its disc-jockey phase since World War II.

As commercial radio in the U.S. closes a half-century of scatter-shot development, its prominence in the lives of every American has been suggested by Canadian McLuhan. Building from the message of the electric light as total change (“pure information without any content to restrict its transforming and informing power”), he says of “the little box”:

“The uniting of radio with phonograph that constitutes the average radio program yields a very special pattern quite superior in power to the combination of radio and telegraph press that yields our news and weather programs.”

The disc jockey, “the impresario of the love court” (and protomartyr of the Peter Principle) is the servant and sorcerer of this media mix, which makes up at least 80 per cent of all broadcast time in the United States. And the growth of radio since the Depression may be directly traced through his evolution. The fact that the notion of the jock as a serious element of American life is not a common one makes it all the more fundamental to take a look at what’s been happening.

A lotus of questions opens up in dealing with the deejay—an occupation that speaks directly to Freud’s belief in the primacy of language, an axiom that, even in his time, was beginning to fall on deaf ears. And there are as many

opinions about disc jockeys (“nobody listens to radio, but *everybody* can tell you what you said yesterday”), and the sheaf of forms radio takes, as there are products they must sell. A big one is music.

For instance, formula or format radio began in the early fifties as an extension of “The Lucky Strike Hit Parade,” a weekly national program of the ten best-selling songs. Cigarette manufacturers had flocked to a top-tunes format in emulation of “The Hit Parade” to satisfy the defiant growing pains of susceptible youth—kids who were spiralingly younger, but more mature, by the time radio extended the formula around the clock over a decade ago.

The great popularity of “The Hit Parade” from 1935 to 1958 (its decline, however, began in 1950) caused music people many headaches, mainly because of its two-to-three-week time lag in on-the-air reportage. Its full-time successor swelled out of the midlands to meet the life-and-death challenge of network television with a barrage of the leading record purchases, not always adequately derived.

Known initially as “Top 30,” “40,” or “50,” modern radio has perpetuated its conservative liturgy with a tight playlist at the lower figure (anywhere from the mid-twenties to the mid-thirties generally). It’s still the same old “Top 40” (“today’s American Academy”), but today it’s more of less.

More than fifteen years after its rise, formula radio remains one of the more controversial products of mass communication, having been called everything from “a great, new art form” to “America’s Rapid Rancid System.” One of its practitioners, John Barrett, is a young Prospero raised in contemporary radio. He has been one of its most innovative individuals as station manager of KRLA, Pasadena.

Barrett’s early career was spent at WTIW, New Orleans. He joined the Storz outlet in 1953 when “TIX” became the generally recognized premier “Top 40” station, and Les Crane, né Stein, claims to have been the format’s first franticizer.

“Top 40” came up the river from New Orleans, and nutty, dumb radio contests, which bloomed at Storz’s WDGW in

Minneapolis, clamored down the ol' Muddy. At the third annual Gavin Programming Conference in Las Vegas in December, 1968, conducted by radio's Superman, mild-mannered Bill Gavin (whose weekly tip sheet out of San Francisco is an incorruptible but somewhat overstuffed reflection of the nation's popular music tastes), Barrett said:

"Radio is the single most powerful medium of social change on earth today . . . so potent a tool for social change that there's reasonable scientific speculation that man may not survive it. . . . Radio, in fact, the whole world, is entering a new era, an era of unprecedented creative advance. In the next decade radio is in the hands of the programmers."

Except that more music and less talk is increasingly making radio an economically dictated, mechanical medium. This, in fact, *is* meeting the demands of the listening audience. But these programmers would seem to be running computers, and the live, informal immediacy of the jock, his reputed strong point, has long been, fitfully, on its way out. Why shouldn't he be also?

Barney Pip is a jock in his mid-thirties, although his audience has been led to believe he is in his post-teens. On the air he blows unnerving blasts on a trumpet, which he really can't play. But he calls himself "The World's Greatest Trumpeter," and he uses a falsetto voice, versions of which can be heard on many "Top 40" stations. Said Pip, who is very bright and sensitive and knows exactly where he's at:

"As far as the computer and my job, the audience I work with demands the truth because machines don't lie. So, if humans are going to start fooling around, they *can* be replaced by machines.

"So, if the truth comes off a little straight sometimes, then that's a value judgment on my part, rather than go that free-form route where somebody couldn't latch onto it, and say, 'Well, it is the truth and it isn't the truth, and I have my own outlook and if I want the truth I'll go to a machine instead of him then.'"

After three hundred years, modern science now finds its

electronic *cum* computer self turning on itself and returning man to the primeval state on the hairpin road of evolution. With the flux fest that is radio as constant companion, how key a voice in the evolving electronic sound is the immediate but ephemeral spoken word (McLuhan calls the spoken word "the most emotional form of communication") sandwiched around the music (another "most"—and increasingly, with stereo FM, headphones—and drugs)?

For game theorists, TV is where the money's at, but the sounds of the folk have nearly seven thousand outlets where they can break on through. The U.S.S.R. and Communist China may have the numbers, and the best Marx, but independent, decentralized radio is a prime reason they likely lag behind the U.S.A. in the joyous flight to the wired (and weird) stateless man. (Moreover, they are not known to be waxing enthusiastic.) Still, if "there's reasonable scientific speculation that man may not survive broadcasting . . ."

The word "jockey" is a surprisingly basic one to Western man. Aside from its ready definition of a horse-supported man in a race, it also refers to "a man of the common people"—and "to bring, put, etc., by skillful maneuvering; to trick or cheat; or manipulate trickily."

The label can be traced from Jacques (French for peasant), and the Battle of Hastings gave it to the Scotch as Jock (nickname for man or fellow). John, the most common of men's names, means "Jehovah is most gracious," and its Italian, Giovanni, short-handed to "Johnny," is the stem for "zany," which defines a clown's attendant who mimics his master's act.

It is no trick to view the disc jockey (and the man on horseback?) as the Fool (the source, says the Tarot, to which all must return), but the guild fools of medieval times played an important part in the spread of literature and education. They formed a branch of the troubadour organization, a hallowed force that permeated pre-Renaissance Europe. The troubadour was often joined in his travels by

an apprentice or servant called, a *jongleur* (Spanish and Provençal, *juglar*; and Latin, *joculator*), whose business was to provide a receptive setting for the poet's words.

Christian mystics of the Middle Ages cherished a belief in "The Fool in Christ" developed by Harvey Cox in *The Feast of Fools*, and Lear's Fool, who accompanied his king through the storm, is believed in some way to represent truth. Additionally, a loose coalition of outcasts and the avant-garde has made its presence felt in every dynamic culture.

In today's transition from either/or to both/and values, the disc jockey is generally seen as the butt end. However, in all his profuse colorations from formula-automated platter spinner (screaming, beaming pop to droning, honing classic) through telephone talk trustee (sideburning changling to right-wing ding-a-ling), might he not conceivably contain the seeds of a real Renaissance man?

Ranging from Falstaff and Harlequin to Dante and Poe, his high-wire, hallucinating utterances above the world's stage may not be artistry in rhythm, but is every man-jock an actor? Can he fall hard before people?

If the deejay does not readily seem to be a "holy fool," he does fill what seems to be a universal role. He creates a tumult (the Yiddish *tummler* is a buffoon, the tumbling burlesque comic, who makes a lot of noise but is said to "accomplish little") for today's musicians, as the *juglar* did for the troubadour. The jockey has *always* hilariously cleared the way for the inner-space race. The trip is desirable, and necessary, but need there be a winner?

So to call the disc jockey the Fool is to give his posture a positive hearing. With the stewing States in the lead, the jock's odyssey is perhaps not the oddest of our age, but it may just be *the* supraconsequential Joycean gig of our jangling times.

(Chaucer wrote of the jock in "The Parson's Tale": "Jangling is when a man spekith to moch befor folk, and clappith as a mille, and taketh no keep what he saith.")

For it does not take much to make the jump from deejay

to emcee—to preacher and high priest. Who, in fact, would argue that the disc jockey is not a hype priest? However, in preparing us for the music of the spheres, might he not have to become a Shem instead of a sham, a gem of a Jacob instead of a jingling Johnny? (See Joyce.)

As such, the deejay's primary responsibilities could be to restore the Fool to his privileged position and herald the advent of what Gene Youngblood in the Los Angeles *Free Press* called "the entertainment theocracy." Conversely, however, the late Dr. King once said:

"We must all learn to live together as brothers or we'll all surely die together as fools."

Actually, is the explosion of radio into the home—the easy availability of the outside world in the twenties—anything more or less than the *ricorso* or return? Broadcasting Boswell Erik Barnuow writes: "... the tower-builders reached for heaven, each in his own way," and radio has presented our shakily poised planet with a profusion of disembodied voices, throwing thunder back into the air.

What primordial memories (*and new ones*) does the disc jockey call up? Is the microphone to the deejay what the rattle was to the shaman? The antennae his totem? How true does the jock run to archetype? Does he responsively sound prototypal motifs—walk as on a tightrope, asks Arthur Koestler, the line of intersection of the Trivial and Tragic Planes?

And where in the new, initiating influence of rocking American radicalism does the twisting and shouting deejay stand and pivot? Is he, in his supreme confusion, representative of real leadership toward a postsurreal, postsymbolic, postpunning, and game-playing world?

Or is his howl just a bleat, and is he just beating his meat? Is he "merely" a public servant? Are the leaders, "alas," being led by the lead?

Despised more than admired, the disc jockey is a curiously scaled member of an indiscernible *nouveau* vulgar elite. The standards for true qualification are loose and not really subject to greatly concerned definition. Still, this

cell of inestimable sound purveyors (there are twenty thousand to thirty thousand in the United States, and, perhaps, a like number in the rest of the world), their lives sparked with insecurity and turmoil, bears striking witness to the times in which the deejay was born—the chaotic and totalitarian twentieth century.

Such a profession would seem to find ego at the crossroads—directing traffic from the hip? It has to be some ego that can believe an audience would rather hear its voice (warm as it may be) than music, and nearly every survey suggests that he say what he has to say and get out of the way.

Said former WNEW general manager Jack Sullivan of proto pop jock Martin Block:

“We did surveys and found six percent of the people listened to the ‘Make Believe Ballroom’ for Martin Block. But that was fine because he was accomplishing what he was supposed to accomplish. He was sublimating himself. He had nothing but guests on his show, and that’s how he was judged, how good was the quarter-hour on Benny Goodman, Nat Cole, or Margaret Whiting.

“Nobody told him not to talk. He’d play three records, and then hit you with ninety seconds of commercials. There’s not one guy in ten who can do this today. Block gave you 2¼ minutes of commercials in fifteen minutes. After he sucked you in, he wouldn’t let you go. . . .

“There’s no question that this generation still is listening for the music. But what they’re doing with WNEW-FM is listening the way people listened to Martin Block. No one ever objected to Block because he was so sublimated. The whole idea of the ‘Make Believe Ballroom’ and the revolving stage, ‘Here comes Benny Goodman,’ corny as shit. He still made plain by all these devices that he was going through all these machinations *‘for you, and you, and especially, for you.’*”

Sullivan added: “But talk *can* be part of a good radio station. That potential of radio is too dynamic, in my opinion, just to be forgotten. It’s a basic radio thing to do.”

Says former WNEW-FM program director Nat Asch:

"I was convinced that we as a society had reached the nadir, the absolute bottom, the lowest point of the pendulum swing, of disaffiliation. The Kitty Genovese incident, etc., pointed up the fact that we'd gone way beyond our need for privacy. And I was convinced that the sound of the human voice was a very important factor in the renaissance, as it were, of the society. . . . I was convinced the sound of the human voice was the single plus factor that would literally cause an immediate success."

WNEW-FM's "progressive rock" format has not been all that successful; not only does WOR-FM's tight "turtle neck" sound, devoted to familiarity, beat them in the ratings, but most media folk agree it has a superior sound. However, amplifying on how to hijack an audience, WNEW-FM evening rockonteur "Rosko" (who has worked fourteen stations in ten years), said:

"Every job I've ever had I've taken that same philosophical approach to it, that it is for people, and I have to find out what people want and come back into the studio and reflect it. In many cases, management has made it difficult for me to stay on, but I've never been fired. . . .

"It's attitude, and it should be giving rather than being a showcase for the personality. I just try to get involved with it, so that I am as involved as I hope the listener is, so that when the spirit moves me to inject something, it is consistent with what is today. And you simply present it.

"When I reflect on it, I don't even find myself, *per se*, in the show. George Duncan (WNEW-FM's former manager and an ex-policeman, who became head of Metromedia Radio) has said to me: 'Be yourself.' My personal groovies depend on what I have found people want. . . .

"I don't dig most jocks. I don't dig the concept. I totally disagree with making a disc jockey an artist and a celebrity. It has grown to Johnny Carson sitting with guests and talking *in*.

"I think if he had a greater talent or a similar talent of any artist he plays, then he shouldn't be a disc jockey, he should be a singer."

The jock is himself not a musician in his performances, but his orchestrating and interruptions run the full range of communication. The success or failure to “get across” is a constant puzzle and source of fulmination to himself and all around him.

And the dials this clap of thunderbolts manipulates has a computerized offspring ever peering over their shoulder. If DJ = MCⁿ, how long will it take the disc jockey to go the way of the horse?

However, the ultimate concern is with a far greater commitment, an ominous pervasiveness of seemingly somewhat lesser stature. The omnishepherding disc jockey (“aside” from those select but shaky “hit” leaders who function as powerful advance pitchmen for the high-powered popular-music industry) surrounds the public with the demand of words and music (BUY!)—to act, lest it burn in the eternal hell-fire of depression.

An electronic extension of the countless traveling salesmen and medicine men who crisscrossed America during its expansion, the “faceless” deejay—a 24-hour tout with “Average Joe” purse-suasion the likes of which the world has probably never seen before—may be the pop propagandist who is the American Dream—or a nightmare of a Knight Mercantile.

What makes this commercial conditioning more complex, however, is the role of the better disc jockeys. These are the Perelmaniacal “wake-up” mountebanks, those with the highest ratings generally, although the long-lasting, looping, and ricocheting morning “satirist” has seen his audience begin to fragment.

These anchor men seem to have as point of departure from their lesser *frères* a humorous approach. The comic style is something not at all viewed as rigid, and usually seen as anathema to propaganda. Its intent is entertainment, but quite often—because of its tenuous reliance on the unexpected—it may represent an irreverent and incisive tack.

Perhaps B. Mitchel Reed (BMR of “Who is ya leedah!? —You are my leedah?—” identity) summed it up in 1966.

Reed, who was a soft-spoken midnight jazz jock on WOR, New York, in the mid-fifties, had begun in Baltimore in 1952 by retelling his daily sessions with psychoanalyst Robert Lindner on his witching hour "Boy on the Couch" show.

In 1966 he was a swift-spielung morning man on KFVB, Los Angeles, a dying vestige of a "Top 40"-oriented station whose additional adult appeal through well-paced personalities made it a pioneering outlet as "Color Radio, Channel 98" in the late fifties and early sixties. Reed had been converted there in 1958.

By the latter time, according to the ratings, Reed's cry of leadership was not being heard by many. Reading a rather innocuous public-service spot announcement, however, celebrating National Trade Week, Reed, resurrected in 1968 as a renaissance rock jock on KMET-FM, Los Angeles, tagged it:

"Hmm, our parents only get a day; national trade gets a whole week."

In term of arch ubiquity, the "new man" as projected by that push-button enigma, the American disc jockey, gives uneasy weight to what President Eisenhower advised when asked at a 1958 press conference what people should do to reverse the recession:

"Buy."

Q. "Buy what?"

A. "Anything."

Radio is a private experience, affecting most people intimately (although ponders Fellinihil insert jock Brittain, "It sure would be nice to *hear them* laughing"), and for all we know, in the stream of secret oral teachings. Then again it may be no different from the vanishing exhaust of automobile mufflers. It may not bespeak leadership, but reflective "Give 'em what they want" does intone a mystical quality.

And the short-lived "middling" rise of the "jabber jockey" brought the listening public into the open—through a rather arduous process of busy signals, waiting, and salty sallies

and chastisement that is not as unmusical as it sounds. His flourish, by and large, rested on the ability of talented morning men who were unable to knock off the overwhelmingly dominant competition and/or those who weathered the "Top 40" tempest. Whether this is Town Hall of the Air or fully Fascist Radio only adds to the ambivalence of our times—without which myth ("something so true it is hard to believe") is impossible.

In fact, Greek mythology, which associated the horse with thunder while lightning was the whip which sped the horses on their way, tells us that the goddess Athena taught the people of Cyrene the art of taming horses. It also says the great hero Perseus, which means "dazzling brilliance," beheaded Medusa with the help of the shiny shield of Athena so he would not be stoned by looking directly at the Gorgon.

From the gushing neck wound sprang the winged horse Pegasus, whose father was Poseidon, the god of the sea and earthquakes. Poseidon's stature rivaled that of Zeus. Earlier, Athena and Poseidon were called upon by the gods to grant men the most useful boon. Athena's gift was the olive tree; Poseidon's, the horse. She won and was awarded Athens as a prize.

Pegasus went on to some great things. After he had become a constellation, his hoof struck the rising Mount Helicon, and the kick produced Hippocrene, the spring beloved of the Muses. Whoever drank of it was given the gift of poetry and song; some say it was the "Fountain of Youth."

Now Perseus, who may have fled on Pegasus to escape the other two Gorgons (although Athena, bugged because Poseidon had seduced Medusa in her temple, is said to have tamed the horse first), had an inordinately tough time coming into the world.

His grandfather Acrisius was told by the Delphic oracle that his grandson would kill him. So he shut his daughter, Danaë, up in a subterranean chamber, but Zeus entered it with a shower of gold and Danaë immaculately conceived Perseus, who grew up to be a great warrior.

His odyssey resulted in destiny's being fulfilled, and the Perseus myth is said to be the sole Grecian one in which magic plays a decisive part. At some future funeral games, it so happened that Perseus, "the personification of thought in action," was throwing the discus and he struck and killed Acrisius.

It may not really be necessary to suggest that Perseus was the first disc jockey, but a lot of jocks do come on as if they're heaven-sent. On the other hand (sort of), it is only when we step up to mythology and archetypes, new departures and man's putting worlds in motion (OMMmmm-mmmm) that the deejay takes on some semblance of evolutionary intelligibility, although his eternal foolishness might be bouncing around in a Brownian model.

In an immediate sense, much of what becomes fashionable in the United States—and, as a result, in the world today—has its inception in the playing of popular music on radio stations. The popular music of a culture is powerful medicine ("It's amazing," says a Noel Coward character, "how potent cheap music is"), and the disc jockey is smack dab in the middle, perhaps the mint, of the psychedelic movement as it mushrooms out of the electronic and molecular revolutions. He represents the thrust of a definite cultural pluralism, not unlike, perhaps, the proliferation of Oriental cults in early Christian Rome.

Carl Haverlin is a man who has lived every year of the twentieth century. From 1947 to 1964, he was president of Broadcast Music, Inc., a licensing organization that was thirty years old the fall of 1969. BMI was established by the independent radio operators to challenge the narrowing monopoly the New York-nuanced American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) had on U.S. popular music.

The new source for backwater composition took the light off Broadway and made it shine from throughout the country. Said Haverlin:

"And the music flows back to us, as witness The Beatles.

It's a vast democratization, a world democratization. It's the tempo of the Nigerian drum, and it's worldwide."

From the deejay's playing of a record, it may be only a step to Ed Sullivan, "American Bandstand," Radio Luxembourg, The Beatles, fashions, slang, truly great wealth for the performers (although not as much for most as most people believe), and a decided pervasiveness of our lives. An envelopment, which, it can be shown, has most of its recalcitrant roots (as did millennial Spain—the forerunner of the Renaissance—in its Moorish incantation, which was blasted into being by the Roman colonization of Asia Minor and North Africa) in the life of the black man and the teen-ager, from where it has rapidly filtered into advertising, the subteen, and the culture at large.

Radio was utterly explosive to the preliterate South, as it still is. But it has yet really to get its black and white residents to make music together—to share their blues. Nevertheless, Egmont Sonderling, the white owner of six AM, four FM, and two television stations, whose radio stations in New York, Washington, Memphis, and Oakland comprise the largest single group of Negro-oriented stations in the country, noted:

"Negro radio stations are the only true media of communication between black and black, and black and white, because we are there twenty-four hours a day. No other medium can say that."

Likewise, as the share of the audience slithers from a slice to a sliver (the New York City market has upwards of fifty radio stations, and the audience for "Top 40" at night dropped from nearly 50 percent to 15 percent during the late sixties), the deejay has something for everybody. And he who entertains us receives our most grateful and heartfelt approval. ("If Homer bores his audience he will not be invited to dinner again.") This has always been reflected in the image of the happy-go-lucky traveling salesman (the detached amusement of Madison Avenue?) whose witty, worldly, yet very personal approach resulted in, if not always a sale, certainly a "score."

In the vernacular, "to score" means "making it" *any way*, ranging from "illicit" success in business (from swindling to a drug purchase) to getting laid through charm alone. Radio has pushed the great myth of the magical traveling man to unquestioned heights in the form of the drifting disc jockey—science fiction's privateers. Just to hear them in constant battle may be precisely the role of the great, unwinding American public, and to get involved.

Just as there are only seven basic plots for writers, so there are only nine pigeonholes for DJs. (Actually, there are more but I chose the figure nine, because it is popular with baseball fans.) Regardless of how many thousands and thousands of disc jockeys there actually are in the world, each of them has got to fit one or more of the following categories—except me . . .

—DAN SORKIN, DJ
The Blabbermouths

The disc jockey isn't an artist. He is a vicarious exploiter of other people's talents. He's a selective exploiter. He's not creative in his own right. Basically, he does the commercials in-between. He makes it hang together.

—BILL RANDLE, DJ
Anything Goes

"IN THE BEGINNING" with the disc jockey presents more than a few problems. The generally accepted founders of the genre had more than their share of predecessors, and, as has been thrashed about, eclecticism and the lowest common denominator (not so ambiguously the blues, but country and western music will always supply the gut level in most markets) elusively vied for the major roles in the development of the occupation.

If the history of the deejay were limited only to tracing the playing of records on radio (the value of which found argu-

ments at all turns of the dial), the pageant would be fascinating and challenging enough. And, as has been said, it is practically impossible to write about any part of the music business without sounding a little mixed up.

However, out-of-date copyright laws, radio's reluctance to pay for music and talent, music's fear of radio, announcing technique, commercial kidding, an exploding sales vehicle, grass-roots growth and decentralization, ratings, who-stole-what-from-whom, slogans, contests, jingles, giveaways, formats, and on and on are propped up to take from and combine, and present from the vehicle of one man's voice. Electronic magicianship—or ersatz shamanism?

The electron tube changed everything, for it returned mankind to spoken communication. If it is the tale of the role of a new communicator, it is within the tussle of two new technologies that the story explodes. From individual imagination and incentive to corporate growth and merger, it is the root tossing and turning of the American Dream, by now the half-asleep fitfulness just before the awakening to a new reality.

In the birth days of radio, the playing of phonograph records on the air was largely a no-no. This disdain went back to that "quality" of live programming. In 1922 the Department of Commerce set precedent by granting preferred licenses to those who would not use phonograph records. Thus, the large corporations went with live "excellence" and received the clearer frequencies while the "hams" were squeezed into the lower end of the dial. The next year, the pattern was assumed as the nondiscers got the big thunder of 500-1,000 watts and got centered on the dial.

However, it appears most stations never stopped playing records, even though in 1927 the newly formed Federal Radio Commission reiterated their "unnecessary" use. Their employment briefly waned toward the end of the prosperous decade. But in 1932, at the height of the Depression, a report of the American Federation of Musicians, *The Struggle to Keep Music Alive*, showed that recordings "took up a major share of air time."

Actually, the first records on radio goes back before the

belief that KDKA, Pittsburgh, and WWJ, Detroit, have the right to fight it out for the 1920 claim of being the first regular broadcasting station.

In the winter, 1958-59, issue of the *Journal of Broadcasting*, Professor Gordon Greb of San Jose (California) State College, in an article, "The Golden Anniversary of Broadcasting," put forth the pioneering credentials of Charles D. "Doc" Herrold of San Jose.

In January, 1909, Herrold's station, as it was called (to become KQW in 1929, and KCBS, San Francisco, when it was purchased by the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1949), had its first successful *broadcast*—in contrast to point-to-point wireless communication.

Said Doc Herrold, who died in 1948:

"It was real broadcasting—how do I know? Because I had to make my own audience. I went out through the valley and installed crystal sets so that people could listen to my music. There is not the slightest evidence to show that . . . any of the early experimenters had in mind the use of their experimental radio telephone for entertainment purposes."

And Greb found ample grounds that Herrold operated programs of news and music on a regular schedule, starting in 1910. Questioning Herrold's assistant, Ray Newby, about programming, Greb got this answer:

"At first we would discuss items in the paper—just general conversation that might be interesting to anyone and we would play records."

At about the same time, Thomas E. Clark of Detroit was broadcasting phonograph records to Lake Erie steamers he had equipped with telephone receivers. Clark, who had begun experimenting at the turn of the century, had built transmitters in some Great Lakes port cities, and he was to be instrumental in the birth of the Detroit *News* station, WWJ.

Dr. Elman B. Myers is also said to be the "first" disc jockey. In 1911 he was on the air eighteen hours a day in New York City playing records.

Herrold's first wife, Mrs. Sybil M. True, believed she was

the first woman to broadcast a program, about 1914. Called "The Little Ham Program," it was made up of phonograph records she borrowed from a local music store to attract teen-age amateur-set enthusiasts.

After she played "up-to-date, young people's records," she recalled, "these young operators . . . would run down the next day to be sure to buy the one they heard on the radio the night before. . . ."

Mrs. True also said they gave away a prize in a weekly contest to encourage weekly listening. *Plus ça change, blah, blah, blah!*

Another early deejay was a Westinghouse researcher, Dr. Frank Conrad, who began talking, reading from the dailies, and playing phonograph records from an experimental transmitter in his garage—station 8XK, Pittsburgh—during World War I.

He soon began receiving postcards from listeners, some criticizing his musical tastes and requesting more variety. Some suggested specific tunes, and Conrad complied with the requests, and asked for more, since the mail gave him information on his transmitter's range.

After the war, he built another station atop the Westinghouse plant, and his audience picked up. As music shops reported increased demand for the records he played, an enlightened department store ran a newspaper advertisement on September 29, 1920, for a complete list of radio parts.

Pittsburghers responded in droves, and the ad's success attracted the attention of electrical giant Westinghouse. The result was the licensing of station KDKA in time to provide coverage of the 1920 Presidential election. Conrad grew with the station to become president of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Company.

In 1947, after everyone thought Ted Husing, a top sports announcer (at \$27,000 a year), had flipped when he became a platter spinner on WHN, New York, he crowed in *Variety*:

"In 1927, while waiting for the Columbia network to get organized, I served a fall stint at WHN, doing Columbia University football. In between times, while fooling around

the WHN studios atop the Loew State Building, I was experimenting with a Brunswick Panatrope by which to broadcast recordings.

"First we tried placing mikes in front of the speakers, but with charts supplied us by two physicists at MIT, we cut through the amplifier into our control amplifier and began popping recorded music into the air. I wonder who of today's disc jockeys can match the fact that when it comes to spinning platters the kid was out in front."

A bit late, and a dubious distinction, it would seem, for a man who said his boyhood dream was his name on an office door, underscored "Commentator." Husing added, "I'm not losing any dignity as a disc jockey." However, in his 1935 autobiography, *Ten Years Before the Mike*, he praised early programs on WJZ, New York:

"We never played phonograph records into *our* mikes, but always gave the public genuine acts."

Except that when WJZ started operating in 1922, the Aeolian Company authorized the station to use the Aeolian-Vocalion phonograph discs for makeshift radio entertainment. This was done under the general reasoning that a phonograph company would not cut its own throat by having its own "canned" music broadcast. However, because of the medium's newness, radio talent was scarce. In addition, although their use was frowned upon, it was found that it was also a good ad for the records.

For the record, at a reported near million-and-a-half dollars for five years to muse a few hours a day over the turntable ("The records do the work and I just make the announcement quietly and charmingly"), Husing still found time and energy to report on big athletic events—and try to fulfill himself in print. He left the renamed WMGM in 1955 when the sound of his voice got the best of him and the least in the ratings.

The Jesuits also make a claim to the first disc jockey. Their St. Louis University station, WEW, started in 1921 with its founder, Brother George Rueppel, playing phonograph records, with a running commentary.

The first deejay? In 1957, Lee DeForest, the "father of

radio," said he played a disc over the air for the first time in 1907. It was, he said, the *William Tell* Overture, "a lot finer piece of music than the present day bop pop you hear." The transmission came from a laboratory on the top floor of the Parker Building in New York.

"Of course, there weren't many receivers in those days," he recalled. "But I was the first disc jockey."

Not quite. The previous Christmas Eve, Reginald A. Fessenden, a well-known electrical engineer who had worked with Thomas A. Edison, astonished operators on the Atlantic Ocean with a transmission from Brant Rock, Massachusetts. Fessenden's program was mostly his singing, violin solos, and readings from Luke. But it also included a phonograph record of a woman singing Handel's "Largo."

In the technetronic society the trend would seem to be towards the aggregation of the individual support of millions of uncoordinated citizens, easily within reach of magnetic and attractive personalities effectively exploiting the latest communication techniques to manipulate emotion and control reason.

—ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

“America in the Technetronic Age,”

Encounter,

January, 1968

Something we must get through our heads is this: a poem knows no compromise, but men live by compromise. The individual who can stand up under this contradiction and act is a fool and will change the world.

—GÜNTER GRASS

“On Writers as Court Jesters,”

American Scholar,

Spring, 1969

WHEN RADIO SWEEPED the land in 1922, the music publishers saw it as quickly displacing the phonograph. Their uneasiness reflected reports from mail-order houses of deeply depleted record sales from residential districts. Moreover, ASCAP was finding it tougher to get royalty payments from the booming “mechanicals” for additional balancing income. This was even as Columbia and Victor cut their retail price from 85¢ to 75¢ in 1922, amid predictions of 100 million recordings for the year.

However, new recording companies like Okeh, Vocalion,

and Brunswick, which made and marketed the hits first at anywhere from 20¢ to 50¢ under the standard makers' price, not only cut into the majors' sales, they seldom paid their royalties. With the inclusion of radio, release jumping was to become a continual thorn to the print-saddled publishers.

ASCAP began forever playing catch-up in 1922 by notifying radio stations that any further broadcasting of its catalog would be prosecuted as an unauthorized public performance for profit. The society even went so far as to purchase its own radio station as a strategic move. However, a fee ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 a year per station was decided upon, the charge to be estimated on the size and service of each outlet. Payment was erratic.

Everybody began losing to radio over the next three years. Theaters eliminated orchestras as they installed the wireless. Vaudeville and musicians came out against the "radio-*phone*," and the Keith-Albee booking office notified its theater managers not to use radio service as an attraction.

Radio, meanwhile, although acknowledging that talent must ultimately be paid for, was using performers and music at no cost whatsoever in most instances. Its argument was that of "publicity." Broadcasting an orchestra, soloist, or whomever was believed by radio to be quite nice compensation for the artist's free services. Many performers thought likewise, and throughout the history of radio and television there has been a hassle over whether free guest shots are more than sufficiently paid for by the mass publicity.

So radio thought the pubs, who were in a state of panic, should be grateful for the "free advertising." To challenge ASCAP's demands for the licensing of its music, in 1924 radio's membership organized as the National Association of Broadcasters. Its initial move was to convince Senator Clarence Dill of Washington to introduce a bill reversing the 1917 Supreme Court decision in which ASCAP had won its existence.

New York restaurant owners had been using music without cost. The restaurateurs contended that the music was public service, but the high court ruled that music as atmosphere was essential to the establishment's profit.

Radio lost a similar case in 1923, but it had more power than restaurant owners and it was to use its frequencies to turn the public against ASCAP. The measure was killed, but the broadcasters introduced bills at an annual rate determined to keep radio from paying for music. The defense by music was to become a major part of its expenses, and radio began notioning about supplying its own music.

For fifteen years, ASCAP, the networks, and the NAB, which was ultimately to take the side of the independent operators (a crucial victory over the webs), clashed as radio's propoganda was directed toward ASCAP. The struggle was to manifest itself in 1939 in the birth of one of America's more relevant democratic institutions, BMI, one that was continually berated for "debasement" of popular music.

Radio held off the publishers with a promise to pay—once techniques and programs were improved. But it meant nothing to the publishers who saw radio's existing reality. It kept too many people home, and glued there. Not buying the sheet music, disc, or piano roll of a tune every radio station dinned into their ears, the public lost its taste for an overheard song in about three weeks.

Veteran showmen gasped as they saw experienced cohorts trying to sell something and at the same time give it away. The panic was so great that song writers seriously discussed a plan to tax vaudeville houses for the use of popular established songs.

Even to think this was radical because for years popular songs were given to singers free to help sales, with the vocalists getting a cut if the tune sold. This was how payola began in the nineteenth century, but radio changed it. If a song became a hit, the public, instead of buying some version of it, heard it on the radio and was satisfied.

Additionally, as stations reluctantly signed up with ASCAP, and even paid, the number of publishers doubled, so the paid radio royalties had to be divided among more people. The proceeds were proportionately lower, and everybody had a gripe. Poverty and pragmatism were to dictate the road independent radio and recordings were to take.

Vaudeville began its death rattle as many booking agencies, notably Keith-Albee, barred radio performances by its artists and banned "radio songs" in 1924. This included just about all the popular songs being used by vaudeville artists!

But Keith-Albee's action took a full flip the next year. The vaudeville office began booking active radio favorites like Harry Richman, Eddie Elkins, Ben Bernie, and Vincent Lopez. They felt that radio had sought its own level and that it presented no immediate threat to the theaters. However, Keith-Albee's stand was never consistent, and the talkies and the Depression were right around the bend.

As for truly indigenous recording, Okeh and Columbia pioneered the sending of men into the South to record black performers like Mamie Smith, Bessie Smith, and Ma Rainey, with the result that in the North there was great demand for "blues" discs—"jazz," the real thing, not copies of Negro artists that were the majors' popular hits. And this was music that was not being played over the radio, which largely was airing what was called "potted palm" music.

Black Swan, Paramount, Vocalion, and Brunswick were among the other recording companies producing the music America wanted to hear. "Blues" retailers in the large cities began attracting a fervent clientele by blasting the latest indie sides out of storefront loudspeakers. This pattern did not please ASCAP, whose members believed they alone were chosen to wax lyrical.

Besides, although ASCAP's royalties in 1925 were the highest in history, the 30 percent increase was felt to be a fraction of what the music men were entitled to. They said music was 90 percent of radio. Licenses helped, but although 196 stations in the United States paid royalties of \$133,000, nine German stations paid authors and composers \$160,000 in 1925.

Moreover, radio "made" a song too fast for the sheet trade to catch up and sell it in time. When the public was finally attracted to the music counters, something new was beckoning back in the home.

It quickly became a matter of requiring a greater pro-

duction of hits to make business worthwhile. The familiar "million copy" hit became acceptable at 400,000 (more or less the current standard for single hits). This means, of course, turning out more and more hits to make up for the swift change.

And for whatever else radio was doing, it certainly "made" bands. No other airways sound had quite the same effect as "a good syncopating orchestra," even after all other fields of entertainment were explored and exploited.

A reason for the growth of bands was evidenced by the free ads in more than five hundred newspapers through daily listings. Every time the Happiness Candy Boys, Ipana Troubadours, Shinola Merrymakers, Silvertown Cord orchestras, Cliquot Club Eskimos, et al., were billed in the programs, it was a free pitch for the candy, toothpaste, shoe polish, tires, soda, or whatever. And it was "good will."

Not only was it felt to be highly effective advertising in view of the entertainment hookup, it did not cost a cent. And that was money that had previously gone to the newspapers, which ran the "public service" grudgingly and, on future occasions, were to deny radio the free space.

In 1925-26, the sponsor became the major factor. As he began to desire to know what his growing public wanted, he found that by playing the most popular music of the day, he snared the greater audience.

The advertiser's reasoning pretty much followed the line of least resistance, which was the belief that it was extremely important to program the No. 1 song of the hour, played by Vincent Lopez, Fred Waring, or Paul Whiteman. For he was now increasingly being asked to pick up the tab as stations began selling time.

And ASCAP wanted some of the money, although the society had reservations about some of the hinterland music being played. "Corn," coupled with radio's strength in the South and the suggestive or off-beat, did not acquire favor over the airwaves. The coming battle between the music publishers and the broadcasters was literally a "city slicker" vs. "hillbilly" marathon.

Radio's honeymoon with the public ended as the mass

media's penchant for mediocrity began with the impetus of the sponsor's conservatism. This day-in, day-out dullness, along with vastly improved machines in 1926 in the form of the Victor Orthophonic, Brunswick Panatropé, and Columbia Vitatone, and kindred mechanical refinements in phonograph reproduction, brought the public back from radio. And it was the now familiar radio stars who were being bought at the record stores.

The pluggers turned toward the dominant orchestra leaders with network shows who were to hold sway during the twenties and thirties. The leaders found themselves in the enviable position of being willing to pay for the "time" utilized to broadcast their services free.

Beginning in 1916, the Music Publishers' Protective Association, with the encouragement of *Variety*, made unsuccessful attempts to control plug bribery. But radio's regimenting of "payola" sent the process out of control.

Without going into complicated detail, the reason advertising agencies play such a great role in "running" the radio and television industry is that in the beginning poor, starving radio, unlike the wealthier press did not have the financial wherewithal to make the agencies toe the mark. So it was that the advertiser wielded the big stick and decided on programs. They thought if they sponsored a show they owned the network. Agencies were often right in second-guessing what kind of programs the public would like. And they were awfully wrong sometimes, too.

—SAM J. SLATE AND JOE COOK
It Sounds Impossible

Radio-activity may create monsters, but it will also give us geniuses.

—J. B. S. HALDANE

THROUGH ELECTRONICS' reach into all parts of the country, radio began creating calls for songs never heard of. In many cases, they were local hits, sung over the air by their writers.

In 1925, WSM, Nashville, began "Grand Ole Opry," and the hills came alive with the recorded country sound Okeh had been into for a few years. Crank-up phonographs literally became icons in the Cumberland Gap and the Smokies as the record-breaking sales of discs by country artists began.

Wrote *Variety* at the end of 1926:

"The hill-billy thinks nothing of buying six or more of one song at 75¢ (because of wear). The talking machine to the hill-billy is more practical than his Bible."

Live hillbilly talent dominated the airwaves for two decades, but this was largely in the early morning and evening, and a few performers doubled up by playing records at other times in the schedule. Spawning a web of nationwide country outlets from the Depression on, the twanging sound, along with the "race" music of the Negro, was vehemently criticized by the ASCAP "better" music and Broadway hierarchy.

The country deejay was, along with the black jock, the last to become a known personality in the profession, although the former made his presence felt in mountebank manner after the Depression over the powerful "X" stations across the Mexican Border. This was epitomized by the legendary "Doc" Brinkley, whose goat-gland-rejuvenation chicanery forced him from KFKB, Milford, Kansas (which won a listener survey in 1930 as the most popular radio station in the land), to 100,000-watt XER, Mexico, where he spewed Carter Family records into the States in the thirties.

Another such country boy was Chicagoan Harold Weinstein, who gained fame as Randy Blake on WJJD's "Supper-time Frolic" from 1935 to 1957. He was preceded on that show by early country-airman record-spinner Erv Victor. Said Blake:

"I started out with an ad agency in 1934 that bought talent for fifty-five radio stations. The products we were advertising were Peruna (Pee-Roo-Nah), a tonic, and Color Back for hair. We had a deal where if you sent in a Peruna boxtop, you got a Bible, and a Color Back one got you a dictionary.

"Peruna had a pretty good alcohol content, and it sold like crazy in Texas, which was a dry state. This was the beginning of the 'Supper-time Frolic,' which reached thirty-nine states. My introduction to it was as a singer. For \$25 a week, they let me sing, and the fan mail came in.

"Then XERF in Del Rio, Texas, hired me to do eighty-four fifteen-minute programs singing gospel songs. This was one of the stations we were supplying talent. In the process, I started horsing around with the Peruna commercial. Two days later, I was the announcer at WHAS, the CBS outlet in Louisville that had Bob Atcher, Pee Wee King, and Eddy Arnold. They liked what they heard.

"But I didn't become a disc jockey until 1945. There really hadn't been country music records to speak of before the war. Live music had been more important, but people were always calling in to find out where they could get records. Country record stores were few and far between.

"So, as country records started becoming available, we bought time on WJJD and advertised four 78 records by Grandpa Jones, Cowboy Copas, the Carlos Brothers, and the Delmore Brothers. We sold 210,000 packages in thirty days, which automatically made four country and western hits."

During the thirties, stations similar to Brinkley's operation like WHKH, Shreveport, and KWFT, Wichita Falls, Texas, kept government investigators busy, after the Communications Act of 1934 reallocated frequencies, by jumping around the dial to play hillbilly records and pitch "per inquiry" medicine showmanship. The style became known as "Plastic Jesus" radio, and one of its practitioners, Paul Kallinger, became nationally famous out of XERF after World War II.

In 1926, Radio Corporation of America formed the National Broadcasting Company, and in protest against the "RCA Monopoly," a group was organized called United Independent Broadcasters.

Desperately in need of capital, UIB began negotiating with the Victor Talking Machine Company, but RCA took over Victor. However, UIB did succeed in getting the Columbia Phonograph Corporation to take over the operating broadcasting rights, and the chain opened in September, 1927, under the name Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting System.

Initially, it was disastrous, and the record company withdrew. But the Columbia Broadcasting Company name re-

mained, and ironically, CBS bought out Columbia Phonograph a decade later.

As NBC and CBS became more powerful through their commitment to providing live national entertainment, the local independent stations were left to fend on their own. Since they were unable to compete at an ever increasing level, the economics of existence required that sooner or later the smaller ones use recorded music to stay alive. By merely buying some records and selling time at bargain-basement prices, a man with a license could have a pretty good thing going for himself.

So, as bands began to dominate the airwaves in the mid-twenties, James C. Petrillo, president of the Chicago Federation of Musicians, spoke over four different Chicago stations one March night in 1927 to inform the radio public of the broadcasting methods of WCRW.

Instead of hiring orchestras, Petrillo said, WCRW, whose call letters stood for its owner, inventor Clinton R. White, employed a "mechanical device" enabling the station to offer selections of any band, whether that group was currently in town or not. White's widow, who owns and operates WCRW, said she began playing records in July, 1926, and that her program, "The Josephine Show," was heard daily from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. through 1941.

She added that the station did employ live performers and musicians and that the records were played on her husband's patented phonograph, called a Vibrophone. Thought to be the first electrical sound-reproduction machine, it was used by White at a time when the major manufacturers were committed to a mechanical system in their phonographs.

Through 1926 and 1927, the playing of records on the air grew rapidly and widely, and when the Depression hit, even the major broadcasters took up their use. No section of the land was spared, even though the FRC attempted everything this side of public hangings to curb the practice.

WCRW was to find the going rough as it virtually went it alone in challenging restrictions of phonograph record air play. The following year White described his Vibrophone before hearings of the Federal Radio Commission.

He said he had invented a new device that, with a special needle, broadcast records without the "mike" and that those listening had turned to his station in preference to some of the larger ones sending out the original material. In this respect, White suggested that advertisers could have their own records made and broadcast in the phonograph manner described. By utilizing all the small stations with individual records for each, a new kind of chain could be created.

However, the high commission did not think much of either idea and declared it was opposed to such broadcasts no matter what the advantage was to the little stations. It issued a desist order, saying station operators were liable to a minimum fine of \$500 and that air play of "canned music" qualified as a copyright violation and a public performance for profit.

Four years before, the Supreme Court had reversed a decision in a suit by music publishers M. Witmark & Sons against Crosley of Cincinnati (WLW) and placed radio in the same category as other copyright infringers, with minimum damages of \$250 for each violation. Realistically, this meant little to the burgeoning independent stations, which began making virtually full use of the talents of non-affiliated and new writers (friends and neighbors) and records.

Petrillo, who was to become president of the American Federation of Musicians in 1940, began his doomed two-decade crusade against radio stations' use of "canned music" in place of union musicians with WCRW. In 1929 he did manage, however, to put in effect an order requiring all Chicago radio stations using record players in their studios to hire a union musician to operate them. To this day, disc jockeys and engineers on Chicago stations with AFM contracts are joined by a musician record turner.

By 1928, recorded dance music from small New Jersey stations was available to New Yorkers for more than eighteen hours daily. Neglecting to announce "the record," thereby creating confusion as to how Paul Whiteman could be in several places at the same time, much less broadcast-

ing from a small Paterson station, the announcers carried the guile to addressing "Paul." They kept talking until the music was under way to cover the amplified needle noise, lending the illusion the band had cut in on the announcer's spiel, and not vice versa.

Already the announcer had begun making a name for himself, in spite of the insistence of initial radio management, rightly fearful their "voices" would beget fan mail and become "stars," upon strict anonymity.

But this broke down, and the announcers, quite a few of whom were the sons of ministers, found their egos being bolstered by an adulating audience. Many were to find booze necessary to keep up this elusive interest in their effusion.

Listeners started acknowledging announcers with all sorts of mail and notes, while the actual entertainers, for whom some sort of response was requested by the spielers, were ignored. The deduction was that the Husings' and Broken-shires' longer air time than the acts permitted more opportunity for making an impression. The content of the mail revealed a clear infatuation by female listeners.

The image tended to evaporate as the average radio fan came to call announcers, who seemed to regard themselves as the last word, "hot mush." ("Each announcer knew in his heart," wrote Norman Brokenshire in his autobiography, *This Is Norman Brokenshire*, "that he was God's gift to radio.") These included some of the networks' top announcers, and the seeds for discontent took root.

As the decade closed, the FRC was continually pressured into making the broadcasting of phonograph records "in effect a fraud upon the listening public." The networks, large independent stations, and advertising agencies maintained it was unfair competition to hook up records with radio commercialism, as did vocalists whose fame garnered via the airways made their price as recording artists higher. And the bigger names and their recorders became increasingly annoyed at the blatant playing of their discs on the air.

So the small stations, if they were not indulging in out-and-out misrepresentation, took to giving lesser disc performers a spin. Lending conviction to the conscious or unconscious subterfuge, besides offering real appeal to advertisers at very nominal rates, they gave embryo talent a toehold on the show-business ladder. No ambitious young performer would gripe at any exposure.

Among music people there was no general agreement—flat-out confusion would better describe it—on the value of broadcasting phonograph records. It was certainly of great importance to the small record companies, for it gave them exposure.

RCA Victor, however, was soon to take legal steps, even when the records were performed in connection with announcements advertising the addresses of local music merchants. But there was another side of the coin as the radio-phonograph combination was introduced in 1934. Commercials of all sorts were to drive listeners back to the phonograph after the Depression.

The hypocrisy inherent in the easy profits (and time on the air, which was “thought” to belong to the people, was money to a licensee) was apparent. But even with stations that made no effort to deceive the listening public, what did the audience care as long as it sounded exactly like and just as good as the real stuff?

Thus the battle between centralization and independent operation in broadcasting, and, as a result, popular music, was joined. The tug-of-war was to make the electronic media the puppet of American advertising. In time the disc jockey would be a powerful yet pluralistic string-puller.

Just before the crash, the production of discs for broadcast purposes only was made the subject of a special ruling by the FRC, with announcers required to use this exact phrase: “This program is an electrical transcription made exclusively for broadcast purposes.”

The FRC also allowed announcers three designations for introducing regular discs: “This is a talking machine record,” “a phonograph record,” or “graphophone record.”

But this did not help the music publishers, who argued that the provision of the extant copyright act relative to recorded music did not apply to these programs. Thus no more funny announcements, which, *Variety* wrote, "are very unfunny."

And but for a few independent stations that had to economize, radio in 1929 declared the amateur mike performer out. The advertiser, large and small, wanted the best, and the network audiences, educated to professionalism, accepted the "how now" boys.

Potential spielers were pushed toward the smaller, less affluent indies. From there, if they were any good, they progressed. But there were only so many network announcing positions open, and the hustling, independent staffers began developing a less inhibited style.

Between Mozart and Beethoven, the French Revolution had come. The great unrest that has never since been stayed in the souls of men had begun. Men were never again able to shut themselves up in the myth of the individual, self-sufficing soul, to forget, however much they might seek to deny it, that they are molecules in an agonizing society.

—ROBERT BRIFFAULT

New Life of Mr. Martin

The entry of broadcasting into the history of music has changed all forms of musical creation and reception. . . . Radio music is a kind of magic and the radio set becomes a magic box.

—HELMUT REINHOLD

Music and the Radio

IN 1930, AS DISC SALES dropped in half and repetition of a song was as frequent as eight to ten times a day by a single station, a revision in the copyright bill was introduced by the Music Publishers Protective Association. It would enable the mechanicals to copyright their records and make any public reproduction without their consent an infringement.

However, ASCAP withdrew the amendment. It had been made without the knowledge of the society, which believed it was not beneficial as it would cut up the pie ASCAP was

having enough trouble getting a slice of. The society was pulling in a mere \$750,000 a year from radio.

So, with the economy collapsing, and more stations playing records (NBC and CBS banned "canned music" in 1930, although some of their affiliates were to backslide during the hard years), the pattern of the disc jockey began to appear as the struggle for survival became acute. The argument of the networks and the ad agencies that the apparent stampede, by those very agencies in some cases, to place recorded programs was tearing down a valuable advertising structure went unheeded by striving people who had heard it before.

Spot advertising started to come into favor over the independent chains as Congoleum-Nairn introduced a \$290,000 spot policy with discs over forty stations in 1929. Electrical transcriptions for broadcasts increased in importance during the next three years, and the major record companies saw in radio the comeback of their industry. Instead of trying to force discs down the throat of a reluctant public, the record men decided to devote more time to recording for radio.

Supporting them was Joseph Weber (of the comedy team of Weber and Fields), president of the American Federation of Musicians, who personally conducted the fight to prevent radio stations from using regular records for broadcasting instead of discs especially made for electrical transcriptions.

By 1932 the publishers recognized the need for radio as the only real plug. In fact, what was formerly a by-product became accepted as the salvation of the industry. Victor reached an agreement with the publishers whereby it was permitted to use radio discs featuring the latest standard record releases because it exploited the product of the publishers.

Still, the short life of the pops had the publishers worried. The only commonly held belief was that through two days' air plugging the probable value of a song could be accurately determined. Six years before, that process was thought to take two weeks.

As the publishers were strapped with paying more to radio to have their songs played than radio paid the publishers for the right, the MPPA searched for ways to prevent phonograph records from being broadcast over radio stations. And the juke box came into being to add to their woes.

One of those most adamantly opposed to the broadcasting of records was Jack Kapp, general recording manager of Brunswick. When Kapp visited Los Angeles in 1931 (when discs were off 50 percent, and the West Side Chicago record store he had opened with his brother, Dave, which was one of the largest mail-order operations in the land for blues, jazz, and folk discs, was about to fold), he reprimanded the Warner Bros. KFWB, which was allied with Brunswick, for airing its discs. Although he concluded that the station probably regarded it as a favor, he stated that his experience had been that when discs were "etherized," sales were immediately affected.

But the one-lungers went about using phonograph records exclusively, and while they complied with the FRC regulation (which tended to destroy a recorded show's mood), there was really no way to control it. Artists with radio reputations began refusing to record for phonograph discs, claiming the continuous broadcasting by practically every little station in the land depreciated their network value, besides minimizing disc royalties and personal appearances. The company saw it as 75¢ times x number of plays lost to them, and so Victor, at the instigation of Fred Waring, began preparing a federal case to prevent air play of phonograph records.

The small stations said they were just playing what the local households were requesting. (A number of popular-music writers began taking *noms de plume* and turning out what the public wanted.) The advertiser accepted this. In fact, he had no reason to doubt it, and radio's "leadership potential" began to be stymied even more by the sponsor. The disc jockey was to become the central figure in the compromise.

In 1932, ASCAP signed a three-year pact with the Na-

tional Association of Broadcasters for a percentage of gross time sales. However, in getting 3 percent, 4 percent, and 5 percent in royalties through 1935, the music men once again found themselves outsmarted because the income applied only to that taken in directly by the individual stations. Without the networks' contribution, ASCAP lost 50 percent of its anticipated royalties.

The indies contended that the method of assigning the tax was inequitable. They paid, but ASCAP found itself in the position of potential victim and executioner. It could withdraw its public performance privileges of music over the air, and some 85 to 90 percent of all radio programs included music, but it would, of course, also exterminate itself.

The NAB also backed its independent stations in the gripe of ASCAP and the major recorders. They questioned the recording companies' claim to a product after it had been sold over the counter. With disc royalties for the first quarter of 1933 the lowest, and top sellers going at 3,500 a quarter (sales totaled 107 million in 1927), name bands complained bitterly that a hit didn't mean anything because of the continual play of their records on smaller stations.

When the NRA code for the broadcasting industry came up for hearing the same year, the AFM asked that a clause be inserted banning the airing of phonograph records unless used for incidental effects. Waring was its most outspoken supporter, claiming air play of his discs severely hampered his attraction.

Phonograph records had become a liability, and it seemed the most-played tunes on the air were the worst sellers. The Depression certainly accounted for a great deal of the unhappiness, but the problem had been around for seven years. It was generally agreed that the more radio plugged songs, the less likely were their commercial potentialities.

NBC instituted a limited plug plan the next year as a part of the Broadcasting Code Authority's pledge to join the music publishing industry in a drive to eliminate payola. Broadcasters were getting fed up with the frequent late

changes in programs made by bandsmen and singers, and with the class of pop releases that slipped into repertoires.

However, Tin Pan Alley voiced its new/old theory that songs sell well in spite of the overabundance of plugging. No such thing exists, said the music men; too much hoopla can't hurt songs these days. The chain execs were said to have thrown their arms up and decided to handle their own business as best suited themselves, without further consideration to the pop music end.

The major pop music event of 1934, as prosperity slowly came back to America, was the merger of Columbia and Brunswick, although both brands were maintained distinct and apart from each other. Jack Kapp, who instituted technically superlative discs while at Brunswick to compete with radio, became the operator of the American branch of England's Decca, taking with him Bing Crosby, the Casa Loma Orchestra, Guy Lombardo, and the Mills Brothers.

A Brunswick-Decca sales battle began with Irving Mills returning to Brunswick after a year as a Victor consultant. He brought back with him Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington, among others.

Kapp agreed with Waring and Paul Whiteman that unlimited broadcasting of records was a plague. He was reportedly influenced by the fact that one of the first things he did at Decca was to sign an exclusive contract with the juke-box interests.

But he saw a rock-bottom price of 35¢ (three for \$1) as a chance of success, and Decca was to hold out, until forced, against the air play of its discs. Victor's two leading band leaders said they would not record if the perpetual plugging by small stations continued, and their suits were to result in the final legal decision.

Two major sources of their concern, which they could not really affect, were the failure of sponsors to show interest in local talent and the absence of showmanship on the part of would-be radio artists. The performers said they were tired of appearing on call from Albany and

Omaha stations and being told the publicity alone was worth the effort.

So local hit parades came into vogue, although at the end of 1934, *Variety* blasted the "Hit Parade":

"Lucky Strike showmanship failed to appreciate what candid music publishers admit, namely that there is nothing so sing-songy and monotonous as pop music when overdone. So what started as a peppy and welcome program ended by blasting and blaring itself into an assault upon America's nerves."

But within four months the "Lucky Strike Hit Parade" was in prime time on NBC's Red Network. And it did move Luckies ("Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet"), as their legendary leader, George Washington Hill, in cahoots with Albert D. Lasker's Lord and Thomas agency, found out and quickly exploited. Luckies had reached the woman with its slimming theme, and then they hit the youth. Smoke Luckies and stay thin and stay young. Swing began to smolder, and college students who were feeding the juke boxes for the hits also got their preferences on the "Hit Parade" for free.

Variety was somewhat to blame, since its compilation of the tunes most played on the nets was used on any number of local weekly radio programs. For instance, a downtown Los Angeles clothing concern sponsored a one-hour program of recordings each Sunday on KFVD. The records were played in order of their popularity, from the bottom, and the show was called the "Starlight Revue," with the subtitle "Variety's Popularity Program."

People in show business have this endless desire to be told over and over how wonderful they are. And that desire drives them to perform before the public. As a matter of fact, I think there are probably more people with more talent outside show business than in. But the outsiders don't have the need to be loved that the insiders have.

—RODNEY DANGERFIELD

It is true that the psychological "I," which we call "personality," is likely to disappear. But we did not think that this "personality" is Man's richest possession. . . . If we had mirrors capable of revealing to us that "personality" which we value so highly, we could not bear to look at our reflection, so disfigured would it be by all sorts of monstrous excrescences.

—LOUIS PAWELS AND JACQUES BERGIER
The Dawn of Magic

INVARIABLY WHEN the subject of the first disc jockey comes up, the name is Martin Block. The legend goes that on February 3, 1935, Block, a \$20-a-week staff announcer on WNEW, New York, began playing phonograph records while awaiting bulletins from the Hauptmann trial.

There was not a single disc on WNEW's shelves as Block, who worked on some twenty stations in the early thirties in southern California, recalled a Los Angeles program entitled "The World's Largest Make-Believe Ballroom." He hurried out to the nearby Liberty Music Shop, bought five

Clyde McCoy records, and made it seem that the music was coming live from a dance hall while he held imaginary conversations with McCoy.

However, during the twenties, Block had peddled along Broadway, using a sound truck and records, until the law, at the instigation of shop owners, told him to knock it off.

Finding the WNEW sales department unreceptive to a show of phonograph records, Block went out and got his own sponsor—a firm that made a reducing pill called *Retardo* at \$1 a box. That is, the patent medicine's owner was willing to let Block pay his broadcasting bosses for *Retardo*'s first commercial airing.

The next morning Block went on the air and softly cooed in a soon-to-be *fatale à femme* voice, “. . . be fair to your husband by taking the reducing pill.” The following day's mail to WNEW included six hundred letters, each containing a Yankee dollar. By the end of the week, there were 3,750 replies.

It was estimated that within four months Block had 4 million listeners tuned in daily, and before the year was out, his “Make-Believe Ballroom” was on the air two and one-half hours daily. It was sponsored in quarter-hour segments by advertisers who found that as they went along with Block's ad-lib approach their goods moved at an unprecedented rate.

Block, who claimed origination of the LS/MFT (Lucky Strike/Means Fine Tobacco) and ABC (Always Buy Chesterfields) slogans, was to exhibit such power as producing three hundred refrigerator sales for a Newark department store during a 1938 blizzard and obtaining fifteen hundred pianos for the USO during World War II with three perfunctory plugs!

The show Block copied was that operated by Al Jarvis, who, in 1932, started spinning records on KFWB, Los Angeles, under the title “The World's Largest Make-Believe Ballroom.” In fact, Block, in an article, “The Case for the Disc Jockey” in a 1942 issue of *Billboard*, acknowledged that the deejay began developing “about 10 years ago, particularly on the Pacific Coast.”

Even before the crash, three Los Angeles stations, KGFJ, KMIC, and KPLA (in association with KMTR, where Jarvis got his start), were almost exclusively broadcasting phonograph records around the clock. Eddie Chase, who was to become a leading Chicago and Detroit jock under the "Make-Believe Ballroom" format; Don Otis, the future handler of the West Coast's popular "Lucky Lager Dance Time"; and Mel Lamond, whom Carl Haverlin said he heard on KMTR around 1926, are said to have been among the first in the Los Angeles area to play records on the air.

Said Haverlin: "I used to lie in bed at night with a radio on and I'd call him up and I'd say, 'That was the greatest tune I've ever heard. Would you mind doing it again?' For example, Frank Crummitt had, to me, a fascinating song, 'And the Pig Got Up and Slowly Walked Away.'

"I heard the disc jockey very early and fell in love with what he was doing. And to me the disc jockey then was this man Lamond, and he had some associates on the station, and they were doing a magnificent job of interpreting to the public those things that in their wisdom, or sensitivity, they thought the public liked.

"Then they would go and hunt more like that. However, I don't think they were leading the crowd. *In fact, I don't think any disc jockey ever lived who led the crowd.*

"I think what they were doing was being sensitive to indicia and then going out to the record stores and listening and buying and picking up and bringing in, and assembling them together like a fine chef assembles a nice meal."

The cost to the public taste? During the early thirties, small, struggling stations on the southern California frontier, hungry for any sort of revenue, aired, wrote *Variety*, "the most banal advertising spiels with their marathon of time-worn and worn-out phonograph records."

Ironically, so unreliable were even the network outlets (KFI, KHJ, and KECA), that the generally held notion that radio hurt record sales went in reverse around L.A. Repelled by radio, anyone who wanted music was forced to resort to the perhaps more laborious method of changing discs, and records enjoyed a better proportionate sale than

in any other spot in the country. A true Hollywood status symbol of the Depression was the automatic record-changing phonograph.

By the heart of the Depression, many lesser stations relying on records were surviving. Salesmen were on straight commission, and the "announcers who interrupt the phonograph records" cost \$30 a week. More often than not, however, these two jobs doubled up (along with that of engineer, although Petrillo had made some inroads in Chicago and St. Louis by getting AFM members into turntable positions at \$90 a week or getting dues from engineers). A percentage of whatever advertising was acquired was the remuneration for zeal and hustle.

KMTR, Los Angeles, has inaugurated a nightly program known as "ballyhooley," in which parodies on all known, and some unknown, forms of radio advertising are aired, together with burlesques of some well-known radio broadcasts and announcers.

—*Broadcasting*, January 1, 1932

Don't kid the copyright owners, you broadcasters. They don't like it, and they have let this be known by word of mouth and otherwise through their network of regional lawyers. "By Special Permission of the Copyright Owners" is the approved announcement. Jazzy variations of that trite phrase, such as the "Bally Old Copyright Owners," a la Ben Bernie, seems to go against the grain. The Society, one of its officials said, resents the "acrimony" that some performers put into the announcement.

—*Broadcasting*, May 1, 1932

ON MAY 25, 1932, the Marshall Field & Company "Musical Clock" program on KYW, Chicago, was interrupted by a speaker who suggested that the 7-9 A.M. offering (except Sunday) of phonograph records, time and weather announcements, and brief merchandise messages might be "taken off the air" unless the written response of the public indicated this was displeasing.

The show had been sponsored by Field's since April 14, 1930, and for almost a year prior to that, KYW, the Chicago *Herald and Examiner* station at 1020 kilocycles, carried it as its own feature. Since its inception, the "Musical Clock"

had spotlighted as its announcer Miss Halloween Martin, born that day in 1902 in El Paso, Texas.

She had graduated from De Paul University in 1926 and was working for the *American* as an advice-to-the-lovelorn columnist. She had been an actress in college, and every so often Homer Hogan, the station manager, used to send down to the lonely hearts department for an announcer. She turned out to be the girl who could do it with ease.

So one day in 1929, Halloween got a call from Hogan. He said he had been on a trip and had left a call for the hotel desk to get him up at 7 A.M. He told her that a very pleasant female voice had awakened him, which had given him the idea to put Halloween on the air with some phonograph records. All she had to do was give the time every five minutes.

The program grew as a crash hit to include more service features like the temperature and weather, and the following year, Field's took over sponsorship. Initially, said Halloween, who arose every morning at a quarter to four, Field's just used the "Musical Clock" to promote the mood of the store and some of its free services. But gradually, direct advertising began to be used, although a certain percentage of the show always remained institutional.

Halloween picked her own music, which was a mixture of musical comedy, light classic, and popular. She played other things, too, like heavier pieces and even jazz, but the light yet lively music was what the audience preferred, she said.

And that audience was huge and attentive. Following the announcement, for more than a week thousands of letters poured in, enthusiastically endorsing the program and imploring that it be continued. As a result, an early-radio-listener report (most likely the first to be concerned with disc-jockey-style programming) was put together by KYW's Waldo Warren.

There were 2,097 letters and 1,144 postcards received. Of the letters, 52 were in the form of petitions or from groups. The total number of listeners mentioned in these letters was 2,008.

Counting each of the other letters and postcards as representing a family of four (the official census average), Warren interpreted the total heard from as nearly 15,000. Letter-writing to stations in radio's initial period had been much greater, and Warren concluded:

“. . . the number of letters received by Marshall Field & Company in response to this request is quite remarkable. When it is considered that this program is on only ONE STATION, while many of the nationwide chain broadcasts are on upwards of 100 stations, and that the letters received by Marshall Field & Company are far greater than the total of some chain broadcasts, the immense popularity of the 'Musical Clock' is clearly indicated.

"If we assumed only one family in a hundred would write, even if requested (which seems a very safe assumption), then it is fair . . . in preparing programs, to have in mind the estimate of 'a million and a half' listeners every morning. I am convinced from the general tone of these letters, that this is a very conservative estimate."

Warren wrote: ". . . it would be difficult to imagine a series of letters that would express a more whole-hearted, and enthusiastic endorsement of the 'Musical Clock' than did the majority of these letters." Many stated that the whole family enjoyed the program and depended upon it for the correct time, going to school, catching trains, and keeping to a morning schedule of getting up, getting dressed, breakfast, etc. A great many stated that "these carefully selected records give us better music than most of the orchestras that are regularly on the air."

Unstinting praise of Miss Martin included remarks like "most pleasant voice we ever hear on the radio," "only woman's voice that sounds natural and unaffected," "adorable," "don't let anyone else announce anything but her," "simple, frank and straightforward," and "the announcer that can't be improved upon; that young woman has 'the voice with the smile' to the nth degree."

More general comments were equally adulating:

"I dance all over the house while I comb my hair or make toast. Snappy music in the morning is so invigorating."

Many times I hum all morning the last song I heard when I left the house.”

“The Musical Clock wakes me up in the morning. I dress by it, eat my breakfast by it, wash the dishes by it, sweep the kitchen by it and in time to the music. Such beautiful music. I love it so.”

“Who wants to read a whole newspaper to find out the specials?”

“There is something about giving these specials in that manner that is more personal and intimate than newspaper advertisements, and one is inclined to listen to them.”

“Your style of advertising is very clever and interesting. You’re in a class by yourself. You have something different to tell us every morning.”

“I might also add that the entire Ravenswood neighborhood listens in as you can hear it in the respective homes as you go down the street.”

“How can you consider discontinuing this ‘bright spot’ of the morning? Having had to give up so many things recently I dread the thought of having to give this up too. I have not even a desire to look elsewhere on the dial.”

“A program that has lived three years and has received the whole-hearted reception the Musical Clock has, cannot be regarded as a thing that will be taken away, but instead it seems like an institution indispensable.”

“You really put me in quite a panic this morning with your startling announcement. I just about passed out. Positively we will throw out the radio if you ever stop your program.”

“I have said many times to my sons if they would listen to the Musical Clock each morning they would have a very broad musical education because of the character of pieces you play which are above the average.”

“We feel Miss Martin is a member of our family.”

A number of letters contained definite suggestions for the improvement of the program. Among the more pointed advice were:

“It appears to me that a store which appeals to the higher

classes of trade could well omit trashy jazz and disheartening, mournful 'blues' singers."

"The change from classical to jazz should be toned down. It is just the same as if you were eating a piece of angel food cake and bit into a piece of stone."

"May I question, however, in bewildered wonder, why, with the vast number of records, must selections be repeated within a few days; and why must only one part of a composition be played if it happens to take more than one side? And why must the program contain more jazz than the better music?"

"I would recommend that the early morning program consist of fewer records by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra or by the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and that the majority of selections be of a more spirited nature, such as would assist children to speed up in the preparations for school and adults to catch their morning train."

"I am a musician and have been in radio in Chicago for eleven years and have built as well as played programs. . . . This business of beginning a selection nowhere and ending it in the same place is certainly annoying to a musician. There is a feeling of being left up in the air. I do feel you can greatly improve your programs by building them intelligently, instead of merely throwing together some thirty records."

The "Musical Clock," of course, continued, with great care being exercised in selecting and arranging the records, and "every effort made to comply with the requests of listeners." In addition, Halloween, who was really more an announcer than a personality, said she had to have enough knowledge about the products she was talking about so that she could step behind any counter and sell them. And she said the company was really quite strict in enforcing the format of four short commercials per hour, temperature reports, and the time every five minutes on the dot.

"This was somewhat frustrating for a ham like me," said Halloween. "But it wasn't as easy as it sounded, and I did have a couple of breakdowns. Once I made a mistake and

was advertising a \$47 or \$57 mattress for \$27. They sold extremely well, of course, but I don't imagine the company made anything."

On December 17, 1934, the "Musical Clock" went to WBBM when KYW was moved to Philadelphia. So strong was the competition for the show that the National Broadcasting Company announced it would break its no-phonograph-record policy. Network executives said they would allow WMAQ to use phonograph records (78 rpm) only until NBC could make the radio transcriptions (33½ rpm) to fill up the two hours.

In 1938, Field's director of publicity, G. R. Schaeffer, wrote:

"So far as can be ascertained Marshall Field's 'Musical Clock' holds the all-time record for the greatest number of broadcast hours of any program on any station or chain in the country. During the more-than-seven-years period, Miss Martin, as the 'Lady of the Musical Clock,' has announced some 70,000 musical numbers during nearly 4,700 hours of broadcasting . . . a record it is believed is unmatched by an existing local or national program now on the air."

Actually, she was running close to San Francisco's Frank Cope, whose "Alarm Klok Klub" on KJBS had been aired every day, except Sundays, from 5 to 8 A.M. since March 3, 1930. For nearly thirty years he spun records, repeatedly rang an alarm and announced the time, and was a master of studied casualness.

However, the following year, Field's lost the program to Sears Roebuck. Halloween said Field's used to come to the station every year on a certain day at three o'clock to renew the contract. That year, for some reason, they were late, but Sears was waiting with quite an offer. They were changing from catalogue to retail sales and wanted the show for five years. And they got it because the Field's people were late. Field's tried to buy it back for a million dollars, but Sears said no.

The "Musical Clock" terminated on WBBM in 1944, and Halloween took her common-touch magic to WCFL for the

Stineway Drug Company, where she remained for two years. At that time, her physician warned her that another nervous collapse might take place at any moment, and she retired.

Said WBBM's popular Mal Bellairs, who worked with Halloween on WCFL in 1946: "She was the most nervous person I've ever seen in radio."

During Halloween's reign, record shows began to bloom in Chicago, as they did elsewhere. In fact, within six months after it failed to get the "Musical Clock," WMAQ was playing phonograph records as Olympic swimming great Norman Ross, Sr., began his "400 Hour" for the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. He was to conduct the 7-8 A.M. show for eighteen years until his death June 19, 1953. He was planning to retire that September after his five thousandth broadcast, and shortly thereafter his son, Norman, Jr., took over.

Although he played mainly classical music, Norman Ross, Sr., said his son, was a regular listener to the WLS "National Barn Dance." "He took a common man approach to music. He didn't pick his own music, but he had an unerring sense of what people wanted in the morning. He began fooling around when he heard a squeaking soprano. So he told her to shut up. When she didn't, he broke the record."

The elder Ross, whose audience was very loyal, loved to destroy coloraturas. Said Jules Herbeveux, general manager of WEFM, Chicago, who was at WMAQ for nearly forty years:

"He'd have a soprano on and somewhere along the line he'd cross-fade it with another record that was a particular favorite of his, 'A Hunt in the Black Forest,' with a bunch of baying hounds.

"Sid Stroz, the manager of WMAQ, told him he wasn't very funny and to get on with the music. He repeated this over the air and asked his audience to write Stroz. The next morning, Stroz' desk was flooded with mail, including his paycheck. His secretary was so mad at him she just threw it all together."

And how many people are there who fondly remember the senior Ross's being late to work, and his theme, Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty Waltz," starting up again?

At about the same time Halloween Martin was bagging her many mail sacks, another funny man, Bob Hawk, who was to gain fame as a quiz show emcee for Camels ("You're a Lemac Now"), began his morning and afternoon segments of "Red, Hot and Lowdown." Hawk started his deejaying on WCFL, but he was later heard over WAAF also.

"It was real corn," said Hawk. "But people loved it."

And wake-up disc shows cropped up on powerful outlets all around the land in 1934. In Charlotte, North Carolina, when complaints multiplied against a disc's being overplayed, WBT's Lee Everett made a ritual during his "Morning Clock" of breaking the particular record. Listeners relished the destruction perpetrated against the much-heard tunes.

The same year, as entertainment and communications people awaited developments on the airing of discs and what ASCAP was up to, CBS found it was losing between \$250,000 and \$400,000 in early-day income. In an important concession, the network approved the use of transcriptions on WABC, New York, up to 9 A.M. Elsewhere, John B. Gambling's WOR "Morning Clock" with its situps and orchestral accompaniment had been building up an audience since 1925. The show, which was to use live musicians until the early fifties, became the top-rated "Rambling with Gambling," with his son, John A., taking over in 1959.

New York was slow to catch on to the dawning insanity, but by the late thirties, Bob Carter was doing his "Jim Grouch" show on WNEW, which was beginning its reign as New York's friendly, forerunning indie. WNEW was literally a matriarchy run under the easygoing guidance of "La Mama" Bernice Judis. Carter was followed by Hal Moore ("Start the Day Right"), Bill Kelso, and Bob Lewis ("One morning I just signed off Robert Q. Lewis; I tried to make myself different, and I guess it was the luckiest thing I ever did") during the war years.

Arthur Godfrey began his humorous harangue to rise and shine and get the economy rolling again on WJSV, Washington. The station woke him up via a studio-controlled gong in his apartment, and in case he didn't make it, lines ran to a mike beside his bed.

Godfrey, who began his broadcasting legend at WFBR, Baltimore, in 1929 as "Red Godfrey, the Warbling Banjoist," had been working for WMAL, Washington, a station of the Blue Network of the National Broadcasting Company, in 1933, and had been demoted to opening the station in the morning. This meant putting the records on the turntables and what announcing there was to do.

Wanting to get off the 6 A.M. schedule, Godfrey, an established local Peck's bad boy of the air, began playing a lot of Dixieland, kidding the commercials (but *never* the product, it is maintained), and eventually smashing records he didn't care for. His style and blue or near-obscene material attracted listeners and more mail than any other program.

However, a network vice-president apparently couldn't comprehend Godfrey's appeal and fired him for his antics. WJSV, a CBS affiliate in Washington (to become WTOP in 1943), hired him in January, 1934.

This kind of "fearless" thinking produced a very successful show on the NBC network during the thirties. It was Raymond Knight's "Cuckoo Hour," and it dealt satirically with management hierarchy in much the same way Fred Allen was to become noted for.

This levity, said Godfrey, whom Allen called "the Huck Finn of radio," was the origin of disc jockey style programming, *i.e.*, failure of the record spinner to follow commercial scripts, a habit of poking fun at them, etc. Wrote Sam J. Slate and Joe Cook in *It Sounds Impossible*:

"Godfrey has the image of his audience as individuals. This individual is a plain person. An ordinary, average Joe: Godfrey knows what this is. You must remember, he'd been a deckhand, a door-to-door salesman and even sold cemetery lots before he went on the air. He knows what 'plain' is. He knows what the inside of the average middle-income house

looks like—and he doesn't need a gang of statisticians to tell him, either. . . .

"Godfrey has an earthiness, an independence and an enthusiasm that registers."

It was this style, popularized and publicized by Godfrey when he reached New York during World War II, that was ultimately to become the staple of American radio. And the playground of at least one personality in every good-sized city who was to become a Pied Piper of superbargain proportions.

As mentioned, San Francisco's Frank Cope was an early one, and he was one of the first to spoof his commercial copy. He said he never assumed anything and, like Godfrey, always tried the products. He said: "I think my satirizing commercials peaked the audience imagination."

Acknowledged to have been the fifth oldest morning radio program in the country, his "Alarm Klok Klub" (the misspelling was part of the kooky spell he cast) was the first sponsored wake-up record show in a major metropolitan area, and the longest-running one. On it, Cope roused the populace of the Bay Area during two generations with close to a half-million records and countless comments ranging from pure corn to tongue-in-cheek frankness.

Elsewhere, during the mid-thirties, Jack Lescoulie (who went to New York in the early forties and after World War II began WNEW wake-up teamwork with Gene Rayburn) was making a tremendous dent in network audiences with his "Grouch Club" in Los Angeles, and Joe Gentile and Ralph Binge were the burgeoning "Bob and Ray" of Detroit. That team is alleged to have been the first to ask the audience to blow their automobile horns, an oft-repeated generic deejay stunt. It was used in the fifties by jocks to try to convince rating services of the many they hoped were listening in traffic. A frowned-on improvisation was the sudden cry to "Hit your brakes!"

Other sun-up jocks included Ralph Powers, Baltimore; Clint Buehlman, Buffalo; Thorn Haffey, Columbus; and Ben Hawthorne, Hartford. They were among a growing,

crowding host who were getting people up and out with what *Variety* called "a typically American, or typically American radio, aberration, wacky humor in the morning."

WNEW's Gene Klavan, an always with-it morning man who came out of Baltimore, said: "About 1939 or '40, a guy who was far funnier than most of these people was Bill Herson. One of the great, funny morning men in the country. He more than anybody gave me the idea of what to do with myself.

"He was at WBAL. He was far better than Ralph Powers. Win Elliott did a great morning then, too. He was known as Erwin Elliott. Gary Moore started there, too."

Dim memories of far-out zanies, budding hipsters and flipsters, at all hours persist in the experience of many people. Every market had someone who "was even funnier" or hipper. And he probably was. But even if the audience, sponsor, or management thought so, a tenuous alliance between barely two of the three could keep his caustic undermining commentary off the air. For the guy who was too good, a cop-out could always be found. Usually, it was that he didn't have enough audience to get sponsors, that he was too limited or esoteric, or lately, too political.

Typifying the growing cacophony at dawn was Godfrey's approach toward one of his sponsors, a Washington furrier whose storefront stuffed bear attracted customers, with the help of the deejay's jabs at its moldiness. Additionally, poking fun in what some felt to be at times an irresponsible anti-Semitic way, the Redhead could daily be expected to cast humorous doubts on the character of Zlotnik.

But when Godfrey failed to deal drolly one day with the man and his goods, Zlotnik called the emcee to wail seriously, "What's the matter, Arthur, you don't love me anymore?" Godfrey's pelts sold Zlotnik's.

West coast tribal-rock jock Tom Donahue grew up in Washington, where he did a rhythm and blues show on WINX in 1949 before going to Philadelphia for the next decade. That year he also worked in Charleston, West Virginia, where, he said, he broke Atlantic Records' first big

hit, "Drinkin' Wine Spo-dee-o-dee," by Sticks McGhee and His Buddies. Said Donahue:

"Godfrey was not number one. There was a guy named Gordon Hittenmark ['The Timekeeper' on WMAL, the station that canned Godfrey], an alcoholic under less control than Godfrey. There were a lot of drunks in radio."

The facetious style had only come into its own since the Depression. However, with the advertiser first and foremost wanting the sales message slammed across, and hard to please on a comedy substitute for straight selling, progress in that direction was slow. Announcers tried for a little color and humor, but the agencies put an absolute taboo on the ad-libbing air comic.

By 1939, NBC was to ban the commenting comic. In fact, the comics were pushed into reciprocal radio visits in which light kidding, with an essentially complimentary emphasis, represented their wares. Radio's axiom for comedians became: Be simple and be funny or be fancy and lousy, and don't waste a lot of expensive time.

However, the needling practice began to thrive on the more secluded, less costly, independent local level. And it was Godfrey who, through the deejay style, more or less crystallized the teamwork of the network comics and their announcers, Fred Allen and Jimmy Wallington, Jack Benny and Don Wilson, etc. Full freedom of the informal style was to become known as the "Morgan kick," after that savage sales satirist Henry Morgan, who arrived at WOR in 1938. However, Morgan's bite was a bit much for sponsors and management, although it did attract a better-than-average audience.

Said Eddie Hubbard, who has been at WGN, Chicago, since 1956 after more than ten years on leading independent WIND:

"I was a law school dropout who became a teller in a bank. My first exposure on radio was doing health talks for a chiropractor, Dr. Spector, who didn't pay me, but I took it out in trade. I began regularly with an all-night show when WITH came on the air in 1942. I won an audition, along with Freddie Robbins and Gene Rayburn.

"I was a great admirer of Godfrey. I used to hear him when I did mornings on WITH, and I played the uke, too. I liked his casual manner. Most announcers were crossing the t's and dotting the i's, but he came on with: 'Hey, ya wanna know sumpin'.

"But my hero was a morning man in Baltimore, Ralph Powers. He was a sincere, intimate kind of a guy with a homespun sense of humor."

In the major markets, the superb sales ability of the live interlocutor who made the pitch between the phonograph records was beginning to undergo close scrutiny by the advertiser. The spot field became regarded as the bush leagues of the business, developing for the network big time.

By the early forties, announcers, who had been taken from their comparative obscurity, were to take their informal cue from Godfrey and Block, although the latter was less than personal with his emphatic "Ladies and Gentlemen!" (But his close, "For you, and you, and especially, *you!*" left the audience well pleased.)

As the emphasis went from voice to style, sponsors and agencies were to take more time in auditioning announcers than any other talent. "Hard sell" became replaced by oral imagery and sex appeal. And a research report showed that listeners' moods while listening to a program of old songs was disturbed more by "humorous remarks" than by commercials.

The approaches of Godfrey and Block through imitation came to be quite distinctive and were to become known as radio-oriented and music-oriented programming. Both, of course, were equally sponsor-oriented, but some jocks were to lean even heavier on the pitch.

Although these distinctions did overlap, it would appear that what first distinguished the "disc jockey" from the "platter spinner" was his attitude toward the commercial. Casual, with an "I don't give a damn" slant, it was partly a reaction to the same old ritual in the dawning hours day after day, which, of course, the audience was quick to identify with.

Hubbard, who sounds like both Godfrey and Block (he

was personally picked by Mr. "Make Believe" to do the "ABC Club" for Chesterfields in Chicago), gives an interesting interpretation of the origination of the expression "disc jockey." He said:

"In small radio stations, the disc jockey had to be everything, including riding the *gain*, which was what the volume or sound level was called."

Bill Randle has been a leading deejay at WERE, Cleveland, for twenty years. During the early fifties, Randle, who was first with Johnnie Ray and in 1955 introduced Elvis Presley to the North, was the main reason Cleveland was considered *the* town to "break," or "introduce," a record. (Although it was said his mother in Detroit would send him the play list of the wildly successful Ed "Jack the Bellboy" McKenzie there.) His ratings were said to have been nearly 80 percent of the listening audience at times.

Randle is also a student of etymology, and he cites *Variety* of July 23, 1941 ("Disc Jockey Solves Vacation") and said:

"I believe that the word must date from about 1941. I cannot find it myself in any issue of *Variety*, and *Variety* is the kind of journal that would have had it, had writers known of it. . . .

"The earliest example of *record jockey* that I have seen in *Variety* is contained in an article on the late recording executive Jack Kapp, dated April 2, 1940. I am inclined to believe that Kapp was the coiner of the term *record jockey*."

David Ewen, in the *History of Popular Music*, incorrectly attributes the birth of "disc jockey" to *Variety* in 1937. Capitol's Dave Dexter, Jr., an editor of *down beat* in the early forties, said, however, that *Variety* was originating slang expressions at that time.

As the deejay instrumental in the American popular music industry's ever present "hit" race developed, his "riding" took on a logical yet extraordinary significance, that of staying on ("jockeying") a record toward success. In this were the seeds of payola and the scandals of 1959-60, and

the Damoclean danger of hearings by the Federal Communications Commission.

Today, however, most disc jockeys (particularly in the major markets) have their records selected by the program director or record librarian, for the ubiquitous specter of payola makes the deejay susceptible to any intimation. (In a recent swing of the pendulum, the birth of FM rock has given the jock a relative new freedom.)

However, in the vernacular, "to ride" refers to "jockey" in a far different sense, more akin to taunt or "bug." The close alliance between sports and show business in New York may have caused a radiation of the sports term "bench jockey" and allowed "disc jockey" an additional meaning to take in the somewhat caustic commentator.

The paradox is that disc jockeys so defined are not as dependent as their straighter pop brothers on their music, although the jazz deejay, and now the stereo rock jock, has certainly used the music to express his rebellion and "hipness," and that of his audience. To this point, a prime factor in the *kitsch* blooming of the disc jockey would seem to have been the need for someone in the late thirties to interpret "swing."

In any event, the "personality" types have generally gone on to greater things, expressed by the impact over the years of the recognized founders of the two strains of deejays. Without diminishing Block, a master pitchman, it is highly significant in its equally complex way that the soothing satirical elements of Godfrey, whom *Variety* called "one of the major phenomena of his era," brought him in the eyes of the American public to the level of trust and understanding generally accorded only a President.

The casually informed approach was to become the standard, particularly suited to the morning man, whose job it became to brightly prod adult audiences out of bed every morning so they could produce and buy. After a depression (and another war), in rewinning the right to make a living, the people found that selling the product really became the *summum bonum*. The quality of greed is ever strained, people, and that's no joke. Curiously, the era of the individual-

istic, wake-up jockey was to parallel the conservatism of the fifties.

And after midnight, record shows offered an opportunity for the lonely to assuage their feelings through requests for musical numbers, and the weirder jocks their egos, on outlets that reached into every corner of the country.

By announcing the names and addresses of the person making the request, the airwaves in the wee small hours became lonely hearts' clubs. The lack of sponsor interest in this supposedly small audience tended to allow the music to range out of the commercial sound. Nobody in management was up, and little by little, lesser-known artists were moved to public notice.

But *Variety* was up and took to criticizing the late shows from 1938 on. It started editorializing about WNEW's "Milkman's Matinee," an all-night show hosted by Stan Shaw. The program began August 2, 1935, when Shaw said he picked up on a Walter Winchell column, "If I Were the Mogul of Radio."

The columnist said there were a lot of people up and receptive to a predawn show, and Shaw sold WNEW on letting him fill 2-7 A.M. on a trial basis. It clicked quickly. However, the trade paper found that the show was becoming too much talk and gushy ads, and it was influential in getting WNEW to drop the playing of requests. Substituting fifteen-minute sessions of dance discs, the station soon found out that Shaw's listeners had liked the show just as it had been. Protests swiftly got the listener reinvolved in the show as requests returned.

Another Gotham late-night record-request show then was Gene King's "Midnight Jamboree" on WEVD, owned by the *Jewish Daily Forward* and named after Eugene V. Debs. King said:

"After I graduated from Ohio State, I was given the morning deejay show on WEVD in '36, and I started playing Chick Webb, Fats Waller, Jimmie Lunceford. Then, for \$23 a week, I was given the all-night show which was part of a 7 A.M.-4 A.M. shift, six days a week, with one double back at 11 A.M.

“The ‘Midnight Jamboree’ was sponsored by Alka-Seltzer, and many bars and grills were tuned in. I was piped into the ‘21 Club,’ and every week they would send me a bottle of scotch, brandy and rum, and I couldn’t even afford to tip the cabbie.

“One of the highlights of the show was when I had Kay Kyser as a guest and I said to him: ‘You’ve heard of Alka-Seltzer, haven’t you? You’ve used it?’ He said: ‘Gene, I want you to know that Alka-Seltzer is simply great. I wash my socks in Alka-Seltzer and it gives them the most airy quality because of the bubbles’ . . .

“I can remember a birthday party that these fellas gave for me at WEVD. Fats Waller, Glenn Miller, Sammy Kaye, Tommy Dorsey, Edith Wright, Cab Calloway, Maxine Sullivan were there.

“But the following morning, I was called in by the management and I was bawled out for having cigarette butts on the floor of the studio. Pee Wee Russell, Max Kaminsky, Ziggy Elman, and others went into a jam session. We had things you wouldn’t believe on that show and yet they bawled me out for having cigarette butts on the floor and letting smoke get into the air-conditioning system.”

King also said Phil Harris recorded a tune written by Buck Ram for him, “Swingin’ for King,” and that he broke Jerry Livingston’s “Mairzy Doats” during the war over WOR. He added he became very good friends with Milt Gabler, who was working in his father’s Forty-second Street Commodore Music Shop, from where he went to Decca in 1941. King said Gabler gave him the first pressing of Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit.”

But the accepted white voice of the New York Negro was coming from an uptown trumpet player named Sid Torin, who began his half-hour “After School Swing Session” on WBNX in 1937. Torin also worked in a Forty-second Street record store called the Symphony Shop, so a WBNX staff announcer started introducing the Negrofying Jewish jock as “Symphony Sid.”

For 3½ years, Torin built up a Harlem audience by playing what was known then as “sepia and race” records. The

listeners responded by patronizing such 125th Street establishments as Lou's Pants Shop, Hollywood Al's, and the Apollo Theater. Torin, of course, sold his own time.

In 1940, he went to WHOM, where he remained for 7½ years. His program there included a Wednesday and Saturday "Brother Sid" gospel show. Initially, he was on from 11 P.M. to midnight, but in 1943 he settled into his legendary all-night gig. In 1945, Torin was persuaded by promoter Monte Kay to plug an upcoming concert via new releases by rising jazz performers Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. The show almost sold out, and Kay, with his new partner's show as sole advertising vehicle, began the promotion of modern jazz. "Symphony Sid" remained somewhere on the Manhattan midnight air through 1951, taking jazz into bop and mainstream. After a few years in Boston, he returned to New York, playing r & b initially but settling into a Latin beat in the sixties.

Other midnight shows playing records early included Mort Lawrence's "Dawn Patrol" on WIP, Philadelphia, "The Nutty Club" on WBBM, Chicago, "Hank the Night Watchman" on KFVD, and Al Fox's blues show on KGFJ, both out of Los Angeles.

In 1933, Fox, who called his show the "world's worst," was discontinued. A deluge of letters brought him back, with his records, and his baying hound dog.

"Al had it all wrapped up for a while," said L.A.'s Don Otis. "Just after prohibition ended, I remember he would play 'The Star-Spangled Banner' every night just before the bars closed, and he had a lot of listeners in a lot of bars."

So it was to this nocturnal, magic challenge that veterans and students after World War II responded. The first real generation of jocks then was to be continually fighting for the right to have something to say and play. But the ego/profit drive all around, particularly in the desire of the advertiser to be first in the public's mind, was to be crucial to many deejays in every step of their growth.

This (the principal events for the next fifty years affecting the welfare of the human race) had best be cast after the great catastrophe that's coming to the world in '36 in the form of the breaking up of many *powers* that now exist as factors in the world affairs.

—EDGAR CAYCE
On Prophecy

. . . left to speak for themselves, the conditions speak loudly enough. Perhaps the most telling evidence can be obtained by simply looking at television or listening to the AM radio for one consecutive hour for a couple of days, not shutting off the commercials, and now and then switching the station.

—HERBERT MARCUSE
One-Dimensional Man

BY THE MID-THIRTIES, radio had grown in importance, with the playing of records the common denominator, although the notion was generally derided. Radio men slowly came to realize that they were in show business, and although *Variety* said it was better all the way around, showmanship meant getting the most out of the least with a profit.

This meant not paying local artists—the “publicity” argument was always available—but the sponsors failed to show interest in live talent as the networks grew fatter. So the use of records, as a perfected show, cheaper and highly profitable, increased steadily.

There was always a station back in the boondocks that would give a country or blues disc a spin. While hustling a buck was hypocritically decried, the post-Depression desire to earn a living reflected the technology in its swirling stabs at material success and growth, and spot sales became the way to grow in broadcasting.

Every attempt to make more money, and the pull to make a fair shake all around, started to get out of hand. Not really too different from other times, its intensity through the turned-on ability of the burgeoning electronic forms of communication was beginning to make any literate message secondary. Those who held out for purity of artistry found themselves communicating less and less—except for the black and white southerners whose “down home” blues were becoming tinged with urban realities.

Everyone found something wrong with the method of payment, but the American way had to be upheld. Except, it was argued, for the recording artist. Waring began his drive to curb the airing of discs, especially where it merged with a local sponsor, with the formation of the National Association of Performing Artists (NAPA). He won a temporary verdict in 1937, and there were the peaks and valleys of stations eliminating records and substituting noninfringing discs.

Many stations were buying transcription libraries, and the AFM was to negotiate an agreement for transcription use based on station earnings. With local revenue becoming available, spot broadcasting, which had been suffering from a lack of quality, increased in the larger markets.

As did the insistent, specious spots coupled with retail discs but tempered by the friendlier, live voice in the person of what was to be dubbed the disc jockey. He had firsthand information, personally delivered, on what was going on in his audience's immediate environment, and the multisonic ability to take those who wanted to be taken on the trip.

Block, a dynamic salesman, was the first to be recognized for making the deejay a spectacular overnight success. He took the natural step to push products between the fantasia

of tunes, much to the immediate fortune of his first sponsors—Retardo reducing tablets, Edwin cigars—and alert New York agencies.

However, up until World War II, Al Jarvis could not be said to have been a commercial parvenu. During the Depression, in order to sustain himself, he opened his own record store, The Stomp Shop, on Hollywood Boulevard. And while Jarvis began receiving mail from listeners, possible sponsors were convinced they were only teen-agers.

By 1934, Jarvis' show was extended from a one-hour noontime offering to three hours, from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Shortly after, Jack Gross, sales manager of KFWB, noticed that Jarvis' show significantly affected prime time sales, and the following year the program started selling. Jarvis' first sponsor was the Star Outfitting Company, which sold a complete wardrobe for men for \$27.50.

Cut-rate men's clothiers were quick to support the disc jockey, and Block's tie-up with Barney's, a New York shop that was to branch out to blanket the area with its "Calling All Men to Barney's" pitch, had more than its share of hassles about misleading advertising. Used-car dealers and furniture stores also took heavily to the platter spinners, as did other spurious sponsors who wanted the most for their little money, with no questions asked. Predictably, the patent medicines used the jocks early.

For the first time in human history, all the world's music was readily available to the masses through the fusion of the radio and phonograph. But the expense of increasingly having to get hit with a cheap sales message zeroed in on the housewife.

The music industry started to acknowledge the daytime plug. Directed at the romance-craving and nostalgic woman puttering around the house as her children began swinging to the radio, its potency took dead aim on the network charisma of the "soap opera."

As the agencies demanded to know what was No. 1, public opinion polls swept the country. One Crossley test found that program showmanship topped the "station habit"

theory. Did this mean Block, Jarvis, Chase, and increasingly others holding one-way conversations with recording artists amid laughter, applause, sound effects, and up to six turntables—and an appeal to the “little lady” on where to take her husband to dress him right?

Possibly, for the escape and fantasy therein aroused Proctor and Gamble in 1940, when Block became syndicated, to consider a revolutionary change in its pioneering daytime dramatic wholesaling.

Electronic vaudeville began its clash with dramatic radio in earnest, and economics dictated the ground rules. The name of the game became who used the media in more, and cheaper, combinations, to make it.

Most stations found that records were the way to do it, and names like Peter Potter and Ira Cook, Los Angeles; Bill Baldwin and Les Malloy, San Francisco; Wayne Stitt and Eddie Clark, Kansas City; Hal Morgan, Cleveland; and George Curtis, Portland, Maine, joined the fray for the psyche of the homemaker and the teen-ager.

Payola was not yet an acknowledged factor in the jock's existence, as violations were more severely confronted in 1935. The MPPA instituted \$1,000–\$2,000 fines, with the power of attorney to deduct the penalties from income due from ASCAP. That ability, however, realistically meant whistle blowing all around, because no publisher could afford to drop out of the payoff race.

The disc makers saw their business stifled because the public could hear it all—and free. Moreover, they were of the opinion that no publisher made money from sheet sales anymore, unless it was a smash, and the exploitation expense in landing radio plugs would seem to make overplugging prohibitive.

But there was always a pub pecking away by plugging like hell somewhere. The “venal” commercial hustlers, who lived it, stormed out of the Depression with the sound of the hard times ingrained in the lives of the plain folks.

What it amounted to, however, was that the publisher paid and paid. It was axiomatic that overplugging killed a

song, but the small publishers who couldn't even get near name bands on big-time radio found that by paying enough for a quantity of little plugs, they could force a song up onto "Top 10" shows. These programs were beginning to flower out of the tunes most played on the networks each week. The aggressive publishers could thus achieve big-league attention, which meant what the ad agencies were looking for in suitable mass material.

Following Waring's lead, major artists instituted law suits to prevent air play of their discs. Bing Crosby felt that overplugging of his records would reflect in his box office draw as a screen star, although *Variety* wrote that "the Decca record people convinced the crooner that these waxings were good advertising agents." This was the same Decca whose president, Jack Kapp, was adamant against disc air play.

Waring reportedly dumped \$90,000 of his own money into organizing performers. During the 1960 hearings on disc jockey payola, he stated:

"If the performers had stuck with us, we could have had an association similar to ASCAP. There were 78 radio stations in the U.S., prepared to pay a nominal fee for using records, and even the jukebox operators were ready to sign.

"Our group would have received a \$10 annual fee from every jukebox in the country—half-a-million of them. But the industry lobbied against us, some disc jockeys fought the plan, and at the last minute the performers walked out."

Waring added that the resultant indiscriminate use of records ruined most of the big bands and paved the way for the payola of the fifties.

But the day was dawning for a counterpart to ASCAP. In 1935 the NAB grudgingly signed a five-year contract with the society, which found the networks once more being taxed less than the independent stations. As a result, Hermann Starr, president of Warner Brothers' Music Publishers Holding Corporation, whose catalogues accounted for 20 percent of ASCAP-controlled music, took MPHC's music out of the society for the first seven months of 1936.

Starr wanted a method to tax network commercials at the

source, which would mean more money for MPHC with its forty-thousand copyrights. These included most of the works of Victor Herbert, Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, Noel Coward, George Gershwin, Sigmund Romberg, and Rodgers and Hart.

With the independent stations favoring Warner Bros., and the networks backing ASCAP, the NAB board defeated by a 7-6 vote a recommendation advocating the split. The deck was stacked for ASCAP and the nets, and Warner writers lost royalties for seven months. The firms were forced back into the fold when their motion picture parent realized it would have to abandon film musical production unless radio plugs were restored.

By one vote, Warner Bros. lost over \$500,000 as the networks and ASCAP failure to correct the abuses set the stage for the arrival of the two-party system in American music with the organization of BMI in 1939.

On its *Negro Swing Parade*, along with recordings of colored artists, WDAS, Philadelphia (which began programming for Negroes in 1930), announces the activities of various negro social organizations. Most negroes are joiners, and WDAS found its fan mail increasing. Wires were installed in negro night clubs and cafes and colored announcers spoke in the negro idiom.

—*Broadcasting*, July 1, 1937

Q. How do you rate your music?

A. We're not good musicians. Just adequate.

Q. Then why are you so popular?

A. Maybe people like adequate music

—THE BEATLES

THE SWING ERA BEGAN, and although successful publishers and older writers blasted Dixieland's reincarnation, the good ears led the masses toward loving it. Swing was not a great seller until 1937—melody still sold more discs—but its freak sound was what the kids came out in droves for. And radio once again made new names among the nation's dance bands.

Al Jarvis' anecdotal claim to leadership in the disc jockey hierarchy came about in 1937 when he received \$500 from Benny Goodman to plug his records and appearance at the

Palomar Ballroom. The band was having indifferent success around the country and was on two weeks' notice. Goodman sent his advance man, Charlie Emge, the editor of *Tempo* magazine, to Los Angeles, to promote his appearance. Emge almost completely concentrated his efforts with Jarvis, and the Goodman band opened to an overflow crowd of 2,300.

The method of playing a band's records over the air as the pitch to snare the dance business became standard. However, the young swing musicians found that the price of commercial success was the demand by the hep cats, who closely studied the discs, that the tunes be jammed exactly as on the record. The easy money in arduous one-nighters was in gritting one's teeth and playing the trademark arrangements note for note.

Swing brought it all back home to the recording business. Following Decca's earlier reduction, RCA Victor's Blue Bird line, at 25¢, was an important factor but not nearly as great as the growth of the juke box. Coin-operated machines became spotted in thousands of road houses where not only the livelier dance styles but the low-down lyrics on the cheaper labels found their nickels—likely directed there by a swinging young announcer somewhere.

Around the country, young musicians and engineer-announcers were getting together via the friendly and financial desire to help one another out, get ahead, and enjoy life. With one eye on Spain and the Fascist *entente*, disc jockeys were springing up everywhere, taking as their cue the music that had been coming up through the center of the land.

Petrillo kept up his attempts to stifle disc airing. He asked the AFM for a national ban as NAPA lost its first New York case begun as a result of a favorable Waring decision against WDAS, Philadelphia. In 1937, after the New York Supreme Court at the close of 1936 refused to grant an injunction against WHN, New York, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court sustained a lower decision in the Waring case.

Judge Horace Stern, in noting that "the problems never before have been presented to an American or English

court," said that although property rights were "admittedly not the subject of protection" under existing copyright laws, the "reservations or restrictions imposed by him" did restrict their use.

However, New York copyright expert Julian T. Abeles opined against the prohibition, saying the sale of a record placed it "beyond the limits of the monopoly secured by the Patent Act." As the record manufacturers were preparing to establish a centralized licensing system, it was felt that the broadcasters had a 50-50 chance of winning a test case.

The AFM and the major recorders agreed on a plan mapped out by RCA Victor, and okayed by Decca and the Columbia-Brunswick combine, to drop the line "not licensed for radio broadcasting." This was to be replaced by "The use of this record has been licensed under specific patents. The resale of this record except for home use is prohibited."

But some stations, through their jocks, went to retail outlets to pay for play, and there were always smaller companies eager to give their product away for exposure.

The pubs asked the Federal Trade Commission to help them in curbing payola, but although the regulatory agency's code was tighter than the music men's, it did not spell it out clearly. The commission threatened a further probe, but the antibribery pact was widely winked at.

Transcription business picked up with the impasse brought about by the WDAS decision. The Philadelphia station bought a quantity of NAB public domain music discs, and by the end of 1937 it signed with NAPA. The decision of Waring's organization to collect performance fees did not please the copyright-owning publishers, who were having enough trouble getting their money from the station. His over-all plan was also threatened by a jurisdictional dispute with the AFM.

In January, 1938, Victor, which was considering forcing NAPA to a showdown on whether it really had the right to control use of discs, sent out letters warning against air play. In beginning legal action, Victor did grant, however, 150 stations provisional approval. Decca remained adamant,

but to no more avail than when, the next year, WORL, Boston, became the first publicized radio station to air discs at all times, with the complete cooperation of Victor's Boston distributor.

Block, who signed the Victor license, dropped Decca, saying he was through with them entirely. He kept friendly, however, with the artists by plugging them through a rival disc, "but you should hear how so-and-so plays it."

And national advertisers were beginning to hear about it. Chicago agency exec Walter Schwimmer said:

"I was visiting Mike Cowles, the publisher of *Look* magazine, in the late 30s. He owned some stations at the time, and I asked him if he ever sold any time on his stations after 10 P.M. He said no.

"I told him WTMJ, Milwaukee, had a prime-time rate of \$180 a half-hour plus the program for \$70. But I said I could buy a whole week from 11 P.M. to midnight with two announcers and records for the same price.

"If we put eight announcements for *Look* in that show,' I said, 'I'll bet you'll sell a lot of *Look*.' He said okay and bought it for 13 weeks.

"About two weeks later, he asked me about Cleveland. So I called WGRT there, which didn't have a price because they just picked up bands at that hour. I offered them the same deal as WTMJ, and they said yes.

"Two months later, Cowles called me and asked if I could make the same deal in 50 cities. I said yes and asked him what had happened in Milwaukee and Cleveland. He said circulation had gone up 40 per cent. And in the following months, *Look* jumped from 300,000 to 3,000,000.

"It was the first time in the history of radio that any national advertiser had bought a schedule late at night with only phonograph records, which, since the station charged a fee for the use of theirs, we went out and got our own, usually at a discount."

At about the same time, a national advertiser, Ward's Tip-Top Bread, employed for the first time the talents of a Negro disc jockey, Chicago's Jack L. Cooper, who began out of the South Side furniture store studios of WSBC in the

early thirties. (The station began broadcasting for minority audiences in 1927, sharing the 1240 spot on the dial with WCRW and WEDC.) Cooper, whom *Variety* reported grossed \$185,000 in 1947, seemed always to be on the air ("Gloom Chasers," "Rug Cutters' Special," "Jump, Jive, and Jam," etc.) for South Side retailers, but his main program was composed of "race" records nightly at 11 P.M.

Apparently, the fifty-year-old Cooper, who began as a radio comic in Washington, D.C., in 1924 and is acknowledged to be the first black jock, attracted agency attention through reports from Ward route men. Within a matter of months, Tip-Top Bread had established itself phenomenally on the South Side. It became so popular that a representative from a competitor reportedly came all the way from Kansas City to buy time on "The Jack L. Cooper Show." He was refused on ethical grounds.

Shortly before the Whiteman-RCA Victor suit against WNEW opened in New York Federal Court, after pending for nearly two years, Whiteman appeared on 35¢ Decca discs after a two-year respite on Victor. A new attitude among wax artists emerged. They viewed their records for their exploitation worth. Crosby said pride from a good record was paramount, and he still earned \$40,000 a year from them.

As the trial opened, the American Record Company, owners of Columbia, Brunswick, and Vocalion, was purchased by CBS and I. D. and Leon Levy, the owners of WCAU, Philadelphia. The Levys' interest was 20 per cent. (From CBS, in 1941, Kapp was to buy out his former employers, Brunswick, which meant acquiring six thousand jazz and pop recordings on the Brunswick, Melotone, and Vocalion labels.) With this purchase, CBS apparently recognized the immense value in permitting their records to be played on the air. In fact, they gave them away to have it done.

Under CBS's ownership, Columbia also launched a show on CBS-managed and -owned stations of its product, both popular and classical. It lasted through 1939, when it failed to produce an audience, setting the trend for the less-than-

indifferent success of future syndicated or network disc jockey shows.

In 1940, Judge Learned Hand of the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against RCA Victor and Paul Whiteman in litigation with WNEW. Judge Hand's decision stated that "the common-law property of orchestra leader and corporation manufacturing phonograph records ended with sale of record, so that radio broadcasting company could not be restrained from using records in broadcasts." The Appeals Court decision reversed that of Federal Judge Vincent L. Leibell restraining the W.P.O. Broadcasting Company, operators of WNEW, from playing Whiteman's records on the station.

Following Leibell's decision, Victor instituted a fee scale on phonograph record broadcasting. This was to make air play prohibitive, and Decca ordered WNEW to stop using its discs. This injunction also included dropping Decca works from the transcriptions of "Make Believe Ballroom," which was being offered for national sale to ad agencies.

Decca was put to the wall, however, by Block, who was hustling Victor and Columbia discs, with the national time buyers being sold on his approach. In a manner of retreat *Variety* called "without precedent in the sphere of commercial entertainment," Decca was forced to give its records to the station in April, 1940.

Decca started the rout at the insistence of its artists, who maintained that free play of their records was important to them as advance promotion. The music makers—whom Block plugged, but "how much can I do, fellas?"—threatened to shift their recording affiliations elsewhere.

Victor's move to license stations flopped as Columbia, hearing it would be put to a sales disadvantage, followed Decca, and Victor had no recourse. But even while the home office was pressing stations for licenses, local Victor distributors were urging local broadcasters to play their wares, assuring them that nothing untoward would happen and even giving them the latest releases.

All this made it increasingly difficult for an independent station to run a program of popular dance discs, although

there were stations that just did it. It was necessary not only to know what labels were usable but to know who was sponsored by whom on live major shows. Particularly troublesome were the cigarette-sponsored shows on the networks.

Petrillo entered the row by saying AFM members needed union sanction to sign over property rights to disc manufacturers.

However, after the Decca breakdown, WNEW was without the use of discs for June and July, 1940, as NAPA forced the station to drop them. The Appeals Court decision, July 25, "one of the great legal opinions in the history of performing rights," put an end to Waring's abiding passion, NAPA, although the idea has always remained in the minds of recording artists and producers.

(In 1967, the National Committee for the Recording Arts was formed under the chairmanship of big band pioneer Stan Kenton. NCRA pushed for an eminently fair amendment to the 1909 Copyright Law revision to grant recording performance royalties for air play. The broadcasters reluctantly approved a 2 per cent of net revenue royalty.)

The lower court had found that there were three contracts involved, the first two of which had assigned all rights to RCA, and the last of which had reserved for Whiteman certain rights of license, under common-law statutes.

The orchestra leader had claimed rights in the records, asserting that as the performing artist he had the right to license use of these records to broadcasting companies. He had dropped the original action when he became convinced he had more to lose than gain.

RCA had then sued W.P.O., Elin, Inc., sponsor of the Block broadcasts of Whiteman's records, and Whiteman himself. In this RCA's attorney argued that Whiteman had dropped his original case against Elin and W.P.O. To disturb the main decision would be to allow persons to re-create an achievement to the detriment of the person who had originated it, the court was told, and several cases to back the decision were cited.

The lawyer did argue, however, that Judge Leibell had

erred slightly in a couple of points. The judge had found that RCA had contributed technical and scientific services toward the making of records, and RCA felt it had contributed not only this *but artistic and intellectual services as well*.

The judges were apparently astounded at the magnitude of the issues, as in the beginning when Presiding Justice Hand had objected to the length of eight briefs submitted averaging seventy pages apiece. But later, referring to the main issue, he stated to the RCA counsel: "This is a most extraordinary point that you are raising."

Later that year, the Supreme Court denied a writ of certiorari. Both Whiteman and RCA were indeed disappointed. The record manufacturer wanted to explain its contention that all the rights to license reproduction were obtained under contracts with the band leader, while Whiteman maintained in the brief that he had not surrendered some of the stake successfully claimed by RCA.

It was ironic that at the level of the high court the growing empire of David Sarnoff was given free reign on a decision that was essentially lost. This new form of the *status quo* was not really quizzical to the musician inasmuch as it was part of the exasperation he lives. He now really needed a business head as it became a matter of making the best deal, and the union was not filling the bill.

The Hand decision also took care of the Federal Communications Commission's position, in the form of a hint, that stations using too many phonograph records and running too many ads were inviting possible discipline. The FCC also discovered that the less business a station did, the more it was apt to broadcast records.

Taverns, grills and small clubs by the score have tried to obtain music the easy way—via radio—but in the last analysis have found it wise to switch to machines.

Reasons for this are obvious if sufficient thought is given the question:

1. Only a machine will deliver tunes which are specifically wanted.
2. Music reception via radio is not as unfailing, or as uniformly good as music reception via machines.
3. When patrons are seeking entertainment, high-pressure salesmanship, or commercial plugging, via radio, becomes obnoxious.

Third point is particularly significant, inasmuch as various companies have conceived the idea of incorporating commercial talks on music records to be used in coin machines. All these attempts failed.

—*Billboard*, Sept. 23, 1939

Whether the entertainment that is derived from the mass media produces wholesome effects still remains unresolved. There is some meager evidence that supports the contention of both schools . . . the effort to determine whether entertainment produces good or bad "effects" upon audiences represents a particularly fruitless endeavor.

—HAROLD MENDELSON
Mass Entertainment

RUNNING PARALLEL to the war between recordings and broadcasting was the culmination of a decade and a half of power struggle between the networks, the NAB, and ASCAP, over the signing of a new contract. Music was the chief ingredient of radio, obtained at a cost of 5 per cent, and it has remained around that. Without ASCAP music, there could be no "Hit Parade," and yet *Variety* wrote that

radio paid the publishers only \$218.50 a week for the use of the hits.

In August, 1939, as ASCAP was being built up in Congress as the superdevil of all monopoly, the protean image of the New York Jew, the NAB stressed that they controlled, in their late-evening dance parades, the mechanism through which many song hits were introduced and established.

Accordingly, as a rumor circulated that ASCAP would demand double the performance fees for the new contract starting in 1941 (it turned out to be over three times; ASCAP would settle for a little over 15 per cent), the broadcasters reasoned if song pluggers, using radio facilities, could put over hits, they could do the same for themselves. Moreover, as the pubs scoffed, many broadcasters resented that their own facilities were being used to strengthen ASCAP, who then had the power to hit radio stations for performance rights.

So three weeks after Hitler entered Poland, the NAB convention voted an assessment, using half of ASCAP's 1937 fees as a basis, to set up their own music licensing and publishing firm—to be known as Broadcast Music, Inc.

The prime purpose in the creation of BMI, of course, was to serve the needs of radio, and experienced musicians, from unknown amateurs to the moderately successful, but unable to crack ASCAP's complicated payment hierarchy, began to get their songs heard on the air, beginning in April, 1940. And be paid for them.

BMI's arrangement was a very loose credit policy—a virtual parity—and simple performance payment in contrast to ASCAP's tangle of intangibles and seniority. This also brought in a flood of song writers who could now be their own publishers. The major effect was to begin to give the public more of the music it really wanted to hear—earthy tunes ASCAP tilted its nose at.

And BMI paid off right away, while ASCAP would not accept anyone for membership until he had published five songs, and even established song-writers breathed a sigh of relief by casting off the intricate nine-point weighted-payment gauge of ASCAP.

With the contract up December 31, less than three months after the initial demand of ASCAP of 7½ per cent, the NAB was stunned and refused to pay. Elaborate legal and public relations machinery went into effect because it would become an infringement for any radio station to use any ASCAP music over American airwaves.

The NAB saw it as "a fight to oppose the idea that the seller of music may set prices according to the income of the buyer, on a take-it-or-leave-it basis." So there was really no way anyone in radio could either open or recommend that negotiations be started with ASCAP without being accused of being a fink.

Broadcasters, especially the big midwestern indies, were also in a mood to welcome rather than avoid a test of strength after January 1. Factions were to emerge among them, but spot sales had grown so important that some network affiliates formed a trade association, Independent Broadcasters, Inc., which barred the networks and clear channel stations from membership. Other lesser independent coalitions formed to make their existence helpful, and successful.

With the encouragement of BMI and the hustling of its time salesmen, lesser stations kept up a lively pace for any stations undecided about which music to go with. Having a stake in the music now, small stations fed the fuels against ASCAP monopoly and New York slick sophistication.

At the lowest level, there was always a gaggle of phonograph records to be heard somewhere. As 1940 closed, and press interests in the scrap meant nothing to the layman, quite a few stations signed up for licenses from both sources. However, NBC and CBS were unshakable, and everything pointed to an extended and bitter conflict between the networks and ASCAP.

Innocent musicians pleaded with the contending parties to stop grimacing and start negotiating. Some declared that the side angles accruing from the controversy were becoming so complex that they were thinking about giving up the music business altogether and becoming daytime serial actors.

With the break, hardly any of the ASCAP publishers were releasing new tunes, even for phonograph record cutting. Figuring that the publication of new material would be pretty much a wasted effort, many of the publishers said that when peace came they would return to plugging the tunes they had just got started when the rupture occurred.

Aside from new and enthusiastic song-writers and public domain tunes—used on the basis of recent performance frequency, and rearranged with much precision, BMI's key acquisition was the excellent catalogues of the Edward B. Marks Company. (Other important pubs who joined BMI were Peer-International, M. M. Cole, and The S-H Transcription Company.) Out of this flurry of activity came a lot of reworkings of "Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair," a public domain tune. Surprisingly to ASCAP, the great listening public could not have cared less.

A crisis in sheet music developed as ASCAP song sales began drying up and BMI songs stormed up through the smaller stations in greater numbers than ever before. For, with the acceptance of the ukulele in 1926-27, the freaky sound of southern strummers led the public to a demand for the unusual. Musicians were to develop from this flinty range of human existence, and ASCAP taste and Broadway centralization were slowly to lose their grip on the American ears.

The networks' need for new song material became acute, and a movie guide poll said three of four radio listeners complained that the music they heard was worse than before. Any delay in a settlement was bound to tax the limits of human endurance, it was said.

Not so. BMI had been slipping in its new tunes since the spring of 1940 with moderate success. And as the summer of 1941 began, a surprising tally of BMI composers began to upset the elitist notions of ASCAP. ASCAP-free radio lasted ten months, and BMI received only a smattering of complaints. More important, the ASCAP counterattack never happened, and not one infringement suit was lodged against radio. Actually, the major ingredients in all radio's favor

through 1941 was the unpredictable, intensified interest in the war, so that music was less important than normally.

Although BMI turned out its quota of hits in 1941, it cost the broadcasters a lot of money with some bad song picking. What saved the day for radio were the many small, BMI affiliated publishers, more than fifty, who cropped up with surprise pop hits, from "Hut Sut Ralston" to "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire" and a raft of Latin American songs.

BMI certainly didn't prove that producing hits was a business anybody could enter from scratch, but its high-wire strategy worked. And in a business where most publishing houses are not big business, and the chief customer, broadcasting, is, littleness made a crucial gain in the battle with the Leviathan—with the monster's help.

As it happened, the tensions were greatest on the makers of motion picture musicals, as Warner Bros. had found out so painfully five years earlier. When ASCAP finally did approve NBC's terms of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent in August, 1941, it was because holding out was too costly.

In February a quick air peace became unlikely as ASCAP yielded to reform in a criminal antitrust suit revived by the Justice Department. It had been filed by the broadcasters in 1934, and the main reform was a performance-rights agreement no longer insisting on exclusive agency for ASCAP members.

ASCAP was forced to accept a government consent decree, as charges of monopoly swirled about its head. Finally, beaten down by the courts and with its income drained, ASCAP settled for a scant $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, half what they had been getting!

The society had fought for a principle, and the networks, under a fiat of the federal court, had no recourse but to pay at the source. However, while ASCAP emerged from the ten-month fray with a principle that extended the realm of its radio licensing application, NBC and CBS exacted so many deductions from its affiliates that the money coming out of the networks' pockets was comparatively negligible.

Popular music thrives on newness and survives on youth. Frank Sinatra and his scrawny challenge, to the confusion of America's fighting men, was right around the corner, to the broadcasters' delight. And BMI's ease in staying alive meant the firm establishment of the wide acceptance of a broad folk music.

Five to ten years before the advent of television, the network affiliates started losing audiences to those stations with the friendlier tunes, and the nice neighbors in between them.

"And, hey gang, Bobby Blab's big brother's got a show on WUPY, *and he takes requests!*"

While it is probably true that whoever controls the media first retains his power of centralization, as represented by David Sarnoff, there is always that horde of hustlers behind him, intensely competing in a loose community of the spirit.

In order to answer the question of the importance of the record-playing announcer to the record and music company, however, we will have to revert to the question of which came first—the chicken or the egg . . . whether the playing of records on the air helped the music business to a greater extent, or whether the music business has helped radio by giving it these records, is a much discussed subject. Personally, I prefer to feel that both have benefited greatly, and by continual mutual understanding even greater results can be achieved.

—MARTIN BLOCK
Billboard Band Year Book,
Sept. 26, 1942

Human culture in all ages presents too many imbecile images and principles of conduct to let anyone overlook the fact that disserviceable institutions easily arise and combine to hold their place in spite of the disapproval of native common sense.

—THORSTEIN VEBLEN

WITH RADIO IN virtually every home, music was now available all the time. People might not have had telephones, but they had access to radio. Many had a phonograph, too, and with musical reproduction brilliant and clear, the demand for music in a permanent form reached 100 million discs in 1941. Breakable and easily flawed, the 78-rpm platters were handled like jewels by everybody who came into contact with them.

In 1942 the Federal Communications Commission reported that music in one form or another accounted for

more than 75 per cent of air time. Of this, 48.2 per cent of all stations were using music 100 per cent.

In the final analysis, the FCC said, over 40 per cent of all radio was wax. Those stations placing chief reliance on recordings and transcriptions were nonnetwork operations in communities under fifty-thousand population, with five hundred watts or less power, having time sales under \$75,000 and a profit under \$7,500. These, said FCC chairman James Fly, amounted to 60 per cent of all radio stations. They depended on records to exist.

The disc jockey fell into the arms of the new independent publishers who with their BMI performance fees knew how to run their business, just as the radio men figured them to do. And some jocks were to become publishers before the war ended.

As the country went to war, the major cities started to hear the sounds of the South. One-shot publishers began meeting the demand of workers migrating to the northern metropolises, and as recording companies began to sprout up everywhere, payola ran rampant.

Individual notoriety was going largely to Block. He was sweet-talking housewives in the morning and turning on teens from 6-8 P.M., plus presenting a potent 10 A.M.-noon Saturday offering of the "Top 25" for the whole family.

Influencing a "heart-to-heart" school among announcers, Block began getting competition, however, from WOV's Allen Courtney, a "most professional" performer who was to earn *Variety's* praise during the war. Their "Battle of the Discs" against early-evening network competition not only picked up large, loyal audiences, it substantially served to show that plugging records on the air helped rather than hurt retail sales.

In the summer of 1941 Macy's led other New York record outlets in complaining that the jocks in building up rivalries to be the first to broadcast potential hits were sending customers into the stores for platters that were not yet available.

Some were not just content to secure prerelease masters

but even made off-the-air recordings of live performances. By playing tunes weeks before they were released, and getting the feedback it did from the retailers, disc jockeys were raising many an impressed eyebrow.

One was a Baltimore law graduate named Freddie Robbins, who joined the city's WITH when it opened in 1941 and was to achieve great success as Courtney's successor on WOV's "1280 Club" with his bop and poetry patter during the late forties. He said:

"I was doing a show called the 'Swing Class' for Royal Crown Cola. It was the first time they were on the air with anybody. And I called myself 'The Professor of Thermodynamics.' I deified all those swing guys. We loved them. It was a thing that was busting inside of you. You had to express yourself in music. If you couldn't sing, playing music on the air was a way of expressing yourself.

"A big problem I ran into is very interesting. When Frank was with Tommy Dorsey, I, in all humility, must say that I was really the first guy to recognize that this guy was going to be the first successful single since Crosby. I really knew it. He had not as yet made a single record. Strictly vocals with Dorsey. He had a flock of them, and the James records.

"I had one program sponsored by a furniture store. Seven o'clock at night; 15 minutes. I used to cue in Sinatra vocals on the Dorsey records, the needle right before the vocal would come in, and I'd segue from one to the other. So that in 15 minutes, you'd play at least 30 songs. Night after night after night. Not Tommy Dorsey—Frank Sinatra. He was known then. He was a big favorite, but he was still the band singer.

"Well, Tinsley [WITH's owner] almost fired me because of that. 'How dare you!' ya know? 'Without even mentioning Tommy Dorsey. What is this, who the hell is this guy Sinatra you give 15 minutes to?'

"And he docked me a lot of times. If you left the lights on, he charged you five dollars. Every little infraction."

The war, of course, was to have a profound effect on the

rise of the disc jockey. As did Petrillo, and the two produced a crucial crisis in the life of independent broadcasting and records.

The war somewhat reduced the public's listening to small radio. The events were on a world scale, and the networks provided the best, but independent stations increased their business to record levels during the war. Disc sales reached a peak just after Pearl Harbor, but the limited amounts of shellac (a Southeast Asian export) to keep it up meant the preferred top bands got the material to record with.

So it was rather farfetched when song writer Johnny Mercer, Buddy DeSylva, head of production at Paramount, and Glenn Wallichs, owner of Music City, a record and music store (which began in partnership with Al Jarvis) in Hollywood, decided to start a record company called Capitol in the spring of 1942.

Dave Dexter, Jr., a producer at Capitol and a well-known writer on jazz and pop music, joined the firm in 1943. He said Glenn Wallichs, the business manager of Capitol, came to New York during the summer of 1942 when Dexter was editor of *down beat*. They had met when Dexter had visited Los Angeles the summer before, and Wallichs called him to play some Capitol records on a one-nighter Dexter was doing on WOY.

Dexter suggested that Wallichs give some sides to Courtney, who enthusiastically played Capitol tunes all night with resultant tremendous sales. This didn't make Block too happy, because he was used to, and insisted on, having an exclusive on any record.

Unfortunately, right after that, Petrillo put an arbitrary ban on record making that lasted until late in 1943. Even then, because of the sinking of a ship loaded with shellac by the Japanese in early 1943, Capitol was strapped.

However, at that time, Capitol came out with its first big hit, 'Pistol Packin' Mama,' by The Pied Pipers and Paul Weston. During the ban, they were kept going with 'Cow Cow Boogie,' by Ella Mae Morse, and 'Strip Polka,' by Johnny Mercer, both backed by Freddie Slack's band.

Others who began at that time with Capitol were Paul Whiteman, snared from Victor, Gordon Jenkins, Dennis Day, and Connie Haines.

During the war, popular music was melded and cross-fertilized through the great movement of people and broadcasting. But, as Capitol began, it was decided to drop record and transcription plugs from the daily compilation of the Accurate Reporting Service, a New York-based survey organization that logged all plugs.

Even then, one side argued that the action would slow down the "evil" of the pluggers' drive in that it would make contact with small stations, and wide-eyed disc jockeys, fruitless. Others, at the higher levels of the major pubs, said the effect of discs was negligible.

In any event, it was hoped this would give a more qualitative cast to the list. Moreover, the ratings which were paid for by the big advertisers and the networks, and culled from people who had telephones, dictated that musical programming be New-York known and directed toward the major population areas "yearning" to be Gothams. Every move out of New York was calculated to solidify the ratings and control in the hands of a dozen or so agencies.

But through wartime travel, the outer echelons were being heard from. And with the way people and their provincial tastes were moving, it was an underswell that couldn't be swept back, as much as ASCAP tried.

Disc jockeys didn't panic when Petrillo banned AFM members from recording for juke boxes or radio programs. In general, the jockeys felt that the stations would wage the battle for them. At least three hundred stations depended for existence upon the broadcasting of phonograph records. Also, since the August 1 desist order did not apply to old discs, they felt they could go on for months with their backlog.

Most important, the jocks confidently stated that they took plenty of unknown bands and built them into name attractions every year. If Petrillo thought, they summed up, the big orchestras could do nearly as well without their

plugs, he might ask the successful members of his union about platter shows.

Block had proved to the major recorders a few years earlier his raw power to get to the public's ears, and now his swing-nurtured brothers were standing up for the commonplace acceptance of "canned music."

It was really doubtful that the elimination of discs would result in the greatly increased employment of musicians. Network musical shows—including the remotes—and records and transcriptions, had educated the ears of listeners to a good brand of music. Most of the men Petrillo sought to put to work through the elimination of both juke boxes and the broadcasting of phonograph records really could not approach that level of ability.

The platter spinners said they had no opposition to putting more musicians to work. They pointed out, however, that many members of the AFM were not technically able to hold down jobs in radio or in spots that depended upon music as a major attraction.

Arguments still persisted that the musicians were owed a little bit more by the jukes and jocks, but the record companies nixed an MPPA plan to restrict discs to home use in another attempt to get a final court ruling. The discers never really believed they could get restrictive-use licenses, and, now they did not want to appear conciliatory toward the AFM and antagonistic toward radio and juke boxes.

The AFM situation was intensely embarrassing to Washington, which saw itself fighting labor and doing it under a law of some denseness. Moreover, there had been built up over the years, partly with federal complicity, a general assumption that "live" broadcasting was far more in the public interest than "canned." Now the FCC had to defend the latter as necessary to the public interest.

The jocks were absolutely sure that their power was great enough to sway public opinion. A nation at war needed its music, and Petrillo was merely cutting his own throat. Just come along for the trip, said the spinners, who, like too many others with their antennae pushed forward through the twentieth century, were being marched off to die.

The war itself made it difficult to train musicians to take engineering jobs, but the jocks were just beginning to exploit their vocations in a multitude of ways, including starting quickie trade schools after the war. However, confusion of priorities was to prevail for the returning veterans to the eager youth born as the Depression began.

What the band leaders, whose ranks were being depleted by the war, might be less than warm about was the announcers' growing "song writing." Record company execs were already being annoyed by this jock sideline.

After either writing or cutting himself in on a song, the jockey went all out in high-pressuring some band leader into recording the number. If the maestro wouldn't cooperate, the jock just overlooked the orchestra's latest recording when it came to making up the station's play-list. There were deejays, it was said, who dug up worthwhile melodies, but they weren't in any numbers.

So given a spot on the dial where nobody knew if anyone was listening, the embryonic jock set out to find out what he could and could not do. Should he play commercial music or jazz? The familiar quarter-hour of one performer or a varied show? A "Hit Parade" format? New releases? Popularity contests? Personal appearances? Interviews?

What about his ad libs—informative, opinionated, or wacky? Sing along with the records? Break 'em when they bugged him? Would his approach be imitative of the better known or original? Could he keep his private hurts from killing his public performances? How did he avoid the pitfalls of conceit, resentment, poor taste, exhaustion, sarcasm, futility? When he had finally worked his way through some of these problems to the best of his ability, what did he do when he learned that Petrillo had banned discs and shellac supplies were down to 5 per cent of the previous year!?

One effect the recording ban had was, with the trickle of new releases, to force newspaper record reviewers attempting to keep up weekly departments to include hillbilly, cowboy, and race records, hitherto skipped by average critics.

A major beneficiary of this was Al Dexter, who recorded

his twanging novelty "Pistol Packin' Mama" for Okeh in March, 1942. By the end of the summer of 1943, the disc had sold more than 1 million copies, and Capitol and Decca, who were to sign with the AFM that fall, began fighting for their share of the pop market with versions by Paul Weston and The Pied Pipers, and Bing Crosby and The Andrew Sisters, respectively.

Weston had been Tommy Dorsey's arranger and was instrumental in the star making of Connie Haines, Jo Stafford—and Frank Sinatra.

Capitol was achieving extraordinary success under the most severe conditions. Block was crucial, and when he played Capitol's version first, he gave a permanent boost to the Hollywood company. In view of the fact that Decca's disc was in Block's hands for nearly two weeks, Capitol paid homage to his leadership, while Decca dragged its heels as usual.

But both versions were 1 million sellers, with Decca's selling for 75¢ because of the coupling of Crosby and The Andrew Sisters. Its version encountered censorship because of the opening line, "Drinkin' beer in a cabaret," which Capitol changed to "Singin' songs in a cabaret." WJZ, New York, and NBC banned the Decca disc.

A wave of Nashville sounds swept the country as everything came together to make bands *passé*. The war, the AFM ban, and the lack of shellac reduced the music business to the heavy use of girl vocalists for the first time. They sang the easily adapted country ballads, to the delight of the music publishers, as sheet sales soared.

But the door was closing on the music publishers. Although swing had been directed at college students, the covering pop discs of country music were aimed right at the teen-agers, who listened to radio and *bought* records. Radio's burst with this new music didn't do a thing for ASCAP publishers, but they soon found they'd better pick up on it or be down the drain.

It was easier to balladerize "country and western" tunes than it had been jazz, and some of the distillations became

best sellers. But most times, the girl singers just covered hillbilly hits and moaned them out to servicemen around the world, who, wherever they were, were hearing it on V-discs.

As for the bobby-soxers, they had to be satisfied with just one man, and Sinatra showed up with the voice to start them shrieking. The boy friends and husbands fighting the war noticed he didn't look like much of a man, but it did tend to confuse teen-age boys, who couldn't offer up their manhood for the war effort.

Henry Aldrich and Archie reflected the dumbfounded youth born into the Depression—who heard the surprise hit of 1943, "They're Either Too Young or Too Old." The song reassured servicemen that there were no romantic threats to them back home.

Many of the vocalists, like Sinatra and Dick Haymes, were backed up by a *cappella* choirs because of the AFM ban. Another unusual sound heard was original Latin American groups, and "Besa Me Mucho" ("Kiss Me Much") became a hit by Andy Russell. Mostly, however, reissues were felt to be a safe bet in an uncertain market with a minimum of shellac.

JOCKEYING IS A FINE ART

It takes something more than disks and spot announcements to turn a platter-spinning session into a productive commercial program—for station—sponsor and the music biz.

—*The Billboard 1944 Music Year Book*

You praise the firm restraint with
which they write—
I'm with you there, of course.
They use the snaffle and curb all right,
But where's the bloody horse?
—ROY CAMPBELL

FOR A WHILE during the summer of 1943, New Yorkers could hear the latest in English discs. Block used pressings from there for about two weeks, claiming he got the records through the mail from a friend who bought them in London retail shops. New York Local 802 of the AFM, on orders of the national office, pulled Merle Pitt's studio orchestra out of WNEW for two days until the station promised not to use any English records made after August 1, 1942.

By the same date a year later, the musicians had reportedly lost \$4 million in jobs, but the discers, with sales

down \$25-40 million, serious manpower losses, and 20 per cent of normal shellac supplies, were not really doing badly. Some crises canceled others out, and restricted releasing kept a steady stream of the big band discs available to the public, the average for clicks climbing near 1 million. But during the two years of the ban, no new bands emerged.

Recognizing the power of the turntable, Capitol and Decca (which still abhorred the jock) signed a royalty agreement in the early fall of 1943. This gave the two indies a tremendous jump on Columbia and Victor, who did not sign until November, 1944.

The emergence of the disc jockey started to make its presence fully known to the pluggers. Payola was the subject, as usual, of whispered talks, and the importance of record plugs became a topic of intense discussion. At first, ASCAP publishers were able to keep disc plugs from daily compilations in an attempt to stem the deejay's influence.

This, however, tended to slow down the enthusiasm among the pluggers outside New York, especially after the trade papers agreed in 1943 to list the twenty-five "most played" network plugs in weekly alphabetical order. This was folly inasmuch as, with no bands recording, pluggers were in a sellers' market for salaries owing to the manpower shortage so that they could pay for plugs.

The alphabetical listings lasted four months. The ad agencies found ways to get the "Top 10" numerically, if nowhere else but from the powerful "Hit Parade" or Block's Saturday session. "The Hit Parade" gave heavy emphasis to juke box performances. This lack of weight to nonrecorded hits annoyed the pubs, but that was *in fact* the way they wanted it.

With no easily retained integer, the contact men naturally began losing to the local sounds of the yokels, and the occupation was slowly to disappear. "Way up there" didn't turn anyone on. It wasn't at all like being able to say, as "The Hit Parade" did, that it was No. 1 to 10 and moving up, and it didn't provide vivid results for orders and sales, and on flops.

So, the push began again for "The Hit Parade" (and "The Billboard Parade of Hits" and "The Billboard's Harlem Hit Parade" began making up a lot of record shows again), but payola still helped most the small publisher who it was supposed to protect. By blitzing he could put up a "front of success." It wasn't as paradoxical as was said. The great unwashed were communicating, and ASCAP said it just couldn't be.

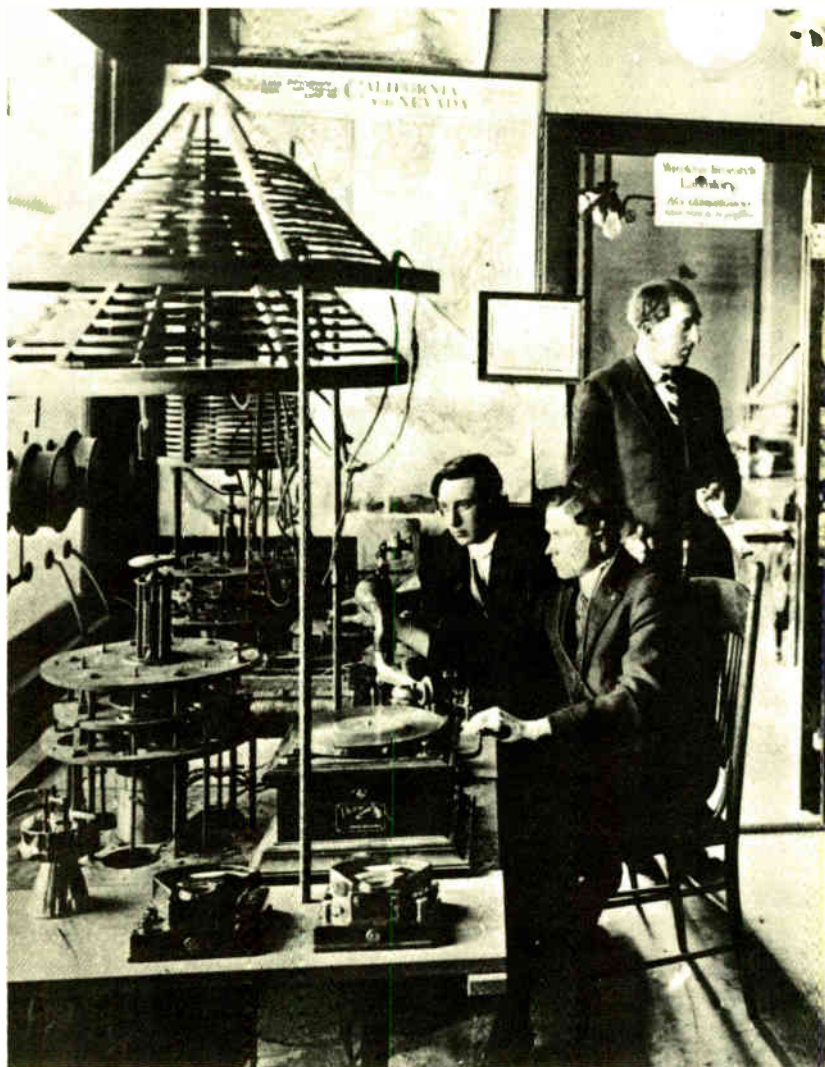
By the spring of 1944, shellac supplies were back to pre-war normal. However, with a manpower shortage, it permitted companies only to produce a more durable and better-playing disc. Because Capitol and Decca were not turning out enough discs to fill long programs without resorting to old releases, disc jockeys on independent stations signed up for transcription services. Companies like World and Langworth, and Standard Radio, were recording new releases.

In 1944, as spot business filled BMI's coffers (newspaper advertisement was limited because of a paper shortage), it not only continued to offer to tie up band leaders by backing them in music companies through advances against royalties, it made the same deal to deejays! Under the circumstances—and by the end of the year Block was said to be making \$300,000—ASCAP had to wail: "Payola!"

For not only did BMI insure itself performances, for which it paid 4¢ a local plug and 6¢ on the nets, the organization also paid for record play. With disc jockeys as publishers, ASCAP's cries were to explode in the payola exposés fifteen years later. But it was just good business—not payola.

ASCAP reacted by encouraging a song-performance survey devised by a City College of New York psychology professor. Dr. John G. Peatman's radio research merely refused to consider plugs before 11 A.M. and after 1 A.M. An attempt to minimize a problem acknowledged to be "unstoppable," it was hoped "bribes" wouldn't be attractive to well-paid day people.

The tastes of the common man could be halted by station



The San Jose, California, station of Charles D. Herrold, which operated programs of news and recorded music on a regular schedule, starting in 1910. (*CBS Radio*)



The latest Western Electric reproduction equipment in the studios of KJBS, San Francisco, about 1930. At right are the dual 33 1/3 rpm turntables for the broadcasting of electrical transcription programs. On the table at the left is the nonsynchronous 78 rpm apparatus for reproducing the standard type of phonograph records. (*Morton Photographs*)



Clint Buehlman.
Buffalo, 1932- .
(*Hinkson*)



New York's John B. Gambling, 1925-59, with son and heir, John A. (WOR)



Arthur Godfrey, Washington, 1933-48, and New York, 1943-48. (CBS Radio)



The prototype of the disc jockey, Martin Block, who from the mid-thirties through the mid-fifties reigned on WNEW, New York. (*BMI Archives*)

(Below) Gene King, host of WEVD's "Midnight Jamboree," pitches Fats Waller (center) and Pee Wee Russell at a 1938 birthday party given for the deejay.



Tommy Dorsey vocalist Frank Sinatra visits Freddie Robbins at WITH, Baltimore, in 1942. Robbins, "The Professor of Thermodynamics," enlivened the Manhattan airwaves on Harlem-oriented WOV through the late forties.



Famed sportscaster Ted Husing more or less challenged Martin Block over WMGM from 1947 to 1955. (BMI Archives)



Before going on to eternal success as “Mr. Rock ‘n’ Roll” in Cleveland and New York during the fifties, Alan Freed ruled Akron in the late forties. (BMI Archives)



Another Cleveland monster was Bill Randle. He came from WJLB, Detroit, where he is shown interviewing jazzman Serge Chaloff (right). (BMI Archives)



Ted Brown and "The Redhead" opened the mornings hilariously for WMGM during the fifties. (BMI Archives)

"Milkman's Matinee" host Art Ford never knew when WNEW's "La Mama" manager Bernice Judis might drop in after midnight. (WNEW)





William B. Williams (seated) with Stan Kenton. (WNEW)



Barry Gray began his opinionated, show-bizzy midnight shows on WOR after World War II. (BMI Archives)

Sherm Feller, Boston.
(BMI Archives)





Bob Clayton, Boston.
(BMI Archives)



Ed "Jack the Bellboy" McKenzie.
Detroit. (BMI Archives)



Peter Potter (between Doris Day and Frankie Laine).
Los Angeles. (BMI Archives)

librarians and agency vice-presidents (who could get ulcers from conflicting reports), but the night people—and the war made their number jump—were not even considered. BMI was furious at ASCAP's reactionary move.

And, of course, Kate Smith was making her voice heard, but it was also directed against the deejay and the night people. The archetypal challenge to the jock came when the mountainous Miss Smith sold \$39 million worth of bonds in an eighteen-hour radio marathon. Ringing her way into the hearts and pockets of all America (and turning on motivation analysts and research sociologists), Kate set a sales and stay-up standard for the publicity-seeking disc jockey.

But she also immediately took after the deejay whose "Battle of the Songbirds" contests were an extension of the request shows, although these were severely restricted because of the war. Miss Smith said it was unpatriotic to use the mails and telephone so frivolously in wartime, and she singled out several New York metropolitan stations whose after-midnight segments were the principal "offenders."

She was quickly answered by WOR's Steve Ellis, who said his show had appeal for "graveyard shift" workers. Stating that only 50 percent of all phone calls were made between 2 and 5:45 A.M., Ellis said he had consulted plants for the best time for their employees to make calls. He said he was informed it was between two-thirty and three-thirty, which, of course, is not a time when people are inclined to want to listen to Kate Smith. The night people were being heard from.

In that vein, the impact of ballad and uptempo music on radio listeners was indicated in a test made by a combo on its show. The group found that its ratings jumped when mostly softer stuff was scheduled, and vice versa. To many it was surprising that such a fine point could be determined.

But there was no doubt about the moods Sinatra produced. And the deejay had to take care lest any crack be misconstrued. Glowing statements about "The Groaner" while discussing "The Voice," or even the chanciest refer-

ence to Sinatra's sparse build, guaranteed to set a station's switchboard spinning.

This ability to get people to their phones caused Block, after retelling a "wheelchair" anecdote about Sinatra, to advise his listeners in the future to write letters.

This editorial element, which was beginning to be expressed by jocks in every manner conceivable, was to come to WNEW in a direct manner when Art Ford, who replaced Stan Shaw on the "Milkman's Matinee," took to playing a chronology of Bing Crosby's records one night. Opining that the King was slipping, Ford engendered much talk about this approach.

Some maintained the jock had brought a new, healthy involvement to the gig. Those opposed to such showmanship questioned Ford's right to Talmudic trespassing. The sides were, by and large, generational, but there was the notion that Ford was jeopardizing the sale of Der Bingle's discs and his career.

Crosby, on Decca, who was to take postwar steps to attempt to make the air play of his records solely his in a complicated deal, still made enough money to keep Bob Hope in one-liners. To this day he is still in the forefront of those entertainers who seek air performance fees for the playing of their records.

And discs were where it was at. Band remotes were just about dead, with the box office decline puzzling agencies and leaders. The fact was records were on the air everywhere, and with a quality that made the remotes less than immediate. What new bands there were found they had to get on wax if they were going to make it at all.

A record boom was envisioned as the war drew to a close (predictions ran from 250 to 600 million annual postwar sales), and the radio sales market was practically being revolutionized by the transcription business. Crosby and Al Jolson were to jump into perfected shows, and custom-built transcriptions, especially if tied in with open ends for local sponsorship in cooperation with a national advertiser, blossomed.

Print advertising was restricted, but war profiteering advertisers had more money to spend than ever. The networks were out for a number of reasons, and the advertisers found the improved quality of transcriptions perfect for their regional and seasonal plugs.

The established performers took to transcriptions, as they did to the easy money in commerial jingles, which began fomenting a potent pop liturgy. As Slate and Cook wrote in *It Sounds Impossible*:

“Musical spot announcements can hit the nation with the impact of a smash-hit song out of Tin Pan Alley. After the jingle becomes established on the air, the agency and the client feel this is the ultimate in broadcasting advertising—to make the product a household word.”

But a whole new generation of embryonic talent, helped along by the jock, was to explode on labels like Capitol, MGM, and Mercury. And the deejay, with the help of a new two-speed phonograph, could play both 33½ transcriptions and the 78 records.

Slowly, the publishers came to realize that the disc jockey was here to stay, and, after the war, they unbent and accepted the fact that the disc plug on the air made things a lot easier for them. The pubs were accused of being greedy for cheap plugs, but with BMI giving the public what it wanted, ASCAP couldn't afford to do much less. It became a matter of acting, and thinking afterward.

The oldtime plugger gave way to the younger promo man with the “ins” with the disc jockeys—and the energy to entertain them. And the diskers' “mechanical” man, who had to cajole copyrights from the pubs, was to become the all-powerful artist and repertoire man. As the deejay began providing the public with specific interpretations, the A&R man (which some jocks were requested to become) became responsible for deciding what the public wanted.

As the war ended, Block was said to be good for \$6,000 a week, and Godfrey, whom *Variety* called a “one-man industry,” was doing shows on WTOP, and WABC, New York, from 6:30 to 9:45 A.M. Included was a last half-hour

that was heard sustaining over the entire CBS network, and his laconic style was becoming a national gathering point. Moreover, within a year his local shows were to pay all the daily expenses for both his stations—before they even opened their doors for business.

Song pluggers and batoneers in Chicago were jolted when WBBM, CBS outlet, and WENR, ABC outlet, dropped dance remotes during the hour from midnight to 1 A.M., to clear the time for a new commercial disk show.

—*Billboard*, Oct. 5, 1946

The media have been looked at through the eyes of morality when, instead, what was required was a fresh glance at people existing in their own right for the first time. It is my thesis that the daily withdrawal of people into the mass media in their after hours is a step in the *existential* direction, that is, a matter of subjectivity which invokes freedom where there had been little or none before.

—WILLIAM STEPHENSON

The Play Theory of Mass Communication

DURING THE WAR, V-discs took American popular music around the world, the signal corps and special services provided excellent training for future jocks, and Tokyo Rose strained the morale of GI's in the Pacific. As it ended, there were 943 licensed radio stations in the United States, and call letters like WPEN, Philadelphia; KCKN, Kansas City; WIND, Chicago, and WTCN, Minneapolis, were among many that were becoming familiar to listeners who wanted to hear the most current in popular music.

Five years later, there were more than 2,000, and now

there are nearly 7,000 AM and FM stations in the United States. Most mainly play records, and in 1946, record sales just edged over \$150 million. By 1970, business totaled virtually \$1 billion (as did radio time sales), only a third behind popular book sales.

In 1946, how mad was the dash into the wide-open field of electronic entertainment and salesmanship was underscored in New York when celebrated network announcer Andre Baruch and his vocalist wife Bea Wain signed on as a spin team for WMCA at a beginning \$150,000.

The realization came slowly to the networks, but they were certainly committed to providing major live-talent programs to a nationwide audience. However, in 1946, ABC and Mutual started using transcribed programs.

Decca's Bing Crosby, who had reportedly earned \$400,000 from his recordings in 1945, tried to get around the "free use" of discs by selling his records exclusively to a sponsor. This was Jack Kapp's last-gasp idea (and he was a superb record man), and Philco bought it for prime-time presentation on ABC and Mutual with local advertising. The show was successful enough, and it contained no fluffs, of course, but it didn't do anything to deter record spinners.

Three years later, NBC and CBS began permitting general use of recordings. This followed a 1948 FCC ruling allowing transcribed network programs in view of the greatly increased fidelity of modern recordings.

And by 1950 the arrival of television found network-level programming of the disc jockey format, not with any real success. But in less than a generation, the role of recorded music on radio went from one that was looked upon with horror to that of a staple. Is it not significant that when the electronic picture came into the home (and the way had been prepared by motion pictures), radio met the competition with, to some an equally powerful imagery, the poetry of popular music?

In March, 1946, the peddling of pop hit Los Angeles with a bang. After fourteen years Al Jarvis left KFWB for KLAC, which was formerly KMTR. The station had been purchased

by the New York *Post* for \$335,000 (to be sold for \$4,500,000 in the fifties). Two years before, the *Post* radio interests had acquired KYA, San Francisco, whose manager was Don Fedderson. It was on his recommendation that KMTR was bought.

"I thought it was a good buy, but the programming was all wrong," said Fedderson, who became manager of the station. Offering Jarvis an estimated \$1,700,000 for seven years, Fedderson changed the station's call letters to give it community identification, and further enticed popular Peter Potter, with his familiar Oklahoma twang and "Symposium of Swing," from KFVB.

Considered at the time to be the first all-disc-jockey station with identifiable personalities, KLAC set in motion a multimillion-dollar battle of the airwaves that epitomized radio competition following the war. It brought super promotions to Los Angeles radio, and Block back to the Coast on KFVB in a fantastic deal that made him, briefly, the top-earning radio performer of all time.

For just spinning records, Block, recorded for WNEW, live on KFVB, and syndicated on thirty more stations, could earn close to \$2 million dollars in 1948. This was more than Jarvis' seven-year contract! But Block bombed, lasting just five months on KFVB.

Jarvis left a \$1 million restraining order to keep KFVB from using his "Ballroom" tag as station manager Harry Maizlish announced that a New York personality would replace him. Speculation mounted, but by early May, it became apparent Block was the man for Maizlish.

As Chicago's Bill Anson (a sing-along jock) won a dinner audition for Jarvis' replacement in Los Angeles' Ambassador Hotel, Block announced he would leave WNEW for California at the end of his contract in December, 1947, mainly to do network announcing for Chesterfields. However, negotiations began between Block and Maizlish for an immediate move.

Meanwhile, with Jarvis and Potter working around hits by newcomers like Peggy Lee, Perry Como, and Nat "King"

Cole, and call letters sung by the Modernaires, KLAC, working neatly with Wallich's Capitol Records and Music City stores in grand promotions, began to run away with the audience. The station initiated a pattern to be emulated a great deal over the next two decades. Eliminating all commercial time at the start, it went from zero to the top in three months with a never ending parade of the most requested popular music.

Included in the fray was KMPC ("the Station of the Stars"), owned by the legendary anti-Semite and red baiter George A. Richards, who also ruled WGAR, Cleveland, and WJR, Detroit ("The Good Will Station"), where Father Coughlin got his start.

Richards took to the inexpensive deejay quickly, but he obsessively ran his stations with only one thing in mind—to get the Jews and commies out of the government. In 1951, after a year of unprecedented hearings over license renewals for the Richards holdings, the FCC recommended they not be renewed, and the Detroit automobile dealer dropped dead.

After the war, KMPC had a top morning man in Bill Leyden, who had started in Detroit with a late-night blues show that had quite a Negro following. He titillated his audience with *non sequitur* shaggy dog stories that had the music as their punch lines, but Richards barred anything that didn't promote his own personal causes. The station programmed music that was 1,000 percent American and sent out press releases banning "jive" as Jarvis, Potter, Otis, and others hooted "square."

KMPC did an interesting thing, though, that summer. Testing the power of personalities, the station turned over two hours of its day to a disc show in which the deejay was replaced by staff announcers. With gab straight, gabbers anonymous, and music maximum, the show not only saw its ratings rise by two thirds, its commercial time, which had not gone over 80 percent before, became sold out. Jock egos dropped, but not so anyone noticed.

At the same time, Edward Petry and Company, radio

station representatives, conducted a survey in St. Louis which showed that nearly 50 percent of those queried recognized a commercial after two months. This was the first poll of its kind, concerned with spot announcements instead of programs. Concluding spot advertising was the best deal in every way imaginable, the report also gushed over wake-up time, which previously some had not thought productive.

In August, 1946, it was announced that Block would be coming to KFWB. *Variety* compared the monster deal to the success story of Oscar Hammerstein II. To be operating out of an Encino home with a specially built studio primarily so he could record daily shows for WNEW, Block signed a new contract that called for \$185,000 from that station and a potential \$312,000 from KFWB if his commercial time was sold out.

Beyond that, Block earned \$22,000 a week from his thirty-station syndication of the "Make Believe Ballroom," and his announcing stint on the CBS "Chesterfield Supper Club" (the only time he had to leave the house) could bring his earnings to over \$2 million in 1947.

California climate and tax write-offs brought Block to Los Angeles in October. His live show on KFWB, to be called "Martin Block Presents," and broadcast from his home, was scheduled to start January 1, 1947. But it wasn't until June 2 that he took to the air.

Drum beating mounted during the spring with two dozen spring agents running a \$50,000 promotional campaign out of a Warner Bros.' studio. The full station staff was virtually on call around the clock as everything from blurbs to billboards and blimps was employed to let L.A. know that America's No. 1 disc jockey was coming to town.

However, most people felt that Maizlish had gotten in deeper than he should have to get back at Jarvis and Potter. So he wisely approached the Mutual Broadcasting Company with an offer that the network take on the land's leading deejay, with KFWB the originating station.

After all, jocks were where it was at, weren't they?

Hadn't ABC just sold a \$2,300,000 package of "The King of Jazz," Paul Whiteman, spinning discs an hour a day, Monday to Friday?

Mutual jumped at the idea of running the 10:30-11:30 A.M. segment of Block's costly 10 A.M.-1 P.M. show. But with Block calling the shots on who could sponsor him as he did on WNEW (quality products, Better Business Bureau approval, no competitive sponsors, etc.), they found it virtually impossible to sell time. The man who had come out of the West to bring Retardo to New York was well beyond that now.

Quickly, Angelinos resented Block's know-it-all New York ways, and KFVB canceled in October. Mutual, stuck with a \$200,000 yearly nut to KFVB, broadcast its program out of its L.A. outlet, KHJ, which took over the local show.

But within a month, a lack of sponsors found Block cut back to just three sponsored quarter-hours a week. And KHJ told the jock they didn't dig his commenting on records. (Disc firm execs, who were by now bending over backward to get prereleases to the the top jocks, were furious.) They said he wasn't professionally qualified! He snorted that discs included in his "review" segment would stand or fall there. The station retorted: "If you don't like 'em, don't play 'em."

Both Mutual and ABC quickly found that the concept of the network disc jockey was a contradiction in terms. Actually, Whiteman's casual, knowledgeable style and well-paced show sold, but not quite enough to everyone's satisfaction.

In Block's case, he was not a friendly local voice but a smug New Yorker coming out of the California sunshine during the middle of winter. If that weren't hard enough to sell in the face of the deejay onslaught, sponsorship opportunities were usually unavailable to Mutual. For instance, Kreml canceled its quarter-hour of the hour show when it could not sell time on WOR because of Block's hair tonic sponsor on WNEW. Too late and in too many places, the network found itself blocked out.

Although Block continued on Mutual over KHJ through

the summer of 1948, his ratings by that spring had plummeted to 10 percent of his peak in Los Angeles, which hadn't been much. The following fall he announced from Cedars of Lebanon, where he was hospitalized with jaundice, that he would be returning to New York and the many opportunities there, especially in television.

As for KLAC, with Jarvis leading its appeal, it put together a team of deejays who were merchandised very successfully as "The Big Five." This did not include Jarvis, who was not exclusively contracted to KLAC. The others, Dick Haynes, Alex Cooper, Bob McLaughlin, Gene Norman, and Potter made the station far and away the leader in the market well into the fifties. The new "Station of the Stars," KLAC was a popular hangout for Hollywood luminaries who knew well the value of mention over 570 kilocycles.

Said slick-sell Jack Carney, a modern Block type in his late thirties:

"Everybody who was getting involved in radio at the same time I was in L.A. wanted to sound like Gene Norman. He was like the definitive disc jockey. His music was just the finest."

Dick Haynes, who received the lowest salary as the morning man (never over \$35,000 a year), was a tall Texas Yahoo who was as corny as he was a cliché. (When KLAC decided to rock, and "The Big Five" were dissolved, Haynes said to station manager Mortimer Hall: "Ah, what fools these Mort Halls be!") But his timing and segues were superb, and his main character, Gum Drop Gus, in the tradition of Mortimer Snerd and Willie Lump Lump, delighted folks as they arose.

In quick time "Haynes at the Reins" ("I started rhyming my name to differentiate it from Dick Haymes") received the highest ratings on the station, in spite of his lack of promotion. ("I was there three months before I met Fed-derson or Jarvis.") This gave impetus to the notion of the morning man as the most important personality on a station. And one morning, just after Jerry Lester's "Real George" had caught on, Haynes threw a nonsense expres-

sion, "Yucca Bean" ("greater than great"), at guest Doris Day.

Mickey Rooney was also on the show, and he popped back with "Yucca Stew." Southern Californians greeted one another in this accepted off-color manner for months afterward.

In order to meet the tough network competition from radio in the late forties, Fedderson put Bob McLaughlin on the air from 6 to 8 P.M. every night with "The Top 10." Most radio nabobs thought a "Hit Parade" show could not survive more than once a week, and a record show at that.

However, the show, "Club 570," worked wonderfully, and KLAC promoted a teen-age club that continually packed the Hollywood Palladium (which Fedderson would ultimately purchase) where the record stars were happy to appear for nothing.

Staggering gross of \$2,300,000 was scored by WNEW, Arde Bulova's New York indie, for its 1946 fiscal year, not only the highest ever recorded by the outlet, but also the highest ever snared by an American indie. According to radio fiscal experts, WNEW's \$2,300,000 put it close to the top in the first 10 grossers in the entire U.S. radio industry. Station's big winner was its recorded "Make Believe Ballroom," which accounted for \$500,000 or more alone in annual revenue.

—*Billboard*, Nov. 23, 1946

. . . each one must feel individualized, each must have the impression that *he* is being looked at, that *he* is being addressed personally. Only then will he respond and cease to be anonymous (although in reality remaining anonymous).

Thus all modern propaganda profits from the structure of the mass, but exploits the individual need for self-affirmation; and the two actions must be conducted jointly, simultaneously. Of course this operation is greatly facilitated by the existence of the modern mass media of communication.

—JACQUES ELLUL
Propaganda

EVERYWHERE, THE DISC JOCKEY—in spite of the networks, Petrillo, who would call another disastrous recording ban in 1948, and Decca—had achieved unprecedented power as a "maker of stars." Perhaps the most amazing tale finally brought the point home to Jack Kapp.

Kurt Webster, "The Midnight Mayor" of WBT, Charlotte, North Carolina, did a show that included many oldies. One evening at a friend's house late in 1946, he came across a 1931 recording of "Heartaches" by Ted Weems. He began playing it a great deal on the air, much to the joy of Decca's

southern distributor, who had a couple of hundred copies of the disc buried in his inventory.

The demand was staggering, and not only did Decca re-issue the recording, it finally broke down and began servicing an estimated one thousand deejays with free, air-expressed Vinylite new releases. Vinylite in those days was to wax ("freebies" of which ran around \$300 a release) what mink is to mohair. (By the time RCA Victor gave in the next year, there were three thousand jocks on 850 independent stations to be serviced.)

The public even thought Weems was new, and there was talk in the trade of a band business resurgence. It didn't happen, but so overwhelmed was Weems that in June he played a date in the Charlotte Armory and turned the proceeds over to Webster.

For a completely opposite reason, Art Mooney's "I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover" became a smash when Al Collins played the novelty for 3½ hours straight on his "Jazzbo Jamboree" in Salt Lake City. Accompanying the record was a nice note saying how Art was sure Al'd dig it and thanking him for past favors.

Collins hadn't remembered meeting Mooney or playing any of his stuff previously. But he put the record on and heard it himself for the first time as he played it for his listening audience.

As it twanged its way through its three minutes, Collins' ears got redder and redder. Incensed that he, a jazz jock, would be sent such a song, Collins continued to spin it, giving it a different title every time in protest. The switchboard went crazy over the "First Record Filibuster," and the tune became a best seller.

"Jazzbo" brought great oral imagination to the medium, and a twentieth-century sense of community. Making it to New York in the early fifties (initially as a country jock called "Cactus" Collins), he ran a flippy jazz show on WNEW called "The Purple Grotto," a subterranean communication to the hipster subculture. Through sound effects, the Grotto's "construction" was heard on the air and was a

real production. Its mundane "purpose" was to get the jock, via a tunnel, to a tight after-show emceeing engagement at The Embers. "Deep in the bowels of the WNEW building," Collins told his audience, the Grotto was free from worldly cares.

He also said it was free from electrical wires! His only source of light came from a purple and white calibrated candle in whose glow was bathed his companion in solitude, Harrison, a long-tailed Tasmanian owl. Collins painted far-out pictures with his words and music, but he seldom messed around with commercials, although he was likened to Henry Morgan. His theory was simple. The more you said about a product, the less you were getting paid per word!

The collective disc jockey had taken over, and *Variety* called it "a postwar showbusiness phenomenon as revolutionary as the atomic bomb, and with about the same effect as far as the orthodox form of talent purveyed is concerned." Los Angeles had more than fifty jocks by the time Block got on the air there, Chicago thirty-nine with 176 sponsors on 268 hours a week from twelve stations—and the National Association of Disc Jockeys grew from a Universal-International publicity stunt for a Deanna Durbin movie, "Something in the Wind," in which she played a deejay, to a fraternal guild registered in New York.

The following winter, New York City had a reported ninety-three persons on nineteen stations spinning records some four hundred hours a week. Some jocks, through the miracle of wire recorders, faced themselves on two or more stations in many cities.

As unknown discs like The Harmonicats' "Peg o' My Heart" and Frankie Laine's "That's My Desire" followed "Heartaches" to the top, *Variety* saluted the disc jockey with his own chart. Jocks were polled each week for the Top 10 requests in their area. Reporting in the first poll were:

New York: Paul Brenner (WAAT, Jersey City)

Boston: Bob Elliott and Fred B. Cole (WHDH)

Philadelphia: Joe McCauley (WIP), Stuart Wayne (KYW), Joe Grady (WPEN)

Cincinnati: Bill Dawes (WCKY), Malcolm Richards (WCPO)

Chicago: Ernie Simon (WJJD), Eddie Hubbard (WIND)

Minneapolis: Ed Stevens and Stewart Lindman (WMIN)

St. Louis: Rush Hughes (KXOK), Gil Newsome (KWK)

Kansas City: Bob Kennedy (WHB)

Los Angeles: Bill Anson (KFWB), Bill Leyden (KMPC)

San Francisco: Jack Gregson (KSFO)

Seattle: Bill Griffiths (KOL)

"Peg o' My Heart" was broken by Hubbard, who had come to Chicago in 1945 from Baltimore, as did Simon. He said:

"Claude Kirschner was supposed to play it on his show, but he didn't get time. And I almost didn't include it. But it was the last thing I played, and I never saw anything like it. By the end of the week, The Harmonicats were on their way to becoming the biggest thing in the land. And they quickly followed it up with 'Near You.'"

Early in 1948 (as Petrillo called his union out), WNEW pulled out a BMI original, "There I Go" (which had been a big seller eight years before under the title of "Jeannie's Pal"), recorded for RCA Victor by Vaughn Monroe, and plugged the hell out of it.

WNEW's program director, Ted Cott, who dreamed up the experiment, also lined up the cooperation of six other independent stations—WHDH, Boston; WPEN, Philadelphia; WSCR, Scranton; WWSW, Pittsburgh; WWDC, Washington, D.C., and WIND, Chicago. He convinced Victor to re-press it, guaranteeing the seven stations would play it five to ten times daily.

In less than two months, sales reached almost 100,000, and Victor was confident they would reach a quarter-million. On such a planned basis, it was felt that BMI tunes could be blitzkrieged into hits, and ASCAP song-smiths cringed.

But another Monroe recording, "Bamboo," received virtually the same treatment—and went nowhere. It became axiomatic that unless "it had it in the grooves," there was no guarantee of success.

ASCAP notwithstanding, most pubs, however, had begun saying yea to the jocks. The Robbins-Feist-Miller firm hired press agent Barney McDevitt, who was a key man in Capitol's growth, to supply his West Coast list of deejays with pre-releases of their tunes. And Capitol offered free live shows to new radio stations in the West for the edge on air play of records and transcribed shows. Capitol's new, rising performers were seen in Boise, Denver, and Portland, and the company's sales rose.

Literally everything was offered the jocks—free pre-releases, free products for air mention ("plugola"), and free guests—with Capitol in the lead. The guest shot was to become particularly effective, although the American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA) said a guest should be paid, especially if the shot included doing his thing.

Jarvis opened up a can of worms when he allowed Woody Herman to substitute for him, with a couple of dozen guests, one Saturday early in 1947. More band leaders, who were beginning to take offense at the jocks' comments on their records, began eyeing the platter posts. (Former Casa Loma trombonist and singer Pee Wee Hunt had briefly done a deejay stint on KFVB in 1943, and Don Otis had helped Leopold Stokowski put together a jazz and pop show for servicemen in 1944, but generally, musicians were not taking to the mike and turntable.) With Whiteman and Tommy Dorsey rumored to be deejays on ABC soon, the baton wavers argued they were better informed, so why not?

L.A. jocks formed the Disc Jockey Association of Southern California for protection and began a little self-assessment, notably to regulate use of guests to prevent press agent abuse. For a while they even banned free band and picture plugs.

As AFRA said, jocks had to limit their guests to straight

interviews. The union, however, could see no way to prevent a band leader from becoming a disc jockey. The intrusion became a matter of some resolution when Herman dropped his guest jockeying under fear of possible jock retaliation, he said.

Within two years, as old-line pubs and pluggers hemmed and hawed, the deejay plug became paramount (influencing 85 percent of all pop sales). By 1950 most publishers were employing men to sock it to the jocks. As early as 1947, *Variety* reported:

"Mills Music contactman Buddy Friedlander experienced a plugger's dream last week when he and his firm's tunes were aired for a hour and three-quarters over Hal Tunis' WAAT, Jersey City, platter show. Interviewed by Tunis, Friedlander gave out with what makes a plugger tick."

It was still, or perhaps was fully becoming, a matter of rapt discussion whether disc jockeys helped or hindered sales. By mid-1947, it was felt by those who "knew" (the majors) that with the jocks ganging up on the hits, and the less haphazard scheduling of shows (with listings in the papers), a song could be heard free anytime, anywhere.

The majors, who were experiencing a sales decline, thought this was why, and so they relaxed their pitch to the jocks. And, of course, the indies moved in, and again the cry that the cost was quality was raised.

For of course every jock worth his time slot would give his inner ear and soul for a "sleeper." As deejays across the country broke unknown records into big hits, the "I Did It" craze wasn't all that satisfying to record companies and publishers.

Jocks would get prereleases from press agents of artists, but in exposing the songs, they could upset the release schedule of the record company and the exploitation timetable of the pub. And when the bait dangled before the jock included a cut-in on disc sales royalties in return for plugs, the flexible independents could raise havoc with the best-laid plans of the majors.

Many jocks refused to get so involved because it would put a crimp in their programming freedom. Still, while new

hits and new talent were being eagerly sought, an attempt was made, with organized jock assistance, to bring back the bands, but to no avail. The sound of bands might help balance their shows, but economically, one new singer was more to everyone's taste.

Then, as 1948 began, Petrillo called another recording ban. Although this wasn't directed against the deejay (it was brought about because of the Taft-Hartley Law's edict against union welfare funds), it caused another slump of 50 percent because the public mistakenly thought no new songs were being released.

As it turned out, the independents—with their simple message the majors rejected as awful—benefited the most. "Nature Boy" on Capitol, sung by Nat "King" Cole, was the capper, and freewheeling indies found they had clear sailing as the majors sought an agreement with the AFM.

It finally came after eleven months when Petrillo assumed that Thomas E. Dewey would be elected President and be antagonistic to labor. Agreeing to forego the collections of royalties (\$1 million) accrued during the ban, Petrillo signed a five-year agreement that was substantially the same as the one he had refused to renew January 1. With this stuck in his craw, Petrillo announced he would go after the jocks and jukes.

Before the start of the disc ban, Petrillo had been death on the subject of free air use of recordings. It had been anticipated when he wrote a new contract with the radio networks in February, 1948, that the jock would be spotlighted by the AFM, but it didn't happen. The disc jockey galled Petrillo, but his efforts were fruitless.

Also, the 1909 Copyright Act was under constant fire, since at the time it was written such things as recordings, transcriptions, and deejays were all unknown or not allowed for. It is still in the process of being updated. Included is the minor but complex and controversial amendment, replete with science fiction elements of sub-audible signals for computer totaling, to get performance royalties for broadcasting of records as demanded by the National Committee for the Recording Arts (NCRA).

The personality is like a tiny bird. Hold him too tight and you'll crush him to death. Too loose and he'll fly away.

—RICHARD CARR

General Manager, WIP, Philadelphia

Some forms of reality are so horrible we refuse to face them unless we are trapped into it by comedy.

—PETER SELLERS

ON THE COVER of a 1962 book, *Careers in Broadcasting*, edited by John H. Lerch, there is the legend:

"Twenty-six of radio and television's leading performers and personalities—including Pat Boone, Robert Sarnoff, Steve Allen, Hugh Downs, Lowell Thomas—give solid guidance and advice on the career opportunities in broadcasting today."

The expression "disc jockey" appears only three times in the anthology. Lerch does not mention the occupation in his introduction, and Steve Allen, whose forties were spent as

a zany deejay in Phoenix and Los Angeles, from where he rose to his network television variety shows, and Pat Boone, a man who without platter spinners probably would not have been in the book, fail to note it at all.

A casual reference is made by Hugh Downs, who began as a deejay in the Midwest after World War II, in his article, "Effective Selling Through Broadcast Media." The main reference to the disc jockey in *Careers in Broadcasting* is by Parke Blanton, manager, WBNS, Columbus, Ohio.

It is significant that this description comes from other than a major metropolitan market, for the disc jockey is not only a phenomenon of decentralization, his start at the grass-roots level is cardinal. However, in describing a medium size market's makeup, Blanton points up the broadcasting industry's antipathy to the "disc jockey" by writing that such a station "has room for three or four music personalities. . . ."

In addition, Richard M. Pack, vice president for programming, Westinghouse Broadcasting Company, who began his career in commercial radio at WNEW, wrote:

"Don't be afraid of apprenticeship. Many noted television people have started as pageboys, secretaries, and assistants. Dave Garroway began as an NBC pageboy, and then went on through the NBC announcer-trainee program, where he graduated bottom of the list. Jack Paar started at a small Midwestern station, traveled across the South Pacific with the Army, and finally worked his way to New York."

Pageboys, secretaries, and assistants, but no mention of the jock. Beginning in the late thirties, Paar went through the local radio route, including a brief stint, before he joined the army in 1943, as the wake-up man ("The Sun Greeters Club") on WBEN, Buffalo. He was very original and took his comedy so seriously (he even had file cards and subhead references) that he had the chief engineer issue orders that the technician on duty should react to gags by at least smiling, if not laughing heartily.

Paar's departure produced an early blossoming of billboard and trolley advertisements when WBEN wooed Clint

Buehlman ("Yours truly, Buehly") away from WGR, where he had built a huge following on his 6-9 A.M. weekday show over a decade's time. Buehlman still opens the day for WBEN.

Garroway failed to make the NBC network grade because he could not cut the highly prevalent formal style, and so he went to work at KDKA, Pittsburgh, in the mid-thirties. In 1939 he won the H. P. Davis annual Memorial Award for the best announcing done by any Pittsburgh announcer.

Garroway graduated to imaginative, easygoing success at WMAQ, an NBC-owned-and-operated outlet in Chicago, following the war. As the disc jockey on the two-hour "1160 Club," his cultlike midnight program, he soon shot to stardom as leader of the casually creative and honored "Chicago School" of Television.

Bay Area jock John Hardy was voted rhythm and blues program director of the year at the 1968 Gavin Programming Conference. He was in Chicago during the late forties and said:

"Al Benson was *the* man [made Alan Freed look like peanuts,] said Chicago's outspoken, out-of-New-York Marty Faye] and Daddy-O-Daylie was the jock for thinking, hip people, but me and my people were strung out behind Dave Garroway."

Originally turned to jazz by a writer named Bill Lawrence, Garroway was later helped by a hipster named Joe Klee, who often programmed his show and delivered the list to the deejay in the lobby of the Merchandise Mart because he wasn't allowed up into WMAQ's nineteenth-floor studios. The jock also had the brilliant assistance of an engineer named Joe Petrillo, who could spot with ease a particular part of records Garroway wanted replayed. This zeroing in on solos the jock did a great deal.

Finally reaching the NBC Network on TV, Garroway set the standard for late-evening celebrity get-togethers with "Garroway at Large" and was the first host of NBC's morning "Today" show. By 1959, ex-jocks Garroway and Paar, proprietor of NBC's "Tonight," had gross time and program revenue of nearly \$25 million.

By the early fifties, disc jockeys were feeding the radio and television nets with a whole new school of personalities like L.A.'s Steve Allen, Boston's Bob (Elliott) and Ray (Goulding), New York's Robert Q. Lewis, and Philadelphia's Ernie Kovacs. They were less burlesque than Uncle Miltie and "Howdy Doody," but none was as relaxed as Garroway and Godfrey. Bob and Ray, in particular, were to influence jocks and comics over the next fifteen years with their offbeat yet commercial mien on NBC's "Monitor."

The power of such jocks began to range far and wide. Chicago's morning madcap, former burlesque comic Ernie Simon, was informed by the Venezuelan Minister of Culture that his picture would be displayed in all state buildings in Caracas if he would send some down.

Why? It seemed that a school class, with the aid of a high-powered receiver, had been using "Simon Speaks, Too" on WCFL, where the jock also had an afternoon pop show called "Simon Says," to study English.

What they heard was Simon in the wake-up vein slaughter commercials and exchange banter with his engineer, Art Klinky, whom he forever called "Klinkenpfeffer." One wonders if today with only a picture of "Big Ern" (who also played San Francisco and Cleveland during his career before his death in 1968) and the code word "Klinkenpfeffer," Venezuela could be taken over—with the help of a loyal core of true believers singing along with Simon's theme, "Hi, Neighbor!"

One morning man who didn't take over was Stan Malotte, who was plucked out of an organ chair in a Birmingham movie theater and made a disc jockey on WWSW, Pittsburgh. He lasted a month, leaving after he wrote a letter to the Birmingham *News* that took up six columns blasting Pittsburgh.

Saying it was a libel on Birmingham to call it "The Pittsburgh of the South," Malotte said the northern city was "an aesthetic abortion, a municipal hovel, a very loud stink, a mining town on a vast scale." He concluded:

"All here is hopelessness, stunned defeat and sullen resentment. The people are dimwitted citizens, a race of

robots, uncouth and barbaric, human refuse, with a complete absence of social consciousness.”

Malotte was an early *ouslander* to make an unsuccessful bid to stand tall in the ears of a metropolis. Controversy in the morning had become accepted, but Malotte did little to stand himself a chance. However, no personality jock, since the late forties (when it was all so new), has ever really ridden into town and made the people accept him. Although FM rock has dented this pattern, folks just plain resent someone coming into their territory with the express belief and purpose that he knows how to entertain them.

And this inability to move around successfully cut into the performing deejay's act, and he was forced to accept the norm or be out of work. While music-oriented jocks reached certain lofty heights in establishing the image, their appeal was generally of far less scope in the early days of the profession.

However, as more and more pop music was waxed, the pressures mounted to play much more music, and be quiet about it. So the apprenticeship opportunities for personalities, who could also become double-edged monsters for management, were to fade.

On the subject, Studs Terkel, the author of the best seller *Division Street: America*, which has been called “the real hidden feeling and thought of Americans buried under the official mythology of the mass media,” said:

“I like being called a disc jockey. I would say I was first a disc jockey in 1938. There was a program, ‘Weekend Reporter,’ on WGES, a West Side station. I interviewed Bud Freeman, the old tenor sax man, and it may have been the first jazz interview on a Chicago radio station. . . .

“For better or worse, the disc jockey is the most influential figure in America today. It's not the journalist or the columnist. I'm not as pessimistic as some of my friends. The disc jockey is a factor in all of this. The variety! The disc jockey covers every stratum in our society.

“With all this, the disc jockey is the *schlock* salesman. You know it's selling. He's the peddler, and after a while,

it just takes over completely. The frontier peddler did serve a need; he did bring necessities in one form or another, and luxuries, to the frontier family. But today, with the consumer economy, the disc jockey is as guilty as the commercial manager."

Terkel has been involved in virtually every aspect of electronic urban folk communication in Chicago, although his presence to the public has been largely confined to off-times intellectual ghetto hours and "the other end of the dial." His current interview-review show on Chicago's pioneering FM station, WFMT, began in 1944 on WENR on the old NBC Blue Network, now ABC. It was a brillig deejay stint sponsored by Edelweiss Beer ("Drink Edelweiss, it tastes so nice," yodeled the spots in Strauss waltz time) from 10 to 11 P.M. on Sundays called the "Wax Museum." Music ranged from Bessie Smith to Bach, and *Variety* praised Terkel as "erudite and idiomatic—gravelly coo should sell products." The *Billboard* reviewer, however, said "show offered pleasant diversion, yet did not stack up as big-league commercial fodder."

He really didn't sell, and the program's Sunday supplement format had its ups and mostly downs. But by the end of 1953 this early McLuhanacy ("I think he's full of crap," said Terkel. "He's describing truth, but he has no point of view") evolved (for about six months) to a Monday-Friday 11:30 P.M.-11 A.M. weirdo called "Sounds of the City."

Terkel says "Sounds of the City" included a lot of on-the-spot news coverage, by himself and street savant Vince Garrity:

"I've got a burglary in a currency exchange, Studs. What are you playing?"

"Mozart."

"How many precincts did he carry?"

Radio really starts 'round midnight, and most cities have memories of this type of head-open show. New Orleans, for instance, stayed awake following the war to "Poole's Paradise," a pop music melange over WWL that included deejay Bob Poole and his Spike Jones type of sound effects. When

Poole departed, the all-night spot was filled by Dick Martin, who for nearly fifteen years beamed one of America's most head-open jazz shows, "Moonglow with Martin," through the early morning skies and up the Mississippi basin and into Canada.

Terkel's fondness for being known as a disc jockey likely goes back to a poker game at novelist Nelson Algren's house.

"At the beginning," he says, "Algren introduced me to an American Indian, who was called Chief, as a disc jockey. And that rather impressed him. He just looked at me for a moment.

"The stakes were pretty high, far beyond what any of us could afford. And, as the game went on, the Indian was winning heavily, and a mutual friend of ours named Dave was losing heavily. So Dave made out a personal check for two hundred bucks and handed it across the table to the Chief.

"And the Chief looks at it and says, 'I don't know you. How do I know? I may never see you again.'

"So I said to the Indian, 'It's okay, Chief, it's all right.'

"And he looked at me and said, 'If it's okay with the disc jockey, it's okay with me.'

"And there you have the whole idea of the magic voice and the magic box, no matter who or what he's selling."

It seems to me disk jockeys have reached a place in radio where it would be well worth the record companies' while to make records for his particular use—preferably the more satisfactory acetate type. These records should carry two good tunes—not one good number and one “dog” tune, as is generally the case—even though it may be necessary to wax a time-proved old favorite on the flipover side. Further, these records could be stamped “suitable for broadcasting,” so the poor downtrodden disk jockey wouldn't have to audition every record to be sure it is “clean.” Often an otherwise good tune has to be thrown out because of a single suggestive line or way of handling certain lyrics.

We have had fine co-operation from band leaders—and we feel they are doing both our program and themselves a favor when they appear on disk jockey shows. There is always a lift in requests for their recording after such an appearance.

—ED MCKENZIE

“Jack the Bellboy”

The Billboard 1946-47 Encyclopedia of Music

The average life of a disc jockey in Chicago is three years, and the average national pay is \$104 a week before taxes.

—ART HELLYER, DJ

THE *Chicago Daily News's* caustic Mike Royko, whose daily understatements have been collected under such titles as *I May Be Wrong, But I Doubt It*, conducted a standard columnist battle with the city's top-rated morning men, Howard Miller and Wally Phillips. Both came out of World War II to capture positions of decentralized preeminence in middle-of-the-road radio.

The three editorialists are about seven years apart, with superpatriot Miller in his mid-fifties (“If they can come up to a norm, I'll come down to a norm”), impish prankster

Phillips in his late forties (“I’ve never grown up”), and Royko around forty. All are trying to keep their youthful outlook, but Phillips, who had a somewhat out-of-character pro-Vietnam War stand, is more akin to Royko in spontaneous expression, and, of course, just above him in the pecking order.

In the case of Royko *vs.* Phillips, in these super-Edisonic end-of-days, the medium being the Mess Age can cause both to strike out. Just after the release of the Walker Report on police violence at the 1968 Democratic Convention, Royko devoted a column to letters from readers. One, from a Lester Siegel, read:

“Wally Phillips has excused the police by saying that some of them were like parents over-reacting to unruly children. If this was the case, you could say the Nazis over-reacted like parents in their treatment of people in Germany. I was present for much of the convention, working for a senator. I doubt if Mr. Phillips was there because no sensitive, decent human being who was there could have made the statement.”

Replied Royko: “True, but I thought we were talking about a disc jockey.”

A jock on the *Chicago Tribune’s* WGN since 1956, Phillips is one of radio’s most imaginative and facile comics. Besides his quick and succinct wit, he makes use of sound effects, voice tracks, and phone calls that is much admired throughout the industry.

“Sometimes I don’t play any music in an hour,” said Phillips, who has been the wake-up man since 1965. There’s no formula or pattern to it, and if there’s one thing I think radio should be, that’s it.

“A woman once called me and said, ‘I don’t hear nothin’ on the radio.’ And I said, ‘That’s very possible, ma’am; we had a power failure at ten after one.’ ‘Why don’t you make an announcement?’

“I thought if I told people that nobody’d believe me. And that’s when I thought about using the phone, with both sides of the conversation, on the air. For years, you just used to hear one side.

“Radio is getting more personal all the time. I’m disconcerted when I’ve got a guest whose got a string of degrees because he knows more than I do, and maybe his perception knocks me out of the box.

“But I hope I’m growing into a feeling of that’s okay because I am the seat and I have access to things that transcend what he’s got. Meanwhile, no matter what question comes up I’m not lost because I’ve got somebody around who can jump in. That’s what the involvement is about.”

While being completely cognizant of the limits of his air approach, Phillips claims fervent devotion to the truths of the late Lenny Bruce. Said New York’s tart and talented Ted Brown, a “show biz” jock’s jock: “When I used to go see Lenny Bruce, I used to always come away saying: ‘Geez, I’m a constipated old . . . Jesus Christ! Why can’t I be free on the air? Why can’t I just do it? And I get that feeling like I couldn’t wait to get on the next day to do it. I would never ever be that free. You gotta be free. It’s the only way. Honesty and freedom! That’s what it is.’”

The revered social satirist’s brilliant monologue “defending” Eichmann because he was “under orders” could have been what Phillips was improvising on. This is not to defend the deejay’s subtle style (a slick blend of straight-faced absurdity and abstraction), but/and to improvise—unconsciously or otherwise—on a mentor is a recognized universal—as is music.

Answering hotly in kind on the air, Phillips nevertheless brushed off the stab of mighty Mike’s pen as part of the personal publicity war columnists and kilocycle commentators of all stripe thrive upon.

“I go along with Paar’s idea in one respect,” said Phillips. “People like to think they’re getting in on something they’re not supposed to hear. If you can bleep out something, people love it. They can imagine whatever.”

Miller, who called his daily comments (“I’m not privileged to editorialize on the air”) “personal reflections,” has played slick, mild music in Chicago for nearly 25 years. In his top tunes-to-teens days (*Time* profiled him in 1957 as “probably the nation’s single biggest influence on record sales”), he

called himself "Your Uncle Moo-Moo," and until the spring of 1968, he was the city's ranking wake-up man, on WIND.

Advertisers who wished to purchase time on his show reportedly could do so only if they bought additional spots in the rest of the WIND schedule. And it was usually well worth it.

After the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., Miller told his listeners that the city's "brave policemen should be honored by a public holiday for their activities during the disorders." And he lost his job, which reportedly earned him nearly half a million dollars a year during the fifties.

Miller returned to the airwaves the following fall in his old 6-10 A.M. slot on WCFL, a 50,000-watt nonprofit station founded by the Chicago Federation of Labor in the twenties. He is now on WGN in the late afternoon. Terkel calls WCFL a "labor skate," and the station's tax-free status is in the same category as the Catholic Church in this respect. William Lee, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and Mayor Richard J. Daley have been lifelong friends.

For the past couple of years WCFL has been a tightly programmed, successful rock/respectable outlet. (It was where the hilariously successful "Chicken Man" drop-ins began.) The format change initially outraged AFL President George Meany, although the station had never really done well.

Said General Manager Lew Witz in the fall of 1968:

"Our premise in the radio station, which has never been before, is we believe that we can entertain and inform the most people at any given time, from Howard Miller's total appeal in the morning to Barney Pip who draws teens to twenty-five."

Pip makes the station's legendary Dick Biondi sound like a kettle drum. He said:

"Literally translated the character I play on the air is Henry Bumpkin, and that has evolved to Howdy Doody. It's the kid who comes to the big town for the first time with his eyes bulging.

"And to a listener, it's a psychological crutch for him. He

can say he's everything. If radio truly reflects life, you'd think everybody in the world had a ballsy voice.

"I think the falsetto as a dramatic device is more correct in reflecting, and besides, if a guy like me with a falsetto voice can get on the air and hawk and gasp, then why can't a guy just coming in off the street?

"And you'd be surprised how many of them do. That's the whole strata of hope that it engenders."

Said impresario Sol Hurok, on the subject of performing talent:

"That's the greatest thing—to portray the character and not let yourself come through."

Added Pip, who is from Indianapolis:

"Wally Phillips and Jean Shepherd in Cincinnati were big influences, as were the early Lenny Bruce records on Fantasy. Also, one summer, I went to the James Dean Theater School, in Fremont, Indiana, and Howard Miller came down.

"And he went through a thing with this farm family that raised Jimmy Dean, and they were noncommunicable, really. They just didn't know what to think.

"And he didn't have a note, and he didn't have a commercial written up for him, and he went through the whole thing in fourteen-thirty. I later knew it's what they call a 'rave,' lots of words just strung together. But, at the time, my eyes just bugged out."

The rave in its classical form for air personalities is a test in which a performer is asked, say, to talk about an ordinary pencil for three minutes or sell one of two 25¢ pieces to a prospective advertiser. It is the full extension of selling the sizzle instead of the steak.

Al Jarvis, in reducing the importance of a knowledge of music for a disc jockey ("Let's face it, this is a bastardized art"), put it this way once:

"One of the topnotch jocks in the country whose income exceeds our President's has someone else select his records and professionally does not know Sammy Kaye from Duke Ellington—but the point is he could sell Sammy Kaye to Duke Ellington."

At 7:36 A.M., Tuesday, November 26, 1968, between Jack Jones's "The Way That I Live" and "Anchors Aweigh" from an album entitled *A Tribute to Our Fighting Men in Vietnam*, by Paul Laval and The Band of America ("... of course, something that's very near and dear to my heart, having served in the Navy, and I like to play it every so often always respecting that there's such fellows as the Marines, the Army and the Air Force that helped a lot. But, really, when you come right down to it, the Navy won the war. Just blew some votes"), Miller told his audience he was not running for mayor of Chicago—not just yet.

This was prompted by a newspaper story in which Miller was reported to be the American Independent Party's choice for mayor in 1971. An article following his radio message ("I thank those friends who, knowledgeable of my philosophy, are in support of my future plans; if it is God's will, I may someday be privileged to serve the city I love," it concluded. *Anchors aweigh!*) said he was interested in running for the presidency of the Cook County Board in 1970, the position from where Richard Ogilvie was elected governor in 1968. Said Miller, who lives on a 160-acre horse farm in northwest suburban Barrington:

"If you could have taken the chair-isma of a Bobby Kennedy and put it on top of a Humphrey or a Nixon, you would have had a hell of a candidate.

"I think there is a road through show business to politics, and I think it's a natural, if the man is prepared for it. In the city of Chicago, I'm pretty much of a household word. I think I can say that without any braggadocia. Only by virtue of the fact that I've been here every morning, day after day, and said my name a couple of dozen times every morning for 20 years.

"Consequently, they know Howard Miller. Now, if they accept me as a person who has the ability to do something other than say the time is six fifteen, then it's a perfect combination.

"I think I am enough acquainted through just general cognizance of what has taken place over the years of the

nitty-gritty, the nuts and bolts of the actual budget. I'm sure the mayor has to do that even tho he's been the mayor for 15 years. He probably has to study the budget.

"And I'm sure it's no different than studying the budget of your business. And since I'm fiscally conservative, I'd practice an austerity program. I just think we waste too goddamned much, because of these political commitments we make to get elected. But I wouldn't seek public office under those circumstances. . . .

"Well, I chose 'Anchors Aweigh!' largely because I needed an instrumental after a talk. I couldn't very easily select any record that had a lyric because a lyric might connote something, you know. Accidentally or intentionally.

"If I'd played a white man, there might be somebody saying why doesn't he play a black man? So I played something they couldn't find fault with. And I didn't want to play anything quite as broad as 'I Am an American,' because then it looks like too much of an insincere ploy, and so I avoided that. I thought this was the middle-of-the-road."

Said Terkel: "The middle ground, neither Bach nor hop, is the great danger. To me, this is a horror; this will be Orwellian. Year around Christmas music, played by Lombardo or Welk. That middle ground, to me, is death. As a black guy will tell you, I'd rather have hostility than indifference."

Bobby Dale is a truly literate man, a genuinely Joycean jock, who is one of radio's great midnight men. Taking how many sides of his answer as only he can, Dale said of middle-of-the-road, which for the past ten to fifteen years has been mass programming that represents the pinnacle of broadcasting taste:

"That's where you get hit! 'I thought you were talking about a way of life.' I AM!"

Miller was a fairly easy windmill for Royko. But he could still be elected to something, and it's not hard to visualize the rug he as a deejay asked his loyal fans to cut, turning into the one he might eat in a political office. Tragically, however, Miller, like Daley, never seems to eat his words.

The historical aspects of religion have a meaning for the mystic chiefly as symbols of acts which he conceives as being divorced from time, or constantly repeated in the soul of every man.

—GERSHOM SHOLOM
Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism

One of the things I was fascinated by was the attitude that if you didn't dig what was then considered the new sounds, there was almost a racist thing attendant. There were a few guys who were doing things that cost us jobs, money and so forth, and it was a little disconcerting to hear some guy come along with that kind of thing.

It was tougher then. In the 40s, when TV first started, I lost a Coca-Cola dance-record show, one of those judging things by the kids, because they had no Negro teenagers.

—WILLIAM B. WILLIAMS

1949 WAS AN above-chaotic year for broadcasting and popular music. As voices like Bob Clayton, Boston; Frank Ward, Buffalo; Bud Weddell, Cleveland; Nelson King, Cincinnati; John Froland, Memphis; Dick Norman, Dallas; Jim Hawthorne, Los Angeles; and Pat Henry, Oakland, pounded home their various messages, the entertainment business rocked with such controversies as the copyright quandary and the disc jockey's real value, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ vs. 45 rpm's, bop or corn, and the rise of *schlock* spots in the face of television.

The only bright note was the staying power of "corn."

Fearful of turning down a hit, top labels successfully covered hillbilly hits as Hank Williams began delivering his goodies. Bop came and went, the mere mention of the word raising hackles on the necks of agency execs and station managers. However, the hipper jocks played swing's extension ("a vast and terrible interregnum in American popular music; music for the coterie," said a longtime ethnic programmer), giving the tunes whatever title came to mind—as long as it didn't contain "bop."

Soupy Sales was one of them. During that era, he was Soupy Heinz in Huntington, West Virginia; Cincinnati; and Cleveland. "White Fang" and The Dog began in those days. Said Soupy:

"I was crazy about jazz. I'd open with Artie Shaw's 'The Glider,' on the old Musicraft label, and Miles Davis on the old Capitols, 'Jeru.' 52nd Street jazz. All those things that I thought was tasty, and they were—they were good—and Norman Granz.

"I played those things until one day this guy came to me and said: 'Boy, you really play wild music.' He was putting me on. He said: 'I bet all the shoeshine boys and the guys at the gas stations really love it! You know how much they buy? Get smart.'

"Why is it that when anybody gives you advice, I'm young at the time, and you go, oh really? I thought about it, and I didn't have any sponsors or anything, and I was let go.

"And I went out and I sold spots myself. And I started playing the *Billboard* 'Top 10' and it really took off. But what I did was, and I learned was that when people accepted the show, that it was a commercial thing, then it was nothing to bring in a Stan Kenton or a Duke Ellington or a Gene Krupa or a Woody Herman. Because then they said if he's playing that it must be good because look at all the other stuff he's playing. And it worked.

"I had my own system where I played a pop number, a number that was going out, a commercial band or jazz thing, then I hit 'em with *something else*. Some of the jocks just played bad music. Always on an album, there's 3 or 4

good sides out of 12. The rest are a bunch of crap, and that's what the stations played. And they'd read off the album covers."

No sooner had the industry sighed off the public's confusion as a result of the recording ban than the rpm dilemma kept buyers out of the record stores. Even Capitol lost money, and poor Decca (whose Jack Kapp died in March at forty-seven), with more big sellers than ever, and sticking with the 78s, couldn't take advantage.

Columbia came out with the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm microgroove, long-play discs of Dr. Peter S. Goldmark in 1948, and Victor introduced their 45-rpm, seven-inch, single records the following January. But even when Capitol quickly pushed the balance toward Victor by going to the 45s (new Mercury had sided with Columbia) and the whole year found the days of the 78 numbered, the public didn't quite know what to replace the 10-inchers with.

It was over a year and a half before the rpm matter resolved itself. Victor accepted the slow speed when it introduced its first three-speed phonograph in December. Just after the Korean conflict started, Decca decided to "go 45," and a month later, Columbia coalesced.

Early in the squabble, the top labels in dismay followed a Columbia price cut designed to put the squeeze on the indies. But it did nothing to reverse the rpm confused market. Victor came up with a company farm club, the 49¢ Bluebird line that consisted of hits by new artists, and made some points.

As television came fully on the scene, BMI announced it would no longer pay premium for network plugs. Saying this reflected forced and "synthetic" popularity ratings, the society said a truer picture came from disc jockey request polls. Coincidentally, BMI affiliated publishers for the first time had a majority of the hits in both record and sheet-music sales.

The year, with an upturn around the corner, however, ended with the same old complaint. The plethora of recording performances on the air blocked hit development and

new talent. If there was a breakthrough, the public was clobbered with the disc so often, they didn't buy it, reiterated record men. So a tune was quickly blurred and forgotten through the mass of music.

Consequently, retailers were reluctant to stock other than established disc jockey poll tunes. If BMI could make every man his own publisher, postwar radio made many a deejay his own "Hit Parade."

Competition became so sharp and bitter among recording companies that interest in "exclusives" was the order of the day. This struck right at the heart of the pubs' operation. Established firms gave tunes to all recorders at the same time, but the discers, who were finding the pubs' experience less reliable all the time, began bypassing them.

They went to song writers direct, small pubs, deejays, or anyone who might have an unknown potential hit. It was literally shooting in the dark, and the independent producer became someone to be reckoned with. But the jock, with his insatiable desire to uncover a hit, thought he alone was on target, and this made life miserable for the plugger.

What it did, of course, was give the little guy a chance, and the slightest flurry of a regional number made covering the rule. Amid a torrent of releases, the pubs moaned but admitted that the recorders were helpless to do anything but cover.

Under this general pattern, a recovery started at Christmas. Novelties rode the crest again, and the indies, who were hurt hard in forty-nine, dominated the market with new performers for the first half of the year. After the Korean War began, everybody's business was going well. A wide range of discs was being bought, but the standards took the lead through most of the rest of the year. The battle of the speeds ended, and not only did the new phonographs start selling, but an average of ten dollars of new records could be counted on with the purchase.

Where the real pressure came, however, was from the artists' press agents. "Breaking" a record and personal appearance dogfights were left up to the stars' flacks, and

nowhere was the battle more frenzied than in St. Louis, where Rush Hughes (KXOK) and Gil Newsome (KWK) were all-powerful. *Variety* called the rivalry "town's lone bit of color." Station operators, frowning on sidelines and "abuses" that earned the jocks more than their bosses, called it "silly."

Hughes was the son of novelist Rupert Hughes. Even before he began jockeying on WHB, Kansas City, in 1944, he had built a reputation for his vibrant on-the-air imagery with "Rush Hughes and the News." On the basis of his successful style, KWK asked him to supply them with transcriptions.

The idea worked out so well that Hughes began syndicating around the country. KWK objected, so Hughes dropped them, and during 1946 he put together nearly seventy-five customers from Cincinnati to Portland, Oregon, and from New Orleans to Minneapolis.

Early in 1947, Hughes signed with ABC affiliate, KXOK, and moved to St. Louis. By late spring KWK had brought in the rapid-fire, hard-selling Newsome, with his record-shop surveys. And it wasn't long after the fall semester was underway that he topped the ratings.

The battle was joined as it was just about everywhere else, but with Hughes on the road quite a bit with a new transcription contract to be promoted, he had the opportunity to tape interviews with performers before they came to town. So Newsome began spending his weekends doing the same.

The jousting got so bad that anything other than "first on my show" usually meant bad-mouthing by the losing jock. In fact, lesser announcers would reluctantly turn down advance men for entertainers.

Not only did they acknowledge the power of a Hughes or a Newsome (or a Clayton, McKenzie, or Norman, ". . . he can do more for you than I can"), they feared their possible air venom. By letting the press agents off the hook in this way, the other deejays shrugged their shoulders and tried to make the best of a sticky situation.

Where the publicists had a field day was on the after-

midnight, night-club-originating, discless jockey shows out of New York. In the mid-forties, deejays like Allen Courtney, Dick Gilbert, and Freddie Robbins were hiping metropolitan listeners throughout the afternoon and evening to the inside slant from the glamorous world of show biz. Mainly over WOV, which had a miscellany format of big-band jazz, great vocals, and mixed-in Negro artists, they played tasty discs, commented perceptively and humorously on them, and did interviews.

Courtney was casually outspoken on many matters, and admired. He used the phrase "Tolerance Through Music" but was to drop discs for interviews and commentary as peace came. Sing-along Gilbert had been a *Variety* "mugg" and might have coined the expression "disc jockey" while there. WEVD program manager David Niles said he first heard the Arizona-bred Gilbert, whom Robbins said wore a gun to work out of fear of jealous husbands and boy friends, use the phrase on that station in 1941. He hosted Fred Waring's first appearance on a jock show on WHN in 1944.

The immensely popular Robbins had come from Baltimore, a real hotbed of initially successful jocks, with what *Time* called "the best jazz-music program on the air" and biting remarks about commercial pop. He also brought his own Runyonesque: "We got stacks of lacquer crackers on the fire, so hang out your hearing flap while His Majesty salivates a neat reed." And Benny Goodman came on.

Said Robbins, who exchanged pop poop via a weekly acetate with Garroway in Chicago and Gene Norman in Los Angeles (all three were highly successful jazz-concert promoters in addition to their air chores):

"My idea when I started was to be completely different. I didn't wanna be like anybody else. I didn't wanna say anything like anybody else. I wanted to get it so far away from any kind of cliché at all. From the station break to the artist himself.

"So I tried to say things in different ways and coin phrases and paraphrase things, Shakespeare, everything else. To make a clever and original repartee. And that went to the

names of the artists as well. That's how 'The Velvet Fog' was created for Mel Tormé. Paraphrase of Duke's record 'Magenta Haze.' That was the basis of the whole language, of the whole creativity, to try to say things in offbeat ways.

"I was the first guy to do celebrity station breaks. Using music strings, music backgrounds, personalized openings and closings, things like that. It's all from me. But you had to take those off of records. Now, of course, guys are in business just doing that alone."

But the banter from WOV paled before the all-night belligerence of Barry Gray on WOR ("Moonlight Savings Time"), who took de-emphasizing discs to permit himself weighty words on the Broadway scene. Competing basically with the inescapable Walter Winchell, whose NBC Blue Network show flashed the word to millions, Gray went after every White Way wit in sight. So vituperative was his rap that Leonard Lyons sought his attorney's advice, and Ed Sullivan, Dorothy Kilgallen, and Harriet Van Horne considered action. And Lee Mortimer punched him out.

Gray, whose power was recognized by aborning Mercury when it invited him to Chicago to look over its pressing facilities, left WOR in the fall of 1947 when the station couldn't handle him anymore. After 2½ years of the same on WIME, Miami (where Courtney came to contest in the fall of 1949 on WGBS from 11:20 P.M.—1 A.M., to remain on the air there for two decades, acquiring, however, a more conservative cast to his opinions), he returned to a 1-4 A.M. show on WMCA. By then, what he had started was spilling off of eight stations, notably on WINS from the classic, classless style of Jack Eigen.

Eigen, who was screamingly satirized by Mike Nichols and Elaine May on Mercury in the late fifties ("Jack Ego here . . . I was just talking to my good friend, the Pope"), set up shop in the upstairs lounge of the Copacabana, in sight of the cloakroom, with his "nice show for nice people," in April, 1947. Taking a polar tack from Gray, Eigen emceed what Variety called "a spontaneous benefit bill money couldn't buy."

They all came to sit around the mike with Jack. Lounge

business leaped from \$3,000 to \$16,000 a week, New York stay-up-lates were entranced, and normally early-to-bedders started staying up that much later.

Eigen was so impervious to criticism that regular Sunday night digging by Fred Allen turned into publicity plus for him. The comedian's weekly remarks became sensational advance notice to a vast audience later on in the night when Eigen, fed to the parent Crossley Broadcasting's WLW, Cincinnati, brought weekly intimate conversation with the stars to the width and breadth of mid-America. Eventually, Allen sparked Eigen's first anniversary celebration at the Copa.

Imitators sprang up quickly in the major markets. In Los Angeles, Bill Anson out of Sardi's brought business up 600 per cent, George Jay in The King's Restaurant became a must for enterprising entertainers, and Johnny Grant sat in at Ciro's. In 1950, WMAQ, Chicago, after Garroway had gone to New York, put Mike Wallace and his wife, Buff Cobb, on from 11:30 P.M. to 1 A.M. out of the city's Chez Paree. When Eigen (on WMGM) left New York in 1951, he took over the Chez show, which ultimately had a long reign out of co-owner Mike Fritzel's restaurant at State and Lake streets.

Elsewhere, men like Sherm Feller, Boston; Steve Allison, Philadelphia; and Ralph Moffatt, Minneapolis, were picking up late night audiences with a format that would explode some fifteen years later into talk radio—and die in three years. And Mort Sahl was shortly to tackle the thorny issues of the McCarthy era out of San Francisco's hungry i on a midnight show on KGO, which reached Alaska.

Gray's return shot him back to great acceptance. Somewhat subdued ("a sort of moderator rather than opinionator"), he was nonetheless criticized by Abel Green, who wrote in *Variety*:

"Gray's most effective recent trick is the continuing harangue over who-stole-from-whom, referring to gags and stage business. It's still a grave question to what degree the public should be exposed, and disillusioned, to such intra-trade stuff."

Gray, Green, and Winchell were to exchange verbal blows

during the early fifties on the wiseness of this behind-the-scenes blab, and more. So vicious, in fact, did the scoop scraps become that Gray was badly beaten up twice, allegedly at the instigation of Winchell and some restaurant-owner pals who found his crowds at Chandler's eating into their business.

Gray replaced the raspy Symphony Sid on WMCA, but the revered bop exponent found an all-night slot on WJZ that summer out of Birdland. Taking jazz off Fifty-second Street to Broadway, he had been reaching the hipsters with his between-sets ethereal jazz discs out of the Royal Roost (which he opened with Monte Kay and Ralph Watkins, and publicized its initial Friday sessions by mentions on his Thursday show) and Bop City.

His nearly two-year stint on ABC's powerful flagship station hit thirty-eight states. There was even a Symphony Sid fan club in British Guinea.

Torin's success on WMCA had produced an expansion of the after-dark Negro market. WHOM had a sold-out rhythm and blues "After Hours Swing Session," nightly from 11 P.M. to 2 A.M., with Willie Bryant and Ray Carroll, and WINS introduced Eigen anticipators to Amsterdam News columnist Joe Bostic's "Harlem Music Shop" from 11 to 11:55 P.M.

At the half-century, midnight radio began spreading where the truth could be heard, and the night people had become used to nothing else.

Even then, and elsewhere around the clock, some stations didn't dig the plugging of niteries by deejays to compensating their engaging guests. It was even banned for a while on KLAC, which thought the clubs should buy time. (And there were some feelings that record companies should do the same.) As television encroached, management began looking to any source for revenue, and the battle cry on the AM front became "sell."

Forgetting the sensitivities, time salesmen hyped their bidding for business that might be considered spurious. Low-cost radio started to pay off big, as stations like WNEW,

WIND, WJBK, and WMIN had proved. These metropolitan indies, who were seen as truer reps of radio than the network affiliates, were well prepared to withstand the onslaught of TV, and their little brothers scraped for whatever business they could scare up.

However, every station was fairly equal after the witching hour, and the majors weren't about to turn down the business. So in the fall of 1949, WGN, Chicago, shocked the industry by turning over its midnight–5 A.M. hours to Harold Kaye's Mail Order Network.

With Erv Victor spinning pop and hillbilly records between the "per inquiry" spots, plastic Jesus radio, with six pitches per hour, was spewed from WGN's superengineered, wide-ranging, 50-kilowatt mountaintop, where the big bands had been beamed live to the nation just a few years earlier. The NAB frowned, but WGN was not a member. Its feelings were the same as WNEW's, which the following year dropped its affiliation, saying it was unnecessary to independent stations in large metro areas.

Results were said to be phenomenal, with mail orders coming in from all over North America, including Panama and Hawaii. The sound quickly got to WOR, where it was short-lived because of the sophisticated competition that dotted the Manhattan midnight dial. (However, it was replaced by Big Joe Rosenfeld and his "Happiness Exchange," a corn-cracking soiree of common folk.) Chicago, on the other hand, encountered a flurry of hillbilly programming at virtually ever spot across the band during 1950.

But supposedly blasé New Yorkers, whose listening to Block had made Barney's Stores for Men, and who by the late forties were hearing some \$5 million of saturating clothing commercials for outfits like Robert Hall, Prentis, and Ripley, were nonetheless going from their radios to their phones in great numbers. "Hurry up and call this number" jocks hit the indie airwaves after Hal Tunis and Bob "Pedro" Harris over WVNJ, Newark, New Jersey, sensationally sold soup, nuts, and on.

An outstanding member of that breed was Art "Pancho"

Raymond, who was a forerunner in presenting the Latin beat during the late forties and early fifties. He launched Tito Puente, Tito Rodriguez, and Joe Loco and, with George Goldner, started the very successful Tico Records, a division of Roulette. He is currently doing a late-morning show on WEVD, New York, devoted to Anglo-Yiddish records, on which he calls himself "The Tumbler." He said of the post-war era:

"That's when the hard pitch, the hard sell came along and if we didn't get people to call for a home demonstration of a television or a sewing machine or a vacuum cleaner, we were worried about our jobs."

WVNJ gave out figures like sales of 399 pairs of nylons and 63 vacuum cleaners in one broadcast for Tunis, and orders for 119 Admiral TV sets and 26 upholstery jobs in one day. Not only could the new station offer concrete evidence of its sales effectiveness, WVNJ was able to determine the size and nature of its audience.

The station said sales had been recorded on seven different floors of the Savoy-Plaza, and that heavy response had come from Brooklyn's upper-middle-class Ocean Parkway area. In one case, for a \$300 item, WVNJ said the sponsor's credit department had checked purchasers' ratings and cleared 85 per cent of the sales. Cancellations were few, they added, and very quickly WOR added Tunis and Harris for similar telephone testimony.

Under the threat of television (which a Philadelphia survey in the fall of 1949 raised some doubts about): it showed that radio listening in TV homes, particularly those of six months' ownership or longer, averaged 20 per cent between 5 and 7 P.M., compared to virtually nothing the previous summer), lower rates and longer programs were seen as the road for radio to take. Broadcasting was at the crossroads. Formula radio was around the bend, but the day of the personality was also happening.

The deejay had become firmly entrenched as a part of the American scene, and a listener, whether he be high-brow or hillbilly, could readily find on the dial a musical

environment in which he felt secure. But the hurly-burly pace of the popular music business doesn't stand still for long—the day of the big band was over and the soloist rode the crest—and by the middle fifties it was gyrating with a pitch that shook up radio and upset the nation's sense of values. Rock 'n' roll was on the way, and with it the "Top 40," everywhere on the dial, it would seem.

Radio's initial era ended as stations started ousting orchestras as the AFM squawked. The union made a last-ditch effort in the spring of 1950 when WINS, at the close of its contract, announced it would use records exclusively and not employ *any* musicians. The dispute differed from the feather-bedding type of squabble of other unions in that the labor-saving device was directly *competitive* with the human labor it was replacing.

In another union battle, AFRA charged WMGM, which had changed its call letters from WHN when it was purchased by Loews, Inc., with underpaying free-lance announcers. In order to prevent stations from hiring free-lancers, the union set up a pay scale of \$15 per commercial half-hour as against \$10 for regular staffers.

AFRA said WMGM was paying Ken Roberts, Ted Brown, and Hal Tunis the lower rate. With the trio working between four and five hours daily on the station, staffers were mad because they were making less on their base pay than on their commercial fees.

So WMGM fired their eight staff announcers, but the union won out as they were rehired and the free-lancers paid union scale.

The old ways of life have been disappearing much too rapidly for comfort, and we are in a great cultural confusion.

—JOHN CROWE RANSOM

Everyone was very sympathetic and pulling for me when I came here. Cold New Yorkers, I found, were no different than others. I was a poor guy on the spot, trying to fill the biggest shoes in show business, and they rallied around me.

—JACK STERLING

IN MAY, 1950, a Chicago judge ruled that a recording was a "publication," and all discs could be tossed into the public domain because they did not carry a copyright notice. Throughout the summer the music business held its breath until the court modified its stand and said the ruling applied only to work recorded before the 1909 Copyright Act.

At the same time, NBC broke down and initiated its first network disc jockey, Wayne Howell, who started a Saturday afternoon half-hour show. On the net's flagship station, WNBC, Ted Cott, who had come over from WNEW,

introduced a disc jockey format to compete with the increasingly popular indie.

Based on the concept of "big names plus specialization in records," WNBC featured personalities like Skitch Henderson, Bob and Ray, Henry Morgan, Arthur Treacher, Leopold Stokowski, Clem McCarthy, Jackie Robinson, Sam Goldwyn, and H. V. Kaltenborn.

WNBC gave it a good ride in the early fifties, but WNEW's headstart in the light, local-emphasis bag was far too much for the broader-ranging network affiliate to overcome. It was comparable to Faulkner's belief that it is better to go deep than to go wide, and few can do both. The dominant success of WNEW has only recently begun to falter on its course, and the station remains in many ways the one to beat.

The attempt to compete in every city was largely to suffer in such tries at changing people's listening habits. "Fustes' with the mostes'" was especially applicable to the success of stations with whimsical morning personalities.

In 1949, Godfrey gave up his commitments on WTOP and WCBS and was replaced by Jack Sterling in New York and Eddie Gallagher in Washington. WNEW, with its wedge of Block, wisely moved its morning team of Gene Rayburn and Dee Finch up from a 6:30 to a 6 A.M. start.

Sterling with his friendly, average approach and semi-complement of live music kept a healthy enough share of the audience during his nearly twenty years on WCBS. (In 1967 he went to WHN, which had reverted to its old call letters in 1962.) However, the WNEW morning show has been rated 1-2-3 and built fierce loyalty for nearly two decades, perennially battling WOR's four-and-a-half-decade-running Gamblings and, in the sixties, WABC's tight pop format.

The antic eminence of Klavan and Finch (formed when the nutty Gene Klavan came up from Washington in 1952, and "reduced" to "Klavan and Friends" when Finch retired in 1969) has been cut into only recently. They withstood the challenge of superzanies like Bob and Ray, WINS; Ted

Brown and the Redhead, WMGM; Henry Morgan and Ernie Kovacs through the fifties and sixties.

Said Klavan, who uses a store of impressions:

"We knocked off Bob and Ray three times because we were better morning performers than they were. They were very good bit-doers. Unfortunately, when you come to a station like this, in any market, you have a great many commercials.

"Well, the thing that they're known for is their funny commercials. But they never did them on their show. They did straight commercials, and bits in between. Their bits were overly long. They never did learn morning techniques. They're wildly clever, but they're lousy editors."

Said Bob Elliott:

"We started network with 15 minutes at night and an hour Saturday nights, and then we took over 2½ hours in the morning on WNBC. When we took on TV, we gave up what was the hardest thing to do, the morning show. The same thing happened at WINS. We stayed there for two years, then we got wrapped up in 'Monitor.' WHN [in the sixties] was the same story. . . .

"If the ratings were down, we were doing what we could do best, and the ratings always did go up. The mornings were loaded with commercials, and we were paid, of course, to play around with 'em. Like using Wolf Man in the Barney's commercials, the fashion shows, the fur coming out of his cuffs."

Godfrey personally went for Ted Brown and the Redhead, and he let his national audience know it. They (she was Brown's wife and partner for six of the eleven years he was on WMGM) had a great following in trade circles, from fellow performers to sponsors. Now in afternoon drive time 4-8 P.M. on WNEW, Brown said:

"I had one track of all telephone operators starting out in Floral Park that would go to like Bombay. I'd do it about three times a year, and it would run for like an hour. As a running gag. Usually it was just that I was making the call into the record library, and it would wind up in Bombay.

Wild, man, beautiful! I bought 'em from a guy who thought he was going to work for Bob and Ray. . . .

"We used to pull such stunts on each other. We're doing a show from home and we're in bed. We used to do the show from a basement studio we had. An engineer would come from Portchester. I get a call from 'master control':

"Ted?"

"Yeah?"

"Listen, we had a big storm last night and the transmitter is practically destroyed, so you won't be going on at all today; it's impossible."

"And I hung up. So I tell her to go back to sleep. Then, jeez, I thought, I hadn't heard a wind, nothin'. What storm? But I still believed it, right?"

"About five to seven, I said, jeez, somebody better tell Frank—Frank Mancini, the producer. Nobody's told Frank; he's down there. So I put my robe on, ya know, and I'm walkin' down and I just get to the top of the stairs and they're comin' up after me."

"What're you guys doin' down there? There was a big storm last night, the transmitter blew down.' And now when I heard myself articulate it, I realized how stupid it sounded."

"God damn Bob and Ray had gotten my private number. I swear they sounded exactly like an engineer. [It was Ray.] Engineers have a certain sound. And I never in my wildest dreams doubted it was the engineer at master control talkin'!"

"So I went and got a recording and put it on, and while it was on, I called 'em. They told me they did it, but they couldn't understand because they heard me come on the air, and the moment it came on the air, while I was on the air, I was talking to them on the phone. Well, they didn't know I had openings for 10 minutes late, 15 minutes late, the whole thing."

"They paid us to be live on Saturdays, and she was never live on Saturdays, not one. We never prepared anything. All of it was ad lib."

"At one time, we were very good in the ratings. But I always had like the head of Snow Crop listen to me or the

buyer for a certain product, and they couldn't care less about them. Considering we weren't No. 1 or No. 2, we made a lot of money for them."

Said Klavan:

"Ted Brown and the Redhead didn't make it in the morning because they were *too much*—in the morning. They were dreadfully clever. . . .

"We're a proven product and we've had 8,000 meetings with sponsors. There's certain don'ts and we've got answers for all this kind of crap. I say:

'Gee, if we do it your way, we'll have to do it fairly straight. If we do it our way, there's a problem you might not like.'

"What's that?"

"Well, we may have to take a minute and a half to do your commercial.'

"And their eyes glow and you're in business. We've had very few problems. We sell. . . .

"Always surprise. You can never say what I'm going to do, because I don't know what I'm going to do. And I have infinite control.

"Radio today is a viable, living thing, but all comic approach to radio is dead. The problem with this thing today, and this is what's wrong with radio, and why I'm so infuriated with radio, radio is still a sensational medium, and I love it. It should grow, but it's not going to grow because it's a business and not an art form. Most radio stations are supermarkets; they are not theaters anymore."

Interestingly, a qualitative listener-study in the early fifties was said to have showed that the Klavan and Finch audience was attracted *least* to their comedy. The team swallowed their pride and polished up their act in the areas of greater acceptance—music, information, public service, etc. But they still went out on the air and got their laughs.

So while WNEW has long been viewed as the prototype personality-station, it early advocated a philosophy that its programming should be "personality-proof." When Rayburn went to WNBC and Bob Haymes to WCBS in 1952

(Haymes was reportedly offered triple his salary to make the move), program director Bill Kaland was able to state that it really was a small matter because the station's audience was attracted to the show and not to the talent.

Kaland said that there were few inquiries when Bill Harrington replaced Haymes but that reaction was strong when other performers' records were inserted in a long-running Bing Crosby program.

Said Carl Haverlin:

"I'm not too sure that great radio stations don't have even beyond their own knowledge a thing. . . . This instinctiveness, a lot of it is extemporaneous ('Did I say that?') like the operas they used to sing in the vineyards of Italy long before the operatic form became what we know it as today. . . .

"Out of this improvisation, like cicadas and grasshoppers, they create a sound all working together, and this is what's happening today. One jockey goes off, and another jockey comes on, interweaving and creating a new thing. And if somebody comes in and changes it, they can all go to hell in a handbasket."

And the radio program went out and formula radio was born—the attempt to produce listener loyalty for a station. This took place at a time when the TV picture out of New York and Hollywood had most of America glued to their tube.

There is some dispute over who was the originator of the brand of radio that has been, although not necessarily dominant today, the most controversial since it almost immediately began using rock 'n' roll music as its programming. However, credit for the kind of broadcasting that used a twenty-four-hour hit parade exclusively is generally given to the late Todd Storz, who started his air empire with KOWH, Omaha, and received his big push at WTIX, New Orleans, in 1953.

Storz is said to have been the first to capitalize on the public's compulsion to keep the juke box playing with hits. He is said to have witnessed this phenomenon in an Omaha

restaurant with the result that early in 1950, KOWH went pop music and played the hits from the record stores. This was certainly not a new approach to radio, but Storz extended the "Hit Parade" shows to a full-time frenzy at WTIX.

A few months after "TIX got underway, the dynamic Gordon McLendon opened up the second main branch of "Top 40" at KLIF, Dallas. This station had been generating real excitement and unparalleled ratings in brash "Big D" with its policy of McLendon's personal re-creation of major league baseball games, popular music, identifiable personalities, and early entry into identifying jingles.

Said Bill Meeks, president of PAMS, Dallas, an early jingle house:

"The first jingle station i.d. I remember was for KLIF, November 11, 1947. I was at WFAA and had talked to Gordon about doing work with him. So we got together and did it. I'd had a musical group. We thought as long as we had the air time, we might as well sell the station, too. It was a pretty long jingle.

"About 1951, I built up ten different types of singing jingles for two stations. They were successful because people could identify and remember. I then started syndicating. The first of the big orchestrations were used in 1953, pre-recorded."

Although "Top 40" basically used the jingles, WNEW, KLAC and WORL, Boston had them in the late forties. An early Meeks jingle, like the original KLIF work, was done for KDNT, Denton, Texas, about 1952, he said. It went:

"All right, now let's everybody sing:

"No worn-out, old-time movies,"

CHORUS: "No worn-out, old-time movies,"

"No picture tubes to fail."

CHORUS: "No picture tubes to fail."

"No ice cream to annoy you."

CHORUS: "No ice cream to annoy you."

"Here in Denton, none of them there cotton-

pickin' John 'n' Marsha tales neither. Heh, heh, heh, heh!"

CHORUS: K-D-N-T is the station with the great big smile,
You'll keep up the pace as long as you go to the dial.
Tune to Denton's music,
Your good time music spot,
Hear music, news and weather
On the one-four-four-oh-dot."

"After that," says Meeks, "jingles got much, much shorter. By 1960, we started the very ultra short i.d.'s and the variable-type logo. This meant each radio station could have its own musical signature."

As for WTIX, it was a classical music station when Storz took it over in 1953. At the time, the highest-rated station in New Orleans was the "Top 20 at 1280" (WDSU) with Tiger Flowers. Bud Armstrong, the new 'TIX manager, is said to have commented:

"If 'Top 20' pulls that rating, think what we could do with the 'Top 40?'"

So the "Top 40 at 1450" went on the air every afternoon from three to six, and its first ratings were fantastic compared to other times. 'TIX started it around the clock and began surveying a record store. It also learned that kids turned on the radio first but that the station still had to do something to keep the adults listening.

At first the top tunes were mostly by pop soloists, but the Fontaine Sisters and The Crew Cuts with "Sh-Boom" (the tune, originally done by The Chords for Atlantic, considered by Arnold Shaw in *The Rock Revolution* as the harbinger of the change) were coming in. When Bill Haley and His Comets came out with "Rock Around the Clock" in 1954, 'TIX wouldn't touch it at first. Their salesmen felt it was too close to rhythm and blues, and they did not want programming to do anything that might make advertisers think the station was attracting a Negro clientele.

But its sales soon precluded this, and the barriers came down. And when Elvis exploded on the scene two years later, the previously unmeasurable country and western sound became a paramount factor. By 1956, there was no doubt about it: Rock 'n' roll had arrived.

It's like Spike Milligan says, and God knows he's right, this world is full up with mediocrity, and you find it everywhere, and when you brush with it you brush with venom.

—PETER SELLERS

One reason for the format, of course, is to take an average talent or inferior talent type guy and put him in the mold that can carry him. And if he does what he's told, he's accepted.

—HAL NEAL, ABC

IN 1951 THE MUSIC industry envisioned its biggest year since before World War II, and August 20–26 was the first annual national Disc Jockey week. The increase in homebodies because of TV and the Korean conflict, and the resolution of the three-speed crisis, were bound to bring an upswing in business.

And ballads were back in the driver's seat. Solid pops were to have a healthy era through the middle of 1954, except for a slight downturn in late fifty-one and early fifty-two, when so-called "corn" surged with its sound,

loaded, to the distaste of purists, with electronic experimentation.

This "stressing the best in pop music" was looked upon as a wholesome situation. Largely responsible was Mitch Miller, the head of artists and repertoire at Columbia Records, where he had come from Mercury in 1950, covering Hank Williams hits with performers like Tony Bennett, Rosemary Clooney, and Jo Stafford.

The concept of "covering" the quintessential original recording began to obtain wide currency in the early fifties. This notion has had its pros and cons, of course. It has always been viewed as good business, with the blurry line of demarcation that of what is a carbon copy—an out-and-out steal—and what is an attempt to communicate better.

Actually, it was the publishers' demonstration record that was where the arrangement had to come from. And the covering of a record, for all its ersatz quality, has to be directed toward an audience that may accept an interpretation because it strikes a readily responsive chord in its consciousness.

Leadbelly's loss of his mule has scant mass appeal, particularly to a northern urban white middle-class student, who may even think he grooves on it. And in a way, there are ways to feel the experience. You are more likely to see it live, if you are so inclined, than you are to hear it on the air. And many of the young are doing just that, through a return to the land.

For, if radio is anything, it is the blues, and this is what was starting to break through in the fifties. You can hear them anytime, anywhere on the dial—your blues, whatever they may be, and they can be so many things. So while there is a pushing in toward the middle, the public not only gets what it likes, it may grow to like what it gets.

Said Bobby Dale:

"I wish I had some music charts from KDWB when I first went to work for Crowell-Collier as music director [1960]. It was so beautiful at that time because I didn't think about, you know, about what this or . . .

"Hey, yeah, *that* stayed with me, and that was enough for me to go on. If I was wrong or right from there on, I mean, like *wow*, some of the songs that were 'Top 10.'

"Like 'Louisiana Man,' by Rusty and Doug, or 'Mojo Man,' by Lightnin' Hopkins. Wow, Minneapolis, man!

"'Look,' I said, 'if anyone asks you, tell 'em it's a fuckin' novelty.'

"'But "Cold ground was my bed last night./Rocks was my pillow, too./And I woke up this morning wonderin',/Lord, what in the world I gonna do?"'"

So the acceptance of a Tony Bennett's "Cheatin' Heart" as against a Hank Williams' anthem, or a Ray Coniff's, Wilson Pickett's, Jazz Crusaders', or Bing Crosby's "Hey Jude" after The Beatles', *ad infinitum*, is basic to human cross call-and-response. And those who have learned others' songs have always been greatly admired craftsmen.

Said Haverlin:

"Music is feeding via radio and cross-fertilizing, and it's getting better all the time. *Radio is a magnificent hothouse for all things musical, in my opinion.*"

The frantic drum beating of the disc jockey brought on response from everyone by the early fifties, and "chicks up front" was acknowledged in record promotion. Howie Richmond's great success as a publisher had come from his early and ready recognition of the power of the deejay. In early 1951 he put on blonde Tommie McLeston to pitch jocks around the country on behalf of his recorded tunes. Other pubs quickly followed with promo girls.

Record companies and publicists, of course, were into that already, with deejays increasingly encountering as many gals as guys in receiving new releases. As *Variety* inveighed against payola and "The Music Biz's Frankenstein," the disc jockey, this or that jock was as likely to settle for "layola." Few jocks, especially if they were up-and-comers, were about to look any gift horse in the mouth. Although, said San Francisco's Jim Dunbar of his early days in Detroit:

"I was all glands and these promotion guys'd come up

with a chick and I'd toss 'em out. I wasn't about to be bought for a broad, and I'd hate myself for it."

And disc jockeys, particularly after dark, could always expect phone calls from women who just loved their voices and/or music and just had to meet them. These chicks could be hard to put off, but publicity pictures could be re-touched (or untouched) for opposite reasons, too!

But even keeping it on a business basis, it was not all that easy to play everything you "contracted" for. Promotion people were coming out of the walls—from record companies, publishers, distributors, performers. The a&r chieftains, all-powerful, were also becoming receptive to distributor publicists. Their daily dealings in a market where they got quick feedback through the jocks' requests made them highly useful as critical sounding boards. This grapevine, from jock to distrib to a&r head, was the road hits rode during the fifties, and the payoff was huge to all involved.

These local reports could also be used to promote a record in other parts of the country, and the breathless appeal "It's breaking big in Fargo, Tulsa, Wheeling, Winnipeg," wherever, became the byword for the push on any disc toward national hitdom.

Chaos spread as release jumping, price differences, and pirating increased and flexible independent recording companies became prevalent. Audiences were being made familiar with labels like King, Alladin, Savoy, Swingtime, Jubilee, Atlantic, and Chess by Alan "Moon Dog" Freed, Cleveland; Dewey Phillips, Memphis; Gene Nobles and John Richborough ("John R."), Nashville; Zenas "Daddy" Sears, Atlanta; Ken "Jack the Cat" Elliott and Clarence "Poppa Stoppa" Hamman, Jr., New Orleans; George "Hound Dog" Lorenz, Buffalo; "Jumpin'" George Oxford, Oakland-San Francisco; Phil McKernan (the father of the Grateful Dead's "Pigpen"), Berkeley; Hunter Hancock, Los Angeles; Bob "Wolfman Jack" Smith, Shreveport and Del Rio.

They were white jocks who were beginning to complement the rise of the highly stylized Negro deejay, like WOPA's blues-singing Big Bill Hill, who offered Cadillacs



John "John R." Richbourg.
(Bing & Togue Studio)



Gene Nobles, host of "Randy's
Record Shop" show. (WLAC)



Chicago's jazz rhymer Daddy-O Daylie.



Nelson King, Cincinnati.
(Ron Shuller
Photography)



New York's "Rhythm
Express" rider, Jack
Walker.



Al "Jazzbo" Collins (left)
with Project 3 promo man
Marty Dahl. (California
Photo Service)



Carl DeSuzo, WBZ, Boston, the ultimate contest prize. (WBZ)

Don Sherwood (left), KSFO, San Francisco, is stunned after losing a footrace across the Golden Gate Bridge to fellow jock Jim Lange. (Gene Wright)





The mid-sixties staff of one of the most listened-to stations in the land, WABC, New York. From left to right: Herb Oscar Anderson, Ron Lundy, Bob Lewis, Chuck Leonard, Charlie Greer, Dan Ingram, and "Cousin Brucie" Morrow. (WABC)



Bill Gavin, whose weekly tip sheet out of San Francisco makes him one of the most powerful influencers of the nation's popular music tastes, presents awards at his annual programming conference in Las Vegas, December, 1968. (Las Vegas News Bureau)



Dick Biondi, the archscreeamer, who over wide-ranging WLS in the early sixties was the top-rated jock in markets as far away as Pittsburgh and Wheeling.



WMCA's Gary Stevens finds it hard to escape omnipresent promo man. (Popsie)



KYA's Gary Schaffer approaches shore in his bathtub, five hours after the start of his San Francisco Bay crossing. (Don Aron)



KOL jocks (left to right) Dick Curtis, Robin Mitchell, Gary Todd, Jeff Boeing, Greg Connors, and Joe Sabo exploit the ultimate as pickets surround them at the station's "Love-In" at the Seattle Center Fountain.

Has rock music gotten too freaky for radio?



Yes.
Station managers bite their manicured nails every time a record comes out that speaks directly to today's youth.

Who aren't "bombing around" in Daddy's T-Bird. Or playing kissy-face at the drive-in movie. The establishment wishes they were.

But it won't be long before the last remains of the American child-man vanish before their bewildered eyes.

Young people today are twice as educated as their parents.

They're concerned with the implications of the new morality. War. Drugs. Discrimination. And worn out value systems.

The new rock music points an accusing finger at society for the state the world is in.

It speaks of a new order.
A world where people are real and values are just.

Unlike other rock stations WNEW-FM plays this rock.

New rock. Mind-searching rock. Mind-expanding rock. Everything but played-out rock.

We don't play a record (or an album, for that matter) because it's no. 1 or no. 2. Or no. 12.

If a song takes twenty minutes to play we allow twenty minutes for it.

We don't believe you can marshal art. And if rock music has gotten too freaky for the radio establishment, then good-bye radio establishment.

Stronger barriers than that have been broken in the course of evolution.

WNEW • FM/102.7
METROMEDIA STEREO

WNEW-FM ad.



The staff of the first of the independent underground rock FM stations, KMPX. San Francisco. (*Baron Wolman*)

for a West Side Chicago dealer in the late forties as follows:

"Ah doan ca' if you got gahnashees on yo' gahnashees, ah cain p'choo in a big bread box by fo' o'clock dis afta-noon!"

Said Oxford:

"I was playing 'Student Prince' type music at KWBR in '46. I was from New Orleans, but hadn't really picked up on the music.

"An Oakland juke box supplier, Frank Padrone, sold the station a flock of race records that had been used during the war for 10¢ apiece. He also bought a half-hour for his joints after my potted palm spot.

"Within two years, I was on the air 49 hours a week. Sponsors always heard about me from the kids. Joe Segal, a clothier, used to drive caddies home and they would play with the dial until they got 'Jumpin' George.' I think I broke 'Open the Door, Richard.'

"I went out and sold time, cash on the line for KWBR. I made an attempt to communicate with an ad agency through a demo disc, but it didn't work. So I set up my own agency to run the business through."

Variety said records by "blues-and-rhythms" groups were reaching sales of a half-million in the South and Midwest. Moreover, the white youth were beginning to respond to the beginnings of what Alan Freed called "The Big Beat" and names like Big Joe Turner, Muddy Waters, Earl Bostic, Guitar Slim, Lowell Fulson, Little Walter, Joe Morris, the Midnighters, the Lynn Hope Quintet, and the Griffin Brothers.

Bill Gordon was another early white r&b jock, on WMPS, Memphis, from 1946 to 1950. He became a very successful morning man in Cleveland ("I cause more of a sensation in Cleveland than Bing Crosby or Tennessee Ernie would in San Francisco") over WHK and WERE from 1950 to 1965. He spent three years in San Francisco before returning to the WHK wake-up spot in 1968. He said:

"Many jocks were doing it in the South. Dewey Phillips was an early screamer and yeller. His theme was 'Write Me

a Letter.' I was the first; Dewey came after me. Very few of us wanted to be disc jockeys; we wanted to do programs.

"We thought Freed was puttin' em on. He was a good actor and he screamed louder, and constant r&b."

Said Soupy Sales, who was the morning man on Freed's station, WJW:

"Freed was brought in by 'Record Rendezvous.' He was always drunk. It was late at night, but it was all right, he could handle it. . . .

"I'd heard it before; Decca used to call it its 'Sepia Series.' You could play whatever you wanted, but you got called down for that. There was no place for an Amos Milburn record or a Dinah Washington until they moved more into the commercial field."

Freed, who was to take the biggest fall in the payola scandals at the end of the decade and die a penniless drunk January 20, 1965, the day Lyndon B. Johnson was inaugurated, was a musically trained announcer, with a Wagner Ring fixation (he named one of his daughters Sieglinde), who began his career as a classical disc jockey in New Castle, Pennsylvania, after the war.

Born in nearby Johnstown, Pennsylvania, December 15, 1921, Freed had grown up in Salem, Ohio, through the swing era, and was trained as a classical trombonist and mechanical engineer. He went to Akron in 1946, where his "Request Review" for O'Neil's Department Store on WAKR was a top show through 1950. At that time, he moved to Cleveland with the idea of converting the program to television.

But the "Request Review" on WXEL bombed, and Freed bided his time emceeing the late-night movie, and drinking. He said he was down on the intellectualization and abstraction that bop brought to "the people's music," leaving a gap to be bridged to the new, vital generation. And the run-of-the-mill, country-affected, pop-hit sound didn't do much for him.

However, he was hot to get back into disc jockeying, and it was at the insistence of Cleveland's "Record Rendezvous"

proprietor Leo Mintz that "The Moon Dog Show" (to become "The Moon Dog House Rock 'n' Roll Party") began on independent WJW in June, 1951. Freed's theme was "Blues for Moon Dog" by Todd Rhodes on King, through which the jock would bay.

While acknowledging that the hypnotic sound had definite commercial possibilities, Freed was reluctant to devote his whole show to r&b. He felt it had limited appeal. Mintz, however, was not to be denied. He maintained that a steady diet of gospel groups, blues singers and saxed-up instrumental combos would have the kids listening, buying—and dancing—in no time at all.

"The beat is so strong that anyone can dance to it without a lesson," Mintz told Freed.

The record dealer proved to be prophetic, and the rest is history, myth, and yet to be heard from. Freed became "Moon Dog," a sort of mid-American Steppenwolf, with more than his share of hang-ups, but sincere and believable, with his rock 'n' roll records and gravelly jive patter. (He'd had polyps removed by burning, and his vocal chords had been damaged.)

The "King of the Moon Doggers" (who was to lose that title when New York's blind and bizarre midtown percussionist resented his invasion and legally prevented Freed's use of the nickname) became a Pied Piper of epic proportions. His "Rock 'n' Roll Parties were beamed up and down the heartland (for eight years, three in Cleveland and five in New York, he illuminated the wide-open night on powerful 50-kilowatt stations), and he became the most successful dance promoter in Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

It was during 1952 that Freed first came to national attention. One of the "Moon Dog Coronation Balls" he produced solely through his show resulted in a gate-crashing stampede. Eighteen thousand tickets were sold, almost all to Negroes, for a dance at the ten-thousand-capacity Cleveland Arena. Charges of overselling were brought against Freed—who was found hiding in a broadcasting booth—Mintz, and two others, but they were dropped.

There were hundreds of similar promotions across the mideastern United States. As they were not segregated, these dances in and below "border" states were often held in defiance of local law and custom.

And Cleveland became the pop-music hub of America. For the after-school audience was almost wholly tuned into the perennial college boy approach of Bill Randle on WERE. Said Soupy Sales:

"Randle did it with an air of authority. He did a serious type show."

Both Freed and Randle brought more of an adult approach and enthusiasm to the work than most conservative radio men would admit. People refused to acknowledge that kids, with the indispensable aid of the mass media, were growing up very, very quickly.

Actually, Freed's late time made for an older audience, and Randle tended toward a more solidly pop show. Randle, who had played the harder sound in the mid-forties in Detroit but was not to revive it on his Cleveland show until 1955, was also out to "educate," while Freed was content just to entertain. Said Randle of Freed:

"Alan Freed, regardless of his own personal background, was one of the greatest performers in this business. An incredibly involved performer who lived every beat of every note of the music that he played until he got corrupted by the kind of environment that ultimately destroyed him."

Randle had come to town in 1950 from Detroit, where he had been unable to do much against the mammoth success of WJBK's "Jack the Bellboy." After the war, Cleveland had a signal jock named Howie Lund, who possessed a real facility for rhyme. With his slightly hesitant yet spontaneous style, he had begun at WJW when he was only twenty years old.

Lund went to WJMO in 1948, but he had acquired an already prime occupational hazard, drinking, and was out of a job that summer. A comeback attempt two winters later on WERE failed (although Lund was to have extended periods of popularity in Cleveland during the fifties and six-

ties), and the station took to flying Randle in across Lake Erie. He clicked quickly against Bud Weddell, who had replaced Lund at WJMO. Before long, Randle's 4-6 P.M. program was extended to 2-7 P.M. and he moved to Cleveland.

Randle gained prominence and power when he discovered Johnnie Ray in a Cleveland lounge and pushed his record "Cry," which was bought by Columbia. He was also responsible for bringing many performers to the attention of Mitch Miller. In 1952, Randle wrote in *Variety*:

"There are varying degrees of quality in the music business, but these are not to be confused with commercial acceptability. A great song qualitatively may not sell; hence, for the music business as a commodity, it is not good. The fact that a great song or artist will command a public of its own and will have meaning in the society is highly important to American culture, but has nothing to do with the music business."

An unusual yet representative instance of Randle's influence occurred in 1952 when the deejay came across a Columbia disc made for the South American market. It was a piano solo by Antonio Escobar, and Randle gave it repeated twirls. The response was enough to cause the label to issue a regular single called "Tony's Pianola."

I've found in my career that unless radio follows up or helps to perpetuate a fad when it gets started, it just never gets started. Or if it does, it dies.

Radio latches on eventually. They're slow. Many of them decided to change. Then they all began to sound the same and the cycle reversed itself. Now, some of them broke away from it again to retain a unique image.

—ART RAYMOND, DJ

According to ancient Chinese lore the purpose of music and dance is to keep the world in its right course and to force Nature into benevolence towards man.

—JOHAN HUIZINGA

Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture

By 1952, ASCAP WRITERS were panic-stricken because BMI tunes were comprising up to 80 per cent of those heard on the air in many markets, and they began asking why. On reflection, they thought the success of this upstart organization could not have been due to the merit of the music. Because obviously much of BMI music was vulgar and common and different—non-show biz—non-Broadway—non-Cole Porter. It was their opinion that they were God's Chosen People to purvey music and that anybody else was an intruder.

So then they said: "How did it happen? It had to be collusion or conspiracy."

Variety correctly called it a chicken-egg controversy. BMI calmly said their success was due to their satisfying the tastes of a new generation of music buyers. ASCAP squawked that BMI got the hits because they had the air time and could force their mediocre tunes onto the charts. This was in BMI's interest, said ASCAP, since the broadcasters owned the newer licensing organization. (This was not true.)

Most important, the predominance of BMI songs on the radio was especially critical to new ASCAP releases. It seemed to them that they were not getting anywhere near what they thought should be their share—on merit.

As a result, national program executives instructed their stations to play only the hits to "curb" payola, and the major recording companies, whose artists were on top, concurred. But the deejay was nonetheless receiving some praise for breaking the grip of the big publishers in the music business.

Besides, the payoff or kickback was said to be no different from those in any other business endeavor. It was the distributors in the main who made the temptation difficult to resist. They had the records to sell, and the inventories.

Where the reality lay, however, was that the smaller-station jock (and this included some major influencers because they were poorly paid) had a complaint because the diskers, and the distribs, never got around to buying commercial time on their shows.

With an acknowledged one hundred to four hundred deejays on everyone's must list, the little fish had to scramble for what they could get. In the pecking order, this was understandable, as was the fact that what was also desired was that very personal, sincere pitch that the uncomplicated payoff bought.

An increase in commercial time purchases by the recording companies might have got a lesser jock, who was proving his salesmanship, a salary raise. But some were more

than happy to eliminate the middle man—management—retain their independence, and make even more (tax-free) money. But it would catch up with some of them.

So a basic confrontation began taking place. The disc jockey's potent point—ad libbing—particularly where it meant the proliferation of cheap mentions, began to rile management. Stations started to issue primers on payola, announcing technique, jockey de-emphasis, etc.

Anticipating Storz's lead, as it were, in making it short and sweet, managers took to insisting on the refraining of label mention or expression of opinion on discs. Deejays began losing jobs for the slightest indiscretion and over matters of style. The quantity and quality of between-the-numbers phraseology became a perpetual bone of contention between management and jockey.

A legendary influence on deejays during the early fifties was Jean Shepherd, whose late-night phantasms on Cincinnati's WSAI and WLW blanketed the East Central states. Dick Buckley is a jock in his mid-forties who has been trying to play jazz in Chicago for more than fifteen years. One of the frustrated buffs who have had a constant battle with management ("I was more hard-nosed, but it was because you couldn't hear the hard-core jazz"), he said:

"He [Shepherd] used to talk all the time. Never introduced a record or tell what it was. Boom, it just came in and it was always good. . . .

"One of the things that always made jazz interesting to me was knowing who played what, and when it was recorded, and that sort of thing. And I always tried to pass it along if I knew anything about it."

Shepherd, who came to New York in 1955 with his intensely literate yet light obscurism, gradually drifted away from the playing of records. A William Sloane Coffin of deejays, he disparages the appellation "disc jockey" like the plague and refers to himself as a "monologist" who uses the radio, he said, as an essay and novel form.

Said Wally Phillips, whom Shepherd replaced on the WLW midnight show in 1954 before he came to New York:

"Shepherd's so funny. He did a dissertation on something

one night. The manager was stupefied when he heard Jean going on and on because his format was one record, one commercial. So he installed a red light that would go on if music wasn't played within a space of three minutes. So the next night, Jean did 45 minutes on red lights."

Moreover, management made it plain that offbeat, gimmicky numbers were to be avoided. The notion that "if you can't sing it or hum it, don't play it" became the cardinal rule on many stations. This directly cramped the jazz jock's style. By 1955 their influence peaked, but there were earlier indications that his approach was in jeopardy. Said Buckley, who has been removed from jazz-jockeying since the summer of 1967:

"There's a gap between the kind of mind it takes to be top management and the kind of mind it takes to appreciate jazz. I've run into it so often. Most of the time, top management liked the ballroom type music. I've never found bigotry to be the reason. . . .

"I got the summer job on WAAF in '55. It played jazz, but it had no music policy. Jazz was a dirty word; WAAF was the best-kept secret in the country.

"I sat in for Daddy-O once, and about 25 minutes after the show started, the manager came in and said: 'That isn't what Daddy-O plays. You haven't played a vocal.'

"I've got my finger on the pulse of the South Side of Chicago. It's jazz. It's what they want,' I said.

"So I had to back off and play more commercial music. But I used to hear Daddy-O when I first got here in '48 say, 'Hey, Moms,' and he'd lay a little Charlie Parker on her at ten after nine. He'll bend, but he's fought the good battle and won.

"The jazz jock can either be hard-nosed and be out of a job, or bend a little. And there's the business ability. Guys like Daddy-O and Jazzbo Collins have it, and they dig it. I couldn't sell it myself, and no one else could sell it.

"And I ran into a lot of Crow Jim. I had a Negro audience, but they said it couldn't be done. And I had great mail pull."

And the business ability began taking on all forms imag-

inable. As for payola *per se*, cities began acquiring reputations. *Variety* pointed fingers at Cincinnati and Philadelphia. Words like "flagrant" and "rampant" were used by New York publishers and major recorders to describe the situation in Cincinnati, the home of independent King Records, with artists like Ivory Joe Hunter, The Dominoes, Hank Ballard and The Midnighters, and Jackie Wilson. *Variety* said there was a virtual lockout in the Queen City unless there was a payoff.

Philadelphia, the leading area for indie diskers, was a hotbed of activity for labels, led by Jubilee and Grand. Without naming names, it was reported that the indies were buying several Philly jocks outright, with \$50-100 a week common practice.

And riding into the picture was the underpaid, go-out-and-get-it Negro disc jockey. The strong ground swell of rhythm & blues and the advent of television found more than five hundred r&b jocks taking care of business on independent stations in every major city.

The pitch to the vast Negro market was proving easiest and cheapest by continually playing the records the deeply committed and alienated audience wanted to hear. It was meaning gigantic sales for the Clovers, Orioles, Ravens, Ruth Brown, Edna McGriff, and Little Esther on labels like Apollo, Atlantic, Dot, Federal, and Savoy. A low recording nut made any hit heavy with profits.

By 1952 there were quite a few Negro stations, by and large white-owned. They included successful southern outlets like WEDR, Birmingham; WDIA, Memphis; WSOK, Nashville (which had several Negro shareholders); and WERD, Atlanta, which in 1951 claimed to be the first wholly Negro-owned station in the country.

Preacher-emcees southern Negroes attended to included Larry McKinley and Vernon Winslow, New Orleans; Nat D. Williams, Bugs Scruggs, Larry Dean, and George White, Memphis; "Sugar Daddy," Birmingham; Bruce Miller, Winston-Salem; "Jockey Jack" Gibson, Atlanta; "Professor Bop," Shreveport; and Spider Burks, St. Louis. The great blues-

man B. B. King began his show business career on WDIA as a deejay known as "The Beale Street Blues Boy" in 1949. Other bluesmen in Memphis at the time who had radio shows included Howlin' Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson and Rufus Thomas.

Said John Hardy:

"I went to New Orleans [WBOK] then as a gospel jock called 'Honey Boy.' I tried to do my job in a dignified way, which I found easy to do, since that's the way Dave Garro-way would have done it. Maybe I was kind of sanctimoni-ous. But station managers think screaming jocks is the way to reach the Negro. It's a disgrace and ante-bellum think-ing."

Many of the jocks in the major northern markets were on foreign-language stations like Chicago's WGES and New York's WOV and WHOM. However, they had developed such an appeal that their listeners were sure to tune in at the appointed hour, generally after sundown.

Chicago's main man was Al Benson, "Yo' Ol' Swing-master," who really epitomized the mush-mouth spade as he gave away free "alblums" to his listeners over WGES, WAAF, and WJJD. At one time, in the late forties, he was heard, as were many Chicago deejays, in quarter-hour segments, around the dial and clock for Leo Rose Clothiers and the mob-controlled Canadian Ace Beer.

If Freed was instrumental in the making of Chicago's Chess Records and Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry (with whom he was listed as coauthor on Berry's first hit, "Maybelline"), Benson also did quite a job of staying on their case. He came to national attention outside the music field in 1956 when he hired two white men (because he feared violence to himself) to shower five thousand copies of the Constitution on Jackson, Mississippi, to emphasize the Supreme Court's antisegregation ruling.

Expanded programming to the New York Negro market began, as elsewhere, in the late forties. New York Negroes could hear jocks like Jack Walker (WOV), Joe Bostic (WBNX), Willie Bryant (WHOM-WOR), Hal Jackson

(WMCA), Tommy Smalls (WWRL), and Phil "Dr. Jive" Gordon (WLIB). But because New York is so huge, a specialized part of that audience was good-sized.

For instance, WOV programmed Italian-language shows during the daylight hours, and played rhythm and blues from 6 P.M. to midnight. It was not until 1954 that the New York market had a full-time Negro station. The Rollins Broadcasting Company purchased WNJR, Newark, New Jersey, from the Newark *News* for \$140,000 and fitted the 5,000-watter with a "grind" policy of nineteen hours of rhythm and blues and spirituals, with news and sports interwoven.

On-the-air personalities included Freed, Hancock, and Sears, who were on tape. "Moon Dog," whose first New York area "Moon Dog Coronation Ball" in Newark's Sussex Avenue Armory on May 1, 1954, drew a capacity of 11,500 for two shows with a gross of about \$20,000, made the difference.

In ten months under Rollins, national advertising jumped from zero to fourteen sponsors, and WNJR's roster of metropolitan clients spread from Newark-only to Manhattan, Brooklyn, and The Bronx. It cut into not only the ratings of part-time Negro outlets but their national billings as well. Schizoid programming for Negroes, a symptom of the McCarthy era in not-so-New York, faded as a listener could dial the station in the morning and know what to expect all day.

Elsewhere, and earlier, the expectation was looked upon with major alarm because of payola. The minor labels, with their flexible setups, were able to pay off the jocks in any way demanded. The growing legions of r&b disc jockeys commanded a high price through the development of extremely loyal followings and sales success.

As 1952 got underway, a young announcer from upstate New York named Dick Clark joined Philadelphia's Bob Horn on a Monday to Friday afternoon (two thirty-five to five thirty) program on WFIL called "Bandstand." Tom Donahue called Horn "the closest thing to a Roman emperor I've ever known."

Four years later Clark had the show all to himself when Horn got himself arrested for drunken driving as the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, owners of WFIL, was conducting a campaign against the practice. The following year Clark took "American Bandstand" to television and a gold mine for the ABC network.

Horn was further destroyed by a tax-evasion conviction for nonpayment on payola (the first disc jockey to be found guilty) and a statutory rape charge in which other Philadelphia entertainers were arrested in connection with a teen-age-girl vice ring. He was cleared of the latter and on the former was paroled by a Philadelphia judge in the late fifties to take a job offer from McLendon in Texas, where he died.

In March, 1954, Martin Block signed a five-year contract with ABC. The blockbuster was not so much that the master was leaving WNEW (the station reportedly received a smattering of complaints), but that WABC, the network key, was going to step gingerly into an indie type of programming with a "mod" pattern of pop music. Block was said to be guaranteed \$200,000 a year with a potential of over \$3 million for the five years.

The announcement of Block's four-and-a-half-hour stint (with an hour-and-a-half fruitlessly fed to the network) started the rumors going. The dapper deejay ruffled as stories spread that his ratings had dropped and his billings followed. How could this be, he said, when he accounted for more than a third of WNEW's 1952 gross billings of \$2,600,000?

Although Block took many of his sponsors with him, WNEW executives were not too upset, as their format was solidly entrenched in the community consciousness. As for Block's successor, Jerry Marshall, a nine-year veteran at the station with his "Music Hall" from 2 to 4 P.M., got the plum. Marshall's closeness to his predecessor merged with idolatry, and his voice reflected it.

Block quickly went on the defensive at WABC. With the arrival of Freed, he took to blasting rhythm & blues, which

came to be everyone's whipping boy, and the general "decline" in popular music. But Block also castigated the major lines if he felt that one of their tunes contained dubious lyrics.

"I'm brand conscious," said Block, when he refused to play Rosemary Clooney's hit "Mambo Italiano" on Columbia. "Why should I even be moved to have qualms if a record comes from established firms."

Block claimed he liked to hear discs initially with his audience. Not only was this in answer to suggestions that some of 1954's records should be screened, but Block apparently no longer cared to set himself as the seat of judgment.

"The main point," he said, "is that hearing them with my public is still the best way to hear them, as they sound on the air, not in the privacy of some de luxe, over electronized pickup. And, of course, it removes the onus that I'm setting myself up as a one-man judge to appraise the artistic value of recording company experts."

Block had found himself embarrassed, he said, by the Clooney cutting when he received a flock of phone calls from his "justifiably irate" listeners of Italian extraction.

"Then I know my judgment is correct," said Block with finality.

But *Variety* gave the last word to a professor of romance languages at NYU who said the song was unequivocally "amusing and homespun."

However, the "leer-ics" problem by 1954 had become one not to be laughed off. It had long been acknowledged that the popular-music industry thrived on hits and survived on teen-agers. It was also admitted that the high schooler of the postmidcentury was far hipper to undelayed gratification than were his parents. Juvenile delinquency and everything that went with it became equated with wild music—what Freed called "rock 'n' roll."

John Barrett said he was doing a program in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1952 and had on a Fontaine Sisters record that included the phrase "Doot De Wa." He said the station

manager rushed into the studio and tore the disc from the turntable.

"He thought they were saying 'twat, twat, twat,'" said John.

Throughout the decade the controversy literally rocked 'n' rolled. In the fall of 1954 (as the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in the schools was unconstitutional), Freed effected a \$100,000 percentage and guarantee deals with WINS. He also had a syndicated taped show that was somewhat successful.

And the music business, especially BMI, became bombarded by parental and educational monitors, religious and civic organizations, and radio stations over the increase of allegedly obscene and unsubtle songs. The generation gap had been generated, or perhaps the wind sewn.

Most of the songs were licensed through BMI on independent labels, with newer names like Chess, Checker, Imperial, and Duke—using unknown Negro performers—pointed at as the culprits. "Smutty" discs included "Work With Me, Annie" (originally titled "Sock It to Me, Mattie," but rejected), "Annie Had a Baby," "Annie Pulled Humbug," "Sexy Ways," "Momma Took the Baby," "Rockin' Chair Baby," "Give It Up," "Baby, Don't Put Me Down," "Get High, Everybody," "Bow'd on My Knees," "Get It," "Love All Night," "Toy Bell," and "Honey Love."

Under mounting pressure, BMI announced it had set up a screening committee to eliminate the flagrantly pornographic songs from its licensing setup. Freed claimed he attempted to screen all the material he played, in order to chunk the discs that obviously did not beat around the bush.

However, BMI also said it was virtually impossible for them to police the situation by themselves since they granted blanket deals covering the entire output of the publishers. Moreover, although BMI, unlike ASCAP, attempted to inspect before it registered and licensed, the procedure became academic in the case of their "pre-literate" rhythm & blues publishers.

Because much of the r&b material did not expect to sell sheet music and had only "in my head" lyrics, BMI's insistence on a lead sheet—with lyrics—often went unfulfilled. Confronted with the choice of no choice at all, in that it was reactionary to deny an illiterate the right to record his feelings and music, the licensing society tossed the sifting responsibility back to the broadcasters. Similarly, in early 1971, the board of directors of the NAB unanimously voted to ask record companies to supply stations with printed lyrics as of May 1. The recorders scoffed and screamed censorship.

Editorialized *Variety's* Abel Green on the advanced awareness of the recording industry's needed "kids":

"It's just out-and-out wrong to further pander to that phase with the wordage that should be beyond their years. . . .

"'Leer-ics,' 'rock and roll,' and 'payola' invite a plea to assume responsibilities which will otherwise invite censorship. 'Police yourself.'"

Wrote Charles Keil a decade later in *Urban Blues*:

"The powerful auditory forces of the electronic age have given Negro culture a huge technological boost."

Although the radio stations and some recording companies did take on the responsibility of censorship (this and that station banned this and that tune daily), many saw it as trying to sweep back the ocean. Off-color tunes in "race" music were no new thing, having been belted out by rhythm & blues "sepia" singers since the dawn of jazz. It was just another thrust in the area of free expression, but now, however, in many cases, with the aid of 50,000 watts.

And, of course, the kids were dancing. But wild public dancing had always been frowned upon. It might have been a healthy outlet for the emotions, although the ability to feel and be moved was looked upon jaundicedly, but dancing could lead to "wilder" things. And it did, with sexual freedom being the logical extension. For what Freed and increasingly others did was to sock it to Puritan New England leadership.

Growing up in and around any of America's other major league baseball cities from 1947 to 1964 when the Yankees won fifteen pennants and ten World Series (against, by and large, the National League's Dodgers and Giants) drove young boys to the wall. Freed and the other rocking jocks across America were to drive them from the deadly dull "National Past Time" to the electric guitar and the blues.

The hoarse sorcerer, who did not want his audience to know he was white, brought the primitive music from Cleveland at the same time that that city's Indians were running up a record 110 wins to topple the perennial American League pennant winners, the Yankees, whose games were broadcast over WINS.

Barbarism threatened Gotham, and by 1956, Freed's unprecedented success, in competition with prime-time television, allowed the again champions to depart WINS, with no argument from the station. For two years his rhythms had been disrupted by Yankee night games half the year, but sex finally replaced night baseball.

For America it is not insignificant that from 1949 to 1953—the McCarthy era—the Yankees won a record five straight World Series. The following year Freed's apocalyptic voice pounded into New York out of the belching throatland of eastern Ohio, and it proved to be a megagut counter-punch to the political pathology of Wisconsin's menacing senator.

Banging home the beloved rhythm & blues records with the aid of a cow bell and phone book, Freed, moored behind just the flickering light of the VU meters in a dark studio, was perhaps the head witch-doctor McCarthy failed to burn. But upper U.S. is persistent, and Freed took the full heretical damning for the nation's disc jockeys during the climactic payola exposés.

Seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened for you.

—MATTHEW 7:7

Insofar as most tools and techniques have their meaning in relationship to a definite form of divine activity, the common life of the culture reveals a structure of sacredness.

—CHARLES H. LONG

Alpha, The Myths of Creation

BUT THERE WERE other disembodied illusion-mongers at work. Less concerned with the music, the powerful morning comic, armed with a tape recorder, was in the advance guard in adding what was termed "The Third Man" theme to radio. The production of sound effects and voice tracks contributed to a bewildering pattern on the shows of Bob and Ray, Klavan and Finch, Ted Brown and the Redhead (New York), Carl DeSuze (Boston), Ernie Kovacs (Philadelphia), Regé Cordic (Pittsburgh), Jonathan Winters (Dayton),

Soupy Heinz (Cincinnati and Cleveland); Bob Crane (Bridgeport and Hollywood), Bob Arbogast and Art Hellyer (Chicago), Dick Whittinghill (Los Angeles), Don Sherwood (San Francisco), and J. Akuhead Pupule (Honolulu). Some became local legends, but few found success in television. Others drifted off the air for various reasons but have not been forgotten.

From 1948 to 1965, Rege Cordic, who began as a part-time announcer at sixteen in 1943 on WWSW (where Bill Cullen was on the staff), owned Pittsburgh and environs. So great was his rise and audience on WWSW that in 1954 NBC affiliate KDKA hired him away as their wake-up personality. That the only 50,000-watt radio station in western Pennsylvania would stoop so low as to hire a disc jockey shocked network vice-presidents. But steelworkers and farmhands in the Allegheny Valley reacted equally to the shift away from WWSW.

"It was more violent than when I went to L.A. to replace Bob Crane at KNX in 1966," said Cordic. "They had become used to me at that spot."

Known around the "Golden Triangle" as the likable Henry Morgan, Cordic brought to his three-state audience such inanity as Instant Pocket Fuzz, "to make you feel immediately at ease in that new suit," Mediocre Midgets, the cigarette for the smoker in a hurry, and Saturday Pills ("By virtue of its miracle-fast action on the Saturday lobe of the brain, it'll make any day seem like Saturday before you've finished your morning orange juice! . . . Overdosage may result in financial bankruptcy.")

In 1956, Cordic hired a fourteen-car campaign train to promote the presidential candidacy of Carmen Monoxide, a terribly punning morning regular. With the assistance of three actors from his show endorsing Monoxide, "Cordic and Co." (as the program was known) barnstormed around the area, whistle-stopping from hamlets to cities.

"In one day," said Cordic, "we would hit 10 or 11 towns. I would say we were well received. We outdrew Richard Nixon in Wheeling."

On April Fools' Day, 1965, Cordic did a program from San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge to parody a near-tragedy, the result of bureaucratic slackness in Pittsburgh. It seemed that because of official indecision, there was an unfinished bridge over the Monongahela; the completion of off-ramps was waiting for another ruling on the location of a new ball park. On New Year's Day a boy drove off the bridge. He was unhurt, but the police gave him a speeding ticket. However, a Carnegie Tech physicist determined that the youth was going twenty-four miles an hour. So Cordic instituted the Great Bridge Leap. He built it up as a lifelong dream to "do it in 'Frisco," where he went on the air at 3 A.M. for the folks back home.

The jist of the jest was that, alas, Pittsburgh had a long way to leap in the matter of bridges. *And* in the area of stadiums, which was ready for use in 1970.

However, Cordic's greatest twit was an imaginary commercial for Olde Frothingslosh Pale Stale Ale ("The Foam Is on the Bottom") which he concocted his first year on KDKA. So popular did the brew become that the next year the Pittsburgh Brewing Company, makers of Iron City Beer, offered to put out five hundred cases of Frothingslosh at Christmas. A gift of Olde Frothingslosh with a picture of Sir Reginald P. Frothingslosh, president of Olde Frothingslosh Brewery, Upper Crudney-on-Thames, emblazoned on the label, became a Pittsburgh status symbol throughout the fifties.

Cordic's talent took him to a six-figure annual income in Pittsburgh, including salary, commercial fees, endorsements, etc. But his flit to Hollywood (for a reported \$50,000 a year) lasted the two years it takes such attempts to be stamped a failure. He might not have been less popular than "fur'ner" Pierre Salinger in the 1964 senatorial race, but the arrival of the "funniest man in Pittsburgh" moved Angelinos only more to dial in Dick Whittinghill on KMPC.

Or in 1966, Joe Pyne, who was diarrhetically opposing everything on KLAC; Geoff Edwards, whose whimsy was backed up by Dodger baseball on KFI (he later followed

Whittinghill on KMPC); Bob Hudson, whose antic arrogance on KRLA through his wildly successful "emperor" concept had built up loyal listeners through the mid-sixties; and Robert W. Morgan, who, since May, 1965, had been opening the "More Music" day to large audiences on Bill Drake-directed KHJ, a much-criticized end product of "Top 40." For this was the time when the indomitable 6-A.M.-user found his listenership beginning to break up across the land.

The man whose popularity Cordic attempted to sustain has, of course, gone on to greater familiarity with TV viewers as the head of "Hogan's Heroes." In Hornell, New York, in 1950, Bob Crane began a much-acclaimed career (his rhythm was said to have been what L.A.'s legendary "Color Radio," KFWB, formatted) in radio that lasted fifteen years. The next year he went to WICC, Bridgeport, Connecticut, where over the next five years he had a fervent audience in Manhattan's ad agency exurbia residents.

Crane, who had always wanted to be an actor, picked up certain tricks from jocks he'd admired. For instance, he liked how Hal Morgan in Cleveland talked over the intros to records, and was wild about the way Ted Brown used gimmicks. Crane got the KNX job because the New York ad boys put CBS on to him.

Said CBS's Maurie Webster, who was at KNX from 1937 to 1957:

"Once we got him there, we almost never got him on the air. Crane's whole technique was based on his ability to play all the records. We just didn't have that kind of engineering contract at KNX.

"We put him with the very best engineer we had, a brilliant guy, and told them to spend a week together and figure out how to work this thing. They came back and said, 'It will not work.' Crane said he could not communicate ideas to my engineers in such a way so he could play 'em. Besides, he had these 16-inch discs with wild voice tracks.

"We made a great big physical presentation for the engineers, and we finally persuaded them it would work. The deal was Bob would play all of his voice tracks and

the engineer would play all the music selections and all the commercials. Then we had to design and build within seven days a whole new kind of console for Crane to work at.

"We had a guy who was in charge of labor out there, I think he really thought we had probably conned them. That we had gotten more than it was reasonable for us to get.

"A few days later, he came into the control room one morning and he's sitting in there talking to the engineer and Crane is working. This guy says to the engineer on a control room mike, 'I see it's Bill Paley's birthday.' The mike was always on so Crane could hear the engineer.

"About 45 seconds later, Crane comes out of the commercial and he says, 'We got something very special on our program this morning; we're having a special party for William S. Paley, who is the president of the Columbia Broadcasting System.'

"And he brings in people, a drunken mob singing 'Happy Birthday to You,' a total routine that he had concocted in that matter of less than a minute. At that point, the union guy became a believer."

Crane came to Hollywood (at \$50,000 per for five years) with little fanfare, to replace Ralph Story, who since 1948 had been running a close second in the ratings with his light humor and excellent production. He had been behind KLAC's Dick Haynes through 1953 when that station sagged and Whittinghill pushed through with his kooky humor and highly produced shows.

Although he stayed close, Crane never really caught Whittinghill in their decade-long ratings battle, primarily because the KMPC deejay had a three-year headstart in cultivating the then-not-easily-changed semisomnolent audience. Moreover, Crane was initially confronted with having to disrupt his rhythm to go back to the network numerous time during the three hours. And, in 1958, Whittinghill got a superboon with KMPC acquiring the rights to do the replaced Dodgers' games, which they had through 1960,

when station co-owner Bob Reynolds purchased the American League Angels in the first expansion.

"We started weeding out the network blocks, thank God," said Crane. "But after two years, the ratings still weren't up. So, I started doing after dinner speaking to show people what I was doing.

"At the end of the year, I had done 265 public appearances, gained 25 pounds, and almost had an ulcer. But by the middle of 1959, we started getting feedback and increased numbers. It was also, of course, when Chuck Blore had KFVB going great, so the competition was really brutal."

Crane, not unexpectedly, was also a drummer, which he did on the show. It also enhanced his aptitude to work with three turntables, a neck mike, and two earphones with which to cue records and his engineer.

"I had to be able to edit in my head and decide what would or would not be good," he said. "I found that by kiddingly berating myself a mistake could be turned to immense advantage. I was called a one-man band, but 99 per cent of my success was based on my engineer watching me. His ability could make or break the spontaneity or whatever I was blundering about."

Something Crane decided would be good was ad-lib interviews with entertainers when his show had an hour added to it. His 9:15-10 A.M. portion was criticized for being too show bizzy, but it fitted the bill perfectly for him. During the early sixties everybody, including Arthur Godfrey, who followed the segment, came into Crane's studio to test his wit, and it captivated Hollywooders, hangers-on, and higher-ups alike.

"I bent over backwards not to be an egomaniac," said Crane. "Every guest was treated on the same level. It was light and people loved it."

Crane's grand *coup* came when as honorary mayor of Tarzana, a suburb of seventy thousand in the San Fernando Valley, he asked his listeners to kill ten flies a day. However, when he requested that the flies be mailed in to him,

he got a quick call from the postmaster, who said sending dead flies through the mail was unsanitary and illegal.

Crane invited the postmaster on the show to read the law and then asked him if it would be all right to mail the flies providing they had been boiled. The man said yes, but only if they were certified to have been sterilized.

How was this done, asked Crane? By getting an affidavit from the Department of Entomology, in Washington, D.C., replied the postmaster. You mean, puzzled the deejay, after first, of course, perfectly employing the pregnant pause, it would be necessary to mail the flies clear across the country first? Yes, said the bureaucrat, shrugging.

"Well, that ended it, of course," laughed Crane. "But it was a classic. And strictly a disc jockey bit, you know what I mean?"

A Hogan hero of the mid-fifties, who also said he was offered the Story post, was a Chicago jocular named Art Hellyer, who gave Howard Miller a good run over WCFL. From 1952 to 1957, Hellyer was given free reign by general manager Marty Hogan, who had begun as an announcer with WCFL and compared to the run-of-the-mill station head, had to be called courageous.

Hellyer also acknowledges the incalculable assistance of a nimble partner, as has Jonathan Winters and Soupy Sales. (Said Soupy: "I had a fantastic engineer named Pancho in Cleveland. Except that he always used to break me up just before I had to do the suppository spots by saying, 'Here comes the shit powder.'") This was his record turner, an AFM member a cut above the norm named Lenny Kaye, whom Hellyer dubbed "Dr. K, TT" (Transcription Technician).

"He was the greatest talent I have ever known," said Hellyer. "I paid him out of my own pocket above what he was paid by the station because he made me. It was a combination on his part of total involvement, photographic memory, and an anticipation of what I would do. We saw each other for just those three hours a day, and it was

just remarkable. We had no idea of what was going to happen until I sat down at the mike."

At one point in their spree, which was truly cacophonous, it was decided to send Hellyer and Kaye to New York for a month in a talent swap with WINS's Bob and Ray. But it was called off. "They had Bob and Ray and eleven other people," said Hellyer. "It was just me and Lenny."

The pair's greatest moment probably came when they "covered" the 1956 Democratic National Convention from a broadcasting booth that was obviously the men's room. Hellyer pleaded daily for access to the convention and was finally "granted" the inside privilege. It included such tongue-in-cheek "plusses" as a "one-way mirror," "voting booths," etc., with inserted tracks of toilets flushing.

The next year, Hellyer was fired. "It came at a time," said Hellyer, who like many a fiercely witty morning man said nobody has had an influence on him, "when Howard Miller and I were jockeying for the 1-2 position in the morning.

"One of my sponsors, the First National Bank, displayed a million dollars at Navy Pier, where I was doing my morning show. I said I thought it was wrong because it helped to build avarice and greed in us.

"It bugged just one man in an ad agency and WCFL was forced into canning me. But the First has sponsored me since then."

The fine line of dissent, drollness, and the dying of aired jazz were to cripple many another disc jockey as the tight format of "Top 40" rode in with its maximization of purpose and audience. Many of the emerging jocks had blown minds, but they found themselves forced into any number of variations on a formula. Some learned to disregard the rules in subtle ways.

The key one was production—the wild use of whatever sounds were available to turn the audience on. New electronic toys were coming alive daily for the boys, and this new creativity of sound juggling brought a brash and controversial excitement to radio. Out of the midlands, it began

sending shivers up and down the spines of audiences as it eroded older concepts of broadcasting.

Some said it was decadent, but its insistence was beginning to open up America's ears to its very own music. Even management could be made to love it. Why? It sent ratings up, up away, and it sold, sold, sold.

It's easier to remember what you study when you rock.

—MARK ZBOROWSKI AND ELIZABETH HERZOG

Life Is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl

I am a roc.

—ANONYMOUS

IT WOULD SEEM now that no year of our times opened with a more musically momentous event than Alan Freed's first rock 'n' roll dances staged at New York's St. Nicholas Arena the weekend of January 14–15, 1955. After just four months on WINS (to the tune of "For music, news, time and the weather, keep your dial where the tens come together, W-I-N-S, Wins!"), he had become the major factor in metropolitan nighttime radio as the r&b influence crossed all color lines into the general pop market.

Freed's rapid-fire appeal for requests drew so many phone calls, he had to back off in short order to accepting only

wires and then letters. The response was staggering, and he would acknowledge them in a breathless slur. His oral black aura, however, quickly disturbed folks uptown, where a mass meeting was held in a Harlem YMCA to question his imitative approach. Said RKO General executive Robert Smith, who, as program director of WINS, hired the jock:

"The criticism was basically from the Negro community. That he was an outsider, that he was imitating them, and why shouldn't it be a Negro. We were invited to appear and talk the situation out and explain why a white man was playing this black music.

"Our target was the entire market; we didn't think black or white. And this is what I told them at this meeting, which got very heated. The auditorium and the stage was full, and it was mostly Willie Bryant who was complaining. He felt he could do it better than Freed, whom we hired without knowing whether he was white or black. We just wanted the best talent."

Said black band leader Lucky Millinder of Freed:

"Tis said he apes Negroes in a jive talk manner that belittles them. . . . He has the fire and excitement of a Rev. Billy Graham, the evangelist, but in no way does he burlesque Negroes."

Added Smith, who said it was obvious within a couple of months that "the thing" was going to be bigger than he ever thought:

"Freed's ego was at the center of the downfall all the way through his career. It was huge, even before he was anybody in New York. It grew at a rate that was a lot greater than his popularity. He was an impossible individual on a personal basis. The ones who had to do business with him did; that's what it amounted to."

The following January he did more business than anyone had ever done before in Manhattan. With a capacity for fights of 6,000, St. Nick's was packed with an estimated 7,500 each night. The 15,000 customers (at \$2 a head) was bigger than any jazz concert ever staged anywhere else in New York.

Kids jumped around in pandemonium that continued without interruption from 8 P.M. to 2 A.M. The bill included the Buddy Johnson orchestra, Dakota Staton, Fats Domino, Ella Johnson, Danny Overbea, Red Prysock (whose "Hand Clappin'" was Freed's theme), The Clovers, Drifters, Harptones, and Moonglows.

Tin Pan Alley stirred excitedly as Freed and his low-cost troupe were seen as sparking a revival of frenzied dancing reminiscent of the jitterbugging of the swing era. In fact, Freed later said rock 'n' roll was merely swing with a modern name. Both were characterized by an insistent, hypnotic rhythm that turned the youthful audience (eighteen to twenty-five) into an undulating, wailing mass.

And their younger sisters and brothers started listening, dancing, singing, and performing in groups all around town. The teen-age gangs of the fifties could also harmonize and improvise about their feelings, and they came in droves to Freed, who turned them over to manager Morris Levy or to George Goldner and Roulette Records. And a little while later, he would play them on the air.

Leo Mintz was proved correct, and other Gotham jocks started to pick up the beat. The city came alive with theater shows by Freed, WWRL's "Dr. Jive," and WLIB's Hal Jackson. After the rock 'n' roller grossed a staggering \$155,000 for a prefall-semester week at the Brooklyn Paramount, the *pure* plug power of radio was once more acknowledged.

The show reportedly netted \$135,000, with virtually no damage to the theater, and radio stations started making noises that they wanted in on the revenue. Heretofore, they had been content with the promotional value, but with the low nut all the way around, station-sponsored spectacles were, by and large, to take the play away from individual deejays.

At the same time, Aldous Huxley, who two years later found it incumbent to write *Brave New World Revisited* and put forth the facts to show that the science of thought control had outstripped his seven-century-projected novel in a mere quarter-century ("many, young people, it is true, do

not seem to value freedom," and "perhaps the forces that now menace freedom are too strong to be resisted for very long"), wrote in the October *Esquire*:

"To any foundation in any way interested in the problems which beset an urban-industrial society in a state of technological, intellectual and ethnical flux, I would make the following recommendations:

"Make the best of mankind's literature of wisdom available on cheap, slowplaying records. Do the same, in each of the principal languages, for the best poetry written in that language. Also, perhaps, for a few of the best novels, plays, biographies, and memoirs.

"Encourage manufacturers to turn out phonographs equipped to play these recordings and at the same time arrange for distribution at cost of the simple planetary gears, by means of which conventional turntables can be used for slowplaying discs. Five or 10 millions spent in this way could do incomparably more good than hundreds of millions spent on endowing new universities or enlarging those already existing."

In a way, this was already happening. Perhaps the tales being told by the twentieth-century troubadours were not being produced and presented in the utopian manner envisioned by the prophet of advanced awareness, but where there were less than ten major recording companies in 1947, by 1955 there were a hundred. Today there may be close to a thousand.

The fuse had been lit, and across the land, broadcasters drummed their electronically heightened message toward the noisy and wide-eyed youth and away from the narcotizing mediocrity of blaring television. Jazz had become too cool and found itself frozen out of air time, although it began making inroads as TV themes.

So with Elvis Presley wriggling out of Memphis on RCA Victor (purchased from Sun Records, whose stable included Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Roy Orbison), "rock 'n' roll" radio, with its blasts of NUMBER ONE! TOP HIT! THE NEWEST! THE GREATEST!, started

to immerse the nation in what was almost unanimously proclaimed as immaturity.

Following the lead of Storz and McLendon, group owners like Bartell, Plough, Starr, Balaban, and Westinghouse started buying up stations in large cities and saturating them with task forces of glib, fast-talking announcers and an unnerving cacophony of musical station identifications, slick contests, and hopped-up jingles and gimmicks.

Said Bob Smith, who left WINS for WOR with station manager Bob Leder in 1956, a year before Mel Leeds arrived from apprenticeship with Storz to format "10-10":

"I never believed in contests. With good programming, you don't need the gimmicks."

However, the "gimmicks" were no more than making use of the latest in electronic innovations, which, in many cases, to young southern musicians, was electricity. Sophisticated ears resented the primitive, amplified bombardment as each ostensibly autonomous station was given a pretty inflexible formula of currently popular music. Overnight, "Top 40," "new sound," and "the swingin' station" formula, interspersed with demanding and demeaning commercials, became synonymous with success, and a burgeoning number of stations lock-stepped to the dominant position in the industry.

The sudden skyrocketing of this type of radio made the position of the high-paid personality jocks untenable, largely, and many of them like Boston's Jay McMaster, Detroit's Ed McKenzie, Chicago's Stan Dale, St. Louis' Ed Bonner, and Denver's Ray Perkins, began to fade from the scene. The idea of being limited to a certain number of plays was contrary to what they had been doing. You could listen for a few minutes to the way the show sounded and how it was put together and know who the jock was. "Top 40" changed all that.

To replace them, the groups developed a cadre of young announcers trained to repeat rapidly and religiously a strict and ridiculous barrage of stock phrases about the time, weather, station i.d., and music lists. Largely devoid of any

individual personality, notably in the Storz-influenced Plough and Bartell operations, many even worked with fabricated names—like Johnny Rabbitt, Rob Robbins, and Johnny Holiday—owned by the station. These could be used by different announcers, and the audience apparently didn't know the difference.

One of the factors that spawned this brand of radio was that as the big network shows disappeared, many stations found they were hurting in the ratings because people no longer remembered the programs they heard. The question "What did you do last night?" no longer had significance as far as radio programs went (loyalties had shifted to television programs), so some stations felt impelled to "sell" their call letters.

Mainly, the method employed was to repeat the i.d. continually on the theory there would be tremendous recall when the survey asked, "What station?" A station's call letters literally replaced the word "the" as the listener heard "scoops" of KAOS time, WILD weather, KEY hit No. 1-40, *ad nauseum*.

Audiences suddenly heard thirty-year-old stations that could not be trusted anymore. They were under new management with changed call letters that were made to sound like a word or sound. Like when McLendon briefly changed the call letters of KTSA, San Antonio, to KAKI for association with the large military bases. He reverted when leaders of the larger Spanish community told him it meant shit to them.

And i.d.'s were shouted through echo chambers, accompanied by whistles, bells, teletypes, frequency tones, catch phrases, and musical blasts and stabs. (A Cleveland station fed its signal through a huge oil drum. It was said to be the only station that had to change its oil every thousand hours.)

Selling the station, the music, and commercial products in this way (to inflate the ratings and sell advertising) produced, so it turned out, a melange of whiter-shade-of-pale music. But this fanatical promotion of what sprang from

the rigid programming of music representing the lowest common denominator also consummately clobbered the listener with the voice of Big Brother *telling* you. Some called it "The Big Lie" at work, the repetitive reinforcement of the life styles of rural white America, with, however, some of the Negro and urban story breaking through in teen-directed songs.

In America, togetherness and the teen-ager ruled, and what was being pushed, aside from adolescent music for an exploited and blown-up minority, was not individual items as much as a prevailing, pervading philosophy of consumption and obsolescence.

Said former "Top 40" disc jockey Mike Cleary: "Top 40' has been great at selling Cokes so you can sell Clearasil."

Storz had mastered the tight, supersell format at WTIX, KOWH, and WHB, Kansas City, and when his Mid-Continent Broadcasting took over WDGY (Wee-Gee), Minneapolis, early in 1956 with a high-pressure team of Herb Oscar Anderson, Jack Thayer, Bill Bennett, Don Laughnane, and Bill Armstrong, it set virtually every station in the market on the quiz and contest trail. Radio listeners in Minneapolis-St. Paul were initially offered continuous chances at from \$10 to \$4,000 by merely listening to hear a word or a tune, their phone number, address, or license number, and quickly calling whatever station. Constant tune-in became a must, and to start the summer off with a bang that year (and Elvis Presley had become a national phenomenon), Storz announced the greatest radio or television giveaway of all time.

To run simultaneously on both WDGY, and KOWH, Omaha, from June 7 to 16 (a rating period), the contest was simply a treasure hunt whose prize was \$150,000 to top the \$100,000 offering of a popular television quiz show. Two checks for that sum were hidden in the respective cities, and over the ten-day period, a different clue was broadcast daily but at different times to keep young and old alike tuned to the Storz outlet. If the checks were found after the 16th, as they were, the prize was \$500.

Other Twin Cities' stations had to flock to the fray or lose out in the ratings. WCOW had changed its identity to WISK and initiated a giveaway in which their jocks were to hand out \$1,000 in \$5, \$10, and \$20 bills. All you had to do was be at a continually announced certain place at a certain time and politely ask for the money.

The great day dawned, and at high noon, the WISK deejays appeared in front of a sponsor department store with their unmarked, sealed envelopes. Unfortunately, they underestimated the turnout by about ten times. Something like five thousand people confronted the jocks and six protecting policemen. The crowd quickly got out of control, a traffic jam ensued, and the packets were whisked to the wind as the disc jockeys fled before the charging mob. Fortunately, injuries to the public were not serious.

Meanwhile, WDGY (which was promoted as "The New DGY") continued with its clues as CBS affiliate WCCO, featuring Minnesota legends Cedric Adams and Howard Viken, had succumbed to the pressure. It announced a \$250,000 "key word" contest and gave away \$16,000 during their simultaneous stunt. Both promotions were aside from WDGY and WCCO's regular daily cash giveaways.

Scott Beach is a knowledgeable radio man who was an original member of The Committee, San Francisco's famed improvisational revue. He was at WCCO during the fifties and said:

"The clues were like 'my brother ate fish,' things like that. Wee-Gee monitored 'CCO and said they would give the clues within seconds, so you wouldn't lose anything in time as far as calling in. They committed themselves to cutting in on anything.

"So 'CCO held off their clues until Wee-Gee started a commercial so they would have to do make-goods. And 'CCO changed their clues to 'No matter what station you are listening to now, WCCO is the greatest radio station there ever was. If your radio is not presently set to eight-thirty, change it now.'

"Wee-Gee said uncle after a day."

Damage was not noteworthy from Mid-Continent's Minnesota hysteria, but in Omaha, KOWH's public service tie-in for the public library, as part of that treasure hunt, was not taken too kindly. The Storz flagship had taken to hiding six checks among the volumes. The promotion was called off when the library was overrun.

Elsewhere, variations on the themes kept things simply smashing in an increasing number of markets. The chance at supereasy money went awry, however, for a Denver couple as they tried to win the \$10,000 KOSI offered to the first person correctly to pick in order the station's "Top 40."

They sat right down and wrote themselves a letter, addressing it in pencil. They took a box at the post office, got the letter from it, readdressed it to KOSI after inserting the just-announced "Top 40," and handed it back to the clerk. Suspecting nothing, he tossed it and its day-old postmark into KOSI's box. However, a close inspection by station officials got them charged with mail fraud.

McLendon furthered audience-attracting involvement to put the aforementioned KTSA on the air in 1956, with instant success. (That December a debt-laden Dallas couple discovered the \$50,000 offered by his KLIF, which was receiving Hooper ratings of over 50 per cent, hours before the deadline would have dropped the prize to \$500.) A year later, he moved virtually the entire staff to Houston to rechristen KLBS after himself, "The Old Scotchman," KILT. Within a month, the station zoomed from 2 per cent to 30 per cent of the listening audience, and first place in south-east Texas in Hooper, Pulse, and Trendex.

Said Capitol Cities Broadcasting executive Joe Somerset, who got his start in radio doing promotional copywriting for KILT:

"During the KILT Treasure Hunt, a man died by falling into an excavation for a new museum wing. I think he was drunk; it was late at night. But the next day, we redeemed ourselves when some kids discovered a cache of marijuana."

Another version of the drug uncovering was that police narcotics officers had planted the stash (of heroin) to trap

suspected buyers. But they were forced to call off their best-laid plans because KILT treasure-hunters kept picking up the goods!

Added Somerset:

"KILT jocks were all in their 20s and from all around the country. Elliott Field, Boston; Buddy McGregor, Missouri; Joel Spivak, New York—he was the son of the bandleader, and Don Keyes was from all over.

"But the atmosphere was very Texas. The booming atmosphere in Houston was reflected by the station. Anything new in Texas was automatically good, and, at its best, KILT was rough and brash. . . .

"We once ran a spot, straight-faced, for the Staten Island Ferry. People didn't quite know what to make of it, and our phone gals just took the calls straight.

"We did another one that backfired, but convinced me that this is a very powerful medium. We ran a hard-sell commercial for railroad ties for a week, and we got two hundred to three hundred inquiries. Ranchers use them for fence posts, people use them in gardens, so we had to go scare some up."

In 1956, another commercial, soft as soap, had done much to convince disbelievers in the power of the "dying" medium. It was handled in the inimitable manner of Jean Shepherd and proved he could sell any manner of product, even if he said he couldn't sell—Sweetheart Soap.

Shepherd produced an early instance of generation gapism when WOR dropped him, after a year, because he was not "commercial." He put into distinct perspective the issue of whether radio was still a mass medium with a mass audience or if reality in the mid-fifties dictated programming for admittedly smaller, more selective listener groups. (This reality of specialized programming is virtually axiomatic as radio enters the seventies.)

Through the spring and summer of 1956, Shepherd, whose program director Bob Smith was coming off two hypertense years with Freed, had been doing an all-night show with an offbeat stream of consciousness that won

fervent acceptance in the thirteen states found by WOR's whopping signal. Perhaps interminable rap about such matters as the key role of the "Flexible Flyer sled in the U.S. cultural renaissance," interspersed with scant jazz gems, was not whatever commercial was, but then Shepherd made no claim to other than broaching very personal communication with the "night people."

However, Shepherd had a trump card that had already garnered him great publicity. And it proved he sold. In April he began bubbling on his show about a nonexistent book, *I, Libertine*, by an equally fictitious Frederick R. Ewing, "well remembered for his BBC talks" on eighteenth-century erotica.

The next day his listeners started a run, and the title ultimately appeared on Boston's "banned in" list! With the word out, publisher Ian Ballantine sought out the monologist to ghostwrite in fact the best seller with science-fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon. A month later, *I, Libertine* was out for the "night people," who initially ordered 130,000 copies!

So, what's not commercial? bit Shepherd. I know, he said, I can sell quality or prestige items to my audience, but "give me a detergent or a facial cream and I'm dead, and what else could they expect?"

Ah, not so, Jean baby! He had been told that his contract would not be renewed, but sufficient protest calls kept the show on the air an additional week to see if something couldn't be worked out. As the week drew to a close, a "nightee" called to say he wasn't at all sure his leader couldn't sell soap.

"After all," he said, with a plea in his voice that Shepherd could do anything he set his mind to, "we night people wash, too." He suggested Shepherd ask his followers to go out and buy some.

Shepherd then asked for suggestions about what brand, and it was decided that the less-than-mass seller Sweetheart Toilet Soap would be so honored. (Management would ultimately nit-pick over whether Shepherd said it didn't do

much advertising, as he claimed, or that he said its sales weren't very good.)

So Shepherd instructed his people to march on their drugstores, buy a cake of Sweetheart, and "tell 'em Jean Shepherd sencha. And don't forget to say 'excelsior,'" which depending on whether you speak straight or in italics, refers to fine wood shavings or is Latin for "higher still" or "ever upward." The latter definition is the motto for New York State, and it must be construed that Shepherd listeners, mainly residents of the Empire State, speak in italics, in emulation of their leader.

Click. Off he went, at the behest of general manager Bob Leder, who said the station could not have anyone insulting potential customers. The official WOR announcement stated Shepherd "continually interjected unauthorized material into broadcasts."

Sweetheart Soap was indeed a potential customer. After something like eight thousand cakes were said to have been purchased as a direct result of Shepherd's plea (at the accepted conservative 100:1 ratio of listeners to those who act, this offered up the likelihood that Shepherd had something like 800,000 listeners; I want a less cultish personality, pleaded Leder), Sweetheart informed WOR it was interested in sponsoring Shepherd. He returned triumphantly under their sweetegis to do a Sunday night show from 9 P.M. to 1 A.M. He remains to this day, jazzing up an hour of WOR's night with reminiscences and rap, grandly cultlike but undeterred.

A devoted Shepherdove was WNEW-FM's Jonathan Schwartz, a slightly over thirty-year-old converted jazz and classical jock. The son of musical comedy great Arthur Schwartz (under whose name ASCAP brought an outrageous antitrust suit against BMI in 1954), Schwartz is also a song writer and singing pianist. ("I've made one record, with Ted Heath and his band in London. It sold nine copies; I have them all.")

Schwartz refers to his type of deejaying as a "curio shop" and said:

“At that time, Shepherd was the only man who was saying more than it was 38 degrees in New York radio. When he joined WOR, I listened incredulously and with much affection.

“I got John Crosby, who was a friend of the family, to write a column about Jean. I had stayed up nine or ten nights straight and taped him and then edited it myself down to a respectable Crosbyian span of an hour or so. Out of that tape, he wrote a column that I think helped Shepherd’s career enormously.

“Each and every man working with any degree of intelligence in radio today learned a great deal from Shepherd. He’s impossible personally, entirely egocentric. . . .

“I thought Alan Freed was perfectly ghastly and all like him. I abhorred him; I did not think he communicated. However, obviously, I’m wrong. Any kind of rock ‘n’ roll music literally appealed to me not at all. It was almost a foreign language, which I could not speak.

“In the early 60s, I found there was no space for me, no room, and I felt jealous and envious.”

Shepherd’s *cause célèbre*, along with the monster presence of Freed, began to be much debated throughout broadcasting. It centered around selling strictly “by the numbers” (interestingly, a military expression used to take trainees step by step through the rituals of war). It was the simplistic and dubious belief, ever so slowly going out of radio, that the best audience was that which had the most listeners. Moreover, it also reflected the off-the-wall, supposedly esoteric hipsterism of the jazz deejay as “opposed” to the burgeoning success of the more commercial, “more music” rock jock as epitomized by Freed.

In a very definite way, it was a confrontation of no confrontation at all. Both were broadcasting (and heavy drinkers) where they were at with the blues. But while being bopped with the off-beat is better than no beat at all, Freed’s repetitious rhythms produced the perfect blend needed to turn on the kids (who were still older than was argued), get the numbers, and grab gargantuan advertising dollars.

It was a case of pure generation gap, it seemed, although Bob Smith said he thought there was some cross-over audience between Freed and Shepherd. Said Bob Elliott:

"I don't think the people who listened to Freed listened to us in the morning. We couldn't figure him out. We came up with a guy called 'Leatherlungs Hardrock.'"

As Ruth St. Denis once said: "America lives under the tyranny of the drum. It is rhythmic, but not melodic."

Nonetheless, it is likely that the people who were brought together, as it were, to buy Sweetheart, had something in common, and there were innumerable instances where some form of social group emerged from these more or less atomized audiences. (Everyone has their bests, like Dave Garraway on WMAQ attracting listeners from a five-state area to a party in a Gold Coast mansion that was scheduled to be demolished, or Don Sherwood drawing an estimated 75,000 people for a foot race across the Golden Gate Bridge, or Ron Lundy having 50,000 people line the Mississippi River in Baton Rouge to watch him float out of town on a raft, ostensibly all the way to a new job at WIL, St. Louis.)

This peculiar but persuasive mechanism by which disc jockeys interact with their audiences could be called "para-social" interaction, and although most studies of opinion leadership have focused on the leaders' role in producing change, it usually aims to intensify existing trends, and thus *lead us to action*. Carried to extreme implications, it would seem that the principles of subconscious persuasion and sleep teaching in which the lowered level of a person's psychological resistance increases the effectiveness of subliminal suggestion apply to the half-awake state most adults hear radio in. That is, *immediately upon awakening*, dazedly getting dressed and eating breakfast, and "hypnotically" driving from place to place—particularly to and from work in a generally tired condition.

And quite possibly, the personality disc jockey (and the word "personality" has acquired a perhaps too-wide interpretation), and especially the "wake-up" man, generally represent to their listeners a personalized image of the kind

of front they themselves would like to present to the world. Hopefully, the deejay is really a public relations man who truly cares about life around him. Stations would like their people to sound like someone you'd want to sit next to at a bar—a guy you'd really want to have around.

Said Soupy Sales:

"I don't think the young jocks say anything in particular. They play the music and I think a lot of the disc jockeys like Bruce Morrow (WABC, New York) don't use the medium the way they could. I think you gotta say somethin' once in a while, if somethin' bugs ya.

"I don't think Cousin Brucie says anything to the kids. I get the feeling that those jockeys like that they're afraid all of a sudden one day the kids aren't gonna like 'em, and turn 'em off. And the managers don't wan' 'em to comment on anything. . . .

"I hate this business where you have to rush, rush, rush, where they're gonna get as many tunes in, as many commercials, and they talk real fast, with all the noise. It's like they're on a trip; I da know where everyone's rushing to.

"They got more commercials, and the managers figured everybody wanted somethin' going on all the time. They didn't want any dead air at all. So, there was no personalities. You can't say that Bruce Morrow is a personality because you never know what kind of a guy Bruce Morrow is. You don't know whether the guy's got a family, if he went to the ball game. He never says anything. *I don't think there is a Cousin Brucie.*

"There's a guy, he comes, they say, 'You'll be Cousin Brucie,' and we'll build up a thing."

On the other hand, Metromedia paid Klavan and Finch nearly a quarter of a million dollars a year, William B. Williams \$125,000, Ted Brown over \$100,000, and no personality is making less than \$1,000 a week, because they combine to make WNEW more than a team operation.

It is more like a family or tribe, and personality promotion is secondary to the station, whose acceptance produces close to \$10 million in advertising revenue because WNEW be-

lieves the listener is the most important member of the family. But WABC's billings are way up there, and who's to say Cousin Brucie, who has been called "the Ed Wynn of modern radio," isn't producing new familial ties?

At his best, the disc jockey is assured about everything, up to the minute, and in the know—as a good father or big brother should be. Ideally, he is never naive or sentimental, but quick, witty, and clever. Indeed, where his continuity is ad lib, and it is often, even if prepared in advance, there is every effort to make it sound like a *bon mot* of the moment. But, as foolish as he can be, he must relate.

The consequent effect on a person of hearing (and wanting to hear because he has tuned in) the patter (but not having to give it his concentrated attention) of a preferred deejay for two to three hours every morning over a great part of one's lifetime is confounding, and awesome to consider.

(Radio's power in this regard may be even greater than it supposes. In May, 1969, WNEW-FM's droll wake-up man at the time, Zack—he was shifted to midnights because he couldn't get the time straight in the morning—played a novelty, "Big Bad Bruce," a "fairy tale" about a hairdresser who is burned to death when the dryers overheat. Within a half hour, a phone call was made in my presence which resulted in a wrong number—to "Bruce's Barbecue!")

The crucial notion, however, is that with a variety of techniques ("There are techniques for getting laughs," said KSFO's former program director, Al Newman, who added that radio can and does lead, but not enough. "But very few people are getting that training") the performer seems to adjust to the supposed response of the audience. This would seem to suggest that the disc jockey is, as WNEW-FM's Scott Muni calls himself, a public servant. But if the audience does identify strongly with the personality, the countless episodes show an ability to move widely scattered people to social action, doubt and dissent, brought on by conditioning seldom evaluated as being inflexible—humor and absurdity.

The question "Is being funny serious enough?" has great

importance and proven productivity to the advertisers, but this is the paradox of the shepherding disc jockey who at times seems to degrade the product (in spite of claims to the contrary) and yet can show the crucial sales. It may be he is subtly saying, "You and I know this crap's all the same, but buy *this one* because my sponsor must be a good guy to let me get away with this," for if the audience doesn't buy, he's had it.

And if the country doesn't buy, we've all had it, or so we've been led to believe, and perhaps it is already too late to retreat from an active philosophy of overproduction of waste. (Although Bess Myerson Grant, Miss America of 1945 and now Commissioner for Consumer Affairs for New York City, says the 1970s will be the decade of "The Consumer Revolution.") Only time will tell. And only time can tell how serious is satire. So serious, it would seem, that at the moment, one had *better* take such airings lightly and keep on buying.

So the jock as a human being started to become a museum piece. While Freed and "Top 40" were being blasted and dug, a new school of disc jockeys, depersonalized in varying degrees, were serving their apprenticeship with the growing groups. The best were able to blend their instincts and cleverness with the flood of electronic gadgetry (and, on another level, fuse the joy being spread by the Freeds and the humor poking through from the Shepherds—as long as they didn't get *too* good at it) and, although they were almost universally loud and fast-talking, be more than just "rock 'n' rollers."

Said Somerset:

"Joel Spivak is remembered in Houston because he was distinctive. He was the wake-up man who was down. McLendon didn't think he belonged there and moved him.

"But Bill Weaver, who was the finest manager in the business, moved him back a year later. Joel was downright glum. Bruce Hayes was also a down morning man at our KLIF in Dallas, but Gordon didn't seem to dig that breed."

Concerning the supposed strictness and secretiveness, to

the point of spirituality in some cases, attendant to the rise of "Top 40," Somerset said:

"When I got to KILT, Weaver gave me a big speech about the policy book, how if anyone got their hands on it, we were finished, blah, blah, blah.

"Then he tossed it at me, it must have been four inches thick, and said: 'Here, you take care of it.' He'd never laid eyes on me.

"It was a great security blanket; there were things in there we could always fall back on."

One of the very best of the new breed was a deep-voiced and rabid student of broadcasting named Gary Owens, who began as a radio newsman in Mitchell, South Dakota, in 1952 at the age of seventeen. Lately he has been seen weekly on "Laugh-In" with his hand cupped behind his ear in mock emulation of the old stentorian network announcers. Although some trade authorities criticize Owens as being too "inside radio" in his approach, most aware individuals in the business accept his "too much" voice (in a category with the arch radio voices of Gene Norman, Ken Nordine, and Tom Donahue) as a superb put-on.

After four years in news, Owens broke into "Top 40" (along with many other Plains States radio enthusiasts who were greatly to influence the course of the medium) over KOIL, Omaha, from where he moved to KIMN, Denver. Both stations were members of the Star chain, which was owned and operated by the fiercely competitive Don Burdon.

Burdon would tape jocks who were beating him in the ratings and send copies out to distant markets to get the successful opposition out of town. It was said his bonus offers, to go along with whatever the salary lure was, often ran into five figures. Simple trades between groups were always taking place for like reasons.

The following year Owens was at WNOE, New Orleans, as the morning man, a position he filled with great success at every "Top 40" station he worked at until 1963. At that time, he made the blessed switch to a middle-of-the-road format at KMPC, Hollywood.

Initially, he was in the blah 9 A.M.-noon slot, where listeners weren't quite sure what a rock 'n' roll disc jockey was doing on their station. However, it was quickly decided to shift him to the 3-6 P.M. drive-time segment, where he picked up a large following.

Although WNOE was owned by former Louisiana governor James Noe, it was being programmed by his son-in-law, Gordon McLendon. Owens had been hired by "The Old Scotchman" as a combination disc jockey, promotion barn-stormer, and roving trouble-shooter.

Owens opened up the day and New Orleans heads for over a year with such hilarity as "One Man's Frenzy." Teaming up with author Gerald Monday to produce a daily comic strip of the air, Owens satirized various facts of the radio industry by using his versatile voice to portray eight different characters. He also made up an all-utilitarian nonsense word, "insegrevious," which meant either "good" or "bad." It fitted in perfectly with the station's music list at the time.

In its origin, the Greek theatre was a band of worshippers, dancing and singing on a threshing floor at the crucial agricultural seasons. Then, one day, a possessed person leaped out of the crowd and started imitating a god. At first it was pure song and movement. As cities developed, more people became dedicated to making money, but they had to keep contact with Nature somehow. So they had actors do it for them. I think Rock serves the same function and may become a kind of theatre.

—JIM MORRISON, *DOORS*

The Rock Revolution

There is, however, a higher step in which the sense of duality between the Knower and the Known is overcome: one may become so completely *identified* in his consciousness with the REAL (essence or hidden reality) of that which he contemplates, that the previous sense of the implicit distinction between Knower and Known entirely disappears, and the sense at-one-ness takes its place. And in a further stage still the subtle difference implied in this at-one-ness vanishes entirely, and one has become or *is* the object itself. . . . Since Reality and God are synonymous, that is also the essence of *true* religion.

—“The Yoga Way to Health, Peace,
Truth and Spiritual Realization”

THE CASTIGATION of the music known as rock 'n' roll went into an endless high in 1956 when Elvis Presley began making visible his sound. To this day, no matter to what extremes the new rock has evolved, the figure of “Elvis the Pelvis” reigns supreme. However, the sound of Chuck Berry was communicating white America as well if not better. Said Tom Donahue:

“He was the greatest interpreter of teenage white America in the 50s.”

Berry's first big hit was “Maybelline” in 1955, on which

Freed received a writer's credit. He is also listed as co-writer of several big rock 'n' roll hits, including "Sincerely," "Most of All," and "Darling, Listen to the Words of This Song." A sole Freed effort, "Tongue-Tied Blue," was recorded by Champion Jack Dupree in 1953. The next year, the jock's "Nadine" was an early Chess hit for The Coronets. Of Freed, "Maybelline," and payola, Berry said:

"He was a brother, you know. The record company [Chess] gave it to him. But he never demanded anything. He commanded it, and he accepted it."

And there were times he did it for nothing just to help someone out. Said Dick Biondi (whose association with Elvis ranged from being "fired" on the air for playing a Presley record to herald the jock's arrival on WKBW, Buffalo, to having his shirt signed by the singer at a show and then leaping into a crowd of screaming girls):

"He was the only guy I've ever heard of who took payola before it became illegal, if he promised to play a record, he'd play it."

Freed himself stated the matter of accepting payola as follows:

"But not in front. If I've helped somebody, I'll accept a nice gift, but I wouldn't take a dime to plug a record. I'd be a fool to; I'd be giving up control of my program."

But the powerful disc jockey's independence was soon to be threatened by the arrival of Mel Leeds to tighten up WINS in the fall of 1957. However, Freed's star continued in its ascendancy through 1956-57, even as Elvis was beginning to lead the appropriation of rhythm & blues by white artists such as Pat Boone, Paul Anka, Fabian, Ricky Nelson, Frankie Avalon—and Dick Clark—and stations safely flocked to the heavy play of young white rock.

After a succession of smash holiday weeks at the Brooklyn Paramount, topped by Easter Week, 1956, in which a Freed show, described by *Variety* "like having an aisle seat for the San Francisco earthquake," grossed \$204,000, the jock brought a show into the famous Broadway Paramount on Washington's Birthday, 1957.

(The jock was no longer broadcasting from the WINS studio. Because of a fear and hatred of automobiles due to a serious accident in 1953 which left him with a ruptured spleen, cracked liver, punctured lung, collapsed veins, and which required facial plastic surgery, Freed, whose colds would usually develop into pneumonia, and who was told he had no more than ten years to live, had WINS put lines into his Connecticut home. This also kept him far removed from wily promotion men.)

Lines began forming at 4 A.M. and three hundred policemen were called in. The teen-agers stamped their feet so vigorously that most of the second balcony was cleared for three hours and a building inspector was called in.

The accompanying movie, "Don't Knock the Rock," featuring Freed playing himself, told the story of a famous rock 'n' roll singer, played by Alan Dale. He returns to his hometown and is rebuffed at the railroad station by the mayor, who denounces rock 'n' roll as a menace to the morals of the youth. Screams of derision and boos from the Paramount audience drowned out the mayor's speech.

Freed broke Broadway Paramount opening-day records as 15,220 patrons paid \$29,000 for six stage and seven movie shows on just ten days' notice. Interviewed afterward, he told the *New York Times*:

"It's the rhythm that gets the kids. They are starved for music they can dance to, after all those years of crooners. They are not bad kids, they are just enthusiastic.

"But I used to do it myself. When I was a boy in Ohio, I drove 25 miles to Youngstown and stood in line 3 hours to see Benny Goodman. I see those scrubbed faces looking up at me from the orchestra, and I know they are like my own kids. If they want to jump and clap hands, that's all right. If the theatre gets a few broken seats, that's their problem."

Across the country, headlines blasted out the news:

NEW ROCK, ROLL 'N' RIOT STORM KICKED OFF BY
M.I.T. RIOT
RAP BIG BEAT FOR JUVE CAPERS

BOSTON COUNCIL ASKS CLERGY FOR APPROVED LIST OF DJs
 HARTFORD'S STATE THEATER HAS 5 POLICE RIOT
 CALLS IN 5 MONTHS
 ATLANTA BANS TEENAGE DANCES
 NEGRO SOCIOLOGIST IN HOUSTON BLASTS R&B

But across the Atlantic, Harry Alan Towers of Towers of London, a radio-television enterprise, said rock 'n' roll had taken such a firm hold in London that Radio Luxembourg was repatterning its program operation to keep pace with the stepped-up tempo. With five of the top ten records in the British Isles in the rock 'n' roll idiom, Towers said he was arranging a two-hour Saturday night "Jamboree" for Radio Lux, with a weekly taped segment by Freed to highlight the show. Eventually, said Towers, Radio Lux would be a full-time disc jockey station, as opposed to the BBC type of programming.

At the same time, Freed came under additional fire as emcee of CBS's "Rock 'n' Roll Dance Party," which was sponsored nationally by Camel Cigarettes. Many felt that was rock bottom, although it was pretty well acknowledged that the tobacco-company-sponsored top-tunes shows had long been drawing to the habit listeners of a younger age than was admitted by the manufacturers.

And television didn't help the problem in any way. However, it was correctly argued that Freed was encouraging preteens to take up smoking. Actually Freed lost his chance on national TV in the early stages of his "Rock 'n' Roll Dance Party." Frankie Lyman started dancing with a white girl as a pre-video tape video tape camera took it all in and let it all hang out.

More direct criticism came from the Catholic Church, which damned rock 'n' roll across the nation. For instance, Boston was the first city to exploit record hops, in 1952. When attendance dwindled at church dances, the archdiocese put "banned in Boston" to work. Addressing the annual Teachers Institute of the Archdiocese of Boston, the

Very Reverend John P. Carroll made no bones about the state of the "fad" Freed had brought on. He said:

"There's nothing wrong with disc jockeys. Many of them are helpful guides of youth. But others refuse to face their responsibilities and opportunities.

"Rock and roll inflames and excites youth like the jungle tomtoms readying warriors for battle. Inject a wrong word or misunderstanding and the whole place blows up. The suggestive lyrics on rock and roll records, of course, are a matter for law enforcement agencies. But the first line of defense must be the disc jockeys."

The following March, the Lenten message of Chicago's Samuel Cardinal Stritch reemphasized the Church's up-in-arms attitude. He said:

"Some new manners of dancing and a throwback to tribalism cannot be tolerated for Catholic youth."

And Brother John was to see the dogma come to the Hub to roost a year and a half later. An alleged wrong word by Freed at a show at the Boston Arena was to produce a city-wide riot. It also got him charged with incitement to riot and *anarchy*, forced his resignation from WINS, and marked the beginning of his downfall.

In the meantime, Freed was beginning to get real competition in the roaring form of Philadelphia's Douglas "Jocko" Henderson, a black jock who took to commuting for a two-hour rock 'em 'n' sock 'em rhythm review out of Harlem's Palm Cafe on WOV nightly. A literate Al Benson who blew out a lively lingo on top of such criticized English as "modren" and "more lovelier," "Jocko" brought more r&b goodies home for Gotham addicts.

The show was known as the "1280 Rocket," and commander "Jocko" used a space-flight theme to introduce new songs that were going "higher, higher, higher." The roar of rocket engines was simulated before the records were played, and "Jocko" and a fellow traveler (on voice track) would chatter as though they were on a space trip.

The publicity-conscious jock took it as far as it could go, which, as it turned out, included enshrinement in the mu-

seum of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Kremlin. When Yuri Gagarin completed the world's first manned space flight in 1961, "Jocko" sent the cosmonaut the following wire:

"Congratulations. I'm glad you made it. Now it's not so lonely up here."

The telegram was signed " 'Jocko' Henderson, Rocket Ship commander, radio station WDAS, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania." It now resides in Hall 19, which is devoted to the armed forces' contribution to the current period of "construction of the material and technical basis of Communism."

Not communicated to the Communists was the jargon of "Jocko," the last gasp of bop talk. Out of the night came such patter as:

"From way up here in the stratosphere, we gotta holler mighty loud and clear *ee-tiddy-o and a ho*, and I'm back on the scene with the record machine, saying *oo-pap-doo* and how do you do!"

The usual daddios and mommios were interspersed with such patois as "great gugga mugga," "well all roother," and "great gugga mugga shooga booga." However, for what it's worth, the jive and sound tracks of "Jocko" were not original. It was picked up from a Baltimore oracle and ego strengthener of twenty years standing, Maurice "Hot Rod" Hulbert.

And when "Rod" began a show on WOV in 1960, he informed the audience:

Not the flower, not the root,
But the seed, sometimes called the herb.
Not the imitator, but the originator,
The true living legend—the "Rod"!

And after Apollo II took man to the moon, "Rod" told his listeners:

"If they'd gone to the other side of the moon—the dark side—they'd uh seen mah flag!"

Three thousand miles to the west, another madman, Don

Sherwood, was beginning his malevolent climb ("I'm just a shaggy cool breeze in broadcasting; I got that way hating people") as one of the most potent morning men in the country on KSFO, San Francisco. Said Scott Beach:

"Sherwood is the best disc jockey of his kind there has ever been. He's not kidding anybody; it's a put-on. His era is past personally. No more highly produced shows, voice impressions, etc.

"Hippies don't listen to him, because, as easy as he sounds, he's still doing a show, and they don't like a show."

Moreover, they don't drink, as does Sherwood, and the recent change in San Francisco's population makeup ("Better living through chemistry") represents a meaningful disenchantment with the city's legendary drinking reputation.

Actually, Sherwood is so tied to San Francisco, and the image of the cosmopolitan swinger, continually shifting from button-downs to beads, all attempts he has made to work elsewhere have bombed. (An abortive stint in Honolulu—his life's ambition, he once said, was to float there in a Martini shaker—in 1966 found him returning to the Bay Area with "emphysema.") Sherwood retired in 1969, and his KSFO contract, of course, included a clause saying he could not work on a station within a certain radius for x number of years; this is perhaps the highest praise a personality can obtain.

Dick Whittington is the brilliant morning man at super-suburbia's KGIL ("Sweet Brother Dick, bringing blue-eyed soul to the Sin Fernando Valley! *Put your hand on that warm radio, close your eyes, and say, 'I BELIEVE, SWEET BROTHER DICK, I BELIEVE!'*") and a "Laugh-In" regular. He worked at KSFO in the late fifties and said of Sherwood:

"Don's one of the great, great satirists. I think he could have been the single greatest entertainment force in the country. He does what he wants to do and I admire and respect him for it."

Sherwood's style ranged from such sardonic brilliance as "invading Stockton with 240 sports cars, 162 light planes,

and a cabin cruiser, to being hired by KSFO while he was under indictment for running down the sister of a police captain. His acquittal was headline news.

Sherwood, who claims a passion for yoga and Zen, was a morning delight. Whether he was portraying Fidel Trueheart, M.D., lecturing on "The Human Body: Its Care and Prevention," or taking all the parts in "Just Plain Rosita," a soap opera "which asks the question—Can a woman after 35?" (L.A.'s Dick Whittinghill was to employ the same query for Helen Trump on KSFO's sister station, KMPC, when CBS dropped its soapers in 1960), Sherwood made the out-of-the-ordinary commonplace for northern Californians.

The attendant excitement of whether or not he would make his 6 A.M. show (two out of three is about what it has amounted to over the years) demanded that Carter B. Smith (a jock in his mid-thirties, unusual in that he has avoided the "Top 40" scene), who worked the 9 A.M.–noon shift from 1965–69, always be at the station at 6 A.M. in case "Doctor Don" (or "Radio Fella One") didn't make it.

However, Sherwood's significant social prodding also opened up the ears of many during the tuned-out fifties. Said former KSFO program director Al Newman:

"Sherwood's an enigma; he's been everything from Peck's Bad Boy to a philosopher to a dirty old man. He's not a windmill tilter in certain areas. Yet he has probably gotten into more bags on the air of serious things, whether it be from filling the Bay to saving the Navajo Indians before any of the kids ever thought of it.

"And he got it across in such a way that Mr. Business Man listened to it and got involved in it, which is the most important thing. It's not just a guy blabbin' on the air. This is the special type of guy that can get into a certain thing and get to the people who should hear it. That's the whole thing, really, in communications."

In February, 1957, about six months after Jack Paar became the permanent host of the "Tonight" show, Sherwood was offered a lucrative shot at a show on NBC-TV

out of Chicago. He lasted just two days, leaving with a blast at just about everything we have learned to be appalled by—network television, Chicago, etc.

With a little give and take ("They had the opening show timed to tenths of seconds . . . I don't work that way. They think you'll do anything for money"), Sherwood, with his Pagliacci West approach, might have taken the late-week-night-go-to-meeting mantle from Paar, as was rumored.

So he returned to San Francisco, as he always does. The next year, with the relocated and rabidly followed baseball Giants on KSFO, and at least half the stations in town following the "Top 40" lead of KOBV, Sherwood's ratings and following zoomed as out of sight as the rockets of "Hot Rod" and "Jocko."

However, the *sales* power of the personality does not necessarily rest on a sardonic tack. Doug Pledger on KNBR had been the leading morning man in the San Francisco market from 1953 until the Giants came on KSFO. In fact, his "Music for Middlebrows" gathered a very loyal audience for thirteen years in the Bay Area with a very straight approach.

When Sherwood was at his height with a 24 per cent share of the audience, Pledger was doing nicely with 12. Pledger said the Foster Baking Company decided to run a contest between the two to see who could sell fruit cakes as a \$4.95 Christmas gift.

According to Pledger, he sold 540 and Sherwood a mere 11. The straight pitchman overwhelmingly won the day, substantiating once again the failing of humor where a cash layout is involved. Bizarre radio does not necessarily make for success in the supermarket of broadcasting, and the medium is more than content to let its listeners trip out with the straight and narrow.

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the continuity writer—unlike the newscaster or even the advertiser—really has nothing to say. His art consists in saying it with disarming charm. From this it would seem to follow that the key to success in continuity writing is the stylistic devices by which the disc jockey achieves that goal. When viewed as a whole, all these devices seem to spring from a single motive: the desire to avoid at all costs saying anything in the manner that might be expected. The successful line of radio popular music continuity would seem to be the line that has somehow managed to take its listeners by surprise.

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Familiarity breeds contempt.

—ADAGE

IN NEW YORK, newsmen during the summer of 1960 were taken for a ride by WINS. An August morning's papers, including the *Times*, had carried stories about what appeared to be an Egyptian stone tablet that had been left in a taxicab.

In its thorough way, the *Times* called in an Egyptian expert from the Brooklyn museum to examine the stone and to discover it wasn't Egyptian at all. Its modern hieroglyphic message? "Everybody's Mummy Listens to WINS 1010." (Two years later, WINS heralded a return to a

middle-of-the-road format by playing sixty-six straight hours of Frank Sinatra. Many other stations around the country also conducted Sinatrathons, which were hailed as a return to good music.)

On the West Coast, KFVB had a similar slogan designed to take the onus off its teen image, and format stations everywhere made appeals with dubious ratings-supported figures to "Mom." For KFVB, it wasn't far from the truth.

The day after New Year's Day, 1958, peepole awoke to the widely publicized sound of "Color Radio." In three months KFVB had a 45 per cent share of the market. The runner-up had 9 per cent.

Actually, "Color Radio" was nothing new. L.A. had suffered through it when KABC had used the slogan to try to break out of its suffering network programming in 1954-55. That "Color Radio" failed dismally, as did the attempt to bring it to San Francisco the following fall.

On October 24, 1955, an item appeared in the press stating that "an amazing new local color development will be introduced by a local station. This new fully compatible development will mean that color programs can be received on presently installed sets without any attachment or adjustment."

The campaign mounted as the date for the first demonstration for "a limited, selected few" was announced. Those in the trade fought for inclusion. The demonstration turned out to be KYA's new ColoRADIO development—a format wherein all its programs were broadcast in color, meaning, according to the station, "done by colorful personalities in colorful program structures." KYA's station breaks carried the slogan "First in ColoRADIO." It was, thankfully short-lived.

However, KFVB's "Color Radio" was something else. The guiding genius behind "Color Channel 98" was a facile young McLendon protégé from El Paso, Chuck Blore. "I was twenty-eight," said Blore. "The jocks heard I was twenty-three, and I looked seventeen."

Program director Blore brought with him Texas jocks

Bruce Hayes, KLIF, Dallas; Elliott Field, KILT, Houston; and Ted Quillan, KELP, El Paso. Being retained from the old staff were Al Jarvis, Joe Yocam, B. Mitchel Reed, and Bill Balance.

For close to five years, KFWB kept things lively in the highly competitive Los Angeles market. (After the payola hearings, it was said promotion men were offering a hundred dollars to just get their new releases into KF's record meetings.) It introduced the short i.d. with its "K-F-W-B *Whoopee!*" pushed through a Sonovox, and it had real Rabelaisian identity. Of late-afternoon man Ted Quillan, jock Les Turpin said:

"He was real. He had dirty sheets, and he burped and he shit just like the rest of us."

Radio Pulse for October, 1959, reported that fourteen of the nineteen top-rated deejay shows were on KFWB. The technosensible Blore said his sole purpose was to *entertain*. In an entertaining way, KFWB informed people by making them think they were thinking. Its news shows were quick, to the point, and fun to listen to.

And KFWB jocks didn't just "wing it," or ad lib, although they certainly did their share of that. Their routines were ultimately scripted, and they were trained to a razor-sharp fineness to make every split second count effectively.

Although Blore, now a successful advertising entrepreneur, commercially proved where radio was at—and many operators were already on some sort of formula bandwagon—most radio, when even casually examined, is a hodgepodge of lazy thinking that generally attempts to pick up on an innovation. As is usually the case with imitators, this only produces a succession of fey fads, with little attention to meaningful content. However, it must not be lost sight of that the over-all sound, its tempo, is the content.

For instance, WNEW's success over the years has been composed of five meshing parts—music, news, personalities, promotion, and involvement with people. Together they must produce the best of everything. That's the hard part.

Another highly successful slick operation in the late fifties

was taking hold in St. Louis. It was WIL, a member of the Balaban chain, which also had WRIT, Milwaukee, and KBOX, Dallas. The latter station was to significantly storm McLendon's KLIF fortress.

WIL initially was a very hot radio station with such talents as Gary Owens (and his "Complete Failure" club), Dick Clayton, Jack Carney, Bob Osborne, Reed Farrell, and Ed Bonner. Other top rock jocks to grace WIL's studios included Gary Stevens, Bob Dayton (then known as Robin Scott; Dayton achieved great notoriety when he was fired from WABC, New York, for playing a chorus of "Happy Birthday"—from the tune "Sixteen Candles"—on the twentieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima), Dan Ingram, Ron Lundy, and Danny Dark.

WIL combined very powerful personalities with a very loud format of "Top 40" records and continual contests. It had as many as four contests on the air at one time and as many as twenty in a week. (The toughest one, said Ingram, was one in which the jocks were required to whisper their shows.) They were nothing too much beyond the "Lucky License" type of thing. But the audience was required to register to be eligible for prizes, so the torrent of mail WIL received indicated the station had a very large listenership and not necessarily restricted to teens. Its ratings bumped 50 per cent at times.

And, of course, WIL kept them titillated by stealing contests within minutes and announcing other station's winners. WIL stung and stabbed the audience with electronic sillies, and they loved it. Carney went a little too far with it once. He said:

"I announced that we would be giving away—this was at the height of the contests and the treasure hunts—\$5,000 in cash. You didn't have to buy anything to participate. You didn't have to be doing anything at all except be listening on a given day at a given time.

"The key time was like Thursday afternoon at five thirty. I stressed that the contest involved a three-minute span of time and that within three minutes, you could win \$5,000. I did it for two weeks.

“So, John Box [Balaban’s owner] asked me: ‘What are you doing?’ I said: ‘Leave me alone, do you think I’m going to give away \$5,000 of your money?’”

“The day of the contest comes, the height of the commute traffic. I said: ‘Here’s the way the contest works. We have installed a telephone here in the studio. No one knows the telephone number. If I get called on this telephone in the next three minutes, who is ever on the other end of that line will win \$5,000 in cash!’”

“The question is: How do you find the telephone number? ‘The telephone number is written down on a piece of paper and was placed in a little plastic pill bottle, and over the last three weeks, was taped to a radiator cap in somebody’s automobile. It could have been anywhere in St. Louis. You got three minutes to call this number,’ and then I turned on a metronome.

“And I’m counting it off, and I’m waiting for the phone to ring. Well, every car in St. Louis, Missouri, stopped where it was. On the bridges, on the freeways. *The most* monumental traffic jam. At that time we had 48 per cent of the audience. We just had everybody.

“People just slammed on their emergency brake, jumped out of their car, ran around and opened the hood. ‘Tick tock, tick tock. *A minute left, 30 seconds, 20, 10, BANG!* The phone has not rung!’

“And I said: ‘Mr. so-and-so in the news department is the only one who knew about this. He was the only one who worked with me on this. He went out in the last three weeks and taped this thing, blah, blah, blah.’ He walked in.

“‘Look who’s here,’ I say, ‘Hiya!’

“‘Hey, Jack,’ he says, ‘Remember that little plastic pill bottle, what was I supposed to do with it!’”

“And that was the end of it.

“Among the tons of mail that came in, and the switchboard was just tied up, a registered letter arrived from the police chief: ‘If you ever do anything like this again, we will get the license plate number of every car on your staff, and we’ll see that they get a ticket every time they’re on a St. Louis street.’”

"They were so hot, you couldn't believe it. And everybody talked about it. To me, these were the great days of radio. The best promotions happened like off the cuff, bing, bing, bing."

Said Les Turpin:

"Constant contests are old and tired to us, but to the kid who's growing up, I guess it's new."

At the other end of the "Top 40" spectrum was the Plough operation of Harold Krelstein of Memphis, purveyors of St. Joseph's Aspirin. At the end of 1955, Plough discovered that pop records had become 75 per cent of the retail business in Memphis. So it converted its local country outlet, WMPS, to "Top 40" and within two months, its audience jumped 150 per cent.

During the next two years, Plough acquired stations like WBMS (renamed WILD), Boston, and WJJD, Chicago, and rigidly formatted them. This included eventually putting together their music lists in Memphis with little consideration for what was being sold in their other markets.

Plough achieved great financial success in quick time, and it was this type of programming that crystallized the complaints against so-called modern radio when Todd Storz put together a weekend convention of broadcasters and record-company executives at Kansas City's Hotel Muehlebach in mid-March, 1958. The following year a Memorial Day repeat at Miami Beach's Hotel Americana blew the lid off the disc jockey and the canned music scene in the United States.

With typical Storzian fanfare, the weekend brought well over a thousand disc jockeys plus a flock of record company representatives to swinging K.C. A blizzard met the First Annual Pop Music Disc Jockey conventioners and kept them in the Muehlebach to attend to such seminarian concerns as "Increasing Income and Prestige Through Related Outside Activities," "How Can the Deejay Maintain His Individuality Within the Framework of Conformity Required by Management?" and "Is the Main Requisite of the Deejay Today the Ability to Count to 40?"

At the next year's conclave, late-spring Miami weather and a covey of call girls supplied by the diskers took the jocks out of the classroom and into the headlines and congressional hearings on payola.

The main event at Kansas City, aside from a "dream show" Saturday night (Tony Bennett, Eddy Arnold, Pat Suzuki, The Four Lads, LaVern Baker, The Diamonds, etc.) supplied by more than a score of record companies, was a talk by the artists and repertoire director of Columbia Records, Mitch Miller. Entitled "The Great Abdication," it received national attention outside the trade.

Miller spoke for virtually every jock in attendance when he told management:

"To say you've grossly mishandled this great, fat, money-making radio—would be understating the case. Some of you have made the man who killed the goose that laid the golden egg look like Bernard Baruch.

"You carefully built yourself into the monarchs of radio and abdicated—abdicated your programming to the commercial record shop; to the 8- to 14-year-olds; to the pre shave crowd that makes up 12 per cent of the country's population and zero per cent of its buying power, once you eliminate the pony tail ribbons, popsicles, and peanut brittle."

Miller warned the broadcasters that they were way out of line in aiming solely at the teen-agers instead of the audience that wants "variety, musicianship, and a bit more sophistication in their music." He pointed out that in 1954 seven out of ten dollars spent buying records went for singles. Since then, he stated, the figure for single records had been cut in half while long-play sales had doubled. He emphasized:

"As the bulk of the public finds it can't hear the music it's hungry for on single records on the radio, it turns more and more to buying LPs to satisfy a grown-up musical appetite on hi-fi sets at home.

"It must be more than a coincidence that single-record buying went into a decline at the very time the number

of stations that program the 'Top 40' climbed to a new high."

Almost *en masse*, the jocks gave Miller a standing ovation, the only speech of the two-day meeting so received. In corridor, lobby, and lounge button-holing, the deejays sounded off as if they were fighting for their lives, their egos, and their jobs.

Repeatedly, big and small jocks spilled out tirades against "formula radio." The battle during the convention seminars boiled down to one between "personality expression *vs.* station conformity." As we know, very little has been resolved since then. The philosophy of radio programming shies away from surprise and is ever pushing forward the familiarity of "the most music," an ironic situation that is dehumanizing but also joyous.

Bypassed in the uproar about the responsibility of the disc jockey created by Miller's blast at station operators in Kansas City was the fact that the same weekend Westinghouse concluded a rather insightful public service conference in Baltimore. One subject, "Disc Jockeys and Public Service," was bandied about by a panel chaired by ex-Storz salesman Steve Labunski, director of radio operations for Crowell-Collier, and featuring WNEW's Klavan and Finch; Art Pallan, KDKA, Pittsburgh; Walt Teas, WFBR, Baltimore; and Ben Sanders, general manager, KCID, Spencer, Iowa.

The fact that the panel ranged from the top-billing station in the land to one from a market of under ten thousand made it of more than passing interest. All, of course, patted themselves on the back for their public service features. Most important, they were in full agreement that the disc jockey should feel a sense of responsibility to the community and that by exploiting his personality in personal appearances, interviews, and spot announcements, he could make a more significant contribution to his community and also to the station. The subject of community was very little discussed in Kansas City, where sales, charts, and ratings dominated the weekend.

Meanwhile, New York's leading showman, Alan Freed, was still successfully laying the groundwork for the community of the sixties. His "Big Beat" rocked the Broadway Paramount during the Christmas vacation with a gross of over \$300,000 for twelve days. This included a one-day record of \$32,000 and a \$193,000 weekly mark as police estimated crowds of thirty thousand waiting in line at times. So great were the throngs that the theater eliminated the movie halfway through the run.

This was the chief rock jock's peak, for his sudden and stunning drop-off was four months away and two hundred miles to the northeast. On May 3, Freed promoted a show in Boston featuring Jerry Lee Lewis. According to Joe Smith, a vice president of Warner Bros. Records, who as a Boston deejay helped run the bash:

"The police turned on the lights, and Alan said: 'Hey kids, the cops don't want you to have a good time.'"

The result was a city-wide melee in which one person was stabbed and a dozen others were beaten and stabbed. Freed was charged with incitement to riot and *anarchy*, and the rest of his northeastern tour was summarily canceled.

The following week Freed resigned from WINS, charging the station with failure to support him. The charges were ultimately dropped, but it cost Freed a fortune. That July he filed for bankruptcy, claiming he was \$51,985 in debt, including \$15,000 he said he owed himself!

Upon leaving WINS, Freed went to work for WABC, where a good portion of his audience followed his cry of "We start 'em; the others chart 'em!" But he was a broken man, and as the probe into the television quiz scandals widened into a general exposé of payola in the broadcast industry, he became a man to be avoided.

On November 21, 1959, he was dismissed from WABC because he refused "on principle" to sign a statement that he had never received funds or gifts to promote records. Two days later, "by mutual consent," WNEW-TV canceled his video dance show.

His problems with WNEW-TV were reportedly not connected with "payola" but were concerned with the failure to pay union-scale wages to performers who had appeared on the telecasts. These singers generally mouthed the words in lip synchronization as their records were played. In some cases, the artists received no payment for such appearances.

As a local show, Freed's program did not have the absolute power of Dick Clark's "American Bandstand" on ABC out of Philadelphia, on which agents and producers did tricks to get their talent exposure. Al Jarvis said he was offered "American Bandstand," but turned it down when he was told he could use only white performers.

At his final telecast, Freed, whose image all the way around kept him off national TV, assured his howling and weeping fans ("Now they've taken away our father," cried one girl) that he was confident he had done nothing wrong in the payola dispute. Clark fell, too, but Freed's \$200,000 billings on WABC as against \$12 million for Clark on TV told the story. Going by Clark's Sunset Boulevard headquarters one can readily see the black and white reality of it all.

Freed followed Mel Leeds to Los Angeles, where he was given a daytime show on KDAY. On May 20, 1960, they, along with five others, were arrested on commercial bribery charges, and Freed was indicted for receiving \$30,650 from six record companies to plug their discs on his shows. He pleaded guilty to part of the charges in 1962 while working at Storz's WQAM, Miami, and received a suspended six-month sentence and a \$300 fine.

Shortly before his death, he was again indicted for evading \$47,920 in income taxes, money which came through the payola route in 1957-59. His last radio job was as a jazz disc jockey on KNOB, Los Angeles, and his *Variety* obit said that "he was at the point of returning to New York."

Freed was heir to all the "evils" of the pop music business—the cut-ins, angles, and gimmicks that are the ambiguous practice of "payola." There is no way to gauge

how much money he was responsible for during the fifties—and its material accumulation meant little to him.

There is also no way of proving rock 'n' roll would have happened with or without him. He was on the payroll of a number of recording and distributing companies at \$400-700 a month to favor their discs, and he was responsible for the success of at least a half-dozen independent diskers and countless performers.

But, although double mastoiditis hampered his hearing, he knew music (he composed, arranged, and directed for a twenty-piece orchestra), and he had to hear the new records from distributors and pick those he felt would make it—at least until his growing activities forced him to get an assistant to do it.

It is said he never missed on a “wooley” (“doo-da-doo” or “doo-doo wah”) disc, and if he was given a share by the publisher, it was always for work well done. Payola cannot be condoned, but it may have been no more than good friends taking care of each other, laying something on someone you have a real affinity with, for a little help.

Freed despised the major companies for their hugeness and hypocrisy. He started the real competition, and when RCA Victor came out with “Shout” by the Iseley Brothers, Freed dug it and featured it one night—for nothing. He made “Shout” just to show them. (And how many young New Yorkers are there who remember the show on which he played Jackie Wilson’s “I’ll Be Satisfied” all night?)

If the majors were forced into payola because of the indies, it was nothing compared to the deals that go on in time sales beginning at the network and agency level. The extent of such gift-giving taxes the imagination, and it was the failure to report it that brought payola home to roost.

When Freed was arrested in 1960, New York district attorney Frank Hogan refused to comment on the theory that rock 'n' roll might be an artificially created fad that otherwise might never have taken hold. But if rock 'n' roll furthered youthful rebellion against parental outcry, the music was, nonetheless, exciting.

Freed is a monumental symbol of the ambivalence of our times—loved and hated, powerful and frightened, unpredictable and gregarious. He brought the world the word, and to where it is today, which is not only on the moon. Morris Levy of Roulette Records wrote about this in a special issue of *Billboard* (summer, 1967), "The World of Soul," the world Freed brought to flagging America.

Payola goes back to when David had Saul's ear for most of the psalms and the rest of the hacks who hung out at court had to do something to get their music heard.

—ARNOLD PASSMAN

All disc jockeys are wonderful, but some are more wonderful than others.

—BUZZ CURTIS

Record-promotion man

HISTORICALLY, PAYOLA is said to have begun in Victorian England when Arthur Sullivan, a few years short of forming a dynamic duo with William Gilbert, banged out a ditty called "Thou'rt Passing Hence." Although it may sound like it, the tune itself was not about payola.

But it was payola that got it about. Sullivan had it performed by signing over a portion of future royalties to Sir Charles Stanley, a leading baritone of the day. When the tune was played at Sir Arthur's funeral in 1900, Sir Charles was still collecting.

Actually, the pop music and mass media pageant presents

an age-old picture of new chiefs and kings in tribal and courtly surroundings granting favors for favors and work done, and for economically feasible expressions of love, joy, beauty, and topicality.

Generally, single records, which during the summer of 1969, were experiencing their third major crisis period since World War I, are made largely by people without the capital to do anything grander, and they must be purchased by people with equally small resources. This is, of course, the teenager, but more particularly, and increasingly in the sixties, it became the minority teenager. In a way, there is no sadder sight than seeing a black teenybopper putting out a buck for a 45 when for another dollar or so she could have up to a dozen more songs.

Still, like spot advertising, the singles business offers that American free market opportunity of getting your foot in the door. Both are only decried by those in power, and perhaps the only question today concerning payola (which is what Vietnam is) is not so much if it still exists but to what extent did its flourishing during the fifties manipulate and damage "taste."

When the questions from congressional investigators of "how hits?" hit the fan in November, 1959, Boston jock Stan Richards defended the practice by saying:

"This seems to be the American way of life, which is a wonderful way of life. It is primarily built on romance. 'I'll do for you. What will you do for me?'"

The *New York Herald Tribune* looked at the matter in a somewhat different light. It ran the following editorial:

"To punish the fakers and takers is a relatively simple operation. But to restore lost standards and repair shoddy goods, to try to elevate low tastes rather than pandering to them—these are tasks that are as difficult as they are important. But they are the price of 'payola.'"

Ten years after, payola still goes on, in the retribalization of the world. Although federal laws to prevent the practice were enacted after the overexaggerated exposures, payola continues and is pretty difficult to prove. It is also not so

easy to curb and this has been so for at least fifty years, in spite of dedicated (ultimately reactionary?) efforts to do so.

And it can present some truly ludicrous situations. For instance, the Federal Communications Commission, which is underpaid and swamped with complaints (many of a grudge nature, but they must be looked into), arrested four Spanish-language disc jockeys during the summer of 1968 —after three nights of rioting in Spanish Harlem. It was as the result of a long investigation: there was no direct connection between the outbursts and the bribery busts. One jock, Freddy Baez, was convicted and faced up to eleven years in prison and a \$14,000 fine. But the mind boggles when it is considered how inflammatory the ill-timed act was in essence.

For the minority jock, usually underpaid and employed by a white man, is a different kind of cat from his white, multiformatted brother. He is close to being a tribal chief, a truly important, admired, and respected member of an identifiable community. And he gets swamped with a lot of singles, by an abundance of groups struggling to break out of the ghetto.

The Philadelphia-lawyer trappings that surround the legal entanglements of music and radio were put into focus with the investigation of a Philadelphia disc jockey. Clean-cut Dick Clark was the all-American subject, and payola was the temptress.

During the House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight's hearings in 1960 on Clark's payola activities, Alan Freed testified in closed session. He had been fired by ABC from his WABC job for refusing to sign the standard affidavit denying payola because Clark was given a "tailor-made" statement.

When ABC repudiated Freed's testimony that it told him to "lay on" its ABC-Paramount records, Representative John E. Moss (D., Cal.) replied:

"I would like to say Mr. Freed, in my opinion, is one of the few completely truthful men we've had before us in open or executive session."

Whether payola is bribery remains a moot point. Freed, who said he never accepted "bread in front" as a "consultant," never saw eye to eye with Clark, who said it required an "agreement" for consideration. The difference may be crucial, but at the highest level of mass comm (and anywhere else, under the rubric of public relations), the exchange of gifts for favors, favors for favors or, of course, cash under the table, has been strongly in evidence for some time.

Although hundreds of jocks around the country were undergoing close scrutiny by the FCC, Federal Trade Commission, but most of all the House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight under the chairmanship of Oren P. Harris (D., Ark.), Clark's testimony was delayed during the early days of 1960.

Early in the hearings, Representative Harris was irked when subcommittee member Representative John Bennett (R., Mich.) made unscheduled disclosures on Clark. He broke in to express his disapproval of Bennett's "spreading on the record" the Clark evidence before the subcommittee staff had finished its preliminary investigation.

Bennett replied he was "quite concerned" over the delay in calling Clark to the witness stand—as was Clark. "He's obviously very seriously involved in payola," said Bennett, adding the subcommittee had exposed only "peanut disc jockeys." He went on:

"We have plenty of information to question Clark. I don't think we need a Federal case prepared before calling him. We have more evidence than we had on many of these small-time operators we've been fooling around with; I hope he will be called as soon as possible."

Bennett pictured Clark as epitomizing "the evils of payola."

In answer to Bennett, subcommittee counsel Robert W. Lishman noted that "a substantial part of Clark's \$500,000, more or less, income is taken from royalties on musical copyrights. These copyrights in turn were or are owned by Clark corporations or by individuals acting for and with him.

“Presently our accountants and investigators are examining the books and records of more than 17 corporations. In addition, we are investigating allegations involving more than 80 individuals who are said to have had singular business relationships with Clark in his broadcasting and other activities. This work by the staff has been and is being conducted in Philadelphia, New York, and other localities.”

Speaking of Clark’s reported relinquishment of financial involvement in the 17 corporations, Lishman said:

“Whether this divestment is genuine requires long, painstaking attention. The Dick Clark situation requires long, painstaking inquiry. His interests outside his broadcasting activities are complex. Many persons interviewed are reluctant to talk for fear of reprisals in the form of being denied future opportunity of having their records aired or their talents displayed on his or other broadcasting programs. Some individuals associated with him in his various outside business activities likewise are reluctant to furnish information. We have received numerous allegations which turned out to be selfish and malicious motives and completely lacking in factual proof.

“I hope the subcommittee will not be stampeded into taking precipitate action in this or any other case. We are proceeding in this matter with the greatest speed consistent with fairness and the just accomplishment of our statutory duty.”

Generally, recipients, while proud to be bribed, denied accepting money or favors from recording interests. Some did take; some did offer. Some were cut in; some let record distributors make deejay reports on radio station letterheads, and so on. Some, unbelievably, were never affected. However, that payola was “rampant” just does not jibe with the great amounts of money required to produce such a situation.

There were certainly pressures by small company labels to get air play, and this forced the majors to pay off. But put in the perspective of the American way, the practice fades. Most important, it shows to what lengths hypocritical white America can go to keep the black man down.

One jock who was to pick up the cudgel as if nothing had happened was Murray Kaufman, an ex-vaudeville child performer and middle-of-the-road deejay. In 1959 he began filling the spot Freed had made sacred at 1010. Amid competition that was to include three stations at times (WMCA, WMGM, and WABC), Murray, with his simplified Negrofied nickname, "The K," and his African-oriented concerts and chants ("Ah Vey,!" "Geeza-baby"), was to become more than any other disc jockey in America the image of the profession during the early and mid-sixties.

After the payola fury, a group of paid-off jocks made off to KYA, San Francisco, a station that had been floundering with a "Top 40" sound during the fifties. They included Tom "Big Daddy" Donahue and Bobby "The Great" Mitchell, from Philadelphia, where they had WIBG wailing beginning in 1956, along with Joe Niagara, Hy Lit, and "Humble Harve" Miller, and New York's Peter Tripp, "the curly haired boy in the third row," who did very well against Freed on WMGM.

Stories began to come out of the Bay Area about "payola parties." What was meaningful, however, was that Donahue and Mitchell, in particular, kept on playing the same r&b sounds they had laid down in Philadelphia.

KYA was a formatted radio station, but with the arrival of the eastern deejays in 1960, it had one of the rawest, most basic sounds ever heard in radio. Donahue and Mitchell played records like The Iseley Brothers' "Twist and Shout!" and the Shirelles' "Dedicated to the One I Love," both of which had been very big hits in Philadelphia, but they never got any exposure in San Francisco. There they became monsters again.

As Mitchell used to say as he'd slip on a side he didn't dig, directing his remarks at Blore's slick KEWB, out of Oakland, which never made it:

"We take that Mickey Mouse music and toss it across the bay!"

KYA called itself "Jingle Free Radio" and used a musical stab ("Radio K-Y-A!"), one that was hard or one that was

soft, after every record. The station also called itself "The Boss of the Bay" and conducted audience-involving "Battle of the New Sounds" contests, under the program directorship of Les Crane.

It was here, in 1961, that Bill Drake, then Phil Yarborough, got his ideas for the prototight "Boss Radio" sound that dominated format-radio thinking during the last half of the sixties. Drake left KYA to go to KYNO, Fresno, in 1961, where, with no real talent to work with, he began his highly commercial thing.

Said former "Top 40" jock Bob McClay: "Drake's not original. It's all been done before. Combination and pressure. He combined every goddamned possible 'Top 40' cliché and really laid it on thick."

Said Les Turpin, who began with Drake in 1961: "There's no satisfaction in digging format radio. It's got about as much depth, I don't even think there's a word in the dictionary for it. . . . His original total format was absolutely mechanical. He is, without a doubt, the finest commercial ear in the world today. It's frustrating."

The stinger jingles, surprisingly, beat Blore at his own game, plus an overwhelming multitude of minus factors such as Sherwood, the Giants, a supersaturation of "Top 40" in a relatively small market, and early fragmentation due to the success of sweet and swinging KPEN-FM, the quick interest in jazzy KJAZ-FM, and the lush sound Gordon McLendon introduced in 1959 with KABL.

Blore had used short jingles at KFVB with stunning success, but he abandoned them for a long package for KEWB of the supersmiling variety in late sixty. As a result KEWB, which thought San Francisco was too cosmopolitan for rhythm and blues (it long had two r&b stations; Los Angeles, with five times the population, has oftentimes had only one), lost all the way around. KYA, without the gimmicks and promotional joy (KEWB had gone on the air in 1959 with a twenty-four-hour reading from Bay Area telephone books), played more music and proved that San

Francisco teen-to-twenty-five were no different from anywhere else.

So complete was KEWB's defeat that when its morning man in 1963, Bob Hudson, coined the "Emperor" nickname that swept the nation, KYA's Gene Nelson was to make great use of it during sixty-four to sixty-five when Hudson left for a wake-up spot at KRLA, Pasadena.

As for McLendon, he had purchased KROW, Oakland, and moved the station to San Francisco to give KABL community identification with the city's cable cars. He was thought to be bringing more "Top 40" to the Bay, even as seven stations were blasting it out. He kept the notion alive briefly as tongue-in-cheek he put KABL on the air by playing a rock hit, "The Gila Monster" (the title tune from a McLendon-owned movie) thirty-six hours straight as KABL announcers gave the record "number this or that!"

However, KABL then successfully went "beautiful music" (daytime "schmaltz" and evening classical) with straight-voiced, dramatic deejays reading saccharine odes to San Francisco that have become broadcasting legends and have been adopted in other markets. The KABL sound today seems to permeate downtown San Francisco retail operations, and it has a highly affluent, attentive listenership.

The sound of KYA was to represent a thrust in the explosion of the blues-based new rock in 1966. At that time, the station had become pretty sloppy, although it still maintained a big audience. It had been purchased by Clinton Churchill of Buffalo, where he operated the highly successful WKBW, in 1962.

Beginning in 1958, for at least six years, WKBW grew as a fast-paced, personality "Top 40" outlet, with screamers like Dick Biondi, Joey Reynolds, Tommy Shannon, and Danny Neverth. Reynolds and Neverth even recorded a novelty, "Rats in My Room," that was a local hit. But their follow-up, "Underwater Surfer," flopped.

Reynolds, a three-hundred-pound Calibanal jock (similar to wild journeyman Chuck Dunaway, "The Round Mound of Sound") generated real excitement but was rather offensive.

In fact, his mucky mouth and Augean appearance have continually kept him from moving into the big time, although in 1969, he made it to WIBG, Philadelphia.

If Reynolds hasn't lost a job with his boorish comments on the air, his slovenly meetings with the public have disenchanting audiences. No station has been able to keep the reigns on the Buffalo boy born Joey Pinto.

Churchill brought out Nelson, Tommy Saunders, and Russ "The Moose" Syracuse, one of the finest midnight men in radio today, to go along with Donahue ("Big Daddy here to blow your mind and clear up your face!") and Mitchell. But Churchill's weak point was that he had no limitations on talk, and more important, little point of view. Program directors, who came and went at KYA from 1963 to 1965, had to answer to Churchill too much on too many small matters.

Over those three years, KYA held the market pretty much by default. When Drake came back to town, to RKO General's long-hurting KFRC, with his "More Music," "Boss Jock," "Big 610 Men," and "Hitbound" sound in 1966 (with the highly creative program directorship of Tom Rounds, who became part of Charlatan Productions, which was responsible for the special effects in "The Trip" and the Miami Pop Festival, Christmas Week, 1968), KYA dropped. However, the cycle came around again in 1968 when the station was purchased by Avco Broadcasting and the team of general manager Howard Kester and program director Dick Starr from teeny successful WFUN, Miami, overhauled KYA by tightening up the personalities while allowing them the usual mediocre expression), introducing a new jingle package (stunning to hear after seven years of "Radio K-Y-A!"), and knocked off KFRC. Late in 1969, it was the top-rated station in the market.

Said new KYA deejay Gary Schaeffer in the spring of sixty-eight:

"We're trying to be everything to everybody. Like Drake says: 'In San Francisco, MacDonald's is where it's really at, not the Fillmore and Avalon.' If we win the Peninsula, we win the race. The high schoolers see a guy with long hair

for the first time and they go wild. They've never seen a guy like that. It's amazing; it's totally amazing."

Said ex KYA jock Tommy Saunders:

"We did basically the same thing in Buffalo that we're doing here. It's funny, you go through so many formats at these places you wind up doing approximately what you used to do."

But Bay Area musicians had been influenced by six years of Donahue and Mitchell, whose Autumn label in 1963-64 prophesized the "San Francisco Sound," (and the rocking soul sounds of the original KSAN—to become KSOL in 1963—which, at one time, featured the fantastic jockeying of Sly Stone), and when The Family Dog produced its first concert, KYA's "Russ the Moose" was the master of ceremonies. He had been playing some of the embryonic music on his casually raucous midnight shows when rock matured in the fall of 1965 (after folk had gone electric) and had become *the* overnight jock in the market. However, after that, so-called psychedelic dances were notable for not using deejay emcees, although many tried to add their pallid rap to the phantasms.

During the summer of 1967, at the height of the psychedelic explosion, KFRC and KYA naturally began including a lot of acid rock. As a result, "Top 40" shares in San Francisco dropped to an all-time low. Even in the "Liverpool of the West," the music had less mass appeal than thought. However, a good deal of the audience had gone over to KMPX, the FMer that was playing the new music how and when the audience wanted to hear it.

Interestingly, thirty thousand of whatever the audience was had been brought together for two days by KFRC the weekend before Monterey Pop for a fantastic "Magic Mountain Music Festival" atop Marin County's idyllic Mount Tamalpais.

Its stunning accomplishment was not without unbelievable frustrations, and its achievement has been lost in the publicity for Monterey. Among other things, after the hip community, whose Artists Liberation Front originated the

idea, wagged its finger at the station for securing the sacred mountain without approval of an Indian princess (and the Indians reportedly told the hippies to butt out), and San Francisco bus operators refused to participate, amid the usual hippie harangues, the event was rained out as originally scheduled.

It hadn't rained in the Bay Area the first weekend in June for more than a hundred years. But it came as a deluge, as hippies nodded knowingly. However, the celebration was re-scheduled, and it brought together nearly fifty groups to play in the mountain's natural amphitheater. The vibrations, along with the panoramic vistas, were out of sight.

Peter Tripp, who made it at KYA through 1962 because the station was making it, had come to the market with a great reputation. Primarily, he had achieved monumental fame early in 1959 when he snared the high publicity mark for nonstop broadcasting—201 hours and 10 minutes. This feat has long been a disc jockey attention getter, and virtually every format jock has done it, either for station promotion or to promote personally himself toward a job in a larger market.

It had begun in the mid-fifties with stints lasting 50 or 60 hours, but in 1957, jocks were into 150–175-hour marathons. Tripp, who had received his impetus at Storz's WHB, Kansas City, in 1955, along with old-timers Eddie Clark and Wayne Stitt, and admired format jock Ron Martin ("a universal talent"), did his long thing as part of a March of Dimes promotion, as did others around the country at the time.

However, since Tripp was in New York, he was written about in profusion as a guinea pig important to medical science in *Time*, *Life*, etc. He became nationally famous, although actually he finished third. Dave Hunter, WZRO, Jacksonville, Florida, stayed awake for 9 days, 9 hours, 9 minutes, and 9 seconds—just a little over 225 hours! This bettered a mark Hunter had made in Ocala, Florida, of 187 hours the year before.

Just behind Hunter was a twenty-two-year-old shapely

blonde, Jo Warner, who stayed awake 220 hours on KYTE, Lake Charles, Louisiana. Jo broadcast for 12 hours a day over KYTE and stayed awake the rest of the time spinning records in the window of a Lake Charles music store. Jo said she wanted to go for the 10-day mark of 240 hours but had to call it off in order to rest up for her wedding the following day to Benny Farah, another KYTE deejay.

Other jocks, of course, went after Tripp's mark, and some topped it. The aforementioned Rounds did 203 hours, 44 minutes, and 40 seconds on KPOI, Honolulu, in December, 1959. Accepting congratulations, he did not know he was almost a day behind the real record.

At present, a full 10-day record is claimed as the pinnacle. It is owned by Rhett Evers, WTFM, New York, who lasted it out in 1965. Other variations on the marathon theme over the years have included underwater, ferris wheel, and crane-suspended automobile broadcasting. In 1968, for instance, Houston claimed the new world record of 12,265 consecutive revolutions on the Astro Wheel. KNUZ deejay Larry Vance came down after twenty-two days, breaking the old ferris record of 12,240 set in 1964 in Knoxville, Tennessee.

So many people have been successful by restrictive measures that you look for the de-balled guy, and their own procreation builds. And radio schools teach that technique now, "Don't make a mistake." Paar made a lot of mistakes.

—PETE SCOTT
KSFO

For it is not so great a trick to win the crowd. All that is needed is some talent, a certain dose of falsehood, and a little acquaintance with human passions.

—SÖREN KIERKEGAARD

AT THE MIAMI BEACH fiasco, Westinghouse program manager Bill Kaland made a powerful pitch for imaginative play in programming that evoked an emotional response that was similar to, if understandably smaller than that to Mitch Miller's talk of the year before. Kaland was countered by Bob Purcell of Crowell-Collier and Harold Krelstein of Plough.

They strongly defended "formula radio" as the only way to provide broadcasting with "product control." Both executives pointed out that it was the clear responsibility of man-

agement and not that of the disc jockey to determine the pattern of station operation.

At a later session, Harold E. Fellows, president of the National Association of Broadcasters, supported management control. He said a few disc jockeys were so intent on "projecting themselves as characters" over the air that they lost sight of their responsibilities to their stations.

He stressed the "somewhat terrifying" responsibility disc jockeys bear. Noting that the station manager can't "sit beside a disc jockey and check everything he's going to say," Fellows explained:

"There are important hours of the day, when you alone are in direct communion with most of the citizens of the United States, and upon you alone—in your comportment and judgment—depends the reputation of the entire American system of broadcasting.

"I cannot say to you in a word, or in an arrangement of words, how needful it is that you be aware of this great challenge to our integrity and decency and good judgment."

The few who heard Fellows, if they were not hungover or shacked out, or dreaming up what a record company could do for them next, must have had little doubt that his words were falling on deaf ears. Miami Beach was a highly structured party and fused bomb, woven around potential record sales. Said Bobby Dale:

"They checked me out, found I was No. 3 in the 37th market, and they gave me a dirty book and a towel."

After the damage had been done, and the payola news was about to hit, Westinghouse's president, Donald H. McGannon, told 250 educators, politicians, and broadcasting executives in September:

"The individual in broadcasting is too frequently bridled and stifled by an institutional jingle gym. There's no reason why we should be confused or apprehensive in the handling of the creative individual, if we first recognize that the creative and its results . . . cannot be measured . . . as can a cost accounting procedure.

"No one can catalog or explain that wonderful but in-

tangible creative process . . . a group often descends upon a new-born idea and destroys it by dilution, personal pride, prejudice, compromise, myopic financial considerations."

And just then Blore and Purcell hit the Twin Cities with one of the wildest openings ever in radio. That summer Crowell-Collier purchased WISK for \$750,000 and renamed it KDWB. Unbeknownst to seven Minneapolis-St. Paul radio stations, it hired Dudley LeBlanc of Hadacol promotion fame to lend his name as a supposed advertiser introducing a new patent medicine into the market—"Formula 63."

At the stations' regular card rates, a local ad agency placed recorded spots on the stations, plus KMSP-TV, along with copy for station announcers. As KDWB began running day and night municipal shows at 50¢ admission to benefit the Community Chest, the recorded commercial recited that "Formula 63" was for "tired, dull, repressed people" and promised "immediate boredom relief."

The announcers' copy told listeners to go to any branch of a local drug chain and pick up free "Formula 63" samples. The packages, of course, contained no product—only advertising matter for KDWB (630 kc.), and its auditorium shows. The stores had 120,000 such samples, which Crowell-Collier had had inexpensively stuffed at a local society for the blind.

As the stations discovered the hoax, they quickly dropped the spots. Some threatened FCC and FTC action, as did disappointed listeners who had rushed out to the drugstores. WPBC station manager William Stewart personally went on the air to apologize for the "misleading announcements and gross misinterpretation of facts."

However, prior to the cancellations, KDWB ("Formula 63") had several hours of spot announcements throughout the morning on all seven radio stations. One disc jockey made the announcement and added his own personal endorsement of "Formula 63." Another stumbled through an ice-cream spot and explained his tongue-tiedness by saying, "I must have taken too much of that 'Formula 63.'"

At still another station, a jock said he smelled a rat, "but

what the hell—it's two bucks in my pocket every time I read one of the spots—I'll take the bread."

KDWB, however, had quite a bit to overcome in the Twin Cities, where WDGY had corralled quite a market for three years. In fact, it is generally felt that the Blore Texas *cum* California approach took little into consideration about what Minneapolis-St. Paul was about. In other words, KDWB, it was said, was a rubber-stamp operation and too sophisticated for the northernaires, who had developed a fierce loyalty for WDGY, which repaid them, in the early sixties, by automating itself!

With the payola shock, radio station madness tapered off pretty much through 1960. One of the major crosses brought to bear, although it was only temporary, for the FCC was ultimately talked out of the notion, was to have stations announce that records were supplied free of charge. Some of the straighter stations complied with the ruling, but it was quickly canceled as various groups cried it would destroy the mood they were trying to create.

However, stations began receiving discs that barely ran two minutes to cut down on expenses during a shaky period. For stations were shying away from new talent, if they weren't panicking altogether into "good music" formats. This growth of better-music stations also deterred the development of FM.

However, WLS, the long-time "Prairie Farmer" station of Chicago, began to rock in March, 1960, and it built a fantastic audience around the frenzy of Dick Biondi, who catapulted out of WLS's powerful nighttime signal to the leading spot in markets as far away as Pittsburgh and Wheeling. Diving into "Top 40" at the height of the storm, WLS jumped to the top of the market before the year's end and set the pattern for the successful formatting of slumping American Broadcasting Company stations in Pittsburgh (KQV) and New York (WABC). The network's Detroit outlet, WXYZ, actually had been into format radio during the last half of the fifties. It was reportedly the first network affiliate to make the switch successfully.

One day Kore (Persephone) was gathering flowers in the fields of Nysa with her companions when she suddenly noticed a narcissus of striking beauty. She ran to pick it, but as she bent down to do so the earth gaped open and Hades appeared. He seized her and dragged her with him down into the depths of the earth.

—*Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*

Come on, baby, get in my big black car.

—WILLIE DIXON

RADIO RATHER MARKED time during the early sixties. The payola stink kept a certain amount of pressure on broadcasters, and with the inauguration of the Kennedy Administration, the notion of radio as something other than a great, garish billboard was pulled into action.

Newton Minow's "Vast Wasteland" speech caused great rivulets in radio, and a code was accepted in 1962 recommending that radio stations use no more than eighteen minutes of commercials per hour. Investigations into the ratings services, with disarming disclosures about survey

methods and interpretations, were made, and corrections began in 1963.

In 1961 stereo FM was authorized, and classical, jazz, and the increasingly popular sound of folk music found space on the dial. Radio was, in a sense, doing little more than waiting for The Beatles. But, in another sense, it marked the peak of personality madness, and across the country the Sherwoods and Cordics were at their zenith.

As for the Negro disc jockey, whom "Murray the K" was emulating as did Freed before him, he was beginning to be formatted, which was a mixed blessing. It meant more money but less freedom.

Black jocks had organized as the National Association of Radio Announcers in 1956 in an attempt to better their positions and conditions. It was no secret that rhythm and blues disc jockeys were, in the main, extremely low-salaried, despite their growing influence in their communities and their consequent power in breaking new records. (This, in itself, had become another mixed blessing because of the rise of the cut-rate rack jobbers, led by Handelman of Detroit, which brought on the demise of the small retailer.) Concern over the inequities and what could be done about them became the main topic at NARA's (to become NATRA to include TV) annual get-togethers.

Ironically, the payola hearings inadvertently helped make the very individualistic r&b jock the record industry's prime outlet for breaking out a new record in the early sixties. So many broadcasters in the major markets clamped down on the airing of new releases in favor of sales-tested "Top 40" formats that in many areas the r&b spinner emerged as the only jockey left who was willing and/or able to give new wax a big play.

This was not, by any means, a new phenomenon. However, it did intensify the initiating influence of the r&b disc jockey. Although many of the black jocks were on small stations, their importance in getting a single record started was far beyond their wattage. Many, of course, still demanded payola, and in many ways, the hearings made

little difference in the life of the rhythm and blues deejay.

At NARA's 1962 convention, recording-industry executives showed up in greater numbers than ever before, and for the first time, the meeting was more than a social event. The last day of the convention, a meeting was held between a committee of record manufacturers and a group of NARA officers. It reportedly involved a frank exchange which hoped to stabilize the relationship between the two.

From it, it was said, came an understanding that there would be no favors granted by the manufacturers and none asked by the jocks. The manufacturers stated openly there should be no criterion for exposure other than the merits of the product itself.

Media conventions are notorious for what the black man calls "signifying," although the 1968 NATRA conclave produced actual violence for black militants anxious to own their own thing. The next year, security restrictions were uncommonly tight, but the jocks were far more into an after-hours socializing.

Very little that goes down at such get-togethers is not jive, except, perhaps, what goes on behind the scenes. Much is talked out, but their prime purpose is to put up a good, legit front.

Through the efforts in the late sixties of The Fair Play Committee, a SNCC offshoot dedicated to improving the lot of blacks in broadcasting and recording, NATRA has become a deeply committed organization, but payola, particularly in the r&b field, is still a factor. It is not likely to decrease as long as the importance of black music grows with American white youth. Of course, if the payoff were fair all the way around, it could mean the end of the blues—at least blues that do not deal with the war between the sexes.

Still, as John Hardy said:

"Indie record companies are always cropping up. It's great free enterprise, but it makes it tough to make up a playlist."

White jocks, in the meantime, still managed to have their

own thing going. Many, in the shadow of free-lance San Francisco programmer Bill Gavin, were producing an underground press of sorts through intratrade newsletters. It was pop pamphleteering that ran from what's new in my neck of the woods to vitriolic attacks on the state of the industry, and what to do with chicks who are always calling up ("Ball 'em").

Cleveland's Tom Edwards, Cincinnati's "Jockey Jack" Gibson, Atlanta's Paul Drew, Buffalo's George "Hound Dog" Lorenz, Detroit's Tom Clay, San Francisco's Tom Donahue and Ted Randal, and Los Angeles' George Jay could be quite outspoken in their sheets, but it was Gavin's that became the Bible of the business.

(In 1969, for instance, WPRO, Providence, besides consulting *Billboard*, *Cash Box*, and *Record World*, was receiving at least eight newsletters. One was put out by Memphis jock Johnnie King under the name Gideon B. Matthews. He called his pick hits for the week "St. Matthews' Passions!")

Another came from Philadelphia's Kal Rudman, a contributing editor of *Record World*. Rudman is a former child psychologist who gave up his practice with retarded children, on which he'd written two books, when he became fascinated by the record business. His tip sheet is called "The Friday Morning Quarterback—A Factual Programming Guide," and it characterizes successes as "Touchdown of the Week," "Longest Pass Completion of the Week," "70 Yard Field Goal," etc.)

The "Gavin Sheet," second only in influence to *Billboard*, began as an outgrowth of the "Lucky Lager Dance Time," which Gavin programmed during the last half of the fifties. The show had begun in the early forties on KFAC, Los Angeles, with Ira Cook as the disc jockey, at the suggestion of Lucky Lager president Eugene Seldridge.

It was a "Hit Parade" type of show for the West Coast, and for nineteen years Saturday-night audiences in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle tuned in for the "Lucky 10," which was the results of a weekly local

survey. Seldridge felt that the show was public service. No long commercials were used, and the company printed up surveys for record stores and promotion.

Although the show was designed for young people, Seldridge insisted they be told not to buy Lucky Lager! This, of course, pleased the parents, and they bought the beer and made it number one in the market. Their children did, too, when they were old enough.

However, in 1955, the audience started to get younger as the music became controversial—as did record-store surveys. When people began complaining that Lucky Lager was trying to sell teen-agers beer, the show went off the air in 1959.

In 1958, Gavin's sheet began through his corresponding with stations in the West for "Lucky Lager Dance Time." His cross-section average was sent back to the stations as the "Lucky Top 60." However, the sheet had no eastern data, so Gavin started sending his "Top 60" to eastern stations in return for information. While Gavin was the great beneficiary initially, the exchange benefited everyone as it spread regional action on a national level.

Today most radio stations program from the weekly *Billboard* chart (although the practice has many detractors and critics); it was Gavin who pushed *Billboard*, and *Cash Box*, into relatively more reliable reports during the sixties. Initially, the sheet was not charged for, but today thousands of radio stations pay up to \$250 a quarter for a subscription. Gavin has approximately 150 correspondents covering the four major fields of music (rock, reckless, rhythm & blues, and country). Some 20 per cent of the correspondence comes by telephone, at the stations' expense.

He varies his listings, even though they may be the same across the country. It is up to him to diversify his sheet and make it interesting, although some record people say it is not discriminating enough. But the end result is a more-or-less truthful picture of the pop record scene.

Since 1966, Gavin has set up a rule of exclusivity. He will not publish the name of anyone reporting to other papers,

and his correspondents are the recipients of, besides a free subscription, a sheet stamped "Confidential." This is little more than an ever-so-slight bonus to his correspondents in the form of in-trade gossip. The popular music world has been called "the greatest grapevine in the world."

A Gavin sheet is headed **BILL GAVIN'S RECORD REPORT #**—(the week of May 22, 1970 was number 800), with **WEEKLY SUMMARY** beneath. Its form is generally unvarying.

The first page has the following information at the top: "Smash of the Week"; "Sleeper of the Week"; "Hot Shot"; "Top Tip"; "Record to Watch." Next comes the "Recommended Playlist" broken down into the "Hot Ten" and "Solid Hits," or "The Top Twenty" (depending on how strong the second ten are), "Best Prospects," and "Gaining in Several Markets."

The next section is devoted to "Top Prospects—Sales, Requests & Airplay," followed by "Significant Regionals," broken down into "Regional Sales and/or Requests" (strongest underlined) and "Picks & Plays" (sales underlined).

Page two is usually devoted to "Correspondents' Corner," with sales underlined, requests marked with an asterisk, and all other listings reflecting air play. The bottom of the page contains "Late Flashes & Second Guesses."

A typical Gavin continues with "Non-Rock Programming," broken down into "Reckless Top Thirty," "Preferred Picks" (requests are marked with an asterisk, sales underlined), "Newer Releases," "Correspondents' Top Thirty," "Still Showing Gains," "Moving," "Programmed LPs," "Preferred Picks" (sales underlined), "Regional Highlights," "Late Arrivals—Pop Possibilities," etc.

Page four also usually has "Gavin's Gab" (or "On the Record") at the bottom of the page, where it may overlap onto the sixth and last page under "Bill Gavin's Personal Picks" and "Also Possible."

Page five is "Country Music," usually broken down into "Recommended," "Also Possible," "Top C&W Hits," "Action Records," "Regional Action," "Roundup," "LP Cuts," etc.

"Gavin's Gab" is a gossip column similar to what Earl

Wilson, Irv Kupcinet, Herb Caen, *et al.*, provide for their communities. Similarly, it can concern itself editorially in no uncertain terms. Gavin did a similar column for *Billboard* during the mid-sixties. Mostly, the material is advice on programming. A sample, "On the Record" in the April 18, 1969, "Gavin" was the third and concluding section dealing with program directors. In part, it read:

"Your hardest and most important job is maintaining discipline in your D.J. staff and at the same time building a good feeling of friendliness and confidence. The jock who does just what you tell him only *because* you tell him may be good, but he'll never be great. The jock who understands *why* and believes that yours is the way to go will be his own best critic, and his air work will reflect freedom and creativity."

"On the Record" went on to make sure "*you are the boss*" but to have the sense to know when to be the kind mentor and when to be the stern taskmaster. ("Various temperaments respond differently to your approach.") Some jocks may be making a great deal more than the program director, wrote Gavin, but their position must not be allowed to control the station's operation.

In this vein, he advised the p.d. to be constantly alert for carelessness and overconfidence. This does not mean, he said, to have the staff working under a constant threat of "shape up or ship out," because a sense of job security is basic to a staff's morale.

Gavin went on to expound on sales department cooperation ("Sometimes this isn't easy. Many PD's resent sales pressures to increase the spot load or to run commercial promos") and community involvement ("You can build listener loyalties by being aware of listener concerns and doing something about them. Make sure that your DJ's reflect the world outside the station. . . . Plan shows, concerts, exhibits, etc., to raise funds for charities.")

Some newsletters have been classics, notably the "Tempo" sheets of Tom Donahue in the early and mid-sixties. *J.C.'s Think Sheet* out of Erie, Pennsylvania, offered the following

information as its "Instant Thought" of the week in June, 1969:

"Just about everyone reads a National Trade. Some of us rely to a great extent on where records are listed in these trades. We have learned that one of these trades lists singles by the amount of advertising purchased! The other goes all out to select the right ones. It is not our intention to print WHO is doing this . . . but if YOU as a programmer or Music Director would start studying closely BOTH lists weekly . . . you'll see for yourself which is the one to go by. While we think of it . . . study our PICKS & Selling 45's . . . Coming on Strong Platters . . . and Quick Tips. . . WE TOO study all gathered facts closely to determine hits! There is no other way if one is to have a factual . . . informative . . . valuable . . . and interesting operation."

One of the great newsletters rolled off the tart tongue of payola jock Tom Clay, who had inherited Ed McKenzie's "Jack the Bellboy" tag at WJBK in the mid-fifties. (McKenzie went to WXYZ, and the court ruled he was not the owner of his nickname.) In his June 15, 1961, sheet, Clay, who apparently had settled down to leading WQTE, Detroit, out of a middle-of-the-road wilderness and into a rock 'n' roll wonderland, wrote:

"How do you write your own swan song? Do you wait until the end of the note and very dramatic like say . . ."

The battle was over money. Clay had made real loot through his dance parties, reportedly as much as \$12,000 a night, and "Cutey" wanted a cut. Not a chance, he said in the newsletter, and he went on to describe a meeting with ex-boss Ross Mulholland, in which Clay said Mulholland was "quite loaded," to hash the matter out.

The big bomb Clay dropped into his sheet was the revelation that program director Dave Hull and news director Howard Morgan, both married, were caught with teen-agers in WQTE's offices. Both were fired on the heels of Clay's departure.

Clay was one of the most oral jocks who ever opened his mouth on the air. He made a production number of eating

a candy bar, which another jock said, "I'm sure was Tom kissing himself all over." When Clay went to WCBS-FM in 1969 as part of its "Autonomous Rock" sound, he shook up the upstairs by opening his first show with "I'm going to have intercourse with your mind."

Said WQTE manager Dick Jones: "I'm glad he's gone. He's a constant source of trouble. He just doesn't fit good radio. From now on we're playing nice, quiet music. We are the good music station now. Even FM listeners are tuning us in. Clay is obviously sick."

On FM, another outspoken jock who let his audience know where he was at was at the other end of the spectrum. His name was Seymour DeKoven, and he socked what he called "Barococo" to New York listeners.

Known simply as DeKoven ("I hate Seymour"), he was a fiftyish, Chicago-born prodigy who drifted into classical jockeying in 1953 when he called the Fordham University station, WFUV, to tell them their Dean Eckerstein did not know whereof he spoke, as he was doing at the moment, on the subject of Corelli. Asked if he could do better, DeKoven was on the staff the next day.

Considered the best salesman of classical radio in music, DeKoven maintained there was scarcely anything worth listening to that was written after 1828, the year Shubert died. Building an audience for the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music of Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Vivaldi, etc., that he called "Barococo," DeKoven became syndicated on more than a dozen stations.

With the authorization of stereo FM, he became extremely popular over New York stations WRFM and WNYC. So loyal was his following that he was able to broadcast without commercial sponsorship because five hundred of his listeners voluntarily contributed the \$150 it cost to do the shows.

Said DeKoven in *Time*:

"The biggest nobodies were Berlioz and Brahms. They were just more profound. Who wants music to be profound? Classical music was once popular. People think that you have to hear a pin drop when classical music is being

played. That's not so. Originally it was to dine by or to make chatter to.

"Popular music is only 150 years old. It started as a protest against the introverted. The greatest of the arts were in the Renaissance because they weren't introverted. Originality was not important. Only in the 1800s did it become important if it was original. It was protest music. But it got worse and worse.

"Music has always been universal. Barococo is the greatest of all time. The giants of the Baroque were greater than the rococo—Vivaldi, Bach, Handel. But it was short-lived. So I combined the two to call it Barococo. I don't like the word. Too corny. Our friendly enemies call us the Barococonuts. But it's still the greatest because it's logical. Only through logic. I've tried to prove it."

One of the first classical FM stations to make its presence strongly felt was WFMT, Chicago, which began in 1951. By the end of the decade, WFMT was the highest-rated FM station in the country. In 1959, with the growth of Volkswagen purchases which included Blaupunkt FM radios, it could claim eighth position in the Chicago area Hooper ratings.

An early WFMT announcer was a University of Chicago student named Mike Nichols, who was also probing the world of improvisational theater out of Hyde Park's Compass with people like Shelley Berman, Elaine May, and Severn Dardin. Nichols devised the WFMT announcers' test, some version of which is used to this day. It goes:

"The WFMT announcer's lot is not a happy one. In addition to uttering the sibilant, mellifluous cadences of such cacophonous sounds as Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, Carl Schuricht, Nicanor Zabaleta, Hans Knappertsbusch and the Hammerklavier Sonata, he must thread his vocal way through the complications of L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and other complicated nomenclature.

"However, it must by no means be assumed that the

ability to pronounce L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris with fluidity and verve outweighs an ease, naturalness, and friendliness of delivery when at the omnipresent microphone. For example, when delivering a diatribe concerning Claudia Muzio, Beniamino Gigli, Hetty Plümacher, Giacinto Prandelli, Hilde Rössl-Majdan, and Lina Pagliughi, five out of six is good enough if the sixth one is mispronounced plausibly. Jessica Dragonette and Margaret Truman are taken for granted.

"Poets, although not such a constant annoyance as the polysyllabically named singers, creep in now and then. Of course Dylan Thomas and W. B. Yeats are no great worry.

"Composers occur almost incessantly, and they range all the way from Albeniz, Alfvén and Auric through Wolf-Ferrari and Zeisl.

"Let us reiterate that a warm, simple tone of voice is desirable, even when introducing the Bach cantata, 'Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis,' or Monteverdi's opera *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.

"Such, then, is the warp and woof of an announcer's existence 'In diesen heil'gen Hallen.'"

Another early classical FM outlet of similar stripe was KSFR, San Francisco, which was the toy of announcer Al Levitt. The station was the principal source for the hilarious sale of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms sweatshirts for Rainier Ale during the early sixties.

Levitt sold the station to Metromedia in 1967, at which time the citizenry was assured KSFR would retain its classical programming. However, within a year, Metromedia changed the call letters to KSAN. Shortly after, the company announced KSAN would go "underground rock," and it became a tremendous force in the hip community.

Music stands apart from all other arts. In music we do not recognize any limitations or reproduction of an idea of the things of the world. This is why the effect of music is so much more powerful and penetrating than that of the other arts, for *they* speak only of shadows, but *it* speaks of the thing itself. Music is an art so great and surpassingly glorious, it acts mightily upon the innermost being of man. There it is understood so completely and profoundly as an entirely universal language, and even more distinct than the language of the perceptible world.

—ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

The only place where it's happening is on the radio and on records. That's where people hang out. It's not in book form, it's not on the stage. All this art they've been talking about, it just remains on the shelf. Radio and records, that's the place.

—BOB DYLAN

IN 1962, DAN SORKIN, a disc jockey on WCFL, Chicago, undertook a campaign over the airwaves to "Save Rose Bimler." For more than six months, Sorkin, who is acknowledged to be one of the more quick-witted and imaginative deejays in the business, championed Rose's cause—whatever it was—every morning.

Soon there were "Save Rose Bimler" clubs from coast to coast, buttons, bumper stickers, and even a campaign song—"The Ballad of Rose Bimler" ("I dreamed I saw Rose

Bimler/So plump and dignified/Marching Mrs. Bimler
/With no one at her side. . . .")

Who was Rose Bimler and what was she to be saved from? "To me," said the side-step serious Sorkin, who co-authored a book on disc jockeys, *The Blabbermouths*, in 1960. "Rose is fighting for individuality in a society that constantly destroys it. She's the symbol of the little man everywhere. I have personally never met the woman."

At the height of Rose's popular protest, Sorkin was given a rating by A. C. Nielsen, the world's largest marketing-research organization, which gave the over-all impression that his audience was very small, literally nonexistent at certain times of the morning. The fact that his commercial time had been sold out for three years made this Nielsen Station Index (a much-maligned survey at that time) for the Chicago area a rather mystifying analysis.

Sorkin took note of his latest ratings and went on the air bemoaning his having no one to talk to. "I was taught to direct myself to just one person out there, but I guess I can't even do that," he said sadly.

A. C. Nielsen, Sorkin told his audience, had said in effect they did not exist. Referring to individual listeners over the air as "Lamont Cranston," "The Shadow," and "Topper," Sorkin suggested they communicate from the other world and write the rating service—"if they were for real."

According to Sorkin, for a week Nielsen's mailroom was swamped with bags of letters that grew "geometrically" daily. One of the letters was from a founding director of the Advertising Research Foundation, who wrote:

"I personally know of at least twenty people, all in the advertising business, who constantly listen to WCFL in the morning, many of them while driving to their offices."

The response was such that Nielsen felt obliged to answer each one with a form letter of explanation and apology. When this happened, Sorkin confusedly and bemusedly pondered over the air what kind of nuts there were at Nielsen who actually wrote letters to people whom they themselves said did not exist! He advised his "poor, neu-

rotic" fans to call A. C. Nielsen, whose headquarters are in Chicago, and seek an explanation of this peculiar behavior.

Sorkin said the Nielsen switchboard was flooded with calls. It got so bad that it even became impossible to make outgoing calls. One was finally made, to Sorkin, from an executive, who said the joke had gone far enough!

But as far as Sorkin was concerned, there remained one final filip needed to salve his bruised reputation. He asked that his listeners join him in a mass picket before the Nielsen offices.

By actual count, said Sorkin, 622 placard-bearing and chanting demonstrators aired their displeasure on the sidewalk outside the building. A few months later, A. C. Nielsen withdrew from the business of local radio ratings, the prime factor being a congressional denunciation (by the Harris Committee) of audience measurement methods.

A little while later, Sorkin lost his job at WCFL. He hints that his testifying in a Lenny Bruce obscenity trial resulted in pressure on WCFL by an all-powerful City Hall to fire him. (Arrested at The Gate of Horn night club in Chicago, Bruce alleged it was for his scathing remarks about the Catholic Church.)

Today, Sorkin has a large and loyal following in late morning time on KSFO, San Francisco. His almost \$80-an-hour salary goes entirely to Synanon, of which he is a resident, although he has never been a hard narcotics user. He said:

"In Chicago, I was a distillation of Lenny Bruce and Jonathan Winters, and I was reaching a very small, loyal audience. I wasn't changing any people's minds. Here, I'm doing it subtly. I've changed a lot of people's minds about Synanon, and it's been a great help to us.

"Instead of enjoying the trip, like I'm doing now, I was seeking a goal. I don't try to bring order into a world of chaos anymore, at all."

Into that world, in 1963, the availability on the dial began to increase. FCC Chairman Newton Minow stated what

many within the trade had long felt to be the solution—encouragement of flexibility and specialization of programming by radio stations. However, too many radio stations were unable to formulate fresh program ideas and permitted themselves to become slaves to formulas of one type or another, he said.

At the same time, an attempt to produce pop gospel music failed, as did its logical exploitative extension, “Sweet Charity” key clubs. Said a jubilant Mahalia Jackson:

“Pop gospel music has failed because it’s not the voice and sentiment of the American people. There are some things people are afraid to mess with and pop gospel was one of those things. No man wants to be pulled down, and pop gospel music was like pulling God down.”

(However, in another time, the spring of 1969, The Edwin Hawkins Singers’ “Oh Happy Day!” unprecedentedly cut through all music categories to be heard on radio stations of different appeal.)

But God was said to be dead in 1963, and between the time 200,000 people marched for freedom in Washington, D.C., and John F. Kennedy was murdered in Dallas, Lena Horne sounded the cry of revolution and brought another moment of truth to radio stations across the land. Her 20th Century-Fox single, “Now,” was an adaptation by composer Jule Styne and lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green of the rousing Israeli freedom song “Hava Nagilah,” and it struck a more controversial note than such successful folk tunes as “Blowin’ in the Wind,” “If I Had a Hammer,” and “We Shall Overcome.”

In Los Angeles, for example, the record was virtually blacked out. Among those not playing it were KMPC, KLAC, KHJ, KFWB, KRLA and KNX. KGFJ, KRHM, KRKD and KDAY, two of which were Negro-oriented, played it.

KLAC program director James Lightfoot said he felt the disc was “too strong and out of the realm of entertainment.” He called it an editorial and said it was the kind of material that didn’t fit the station’s image at the moment. Said KMPC program director Ross Barnett:

"The song is pretty strong editorially, and we'd rather cover editorial matters through news and documentaries. Some of the lines are just too strong."

Said the producer of the single, Budd Granoff:

"What astonishes me about L.A. is that in this large city with its cross currents of culture, the record can't get a fair hearing."

In Chicago, only three stations went on the side, the Negro slanted WYNR, WAAF, and WVON. Said WBBM program director Len Schlosser:

"The record is in the area of political and militant action. It is no longer strictly entertainment, whereas the Mahalia Jackson version is more in the entertainment area."

Said WGN program director Bob Bradford:

"The lyrics are offensive. We object specifically to the line 'Don't take it literally, mister, nobody wants to grab your sister.' It's an inflammatory treatment of an incendiary situation. We never had any objection to 'Blowin' in the Wind,' which took a much different approach."

In New York, "Now" received its widest acceptance, with WINS, WABC, WMCA, WNBC, WJRZ (Newark), and WNEW airing it. The latter's William B. Williams ("the psychoanalyst for 500,000 Long Island housewives," oh-so casual that he works standing up, and occasionally can be heard jingling the coins in his pocket) was credited with having initiated the release after seeing a performance of it by Miss Horne at a Carnegie Hall concert.

The only station issuing any statement was WCBS. Program director Joe Cook said, ". . . the rocker was incompatible with the station's format" and he was "not recommending" that it be played by his airmen.

And after "Now," The Beatles and Stones came to America. And in Los Angeles, "Magnificent Montague" on KGFJ began spinning rhythm & blues discs with the appeal "Burn, Baby, Burn!"

The long-haired overseers invasion broadened considerably the appeal of what can no longer properly be called rock 'n' roll. What the English did to rock, or more pre-

cisely rhythm & blues, was improve it. The story of the evolution of jazz has been told and retold, but the authentic blues—the alienated music of the Negro—had not, at that time, attained what could be considered mass appeal.

The rock 'n' roll of the fifties passed through the molding hands of the southern white as an amalgam of rhythm and blues and country and western music. The music of the fifties came out of Memphis and Nashville from the cotton fields; the sound of the sixties came from Liverpool and San Francisco out of the same starting gate, and with good reason.

During the late fifties, the more sensational Negro entertainers like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, James Brown, T-Bone Walker, and Muddy Waters toured Great Britain and northern Europe extensively. The pallid English milltown youth responded enthusiastically to rhythm and blues (sides of which were not being heard in the U.S.), restructured its simple chords, and brought it back to the “colonies” in about the same time it took to bring off the Revolution.

The music that Tin Pan Alley could not take straight up from the South, it did accept through the teen-agers when packaged in an albeit shaggy but nonetheless White Anglo-Saxon Protestant guise. But to be added to the blur of fusion that in the sixties pushed American popular music to new dimensions of excitement was a growing attachment of the “bomb babies” to folk music in which they sought to express their commitment first to civil rights and then opposition to the Vietnam War in particular, and disenchantment with their education and “the good life” in general. Experimentation with LSD further solidified the youthful radioactive community.

In 1965, Bob Dylan wedded folk to rock, and what The Beatles had borrowed from the blues became backed up by folk rock groups like The Byrds, The Lovin' Spoonful, The Mamas and The Papas, Simon and Garfunkel, and Sonny and Cher. But, while the voice of The Turtles was heard throughout the land, the ballad and popular soloists were also beginning to appear on the record charts for the first time in a long while.

The summer of 1965 seems to have been the dawning of the Age of Aquarius. A great surge of folk-oriented rock and explosive soul poured into the charts following The Byrds' "Turn, Turn, Turn," and "Mister Tambourine Man," and Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone," "Subterranean Homesick Blues," and "Ballad of a Thin Man," the first a seven-minute disc that broke the bounds of AM programming restrictions.

Perhaps the year's most momentous event was the FCC decision that radio stations could have no more than half of their FM programs simulcast. This meant new vistas would have to be found for FM stations, and with the advent of the new rock, they were. Not surprisingly, radio did not take the initiative quickly in going "underground" or "progressive." It was well over a year before FM rock was heard around the clock on radio.

Another major happening that summer took place when the Office of Economic Opportunity, responsible for the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty, found itself unable to reach the lower-class youth with its message. When it was decided to promote its programs with a ninety-minute rock 'n' roll spectacular on CBS television, the big problem was how to get the word around that the show was going to be on.

The June 29 program, "It's What's Happening, Baby!" was emceed by "Murray the K," whom the OEO discovered was far and away the most well-known individual to New York City teen-agers. It had its inception in the belief by officials of the War on Poverty that this type of show would attract teen-age viewers because the kids were almost continually tuned in to rock 'n' roll or rhythm and blues radio.

However, the hang-up was in getting independent radio to promote prime-time network TV. It was decided to send out letters from Sargent Shriver personally to leading rock 'n' roll deejays across the country indicating how important this show was to the public interest and asking their help in promoting it to their audiences.

The disc jockeys and their stations readily cooperated,

and the now-famous extravaganza including The Supremes, Dionne Warwick, Johnny Mathis, Ray Charles, Martha and the Vandellas, Herman's Hermits, The Righteous Brothers, Cannibal and the Headhunters, etc., which shocked Capitol Hill, attracted almost as many listeners as its stiff competition (Ben Casey and Jonathan Winters) combined. And OEO offices received ten thousand pieces of mail within a week.

But its soul baring could not hold back the storm. At the end of the summer the power of radio's magic, and what a disc jockey's influence can be turned to, was most frighteningly shown in the Watts riots. As one report read:

"Everywhere you turned you heard it, and the eyes couldn't believe what they saw in the form of fire. Entire blocks gutted. Blazing automobiles in every conceivable position in the streets. Muzzle flames of guns added themselves to the spectacle, and through it all came the unending chant—'Burn, baby, burn. . . .' And you'd better join in with the chant if you were Negro, for nonchanters were suspect and likely to be beaten. 'Burn, baby, burn . . . Burn, baby, burn . . . Burn, baby, burn . . . Burn, baby, burn . . .'"

KGFJ is one of the most widely listened to Negro radio stations in the country. A study the summer of 1965 of the Negro market in Southern California revealed that of entire homes surveyed, more than two thirds said they listened to KGFJ most.

The morning disc jockey on KGFJ was "Magnificent Montague," who had come to Los Angeles after successful stints over the previous decade in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco, where he used as his slogan "Burn, Baby, Burn." In the opinion of Arnold Schorr, general manager of KGFJ, Montague was then the "most famous Negro disc jockey in the country." Schorr also said he tended to agree with the belief of a social worker that KGFJ is a more authoritarian figure to Watt's teen-agers than their own parents.

The expression "Burn, Baby, Burn" is nothing more than an evolution of the chant "Go, Go, Go!" or "Go, Man, Go!"

mixed with the additional slang usage of "cook," meaning "to be in the know," "filled with enthusiasm," "enter into the spirit or mood," etc. It was a picturesque cry for the Negro kids who heard it *every* day. The same can be said for any modification of basic slang that retains its original meaning; such infectiousness is the essence of poetry.

Also, when a disc jockey is said to be "burning the town down," he is "cooking" by firmly establishing himself as the "king of rhythm and blues deejays in capturing most of the Negro audience." When "Magnificent Montague" would cry "Burn, Baby, Burn," it meant merely that his audience should "groove" on a record and, of course, go out and buy it.

The circumstances underlying the uprisings in Watts and elsewhere cannot be discussed here. However, it can be stated that life in a ghetto, whenever in history, requires something to alleviate the complete frustration and restore ego and equilibrium. Its criticisms aside, the position of a leading Negro radio station is just that necessary crucial element, and the Negro market is an intense and loyal one.

The audience for a Negro-oriented station finds it the least expensive, most dependable source for easily obtaining the entertainment and information it desires. That Negro station listenership may be higher in the evenings than during the daylight hours in many markets attests to the economic position of the Negro in regard to the limited availability of television, movies, theater, clubs, etc. Most important, no matter what else he may be doing, it is a voice the Negro can always be tuned in to with relatively complete trust.

So Negro radio, which is almost exclusively devoted to a "Top 40" rhythm and blues sound, understands its market far better than most. Simply, it is not the highly diverse and fragmented audience that confounds market researchers in their investigations. (However, this may be becoming less and less true as the Negro is encouraged to become middle class, the racial sound of popular music becomes harder to distinguish, and the young express their commitments to

the "Movement" in their listening habits. But perhaps in this lies real hope for whatever integration may become.)

And the influence of Negro radio is far-reaching. (It has been called "The Sleeping Giant.") That American slang, like American popular music, evolves greatly from the Negro presents a curious irony in that the secret language of the Negro catalyzed by instant electronic information has made all children master "hipsters" before they barely enter grade school.

Words and expressions like "tough," "soul," "boss," and "tighten up" have in recent years rapidly filtered from the Negro to the teen-ager, into advertising, and to the culture at large, and in particular down to the subteen. The slang word "boss," a relatively recent mass word (as an adjective), has undergone a change that has given it a criminal reference; someone with a "boss" habit is a far-gone narcotics addict.

But in today's common usage, it is a synonym for "biggest," "greatest," as are "tough" and "soul" essentially. Today's youth grow up into a world of superlatives. White-oriented stations that referred to themselves as "Boss Radio" in the late sixties have proliferated, and the use by white six-to-twelve-year-olds became widespread. KDIA, a Negro station in Oakland, called itself "Boss Soul" radio, and a possible trend in the late sixties was called "Pop Soul"—the biggest daddy of 'em all?

So the exchange of values that has taken place via the radio offers a stunning and confusing maze of where it's at.

What had been building up over the years among Los Angeles Negroes may have been directed by "Burn, Baby, Burn," which was the password and battle slogan of the Watts rebels. Although KGFJ ordered "Magnificent Montague" to stop using the expression as soon as it was evident a riot was in progress, it is not out of the question to suggest that the cumulative propaganda from a highly trusted source allowed the conditioned reflexes of the roving teenagers (and subteens) to be triggered.

The charismatic slogan "Burn, Baby, Burn" may have

permitted the performance of satisfactory functions for the successful dispelling of frustration and emotion. For while the chant "Kill Charley" and "Get Whitey" was also heard during the four-day uprising, the fact that no more than one fifth of those killed were not Negro made this at best verbal venting of indignation that was stymied for many reasons. Even given the weapons, and under mob cover (what Huxley called "herd-poisoning"), the destruction of life requires more forethought than the furtive lighting of a match or tossing of a Molotov cocktail.

It would seem that the burning of buildings was more easily in the realm of possibility for the mobs, and so "Burn, Baby, Burn" did in effect "Get Whitey"—the absentee landlords at whom a great part of the Negro's anger was directed, plus making it hot for the "ofay" police and firemen.

This is not an incriminating judgment as much as it would seem to be a sensible interpretation of the actions of the Watts insurrectionists based on what we know, not only from the advanced theories of McLuhan, Jacques Ellul, Herbert Marcuse, etc., but also from the rigid propaganda techniques of converters from John Wesley to Mao Tse-tung, and exhaustive investigations of the behavioral sciences. The intimate relationship KGFJ has with its community points at what McLuhan means when he writes:

"The subliminal depths of radio are charged with resonating echoes of tribal horns and antique drums. [For] those communities that have had only brief or superficial experience of literacy, radio is utterly explosive. . . . Is it not worthy of our meditation that radio should be especially attuned to that primitive extension of our nervous system, that aboriginal mass medium, the vernacular tongue?"

And he adds:

"The power of radio to retribalize mankind, its almost instant reversal of individualism into collectivism, Fascist or Marxist, has gone unnoticed. Radio is not only a mighty awakener of archaic memories, forces, and animosities, but a decentralizing, pluralistic force. . . ."

It is the business of the elders of the tribe to keep the inherited histories and genealogies fresh and accurate in their minds, and to pass them—with any necessary additions—to the rising generation of newly-initiated adults. So on solemn occasions they meet together under the leadership of those with the most tenacious memories, and chant in unison the legends of their forefathers. In this way, they fix the inheritance of oral history more deeply in their minds.

—STEPHEN TOULMIN AND JUNE GOODFIELD

The Discovery of Time

I didn't like the way Gordon went into traffic reports; both times I heard him do it, he did it with humor and the first tidbit of news was a car on fire. I think I would have used a jingle. The Love Bug promotion I heard was a little too complex. I think I would also have double spotted some commercials, then played some records back-to-back to create a more exciting sound.

—CLAUDE HALL

"Vox Jox," *Billboard*

LATE IN 1964, Ira Laufer, sales manager of KABC, Los Angeles, was asked to come to New York to talk to Hathaway Watson, president of RKO General Broadcasting, about becoming the manager of RKO's floundering L.A. radio station, KHJ. While he was not particularly interested in taking over KHJ, Laufer discussed it over the Thanksgiving weekend with Watson and Sam Slate, RKO General Broadcasting vice president in charge of radio.

They told him he would have free rein. The only things he couldn't do, Laufer was told, was go rock 'n' roll or coun-

try and western. The possibilities of putting together an adult format for a metropolitan radio station excited Laufer, and he became manager of KHJ on January 1, 1965, although he actually started working December 1.

Laufer hired Don Otis, long-time L.A. radio personality and promotion man as his director of operations, and they went full-speed ahead. To begin with, they signed Steve Allen and Jayne Meadows to do a conversation show from 9 to 10 A.M. from their home.

"They just wanted to do it," said Laufer. "And they were going to get the biggest names to have breakfast with them and chat."

To take advantage of this (an attempt to pull the Bob Crane audience from KNX, in as much as Crane was leaving to devote his efforts fully to "Hogan's Heroes"), Laufer talked to a number of people in radio and advertising about whom to get as his early morning man—the peak waking hours then crucial to the success of any station. He settled on Dan Sorkin, and they came to an agreement just before Christmas.

Laufer and Otis started to put into action some of the ideas Martin J. Fleisler, the departing KHJ manager and former vice president in charge of promotion for RKO General Broadcasting, and his program director, Geoff Edwards, had attempted. After Edwards was hired at KHJ (the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated), Slate drew up and had accepted a procedure for KHJ and KFRC, San Francisco, in which these two West Coast stations were to be autonomous.

Both stations had witnessed a terrific decline during the previous decade. There was to be no interference from New York in programming and local management was to be given three years to try to make something out of the stations. At KFRC, Jim Ingraham, sales manager of KNX, Los Angeles, was hired as manager. He inherited a bright young program director in Bob Marshall.

Late in January, Laufer received a call from Watson and was informed KHJ was going rock 'n' roll. Stunned, he told Watson everyone in town was buzzing about KHJ's plans

for adult radio, that a press party for seven hundred people (the largest one for radio in years) was almost upon them to introduce the Allens as new KHJ personalities at the Ambassador Hotel, the hiring of Sorkin, and so on.

Watson said Tom O'Neill, president of RKO General, had decided to change the format. Laufer asked Watson why he hadn't met O'Neill when he was in New York in November, or at any time since then.

"I thought I was talking to the boss when I came to an agreement with Watson," said Laufer.

Watson said he would try to inform O'Neill of the extent of KHJ's programming plans, but when he called Laufer back, he said O'Neill had almost thrown him out of his office. A week or so later, Laufer met Willett H. Brown, who had been an owner of KHJ shortly after World War II and was a close friend of O'Neill. Brown was now the owner of KGB, San Diego, and, with the programming of Bill Drake, had seen his station jump to No. 1 in the market in typical "Top 40" fashion.

Drake, a young, up-and-coming radio "counselor" on the West Coast, had his first success with KYNO, Fresno. The owner of KYNO, Gene Chenault, was an old friend of Brown, and he turned him onto Drake.

When Laufer learned of the apparent new chain of command, he got together with Watson and Brown. Brown, said Laufer, seemed surprised at the advanced stages of KHJ's new programming, and Brown, said he would call O'Neill about the situation. Laufer suggested that in his attempt to communicate with O'Neill, Brown offer to put Drake's programming to work at RKO's station in Detroit (actually CKLW in Windsor, Ontario), since it had already gone rock 'n' roll.

Brown wanted KHJ or nothing. It was rumored he suffered some embarrassment when RKO General Broadcasting took over operation of KHJ, and Laufer thought he saw this as a way of getting back at Watson. At any rate, Laufer didn't think Brown talked very convincingly to O'Neill—if indeed he talked to him at all concerning the situation.

Laufer was asked to remain at KHJ through the year. He

refused, but, although he had nothing more than a verbal agreement—to be negotiated after his first year—he was paid off for the full year. Before he left, Laufer informed Sorkin's agent, Harry Abrams, of the change, and a lawsuit was instigated in Sorkin's behalf. He also notified Michael Jackson, KHJ's 10 A.M.—2 P.M. talk show man, whose contract he was negotiating. Jackson was told that rock was in but that it was for his benefit only in order to make future plans, and that he not talk about it.

That afternoon the information was wheedled out of Jackson by a listener who remarked that Jackson didn't sound his usual chipper self. While this wasn't a news item as such, Jackson fulfilled the function of a newspaper gossip-columnist in breaking this story over the air. Laufer told Jackson to cool it, although, of course, it was too late after that.

But the next day, as Laufer was out to lunch, Jackson was fired by Otis. This came down from Brown, who had always maintained an office in the KHJ building, Chenault, and Drake. Laufer didn't know whom they were working for and just what right they had to dump Jackson. He later found out they were employed by RKO General, Inc. (whose interests run from southeastern Asia rubber plantations to involvement in the aerospace program), to which KHJ was reporting rather than RKO General Broadcasting as had been the case.

When Laufer questioned one of RKO's lawyers in Washington about this corporate hanky-panky and seeming conflict of interest and how the Federal Communications Commission might react to it, he was told he did not question things unless he was asked to.

So Laufer left, although he did manage to get Steve and Jayne on the air for a few weeks. According to him, Alan Klein, then manager of Pacific Pulse, the most respected radio rating service at the time, said the Allens significantly affected the eight-week measurement period.

Don Otis stayed on, as he was asked, but he couldn't take it anymore after 2½ months. "I had it," he said, "when one

of the new longhairs asked my secretary, 'Where's Dad-dio?' In the middle of April he submitted his resignation, and the following day he received a terminal check for 9½ months' salary.

Meanwhile, Sorkin was offered the morning slot at KFRC in San Francisco. (He read about the KHJ format change in *Daily Variety*.) Since he had signed with RKO General Broadcasting, if he refused he wouldn't even have a suit.

Besides, since Sorkin had left his job at WAIT in Chicago two weeks early by signing a paper that he would not appear on the air in Chicago for at least three years, he was in a bind. But the challenge in San Francisco was an exhilarating one since it meant confronting Sherwood. It also meant a \$40,000 salary.

When Sorkin arrived in San Francisco on April 5, most people in radio there felt he had an insurmountable task on his hands. It was compounded by the fact that the immensely popular Giants' baseball broadcasts on KSFO were starting. The combination of the Giants and Sherwood was recognized as one of the most powerful programming draws in American radio, and for all the outstanding deejays on KSFO, Sherwood was one of the perhaps dying breed of radio personalities who may be considered a stronger selling point than the station itself.

The situation in San Francisco also was similar to the problems of KHJ which Laufer and Otis had temporarily inherited, even though Sorkin's arrival there was the most exciting thing that had happened to KFRC in years.

The relationship between a station manager and his program director is generally that of what is practical and safe, embellished with the elements of imagination and creativity. Marshall found his ideas stifled by management, ideas that were seemingly enhanced with the arrival of Sorkin.

However, under the terms of the Slate procedure for KHJ and KFRC, a little more forcefulness on the part of local management might have produced different results. Six months after Sorkin's arrival, Marshall was fired by Ingraham, the final straw his refusal to terminate Sorkin's inter-

view with Paul Krassner, the editor of *The Realist*, who was advocating the burning of draft-card photostats to get around the law.

(So desperate was Marshall's plight that just before his leaving he started promoting KFRC as "Frisco Radio." The contraction "Frisco" is not generally looked on with favor in the Bay Area. "It got some talk," said Marshall, shrugging his shoulders. "That's what we needed.")

Ingraham, who told Sorkin just before they both left KFRC early in 1966 that he knew he never had a chance, in his position as station manager had to see that the station's license was not jeopardized. But this can produce indistinguishable like-thinking where a job such as his is concerned. The program director has the same considerations, but when a station is down, new ideas are needed.

"We had ideas at KFRC," said Marshall. "But there was no real promotion behind them."

"KHJ has always had a foot on the curb and one in the car," said Geoff Edwards at the time.

A promotional campaign to bring Sorkin into San Francisco was undertaken—billboards, municipal transportation cards, newspaper ads emphasizing Sorkin's humor under a banner of "Sherwood, Move Over." However, in San Francisco, far and away the best vehicle for publicity is mention in Herb Caen's column in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. ("It's crucial," said Sorkin.) A cut above the average gossip-columnist, Caen turned on to Sorkin when the disc jockey flooded the city with bumper stickers proclaiming "MARY POPPINS IS A JUNKIE."

By the end of the summer, KHJ was rising to the top of the Los Angeles market and KFRC was still in an abyss, and rumors were rampant about its next programming change. Some wag insisted that KFRC was going braille, since that was about the only format they had not gone through.

But while nothing definite was known, KHJ's success indicated that a like format would eventually be installed at KFRC. This uncertainty did nothing to strengthen confidence in Sorkin's chores and campaign.

Subtle and jarring shifts in personnel and programming over the last months of 1965 culminated in a severe budget cut for KFRC which would cut Sorkin's salary by two thirds and make him a staff announcer. This made his position untenable, and he resigned shortly after the first of the year. Fortunately, a week later, he was hired at KSFO for the late-afternoon slot, the second most important time of the programming day because it involves heavy automobile listening.

At the time of his departure from KFRC, Sorkin's Pulse rating had not budged. It remained at a very low .8 percent of the market. What it proved is difficult to say. So many variables must be considered that any evaluation may be as meaningless as many media people believe the ratings, which are now claimed to be "instant," to be.

(Although, as radio audiences become increasingly fragmented and programming more specialized, broadcasters are refining their knowledge of what music and other programming appeals to what people. With the aid of the computer, the general trend in the industry seems to be toward obtaining more and more detailed profiles of listeners so that specific advertising can be directed at specific audiences. The study techniques involve increasing direct contact with listeners, even to the point of lengthy personal interviews with quite large samples of local populations.)

In Sorkin's case, most realistic judges felt that nine months was not an adequate amount of time to establish him in the market. It was generally felt such moves require a good two years, but "Top 40" programming has been able to bypass that time problem—at the expense of personality.

Slate apparently recognized this in setting up his three years' procedures. Moreover, Sorkin felt that his day-to-day work was hampered by shifts in programming. In particular, he was annoyed with fifteen-minute newscasts at 7 and 8 A.M.—the same problem Bob Crane had encountered in his early days at KNX.

"Just when I was getting warmed up," said Sorkin, "I was asked to shut up for a quarter of a hour." Newscasts of over five minutes in length, particularly on music stations, had

become passé by the mid-sixties, although, after that, quite a few rockers determined their length by the available amount of news.

By and large, Sorkin's promotion at KFRC was negligible after a big build-up. Whether the immediate big publicity campaign was wise is hard to say. People who had built up the habit of getting up every morning to Sherwood most likely resented an intruder. Various studies have shown that the life pattern of getting up to a preferred radio station is exceedingly difficult to change, and the variables involved in an attempt to move people to alter their *modus operandi* in the morning are legion and virtually impossible to determine.

Here's the latest from Bob Dylan, it's hitbound. But, look out, world, it's going all the way! "Lay, Lady, Lay!"

—SEBASTION STONE
WOR-FM

Drake is saying things we knew and practiced ten years ago. Be tight, play a lot of music, etc.

—DON BRUCE
Pepper-Tanner
Programming Service

THE MAY 21, 1966, issue of *Billboard*, in appraising the one-year climb to the top of KHJ, Los Angeles, as "Boss Radio," noted that disc jockeys were promoted subordinately to the station. With a distinctly tight play-list of the thirty hits, deejay talk was kept brief. Explained program director Ron Jacobs:

"A disc jockey has to have something better to say than the record which cost thousands of dollars to produce."

Said Steve Allen:

"I am personally put off by the screaming, fast-talking

sort of rock 'n' roll deejay. . . . I believe there is an interesting parallel between the almost maniacal, gibbering, tobacco-auctioneer style in which the modern rock 'n' roll disc jockey speaks and the bulk of music that he presents. . . . It seems to me that what these speakers are selling is not a *message*, but a *sound*, a mood, a color. And it is a color consistent with that of the music."

Or, as the "fastest in the West," The Real Don Steele, who "really makes the clichés come alive," opened his late afternoon show on KHJ one day in 1966—a day like any other day; it's still the same old "Top 30"—over the introduction to The Beatles' "Day Tripper" (segued from The Rolling Stone's "Paint It Black"):

"Three o'clock in Boss Angeles! AndgehHEY, thitz me, The Real Don Steele, a billion-dollar weekend there, and you're looking out of sidewalk call; I got nothing but those groovy golds, we're gonna fit Chuck out here on a fractious Friday boy, got to get a set outside that [unintelligible word resembling blowing bubbles in a glass of water] jumbo city. [Pause] Take a trip. When you chase 'em, daylight."

Elapsed time: 16 seconds, a bit much for the prototight "Top 40" station, but The Real really socks it to 'em, and his chatter was acceptable because it didn't go beyond the intro. Acceptable to Drake, whose programming during this decade took "Top 40" as far as it could go. And while KHJ sees itself as the last word in radio ("There's no reason why we shouldn't lead the market for ten years," said Jacobs, who left in the spring of 1969, as did Steele and morning man Robert W. Morgan), the general nonverbal swing can be expected to produce rapid and divergent change.

However, the last half of the sixties has to be called the "Drake Era" ("the *dreck* era, you mean") in radio. Although he is doing nothing new, he brought to its fullest extension a generation of young adults, who, for fifteen years, have grown up on the repetitive formula of "the hits and the oldies." Particularly significant, and impressive, was his formatting of WOR-FM, after that station had excitingly gone "pro-

gressive rock" in 1966-67. WOR-FM has become a major factor in the New York market.

The Drake concept of radio is simply to try to please *everybody*, to give the public more of what they want and less of what they don't want. He says it's just 'good business. Said Les Turpin, who left Drake to become a middle-of-the-road program director in Phoenix:

"I called him a while back [on the red-phone hot line with which Drake is tied into all his clients from his Bel Air home] very excited about a promotional stunt I had dreamed up. I was going to flat a guy under the Golden Gate Bridge on a kayak to stimulate interest in the record 'The Mighty Quinn,' which I was sure would make number one.

"After I got through with my spiel, Bill simply said, 'Enthusiasm is no substitute for long-term logic.'"

Turpin added: "He is totally involved with radio and no one else can match his judgment of what will be mass appeal. He hears completely commercial. In fact, I think his eardrums are actually early vintage Japanese transistor radios, and he can't turn off the sound."

While Drake says logic, research, and application combined with knowledge, in any medium aimed at the masses, can be good, much of the criticism of the Drake format is that it depersonalizes the disc jockey. His methods are so simple, they almost defy description. They include split-second timing (dead air is heretical), jingles barely a second in length at the maximum, and usually telling what's coming next, jocks talking over intros or endings, commercials spaced to allow two or three record "sweeps," news placed strategically to advantage, and time announced with just the numbers (twelve thirty, not half-past twelve).

Listening to a Drake station is like reading an outline. His concept of "20/20 News" is an example of what his stations sound like, and its why and wherefore help to explain the essential Drake philosophy. His thinking absolutely abhors the notion of "tune-out"—that somebody would change his radio setting to another station.

However, for the largely youthful Drake audience (thirteen–thirty-four), news will do it. Most radio stations, until Drake came along, programmed their news in one or two of six times in the hour—on-the-hour, :15, :25, :30, :45, or :55. So Drake came up with the very ingenious idea of “20/20 News,” news of varying length (based on what’s happening) at either 20 minutes past the hour or 20 minutes before, depending on when the competition broadcast their news.

For instance, in San Francisco, the station to be knocked off was KYA, which aired its news at :45. So KFRC programmed its news at :40. The kids turned to KYA but only got music for five minutes and shot back to KFRC.

When KYA switched its news to :15, :25, or :30, as it did, Drake merely shifted his back and forth between :20 or :40 as best kept the audience tuned in for most of the hour. This, coupled with the “Much More Music” slogan and hypnotic device (WABC’s Rick Sklar in the war of superlatives countered with “The Most Music”), garnered KFRC the greater share of the listeners.

Familiarity, not humor (the extent of which was crystallized by a Drake jock’s reading of a movie commercial that closed, “This movie is rated ‘M’”; he added swiftly: “So is this show”), is the keynote of Drake stations. In 1969, WOR-FM played oldies 50 per cent of the time; the formula on other stations varies according to the number and quality of new releases in any given week.

As far as music programming, it was coordinated by music librarian Betty Brenemann (she advised the 1968 Gavin Conference: “If you don’t like something, don’t play it”) out of KHJ. In order to catch weekend figures, every station did the usual thing of checking the major record stores in its city for listings of top-selling tunes of the preceding week. They added to this their own request-line ratings.

Thirty points were given to the top record, twenty-nine to the next, and so on. Then Miss Brenemann, who was replaced by Meridee Herman, totaled all the points, and the song with the most made the top of Drake’s dance of numbers. The list can vary in length from week to week.

Each week, a couple of hundred new releases pour into the stations, behind their breathless promotion people. The music director and program director at each one listens to both record and promoter, selects a half-dozen or so "hit-bounds," and passes the word on to Meridee. She also listens, correlates the reports, and adds her own thoughts.

Miss Herman's office has lists of what songs stand where at each station. She clips to them a list of every record being played on other outlets but not currently on the local station. Every record is also placed in a card file, showing its current standing wherever.

Every word connotative of a sterile, plastic world has been used to describe the Drake sound. The phrase "juke box" always crops up, and in the normal sense, Drake has produced the ultimate in what radio-opposite Ken Nordine calls "those shouting joy boys drowning in their own adrenalin"—the archetypal image of the disc jockey.

Yet the Drake sound does supply "much, more music" of an exciting rhythmic nature. Nothing is better, nothing is best. It is superslick radio, the human element cut to a bare minimum on AM, and now fully automated on Drake's "Hit Parade" FM syndication, a "mod Muzak" sound of artists like Dionne Warwick, Herb Alpert, and Andy Williams.

Drake pooh-poohed his alleged power by noting that the exchange of information takes place every Tuesday without his being involved. The system was designed to take the guesswork out of music programming. Moreover, he rejected his reputation as a taste maker. He acknowledges he is trying to change tastes somewhat. But he has said overt attempts are foolish, that taste cannot be forced on people or they cannot be pandered to.

However, the one switch that brought Drake to national attention did represent a significant attempt to change taste. It occurred in the last months of 1967 in New York where RKO General's WOR-FM had really been grooving for a year with a very personally involving psychedelic introduction. A new freedom for jocks was being nicely handled by "Murray the K," Bill "Rosko" Mercer, Scott Muni, all "Top 40" dropouts, and middle-of-the-roader Johnny Michaels.

But Drake put an end to it, and the WOR-FM change-over did in fact take well over a year to bring the station *back* to where the psychedelic fringe had taken it in the ratings. Still, the bulk of young people in and around the New York entertainment world, who were really thrilled about the original WOR-FM, said the Drake sound was great. Most don't listen to WNEW-FM, where the incepting jocks went ("Rosko" quit WOR-FM over the air), because it is too much of an overly verbal hodgepodge, although, by summer, 1970, "Rosko" had the third highest rated show in the New York market, including FM.

Viewed in revolutionary terms, the battle between the two (and an interesting semisyndication attempt across the country out of WABC-FM) may be a microcosm of what the seventies have in store. WNEW-FM was a return to the personality radio of the fifties (it has been called a regression, but it does make an attempt at community involvement), while WOR-FM, with its emphasis on "The Sound of Gold" ("moldy oldies," cry detractors), "The Big Town Sound," etc., takes the "Top 40" type of programming onto FM.

WABC-FM made a lengthy study of what road to take and then came on the air about a month before they were committed to interrupting their "Love" concept with the broadcasts of the New York Mets' baseball games in 1969, a seemingly death-dealing intrusion. (However, the Mets, surrounded by "Love," became legitimate miracle-workers by winning the World Series!) A fall '69 entry was WCBS-FM, a neither 'OR/'NEW personality sound.

In its six owned-and-operated markets (and wherever else ABC had been able to place the syndicated program), "Love" used the voice of hip theologian "Brother John" Rydgen to introduce the music and advise youth. Interspersed was the "Scenes" commentary of *Village Voice* columnist Howard Smith.

In New York, opposite "Rosko," WABC-FM (to become WPLJ, "White Port Lemon Juice," in early 1971) had a very informal live show handled by ex-WABC deejay Bob Lewis. (The baseball schedule varied his hours during the sum-

mer.) He went under the name of "Bobaloo," and both shows were as immediate as any on the New York commercial radio dial. Spiced with live interviews with top rock musicians (which WNEW-FM refused to have), the "Bobaloo" show came on very hip to complement the show business/youth involvement of the rest of the programming. Although ABC followed this pattern by using a live local jock at night in its other FM areas as it pussyfooted toward station autonomy, it remains to be seen if this syndication package has sufficient appeal to a growing community whose boundaries are no longer local.

At KSAN, we strive for the one-to-one communication that truly makes radio theater of the mind.

—TOM DONAHUE

We at KMYR are not an underground station in the true sense of the world. By that I mean we don't cater to the ordinary underground tastes.

We do play the music and concentrate primarily on those albums that are selling well all over the country. But we don't get involved in politics, civil rights, and all of the other things which cause you nothing but headaches.

—CRAIG BOWERS

President, KMYR, Denver

ON MAY 21, 1968, San Francisco State College President John J. Summerskill called in the Tactical Squad of the city's police department to break up post-Columbian art (and heads) at the campus' administration building. The same day, the number of multiplex stereo FM stations programming full-time adult rock music in America's vanguard metropolis rose to three with the entry of KSAN, an ex-classical station and a 1967-acquired outlet of the highly successful Metromedia group.

A battle, virtually unknown to FM (remember when the

quality band was the sanctuary from the plethora of commercial spots?), began for the elusive and dubious ratings—a drama no less momentous than those taking place among the youth on campuses around the world. General David Sarnoff, the High Priest of the Mass Media, said by 1971 most music will be on FM multiplex, radio's answer to color television.

Stereo FM is the mass medium for rock, or for the art of recorded music, period, as we spiral into the last third of the twentieth century. While radio is said to be theater of the mind, stereo FM is the jet age for broadcasting, and as fidelity-philes know (including the airlines), where it's at is with headphones. And quadrophonic broadcasting has already entered the special-event stage.

Said WCFL's Ron Brittain who left WCFL for WIND in 1970:

"I think FM is where it's at because that's where sound is at. That's more contemporary than anything today—television, anything."

KSAN's personnel was made up, with a significant single exception, of the former employees of KMPX, an FMer that had been continually on the brink of bankruptcy until March, 1967, when it introduced a folk rock format ("Black Top 40") and increased its commercial billing to over \$25,000 a month. A minor competitor was fully automated KOIT, which began playing head rock, interrupted by the seductive canned "KOIT Mother," in April, 1968 (to become stereo country and western by 1970).

The ex-staffers struck KMPX in March, 1968, for greater artistic freedom and higher wages. A month and a half earlier, Larry Miller, whose taking over of the midnight-6 A.M. shift a year earlier started KMPX's rise, was fired. He came back in April to become KMPX's program director, the position held by Tom Donahue. Donahue quit the station when management began undermining KMPX's hip image, and his resignation triggered the strike.

The twenty-seven-year-old Miller felt rejected when Donahue, forty, jumped in with a sales consultant and needed

money in April, 1967, and was made program director. A personality clash between them largely set the stage for the agonistic future of KMPX and KSAN the following year, a battle which KSAN ran away with through 1970 when its decline in community commitment, under fear of FCC reprisals, found listeners disgustingly tuning out. They initially faced each other on the air from 6 to 10 P.M., and their initial ratings could have been all important to the continuance of desperate little fish KMPX.

The strike issues evaporated quickly amid ego gymnastics. Management would not take Donahue back under any circumstances, and Miller said he would never return to the station—or break the strike. (“Just call me ‘Yo-Yo’ Miller.”)

Anyway, hardly anyone knew what was really happening, and the confused community just wanted to hear their music. As one strike supporter commented: “It’s the weirdest thing since The Acid Test”—novelist Ken Kesey’s mass turn-on to LSD throughout California in 1965–66.

At the extreme, wherever that was, accusations that management had been bleeding the station and would not go along for a long-haired joy ride clashed with the Bay Area’s long-lasting, ever-collapsing, listener-supported, pacifist-started FM station, KPFA, and the “Free City” notion that money’s not where it’s at but the free fruits of the affluent society are. Throughout 1968–69, with headlines dimly drawn, the struggle began to rock ambivalently along on America’s Gibraltar, that Yankee *summum bonum*, the advertising dollar.

But to begin with, as Miller developed a loyal following, Lee Crosby, KMPX’s long-suffering owner, was approached by Donahue, who put the station into a twenty-four-hour arch rock operation. Phasing out segments of foreign-language programming (who can ever forget those delightful segues from 15,000 cycles of the Cream to the 1-D Portuguese Hour?), KMPX began picking up sponsors from the burgeoning small businesses, some of which are not now so small, thanks to KMPX, that mushroomed out of the psychedelic revolution and Haight-Ashbury. Rock around the clock

was a stone groove for the emigrating heads from across the nation during the peak summer of 1967.

As sponsors clamored to get on board, the station adopted a policy of no more than eight minutes of commercials per hour. This was less than half as much as successful rockers.

Success in commercial radio, particularly in the heavy "get-the-kid" "Top 40" competition revolves around playing more music to get more preteens (known today as "diddle-boppers," an audience AM rock runners unabashedly deny they are trying to attract) to get more of the advertising buck. Things like commercials and news mean "tune out," and so it remains a moot point to what extent the children's radio-listening habits influence the family's consumer preferences.

Yet as has been strongly proved, this brand of radio has many of its original listeners (button-pushing but nostalgic) in the lucrative eighteen-thirty-four market, and it is this segment of the population (Ford's Mustang tapped it heavily first) that makes advertisers drool. During the fall of 1967, Donahue's 8 P.M.-midnight show on KMPX was the top-rated one in northern California for that age bracket. Its FM origin made it an unprecedented achievement.

Half-hearted attempts aside, although they have been successful, the smart AM (and FM now) operator either undertakes a format which has been lacking in a market, and for which there seems to be an audience, or really improves on one.

The programming success of Bill Drake is *the* bridge for any interpretation of KMPX, its sister outlet, KPPC, Pasadena, and the growth of underground radio across the country in 1968-69. (KPPC was purchased mainly by Donahue's backer, Lew Avery, who had to fight a huge financial loss because of the strike. Both KMPX and KPPC were purchased by the National Science Network, Inc., in 1969. Metromedia also turned over its L.A. FM facility, KMET, to "free form" programming, and its evening deejay, Tom Gamache, is generally recognized as the first of the under-

ground rock jocks, having begun on Boston FM stations in 1965.)

Donahue, who continually told his audience during the fall of 1967, "We know the honeymoon is over," began divorce proceedings when he started spending most of his time in mass mammon L.A. just before Thanksgiving getting KPPC started. When "Big Daddy" left the tribe, new-age family radio began disintegrating.

With Donahue largely in Los Angeles (he taped his KMPX stint while jockeying live over KPPC, but after the first of 1968, San Franciscans could hear as many as three stand-ins a week), the station was put under the reluctant guidance of morning man Bob Prescott, who read from the *I Ching* during the show.

Miller again made a pitch for the authoritative position. Perhaps his refusal to take LSD, and his love for San Francisco's rare microbotic Steam Beer, made him an out-cast. By his own admission, his weakness was the inability to express himself among his fellow workers. Out of such hang-ups and breakdowns comes the expansion of paranoia, and Miller was a loner in a friendly *cum* communal setting.

At any rate, one midnight early in Aquarius, he rode into the station under the influence and promptly read an uncomplimentary intrastation Donahue memo (unnecessary, Miller felt, since, two days before, Donahue, in a rare station visit, had spoken to him about his alleged transgressions) over the air and was reluctantly fired by station manager Ron Hunt. A straight, Hunt had most of his authority usurped by Donahue.

Miller was brought back by management from Detroit in mid-April to break the strike in an act that could not really accomplish the resurrection of advertisers, who boycotted the station with the exception of one late-in-the-game mind blower. He was on the air just two nights, in Donahue's "coveted" old time slot, before two underground newspaper articles shot him down.

The first, in the San Francisco *Express-Times*, by Sandy Darlington, was the fairest interpretation of the Donahue-Miller squabble. The other, by the Berkeley *Barb's* Jef Jas-

sen, was written the night Miller returned to the air. It was so devastating that when it reached him the next night an hour before he was to close his show, he babbled his apologies to the community and resigned. Print not only lives, it breathes.

But Miller came back two weeks later, bringing with him a local lysergic light named Buddha to handle a late-evening stint. A faintly capable coterie of strike-breaking opportunists had already become familiar to listeners.

Buddha was also to follow Bill Graham, the impresario of the Fillmore Auditorium, as a strike mediator. Graham threw up his hands when he saw how thoroughly alienated were the warring parties.

How bitter was the strike is seen by one attempt of management to frustrate the strikers. A KMPX salesman, Ben Patch, sent a telegram to the strikers that smacked of amateur intimidation.

Patch said he was requesting immediate hearing before the Federal Communications Commission "regarding license qualifications and conspiratorial relations" between Donahue, Lew Avery, Milan Melvin, KMPX sales manager, and "RKO General, Avco. Bdtg., ABC Radio, to be identified Chicago FM station, Metromedia and such others which may have been approached."

The opening paragraph charged conspiracy between Donahue, Avery and Bill Drake, and the wire ended:

"Hearings called to determine involvement, prior commitment by above in effect to obtain forced sales KMPX-KPPC or suppress competition or to purchase control through force, fully willing to testify to accuracy of charges."

A bad bluff, not greatly dissimilar to the majority of complaints the FCC receives. However, it ridiculously allied random participants, although Drake was reportedly contacted about turning over his FM outlets to the strikers. The wire was indicative of the desperation of KMPX's management, one of whom allegedly punched a striker. The point is that not only would not management take back the strikers, they did not want them anywhere else.

Donahue said it could open a can of worms since the

station is the responsibility of the licensee and that KMPX's operation might leave a great deal to be desired before the FCC. He also said a representative of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), which recognized the strike, said it was the most effective walkout against a radio station he had ever seen.

Buddha attempted to bring the hassle to the listeners. He brought on Milan Melvin to speak for the strikers, and it was during his spiel that it became crystal clear the folk were sick of it all and wanted only to hear music. The strike was obviously unresolvable when management refused to go on the air and state their case.

Clearly the most confusing gut action during the strike took place on May Day. The Carousel Ballroom, a recent entry in the San Francisco psychedelic dance derby (making four full-time operations at the time) turned its hall over to the Free City Convention, a Digger happening. Scant hours before, the Carousel submitted to economic necessity by placing commercials on KMPX for the following weekend's dance.

Without exposure on KMPX, the Carousel was reportedly losing close to \$3,000 a week, but the total ambivalence of the situation turned just about everybody's head around. The Carousel was a co-operative venture that came about when The Grateful Dead ("The purest of the rock groups," said Tim Leary. "They prefer to play free and outdoors") decided they'd be better off managing and promoting themselves. The Carousel also provided an additional outlet for the appearance of rising San Francisco bands.

(When Bill Graham decided to obtain larger quarters for his Fillmore dance operation, he took over the Carousel from the utopians and renamed it Fillmore West. Graham faces the loss of the 2,700-capacity hall to the Howard Johnson restaurant chain, which is planning on turning the corner into a motel.)

In 1966 the Dead held out for a new-age recording contract based on its assiduous philosophy and leadership (they were members of The Acid Test) in the psychedelic scene.

When they finally signed with Warner Bros., the recording company initially produced a pale reflection of the Dead's sound. Their fans had had a better taste through private tapes on KMPX, tapes the group denied the station as soon as the strike began. The Dead, performing in New York, reportedly did not know that the Carousel went back to advertising on KMPX.

When the strikers went to KSAN, San Francisco *Chronicle* music critic Robert Commanday decried the diminishing sound of classical music on San Francisco stations through the changeover. He concluded:

"What can be done? Well, the concert music public is going to have to bombard the offending stations with mail or else just buy some more records, give up on radio, or just sit and wait for man's essential goodness to prevail."

A citizens' group was formed to challenge the music-policy change on KSAN, which, only a month before had changed its call letters from its long-time KSFR. At the time, there was not the slightest indication to its audience that Metro-media was going to change the format.

In fact, from the very moment of the takeover, the group made repeated assurances, which were supposedly crucial to its being granted the license, that the station would retain a classical-music policy. The attempt to make Metromedia stick to its promise failed as the FCC shrugged its shoulders.

In another instance, WFMT was purchased by WGN, Inc., a broadcasting group containing the mighty Chicago station, owned by the *Chicago Tribune*. Not only did this mean that WFMT would become able to operate twenty-four hours, it also meant improved news operation through addition of the WGN news service, and a move to a new, ultra-modern studio from its bare-bones, antiquated facilities.

Long-time listeners were up in arms at the thought of WFMT's coming under *Tribune* egis, although the elements of WGN, Inc., pride themselves on their independence, and a group was formed to challenge the sale. This seemed to have some chance inasmuch as the FCC was refusing to grant license renewals because the ownership of more than

one outlet in a community violated their "concentration-of-control-of-media" policy. (This policy was tempered in early 1971 to permit single ownership of an AM and FM station.)

A young FCC commissioner, Nicholas Johnson, who acknowledges that the FCC is a pure Establishment front, caused some open Establishment mouths and senatorial finger-wagging by encouraging listener groups to apply for broadcasting licenses during 1969. All radio stations come up for approval every three years, and anyone can challenge WNBC, WGN, KOA, KFRC, etc., if he likes. This process the controversial Pastore Bill would have eliminated.

Johnson was particularly desirous of seeing newspaper-owned licenses applied for, in keeping with the new FCC notion against "concentration-of-control-media." The FCC blew minds early in 1969 by withdrawing the license of WHDH-TV, the Boston *Herald-Traveler* station.

The previous summer, however, the FCC approved sale of WFMT to WGN, Inc. The same day, it denied the sale of a Beaumont station to a Beaumont newspaper for concentration reasons. When the citizen's group was heard from in the WFMT situation, its case was presented too amateurishly, and the commission had no choice but to deny their challenge.

However, undeterred, they kept the pressure on, and in the fall of 1969, the *Tribune* crumbled. WFMT was sold to the local educational TV station, and it kept its *Tribune*-advanced equipment. A true miracle of modern-day electronics!

WFMT was begun by Bernard Jacobs in 1951 because he liked classical music. When the station went on the air, it asked for money, and once more in 1953. The station got on firm financial ground in 1954 and turned the corner in 1958.

Studs Terkel first appeared on WFMT on Christmas, 1952, with shows centered around Pete Seeger and Big Bill Broonzy. Although this was during the heart of the McCarthy era, there was no political problem.

Part of the irony of the attempted absorption is that when WGN dropped its FM channel to concentrate on TV,

WFMT moved into its 98.7-megacycle slot. WFMT calls itself "The Fine Arts Station" and the basis of its income is from a monthly listings magazine, *WMFT Guide*. There are more than 20,000 subscribers and its circulation is expanding rapidly.

When the station began, there were less than 10 per cent FM receivers in the market. Now the figure is over 75 per cent. What is unique about the station is that it took no gifts from the industry. It is not ruled by the clock. The audience appreciates its flexibility and straightforward, rational, live commercials and newscasts. WFMT's programming is geared to a far more concerned, intelligent listener.

More than 70 per cent of WFMT's audience lives near Lake Michigan, and a good many live in high-rise buildings which do not allow interviews for rating purposes. So any rating for WFMT is bound to be an understatement. The station's "The Midnight Special," a weekly Saturday-night show of folk music, farce, show tunes, satire, etc., from approximately 10:15 P.M. to 1:30 A.M. (repeated Wednesday afternoons) may be the most popular FM show in Chicago. It costs \$275 an hour.

Said WFMT station manager Ray Nordstrand:

"We can't do everything because we're basically a fine arts, classical station. We have to leave it for some other station to do it. We do try to listen to all this underground music and select what is interesting.

"I don't think we can play a lot of it on 'The Midnight Special' because our audience is still bound to the simpler idiom. I'll expose it in small doses, and it's frustrating to me because I like it."

Somewhat relatedly, Commanday also commented on the KSAN change:

"The primitive folk art of the revolt against the commercial establishment is being exploited by the media barons just as methodically as anything else."

Said Donahue, however: "The Establishment will always support the Revolution—at a profit."

One casualty in the Metromedia buy was disc jockey Ed-

ward Bear (born Steve Hirsch, "but I decided at an early age that I was a bear, so I changed my name"). Drifting out west in the fall of 1967, Bear, who had largely been a classical music jock, made an audition tape and was hired for the 11 A.M.-4 P.M. slot. An articulate, imaginative, gentle man, Bear did tend, however, to let his good rap drag on for an audience hanging on for the *very latest* in the new rock.

When the team went to KSAN, Bear was very wisely put in the 2 A.M.-6 A.M. slot, where he would naturally have a little more freedom than the other jocks. His implicit remarks, however, became a bone of contention to management, even buried as they were in the dawning hours. Early in 1969 he was fired because, he believed, he was "least resilient to absorption."

The KMPX strike had killed off a lot of enthusiasm. But real freedom was more or less available on KSAN, and its members initially produced a most contemporary, super-sensory sound. However, when the KSAN management attempted to absorb midnight man Bear into "the format" and then fired him, it marked a new landmark in radio.

Station manager Varner Paulsen was up and listening early one morning. Giving his all for the corporation, he read the riot act to Bear and fired him shortly after. The midnight man in previous times (and Bear did not go on until 2 A.M.) usually could feel pretty safe in the knowledge that the bosses were sacked out.

An attempt was made to organize support for the reinstatement of Bear, but it failed (although he did return on a part-time basis, and again, in July, 1970, to the 2-6 A.M. slot). Shortly thereafter, program director Tom Donahue resigned (calling even his desirable deejaying "mental masturbation") to go into syndication and record production. (He came back as a consultant and weekend jock early in 1970.)

Late in 1969, a radical black KSAN jock, Roland Young, who had successfully taken over Donahue's spot, was fired for broadcasting a listener's suggestion supporting Black

Panther David Hilliard's "kill Richard Nixon" remarks at the November Moratorium. Young had quit KSAN a couple of times previously, saying: "The station is not serving the community. Its function is to make money at any expense. By staying here, I perpetuate the thing that I hate."

During the first months of 1970, Young irregularly worked nights on KPFA. Interviewed in the March *Leviathan*, he said: "The music of Ornette Coleman, man, has been some of the most significant music in America and we know that he hasn't been rewarded for that. The whole jazz-rock thing is such a shuck—groups like Blood Sweat and Tears that have horns and use a few more chords. KJAZ (in San Francisco) has been playing a lot of that as a way of popularizing their format to bring in more listeners and money, and they've been successful at it . . .

"The music doesn't always do it. But I think it can do as much as I can to deal with a lot of things. That's the way I've always prepared for a show ever since I started with KSAN. Always opening up, listening to all kinds of music. If all these things (melodic and rhythmic information and lyrics) can be told in the right form, the right manner, it seems very valuable—like writing something and sending it out. I approached KSAN before I even realized the political potential."

Young returned to the commercial airwaves the following summer as a weekender on KMPX. The station had undergone a mass personal overhaul earlier as the National Science Network tried to decide what to do with it and KPPC. Network general manager Stan Gurel initially sought out Edward Bear as program director, but finally settled on Bob Prescott. Gurel had not made too many friends on the coast with his demands that the stations model themselves after NSN's New York outlet, classical music WNCN, but he grudgingly turned the station back to somewhat local leadership.

Consequently, KMPX began to take over KSAN's role in the community. However, what advantage it would make of a hopefully increased audience was still a thorny issue.

More excitingly, much of the staff attended the Alternative Media Project gathering at Goddard College in Vermont in June and came back with the fervent desire to collectivize the station.

Further impetus for the notion was received from KZAP, Sacramento, whose members were also at Goddard. They laid the groundwork for socialist radio by eliminating managerial and program director positions and tossing all the money the station earned into one big pot, to be distributed equally.

In addition, KZAP personnel decided to eliminate the concept of weekends by having everyone go on a four-day on, three-day off, week, with the jock on the air at the time assuming full responsibility for the running of the station. The socializing of KZAP included even time salesman, who have historically worked in broadcasting on a pot-of-gold commission basis. KMPX's salesmen, however, were not ready to make such a drastic move at the time. But the notion of capitalist free radio begun to attract much interest on the west coast during the following months.

However, as hopes got high, a new individual came upon the scene. Former city editor of San Francisco's weekly left-of-liberal *Bay Guardian*, Creighton Churchill came in behind friend Dave Shepherdson, KMPX's new promotion director, to apply as news director. To days later, he was named station manager! Churchill, who set up the news department at channel 38 (purchased by former KMPX owner Lee Crosby), said he was given the job because he was a graduate lawyer schooled in media law.

Churchill's appointment infuriated the collective, and when their demands were once and for all rejected, they staged a sit-in in October after which they were fired. Said Young: "I don't think you can have a community radio station in the context of a capitalistic society. But we want to obtain a station to keep us there the longest doing the best for the people, serving them."

KMPX, which has consistently lost money since the first strike, was off the air for three weeks, going back on Friday

the 13th of November at 6 P.M. The time and date were determined by astrology and numerology, as the collective picketed with the help of Apache witch doctors. Because of a bad investment in new offices and bomb threats on its studies (which were to be moved in the new building), KMPX moved into a former disc jockey school in a cul-de-sac and went on the air under armed guard.

The new staff (largely from WLS-FM, Chicago), said Churchill, would earn between \$150 and \$180 a week at a base rate of \$10 an hour. In granting most of the demands of the collective but not accepting its personnel, KMPX, said Churchill, helped to become "inter-active radio, not reactive." One innovation, he said, would be the placing of news items on carts so the jocks could insert them between the music as they saw fit.

Until the End

Create your own method. Don't depend slavishly on mine. Make up something that will work for you! But keep breaking traditions, I beg you.

—KONSTANTIN S. STANISLAVSKI

“. . . an Idea of the perfect Radio Station. Built like an Auditorium, it would seat maybe five hundred people, all lounging on pillows with thick rugs sloping down to the turntables with the beatific disc-jockey, lemonade in hand and new record waving overhead, asking through his studio mike to the relaxed (!) assemblage, “fasten your seatbelts, kids, 'cause this is a winner,” and, humming to himself, flips it onto the chromed hubcap, lowering the spike. Lights are low, silken-clad damsels pass among the grape-plucking mortals handing drinks of mulled ambrosia and smiling as if to say “listen to THIS, you mortal.” A song lifts into the ether, and most of us lift with it. Monitors pass amongst the assembled multitude recording their impressions, automatically recorded on tape for later transcription/transmission. Hidden color projectors/star projectors play their light on the domed ceiling. . . . Lord, give us a sponsor, let him see the filthy extrava-GANCE of life; Hell, nobody sees it. Mamon clouds. Mannon. Momman. Mammon. The great song of salt pillars, of sweaty tillers on the Nile of life.

—PETE BLIND, DJ

KTAO, Los Gatos, California

ON THE BASIS of the legalization of air play of records (and the beginning of BMI), the disc jockey, like Lather, is thirty years old today. Consequently, the deejay, unlike the actor, has very little sense of tradition.

Most could be shoe salesmen, and most don't want to meet their audience. (Face-to-face confrontation with an air person can be a titanic bringdown.) This explains a lot; shoe salesmen have to kneel and bow to *their* audience. Today's jock, it has been said, got on the air once and is

still around. It's easier, of course, working three to six hours than eight, although Metromedia's Dave Croninger says the guys who are successful in radio work very hard at it.

Once, Tommy Saunders, on KYA, San Francisco, had to tag a recorded commercial for Career Academy, one of the dozen or so schools training anyone interested in becoming a broadcaster. ("A hoax," said Del Shields. In fact, like any well-trained preacher, he said it three times.) The spot was read by John Cameron Swayze, who in the post-war period represented the image of the urbane, sophisticated airman—the epitome of the network newsman-announcer.

But the younger Saunders audience remembered Swayze not for the "Camel News Caravan," but for the television commercials applauding the indestructibility of Timex watches. Tagged Saunders ("All you have to do is laugh at the right place and they know what you mean"):

"What's he doing now? Dragging a watch behind a steamship."

Saunders had to pay for this disrespect to an elder by calling long distance and apologizing. The oral tradition has always supremely maintained its experience, knowledge, and staying power through its elders, and electronic retribalization suggests, seemingly insists upon, its full return. However, Saunders said:

"This business is essentially vocal prostitution. There is no artistic freedom in radio."

Whither the jock? The first generation of the profession, which had a certain degree of individual freedom, has yet to turn over. The older members of the distinctly less-free second wave are gravitating, as they lose their youthful voices, to less-restrictive stations. In the increasing fragmentation where every record and its interpretation and presentation mean a loss or gain of listeners, these stations, however, are not committed to more-or-less "Top 40" techniques. The name of the game is no longer horseshoes, it's quoits.

Although barely thirty, Saunders has been in radio for nearly fifteen years. He said:

"I think the challenge is getting in your personality over the intro to a record or in a very short period of time. It's not a bad idea, considering the majority of your audience, most people, dial in for the music and the news."

It is the soul of wit, and so, not really surprisingly, what the jock does, what he communicates, is controversial. Within the bastard marriage of radio and records, the battles never cease. Every deejay can viscerally identify with the plight of the Smothers Brothers and other less-publicized censorship. Particularly the arbitrary way that lets through some things that are more revolutionary than political expression.

However, no contribution to whatever the revolution is can be more thrusting than the repetitive play of such put-down "bubble gum" hits as "Yummy, Yummy, Yummy, I've Got Lovin' in My Tummy" for preteens. Still, the young are not being fully served as they mature.

An extreme case of repression was the demise of the *Kokaine Karma* show on WFMU, the East Orange, New Jersey, station of Upsala College. Its protagonists, East Village *Other* columnists Dennis Frawley and Bob Rudnick, became too much—even for a college station late at night. They found Sunday-night sanctuary at WABX-FM, Detroit (from there, Rudnick went to WGLD-FM, Chicago, where he quit when the station said he could no longer call his show "Kokaine Karma"; he followed this up with a stint on WEAW-FM, Evanston, before coming to the West Coast early in 1971 to try to radicalize San Jose on KOME as *Kokaine Karma*) but their dismissal served to point up, once again, the less-than-free position of America's higher-learning institutions.

And while Art Buchwald says, "I think radio is still the best form for satire there is in the communications field. . . . You can say things on radio that you can't on television," young black novelist Ishmael Reed has to resort to print to "toss it right back at the media; the way to be a satirist in America today."

Somehow, nudity for the jock doesn't seem to be the answer. Maybe levitation is. Ken Nordine thinks the stuttering disc jockey is next. Most likely, a good vomiting deejay would best reflect his audience. It'd be like trying to get a straight answer from a band of gypsies, except that this diversity of opinion seems to be working itself out. And it is not talked out as much as it is acted out. *Over-all*, do your own thing, in your own time, and in your own way, does get a bit more than lip service, with the recordings far and away providing the creativity. But radio has no directors of the Stanislavski or Strasberg stripe, and, of course, it deserves none.

For instance, talking over the intro is a Drake device, one that is even admired by Chuck Blore, who has used the usual "juke box" sluff-off in commenting on the Drake sound. In fact, Drake engineers have been instructed not to turn down the volume, and the jocks must keep on their headphones. They must make themselves heard over those intros (and Drake started his climb at the height of the Motown sound with its wondrous wall-of-sound intros). Time is money, and projection for Drake pays well but not incredibly.

Other radio people deplore this form of censorship but are forced into it to compete. They decry as much the chopping up of albums cuts to make them into singles of an appropriate length to satisfy AM radio. Tom Donahue, who helped to alleviate this situation with his mining of FM rock, has likened it to cutting up a Picasso to fit the frame.

Like WPRO, Providence, playing "The Ballad of John and Yoko," after merely snipping out "Christ" wherever it (He?) occurred. At somewhat greater length, in *J.C.'s Think Sheet* (Record Report No. 21), in "The Deejay Speaks Out," Ted Atkins of KFRC (who replaced Les Turpin in 1969 and went charging back after KYA), fumed:

"I recently noticed in your Record Report No. 19 the statement that KFRC is 'editing all records down to about two minutes to give the illusion of playing more music.' I would like to call your attention to the fact that this state-

ment is false in its entirety. KFRC has never made it a policy to arbitrarily edit the music we play. In the four months I have been Program Director of this station, there comes to mind only two instances where any record was ever edited. Both times the songs were far too long to include as part of our regular programming. Even in the case of these two songs, our edited version still ran in excess of three minutes. We simply do play more music. Our commercial policy is such that it enables us in many instances to be far superior to our competition in this area. I would deeply appreciate your setting the matter straight in a future edition of your publication."

Teddy's plea of innocence, of course, attracted no muck-raking young journalist to seek out the truth, whatever that might prove. But Atkins did grab an enormous amount of trade publicity, notably in Claude Hall's "Vox Jox" column in *Billboard*, where his name and progress was avidly awaited weekly by aspiring young professionals.

This brings us to the third generation of disc jockeys, the crown of creation kids. The Drake sound is their mentor, and having been born and brought up after a nuclear explosion and in front of a television set, the larynx explosion is natural to them.

Although others may despise formula radio, the apprentices today (and they are essentially straight) understand it deep inside. It speaks their language. If they have a sense of freedom, and they are no way near their politically active and socially experimenting peers, it may be in the vocal furore they are asked to create. The medium's message (any medium's) seems to be: Out of passion comes chaos, and out of chaos comes order.

Today's young jock comes into an explosive pattern which program director Lee Sherwood of WFIL, Philadelphia, predicted will see 25,000 single releases by the end of the seventies. Who will pick and choose is anybody's guess. Said Sherwood:

"I really see somewhere in the future research done by independent research companies into the acceptance and

motivation to buy and listen to records. If research companies can tell radio today why people do or do not listen, isn't it possible that they will be able to tell us which record will have greater acceptance than others.

"I think this research in no way would hinder the promotion man's job."

But, said Dave Croninger, pointing to a shelf full of thick black books on audience research, using the latest techniques:

"I can't tell you that any individual radio listener knows why he or she does or doesn't listen to anything. That's the toughest part of this business."

Using mass-media techniques of repetition, John Lennon listens to himself and freaks around the world insisting all people want is a little peace. He said:

"We're selling our soap, and they are selling theirs. We have to hammer in that word every chance we get. Every time we get a second on TV, we talk about peace. Peace is our product, and we're trying to sell it. And it's happening."

And radio stations are coming to the realization that tomorrow's programming can have only a little piece of the people. The day of the mass audience is over as radio research evolves from what is known as demographics, the quantitative and age/sex breakdown of listeners, to, frighteningly, psychographics, "the identification of persons who have similar psychological characteristics."

Some stations have been into that a lot longer than most media people would like to admit. Like the listener-supported Pacifica Foundation's KPFA, Berkeley; KPFA, Los Angeles; and WBAI, New York. Although their subscribers are not anywhere near the number of actual listeners, struggling Pacifica, born out of a World War II conscientious-objector camp, knows its audience is fervently dedicated to peace and freedom. In the value reversal that the tactility of the media has brought to the young, it would not be at all surprising to see, over the next generation, that broadcasting finds itself being pulled into

the true community service programming as reflected by Pacifica, with whatever showmanly twists necessary.

And Pacifica could find itself, while not accepting commercial sponsors which its license prohibits, perhaps evolving into a bit more of a bazaar concept for aborning cooperative ventures, as against its current daily pleas for subscriptions and its annual fund-raising marathons. Under inflationary pressures and recognition of crass merchant exploitation, college students at Ann Arbor, Madison, Berkeley, etc., have initiated a viable consumer movement that has produced new forms of cooperative, nonprofit enterprise.

The collective would like to get a radio station, of course, but finding a benign and courageous (and wealthy) owner seems the only way. They expanded to take in interested helpers, became known as Airwaves, and began negotiating to broadcast over KQED-FM, owned by National Education Television and funded by the Ford Foundation.

A predictable, protracted struggle took place during the winter. The collective provided pilot programs and asked for the twelve hours between 11 P.M. and 11 A.M. when KQED-FM was not on the air. Management responded typically by keeping Airwaves dangling with interest, but at a liberal distance.

At any rate, although Frank Zappa says "music's capable of saying everything, but the audience is not ready," the day does not seem far off when radio and records can produce that desirable blend of entertainment, information, and community service—without overt *shlock* exploitation.

Some see this expansive prospect in all the media taking place within the next ten years, and they also suggest that America's seven thousand radio stations will break down even more than they are doing now in order to meet the needs and satisfy the desires of an increasingly mobile populace. Network radio has failed to do this, but the notion of loose configurations of stations with common-interest listenership is not out of the question. As the world becomes smaller and smaller, people on the move will more

and more seek out those sources of communication that will keep them in contact with their tribes.

(A total revamping of the Communications Act has been suggested. Similar to congressional redistricting, it would give AM stations definite geographical boundaries primarily to provide true community services without elimination of commercial concerns. In addition, it has been proposed that FM prepare for the quadrophonic era by combining their facilities—in essence, reducing FM to half the outlets, but thereby achieving real qualitative gain.)

If broadcasting fails to provide these way stations, the people will likely go even more underground and deal with one another more openly in one-to-one relationships. In fact, at the same time radio seems to be pushing into greater variety, it may also be viewed as being on its way out. But it has been so seen for twenty years.

Still, when was the last time a disc jockey looked you straight in the eye? Moreover, in the final analysis, radio has been largely dull and unimaginative, and it is not far-fetched to see it, along with TV as we know it, as a transitional medium.

The technology does not stand still for long, and the more instant communication becomes, the less the delayed, unspontaneous response of the electronic media will be accepted. Talk, really a rather exciting concept, although something less in reality, came and went quickly. Its audiences were far too old.

And as the young get more tuned in, the disc jockey seems to be copping out more and more. He may develop a great set of pipes, but the only show stopper that may be left to him is the same as it has been to all fools: How hard can he fall before people?

However, for those who can go with it fairly far, and still acknowledge it to be mental masturbation, the master piecing of record production may be the most contemporary of trips for machine-mastering poets and heads of the millennium. As Arnold Shaw entitled the first chapter of *The Rock Revolution*, "Where It's At: The Recording

Studio Is the Instrument.” Whether those machines—broadcasting and recording—which provide so much of the world’s music, will be used to further exploit man instead of more fully serving him, lies at man’s fingertips.

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