

RADIO IN RF AND GEB PROGRAM
Retrospect and Prospect

RF and GEB activities in radio now have come to a point where some critical retrospect and some appraisal of prospect for the future seem desirable.

In retrospect, grants made or to be recommended in June fall under five headings:

I. Experimentation to explore and develop possibilities of broadcasting as a medium of educational and cultural diffusion.

	<u>GEB</u>	<u>RF</u>
A. <u>University Broadcasting Council, Chicago</u> general broadcasting for regional and national audience		\$106,000
B. <u>World Wide Broadcasting Foundation, Boston</u> general broadcasting for national and international audience		\$ 65,000
C. <u>University of Wisconsin</u> school broadcasting in a state system of education	\$41,725	
D. <u>Board of Education, Cleveland</u> school broadcasting in a city school system	\$42,600	

Anticipated Outcomes -

- (a) practical determination of ways in which broadcasting can be educationally and culturally effective.
- (b) recruitment and practical training of personnel with requisite educational and cultural qualifications.
- (c) development of interest in educational and cultural broadcasting on the part of cooperating agencies.

Recognized Weaknesses -

- (x) lack of formulated working philosophy - educational and cultural.
- (y) on the part of present personnel, lack of imagination in drawing on educational and cultural resources, and of a wider understanding of radio as a medium.
- (z) slowness of cooperating agencies to implement interest with financial support (less true of universities and stations participating in the work of the UBC, but directly applicable to those cooperating with WLXAL; possibly least true in the case of projects concerned with school broadcasting where prevailing instructional budgets can be drawn on even in early stages of experimentation).

TOTAL GEB \$84,325 RF \$171,000

II. Training of personnel through fellowships at the National Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

	<u>GEB</u>	<u>RF</u>
A. <u>General broadcasting</u>	10 - \$11,324	6 - \$11,500
B. <u>School broadcasting</u>	2 - 7,250	

Present Occupation of Appointees

- (a) educational stations - 10
- (b) school broadcasting - 2
- (c) projects - 1
- (d) commercial radio - 1
- (e) university teaching - 1
- (f) professional theatre - 1
- (g) non-profit agency concerned with broadcasting - 1

Outcomes - TOTAL GEB \$18,574 RF \$11,500

- (a) practical acquaintance with the methods of professional broadcasting.
- (b) better understanding of the possibilities and limitations of radio as a medium.
- (c) better mutual understanding between the industry and non-profit agencies through personal contacts made by fellows.

Recognized Weaknesses -

- (x) lack of opportunities for practical training in types of broadcasting directly related to educational and cultural purposes (most true of NBC, less of CBS, least of BBC).
- (y) lack of imaginative power and mediocrity of educational and cultural background on the part of most candidates who have a clear prospect for future work in radio.

Exceptions: Allen Miller, Director of University Broadcasting Council

Charlotte Tyler, Research Associate, Institute of Pacific Relations

Philip L. Barbour, to take part in the project of the Pan American Union

Thomas Baird, General Post Office (British educational officer)

III. Evaluation of broadcasting in terms of educational and general public service.

	<u>GEB</u>	<u>RF</u>
A. <u>Ohio State University</u> school broadcasting - national, regional, and local	\$69,000	
B. <u>Princeton University</u> general public service		\$67,000
C. <u>National Music League</u> radio's public service in the field of music		14,000
TOTAL GEB	\$69,000	\$ 81,000

Anticipated Outcomes -

- (a) critical appraisal of current broadcasting in terms of its potentialities - actual and unrealized - for general education and for public service.
- (b) recruitment and practical training of personnel through such critical appraisal in the framework of current thinking on general education on the one hand, and of the broad possibilities of broadcasting's public service on the other; appraisal that at the same time takes into account possibilities and limitations of radio as a medium.
- (c) development of research procedures that will set new standards in evaluating broadcasting's educational and cultural contributions.
- (d) in general, the development of a more explicit appreciation of broadcasting's opportunities and responsibilities for education and public service on the part of the industry and non-profit agencies concerned with broadcasting, particularly through reports released through the Federal Radio Education Committee and the National Music League, conferences, and other contacts to be made as the studies progress.

Recognized Weaknesses -

- (x) difficulty of devising feasible methods of evaluation
- (y) difficulty of recruiting personnel with adequate educational and cultural background and understanding of radio's possibilities and limitations as a medium.

IV. Broadcasting as a means of cultural interchange with Latin America.

	<u>GEB</u>	<u>RF</u>
A. <u>Pan American Union</u> experiment in Pan American broadcasting		\$12,820

Anticipated Outcomes -

- (a) development of methods and standards for cultural interchange by radio with Latin America.
- (b) development of interest on the part of the industry and non-profit groups in the educational and cultural possibilities offered by such broadcasting.
- (c) promotion of cultural interchange in Latin America by the example of such broadcasting.

Recognized Weaknesses -

- (x) difficulty of commanding the attention of South American listeners habituated to hearing broadcasting of a different character.
- (y) difficulty of developing interest on the part of the industry in the United States because of its primarily commercial concern with Latin America.

TOTAL	RF	\$12,820
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V. Exploratory studies, conferences, and surveys.

A. <u>Tracy Tyler</u> - survey of school broadcasting in the U.S. and Europe.	\$5,500	
B. <u>Columbia University</u> - exploratory study of the influence of speech factors in radio.		\$500
C. <u>Arthur Garbett</u> , NBC Educational Director for the Pacific Coast - exploratory study of methods of musical education by radio.		\$3,000
D. <u>Ohio State University</u> , Bureau of Educational Research - experimental study of the value of short-wave foreign language broadcasts for language study in schools.		\$3,000
E. <u>Progressive Education Association</u> - study of its opportunities and responsibilities in broadcasting.	\$5,000	

F. <u>American Council on Education</u> - national conference on educational broadcasting.	\$500
G. <u>Charles Siepmann</u> , Director Program Planning, B.B.C. - study of regional broadcasting in the United States.	\$1,800
H. <u>A. Lloyd James</u> - advisory service for World Wide Broadcasting Foundation.	\$3,750
<u>Outcomes</u> -	
TOTAL GEB	\$10,500
RF	\$12,550

- (a) information valuable for the further development of program in radio.
- (b) stimulation of interest on the part of various agencies touched by studies undertaken.

GRAND TOTAL GEB	\$182,399	RF	\$288,850
GEB AND RF			\$471,249

This critical retrospect of activities in radio points to certain considerations which need special attention in future activities.

- I. Further experimentation to explore and develop the possibilities of broadcasting as a medium of education and cultural diffusion should be supported only as opportunities offer in which the weaknesses noted above are minimized. Prerequisite to any support will be the assurance that experimentation will be in the hands of personnel with strong qualifications as to educational and cultural background and a rather more than adequate knowledge of the possibilities of broadcasting as a medium. Furthermore, support must be conditioned on the clear probability of its being taken over by local or regional sources.

One such possibility may materialize in the Rocky Mountain region, where plans are on foot for establishing a Rocky Mountain Radio Council, on much the same lines as the University Broadcasting Council, to serve the coherent region made up by the states of Colorado and Wyoming. This organization, however, would differ from the UBC in having a much wider membership in which not only universities would be represented but other local educational and non-profit groups such as the adult education associations, The Grange, and possibly even the various chambers of commerce.

Presumably the recent grant to the UBC terminates Foundation support of its activities. Some further aid to the World Wide Broadcasting Foundation may be necessary to enable it to secure continued support from other sources. This support should probably be on a smaller scale and may well take the form of contributions to match other funds raised. The Broadcasting Foundation's financial situation will be carefully reviewed during the coming year to determine what further action on the Foundation's part is called for on the termination of its present support on June 30, 1938.

- II. Training of personnel through fellowships with few exceptions has so far clearly been deficient first on the score of the personal lacks of most candidates who have received appointments, and second on the score of the relative ineffectiveness of the facilities for study provided by NBC, CBS - less true of those provided by the BBC.

The first of these two deficiencies is largely due to the restriction of appointments to candidates who have clear prospect for work in educational broadcasting. In practice this has meant appointments to candidates already holding positions on the staffs of American educational stations. The fact is that these staffs are at present most mediocre in quality. It is to be noted that the four fellows who stand as exceptions to this general rule came from outside the educational stations. This leads to the conclusion that in the future while a few appointments may be desirable as a means of bettering the service rendered by educational stations (see below page 9), in awarding appointments more account should be taken of the personal qualifications of candidates and less emphasis placed on their assured prospect for work in radio. To a limited degree appointments might be made the means of recruiting a better personnel: concretely, a request might be sent to all the officers of the Foundation to indicate to JM candidates who seem to them to have to an unusual degree the basic educational and cultural qualifications called for, particularly when such candidates are members of the staffs of national or regional organizations using radio or likely to make use of it: for example, the Foreign Policy Association, public health associations, etc. Possibly some of the officers might care to collaborate with JM in bringing to the attention of these organizations the larger opportunities of radio for their purposes and the consequent need of having some member of their staffs trained in broadcasting method.

Occasionally it might be well to try appointments even more speculative in outcome: in the case of advanced students of unusual qualifications who develop an interest in exploring the opportunities of a career in broadcasting, particularly, perhaps, younger members of the faculties of some of the universities which are now cooperating in experimental projects.

The BBC Staff College now offers an exceptional opportunity for training of the type needed by fellows whose work will be in educational and cultural broadcasting. Present indications are that two fellows can be sent to the BBC for each college term of twelve weeks. Advantage will be taken of this opportunity as candidates are discovered qualified to realize its full benefit.

Officials of the CBS are now developing facilities for training an apprentice group. An effort will be made to have these facilities open to RF fellows. In general, better qualified candidates studying in the United States will benefit most from work at CBS, though work there still lacks purpose and organization.

To NBC will be sent for the present, at least, fellows who are less promising, particularly, perhaps, fellows appointed with a view to bettering the service of established educational stations like that of the state universities. This arrangement is in a way unfortunate; but experience is showing that these fellows get at NBC about as much as they can take.

It may be desirable as time goes on to aid in the creation of some other means of training personnel, possibly as one function of the "broadcasting institute" mentioned below (see page 10). Three years' experience with program in radio clearly shows that the most serious lack in American broadcasting at present is that of personnel which combines broad educational and cultural background with a command of the possibilities of radio as a medium. The prime need is to recruit personnel with these qualifications and with the imaginative power necessary to realize the educational and cultural potentialities of broadcasting.

- III. For the present, there seems no reason to consider further evaluatory studies of broadcasting. The Ohio State University study of school broadcasting and the Princeton University study of radio's general public service may on review justify further support. But until these studies, and that undertaken by the Music League, have clearly demonstrated the feasibility and value of work of this kind, it is doubtful if other projects should be encouraged.
- IV. The Pan American Union experiment with broadcasting as a means of cultural interchange with Latin America, suggests the eventual possibility of similar experimentation for the Far East.

An opportunity may shortly offer to take steps comparable to those which led to the formulation of the Pan American plan. SMG on his return to China will immediately canvass the desirability of a study of broadcasting in China, particularly in relation to the interests of the China program in rural reconstruction. If the outcome is favorable, arrangements will be made for Miss Charlotte Tyler, who is just now completing six months' training on fellowship at the CBS, to proceed to China to undertake the study. If the development of interest were analogous to that in Pan American broadcasting, Miss Tyler might later return to this country to direct a similar experiment for the Far East. That short-wave facilities may soon be available for the

purpose is suggested by the recent move on the part of the General Electric Company to establish a powerful short-wave transmitter for the Far East on the Pacific Coast. An eventual experiment might well take the same form as that now planned for Latin America, namely, broadcasts from this country that would be of definite service to China. "Thought control" in Japan of course closes it to short-wave broadcasts; but the experiment might include the Philippines and other areas of the Far East which come within the scope of humanities program.

Broadcasts relating to the third area of special interest in humanities program, American cultural tradition, probably will not require direct encouragement. An illustration of how significant American materials may be informally brought to use in broadcasting, appears in a recent conversation which JM had with Mr. Carl Carmer, who is now undertaking an interesting series of programs for the CBS on the folklore and traditions of each state in the union: in the course of this conversation JM was able to bring to Carmer's attention work in this area which had received Foundation support and which Carmer agreed offered material of substantial value for the programs he is arranging.

- V. Exploratory studies, conferences, and surveys which have now been supported by the boards suggest a number of possibilities for the development of RF interest in broadcasting.

The Progressive Education Association's study of its opportunities and responsibilities in broadcasting is already opening up new and interesting lines of work. Present prospects are that the PEA's activities in broadcasting will be financed by contributions from the networks. The probability is that the PEA will next year undertake one program in the American School of the Air at the expense of CBS, which will tap new resources of educational thinking developed in the work of its various commissions.

In general, support of activities in school broadcasting is having the effect of moving its control from the more traditional educational thinkers over into the hands of a younger group in touch with current thinking on general education, and within certain limitations quite capable of giving it effect in school broadcasting. In discussions that led up to recent grants for school broadcasting, JM laid special stress on the need for maintaining close contact with developments in thinking about general education. While these projects are under way it may be desirable from time to time to consolidate such contacts by small conferences of those in charge which will serve to pool and to clarify the ideas they are working out.

The Ohio University study of the value of short-wave foreign language broadcasts for language study in schools, seems likely to open up interesting possibilities for making radio serve purposes of cultural interchange in schools. The present experiment is largely directed toward Latin America, dealing almost exclusively with broadcasts in Spanish and Portuguese. It may later be desirable to support further study that would take European broadcasting into account.

The Columbia University exploratory study of the influence of speech factors in radio points to the desirability of further work in this area. With spoken language exerting the influence it does not only in radio but in sound films as well, the need for a better control of its effects is increasingly urgent. The next step appears to be calling a conference of speech specialists and qualified representatives of broadcasting and of work with films, to clarify general notions of factors which should be studied. This JM has in view for the early autumn.

Mr. Garbett's study of methods of education in music by radio is now in process of appraisal. What further support for work of this kind is desirable is not yet clear. But the potentialities of radio for education in music are such as to call for serious attention.

Present indications are that the interest of the American Council on Education in a second national conference in educational broadcasting will warrant support. The objectives of the conference are now being formulated. In general they indicate the Council's aim to create a better understanding of the present situation in broadcasting, particularly as it relates to broadcasting of educational and cultural value. The probability is that the RF will be asked for an additional grant of \$2,000 to assure a conference which will have these effects.

Mr. Siepmann's study of regional broadcasting, particularly through state and university owned stations, will have two significant outcomes. His sampling of the work of some seven state and university stations will indicate that they are at present failing rather sadly to take advantage of their opportunities for public service. The fact is that there are 38 such stations in the country with licenses and university resources that permit them to render regional service of real value; but their present personnel is mediocre in terms of educational and cultural background, lacking in imagination, and failing almost completely to bring to broadcasting the resources which their universities offer. For this reason a limited number of fellowship appointments to give selected members of their staffs a better understanding of broadcasting methods and of the possibilities of radio

as a medium seem justified. Whether or not further steps should be taken is not yet clear. But it may be wise to consider support that would set new standards for the work of these stations as circumstances warrant. One such opportunity may materialize during next year at the University of Iowa, where Professor Mabie, as the administrative head of the Department of Drama and Speech, is showing concern at the University Station's failure to realize its potentialities. Mr. Siepmann's detailed notes on each of the stations visited, provided an excellent basis for appraising the situation, and his full report, to be submitted shortly, will provide a similar basis for a broader consideration of these stations' needs.

Of still more general significance will be Mr. Siepmann's view of American broadcasting as a whole. In general, his view coincides with that of the present memorandum, particularly in regarding as the primary lack of broadcasting in this country that of personnel of proper calibre. His contacts with the industry gives him a basis for aiming this criticism at the industry as well as at the educational broadcasters. Few American broadcasters either in the industry or outside can qualify if judged by the professional standards of the BBC. A few recent appointments and promotions in CBS give hopeful exceptions which, however, merely prove the general rule. The basic need, Mr. Siepmann will point out, is for steps that will set professional standards both in the industry and outside.

This view coincides in general with that of some of the more able representatives of the industry in this country. Mr. Irving Reis, by far and away the most competent producer in American broadcasting, recently suggested that the Foundation might in some way aid in the creation of a "broadcasting institute." Such an institute might serve a number of functions. On the more immediately practical side, it might, for example, recognize by awards, or in other ways, significant developments in broadcasting as an art. It is a fact that there is at present in this country no sound criticism of broadcasting to point out defects or recognize merit. But the institute might also serve functions of more fundamental and lasting importance. Under this heading it might, for example, become a center of research in the effects of sound and spoken language - effects which determine and could be the means of providing social control of the influence of radio and film. At the same time, it might become a center for the training of personnel which would remedy the defects of present facilities for that purpose. Present trends in the industry also suggest the eventual need of some such central agency as the Hays Office provides for the motion pictures. If the Institute were to assume functions like that of the Hays Office, support from the industry might well be found. What aid would be needed

from the RF cannot be predicted. First steps might be to encourage the development of work on the effects of sound in spoken language (first of all through the conference suggested above), and to implement such work by giving limited support to the interests of individuals in this country and individuals who might be brought from abroad (e.g. Ludwig Koch and (?) Lloyd James).

But any formulation of plans for work of this kind will be slow. Certainly formal steps to initiate them are undesirable. The most that is looked for is limited contributions as interests materialize.

In general, it appears that recent grants represent most of the large expenditures at present desirable for work in broadcasting. In the near future the task of primary importance will be to watch and appraise the development of work in projects already supported, particularly with a view to determining what further support they may warrant.

J. M.