

Radio is recognized to be mainly a tool of entertainment. Trying to speak in Freudian terms, here is what we would ask: What are the dynamics of "entertainment" as distinguished, for instance, from the "thrill" we gain from a feature program (hearing bombs dropped over Shanghai) or the pleasure which many people feel in listening to a football game?

Could it be that the word "entertainment" covers different kinds of dynamic structure? Take Freud's analysis of what makes a joke enjoyable. Can this kind of thinking be applied to the pleasure we gain from listening to dreamy music or to an exciting detective play? How would you go about setting up a system of dynamic configurations covering the different experiences which might be referred to by the word "entertainment?" What could be done to test such theoretical approach in an experimental study?

How would you, as a psycho-analyst, account for certain outstanding program successes over the radio--Amos and Andy, Major Bowes, certain serial plays, etc.? Why, for instance, are commentators so popular, apparently quite independent of the philosophy they prefer? Why are their voices so important? How would you go about studying those facts?

The outstanding method used by psycho-analysts seems to be the technique of directed associations, for instance, having the individual tell all that comes to his mind in connection with the complex radio. To what concrete use do you think the association experiment could be put for our project? Do you think, for instance, that the matching of the right program with an advertised commodity could be attempted this way? Here, evidently, our intention is to apply a new technique to the field of ~~radio~~ rather than find a technique for an actual problem.

There is no doubt that the movies offered a completely new kind of experience to us. Even the car is not only a means of transportation but an experience in itself as every driver can testify. Do you think that a similar statement could be made about the radio? Do you think that a similar statement could be made about the radio? Off-hand it would seem that the experience of radio as a unit would not be very strong, perhaps with some exceptions such as the excitement we get in listening to China or the rather characteristic pleasures connected with the tuning-in process or the experience of listening to a concert in your own easy chair. For the rest, it might seem that there is the experience of listening to a talk and separate from it, the experience of listening to music, but hardly the experience of listening to the radio.

If, however, you feel that radio in itself is a new kind of experience how would you try to analyze it? Do you know of any effort analyzing the movie experience or the car-driving experience or any other experience

which could be applied to the radio field?

It is very evident that people have different attitudes toward listening to the radio. There is a snobbish attitude that radio is undignified; for other people it is a nuisance; other individuals oscillate in their radio habits and so on. We consider collecting "radio biographies". Do you think that in doing so we will have to go back to early childhood experience, although for adults the radio did not yet exist when they were children?

We also consider making interviews with mothers to describe very precisely the first contacts their children had with radio. Evidently at different ages, the radio "means" something different. A psychologist, trained in academic tradition, would try to connect radio with what we know regarding developmental phases from birth to maturity. In one phase, radio might mainly be an object of manipulation; in another phase it might serve to collect information.

In still a later phase, it might be a means of self-expression. We are ~~sure~~ that psycho-analysts view the development of the personality in a rather different way. Can you, from your angle, think of any special point to which we should pay attention in collecting this material?

I am sure that in many of the cases you treated, radio was somewhat connected with the troubles of your patients. It would be very helpful for us if you could try to remember examples of this kind and tell about them in our meeting. We feel that you might have observed situations and incidents which are quite beyond the reach of our usual experimental methods.