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RF files
Princeton Radio
200 P
Princeton Board
Radio Study

RF Program in
broadcasting

Present RF program in broadcasting was defined by the
Trustees in April, 1935 as

"limited support to cooperative efforts of the radio
industry and non-commercial agencies that are di-
rected towards the greater cultural effectiveness
of sustaining programs and towards a broader range
of public service."

This definition of program indicates two basic concerns
for activities in broadcasting

- (1) its cultural effectiveness
- (2) its range of public service.

These basic concerns in turn break down into contri-
buting concerns with

- (a) what is cultural, in terms of broadcasting
- (b) how effectiveness may be achieved in cultural
diffusion, i.e. in widening the area of
public appreciation
- (c) what is radio's public
- (d) what is radio's potential service to that public.

The Princeton
project in re-
lation to RF
program

The Princeton Project is primarily concerned with (c)
and (d), specifically

- (x) to characterize the radio public
who listens
where listening takes place
when listening takes place
- (y) to characterize radio's present service
what is listened to
why people listen
how people listen
what are the effects of listening.

The procedure to
be followed in the
Princeton project

The project rests on the assumption that

"If radio in the United States is to serve the
best interests of the people, it is essential
that an objective analysis be made of what these
interests are and how the unique psychological
and social characteristics of radio may be devoted
to them."

To arrive at this analysis it is contended that new methods of research have to be devised and tested

their "development and refinement...have been omitted in former radio studies because of the difficulty and cost as well as the delay in producing immediate results."

"Many studies have been made by educational and commercial organizations to learn more about the specific tastes of the listeners. But such research has, in the main, been directed toward definite educational or commercial objectives with the result that information concerning the real reasons why radio satisfies listeners of various types or what its influences are on subsequent behavior is incomplete at the present time."

The broader aspects of the project

Though the Project is to be administered and carried through by the Princeton School of Public Affairs, it is an integral part of a plan of a larger program of research which will be sponsored by the Federal Radio Education Committee. This program was formulated by an informal committee of six comprised of three prominent broadcasters (Frederic Willis, Assistant to the President, Columbia Broadcasting System, John Royal, Vice-President in charge of operations, National Broadcasting System, James Baldwin, Executive Director of the National Association of Broadcasters) and three equally prominent educators (Levering Tyson, National Advisory Council on Radio in Education, Hadley Cantril, Princeton School of Public Affairs, W.W. Charters, Ohio State University).

In including the Princeton Project in the proposal, it is stated that this committee

"unanimously agrees that preparatory to any final solution of the problem of educational broadcasting, the answers to certain questions of basic interest to both educators and broadcasters must be obtained by systematic investigation. A well-coordinated research project,

conducted by trained investigators, should be formulated to study the essential value of radio to all types of listeners. In other words, it will be necessary to determine what makes a radio broadcast 'effective' before educational broadcasting can become consistently 'effective.'"

Influence of the project in this setting.

As findings are to be released through the informal committee of six mentioned above, they will automatically carry the approval of men whose judgment both broadcasters and educators are bound to respect. They should thus command wide attention in the industry and among educators.

The sponsorship of the FREC will give findings further authority as this Committee is made up of about 40 members representing the most prominent commercial and non-profit agencies concerned with broadcasting. The informal committee of six mentioned above is shortly to be made its Executive Committee.

Finances

The broadcasting industry (NBC, CBS, MBS, and the NAB) has agreed to underwrite administrative expenses and projects to a total cost of not less than \$120,000 during the first two years of activity under the program of research of which the Princeton Project is a part.

If education is to meet its share in the cost of this program, funds will have to be obtained from foundations.

The RF is being asked to contribute for the Princeton Project a total of \$70,000 during the first two years of activity.