

A Word from Our Sponsor

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**Admen, Advertising, and
the Golden Age of Radio**

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They Sway Millions as If by Some Magic Wand

The Advertising Industry Enters Radio in the Late 1920s

In the 1920s unending economic growth seemed possible, and the advertising industry appeared to be its motor; would radio technology help fuel further growth? By the end of the decade, advertising industry revenues reached a record \$3.4 billion.¹ In claiming much credit for stimulating the booming economy, the advertising industry was perhaps a bit overconfident of its power over consumers. But in confronting the prospect of broadcast advertising, it expressed misgivings along with such confidence. While boosters promoted broadcasting as a better way to express business ideals and personalize selling than the voiceless medium of print, others dismissed it as a fad. To some admen, radio advertising remained mysterious; as *Fortune* magazine later pointed out, radio was a business of “sell[ing] time, an invisible commodity, to fictitious beings called corporations for the purpose of influencing an audience that no one can see.”² Advocates of both the hard and soft sell expressed resistance, some citing radio advertising’s ephemeral nature, others the risk of offending audiences. Nonetheless, advertising agencies began, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, to create internal radio departments for handling the new medium. Having entered radio, advertising agencies were forced to consider which print strategies could be translated to radio—and which could not.

Resistance to Radio: “Acute Inflammatory Radioitis”

Initially many admen resisted the new medium. NBC promoter “Jimmy” James recalls that most agencies in the 1920s were “quite

indifferent to radio.”³ The conservative trade journal *Printers’ Ink*, in an editorial against radio advertising in 1922, complained that “[t]he family circle is not a public place, and advertising has no business intruding there unless it is invited.”⁴ Unlike print, consumed by a reader in silence, radio could be heard by anyone in range. The entire family would have to listen, and the young might be exposed to sexual innuendo, jazz, or other inappropriate material. But even if the program were “high-class entertainment,” *Printers’ Ink* further editorialized in 1923, listeners who have been “wheedled into listening to a selfish message will naturally be offended,” because a high cultural experience will have been debased by advertising.

However, *Printers’ Ink* revealed what was probably its chief motive in attacking radio when it warned that newspapers would stop publicizing radio programs “if the broadcasters are themselves going to enter into advertising competition with the newspapers.”⁵ Thus, concern over straining relations with their primary business collaborators, the print publishers, motivated some admen to protect their interests in the print media by openly criticizing radio. Furthermore, most of the advertising pages in *Printers’ Ink* were sold to newspaper publishers, and thus the trade magazine sought to cater to its own largest advertisers.⁶ Newspaper publishers alternately tried to quash or take over radio: In the press radio “wars” of the early 1930s, the major print wire services, such as the Associated Press, refused to allow radio stations to subscribe to their news services. The penetration of radio into the news market, claimed the head of one newspaper trade association, “is seriously depreciating the value of the newspaper’s chief asset in the minds of listeners.” As late as 1933, some newspapers still refused to carry any radio program listings, arguing that listings were advertising, not news, and therefore should be paid for as such.⁷

But advertising agencies had other concerns about radio aside from their desire to maintain good relations with print publishers; they had also to consider the reputation of their profession. The historian Roland Marchand usefully divides the admen who sought to advance professionalism in advertising into two general groups, the “real pros” and those who viewed advertising as “uplift.” Real pros believed advertising was only as good as the sales figures it generated. Seeking to

shake its association with medicine show–style entertainment and bring it into the mainstream of conventional business practice, real pros represented advertising as both a business and a science; they favored quantifiable results and emphasized hard sell strategies, such as “reasons why” to buy a product, over soft sell strategies, such as the use of associations and emotions. Admen such as Albert Lasker and Claude Hopkins of the Chicago agency Lord & Thomas subscribed to many “real pro” beliefs. The “uplift” model of advertising, on the other hand, promulgated most famously by Bruce Barton of Batten Barton Durstine & Osborn, represented advertising as a form of education and a kind of public service and sought to associate it with high forms of culture. Many who believed in the uplift model looked to education, especially the formation of advertising curricula in higher education, as a route to respectability and professionalism.⁸

Radio presented problems for both factions. To begin with, in the early to mid-1920s radio appeared to be a passing fad, a pastime for amateurs and engineers.⁹ Both real pros and uplifters feared that associating their clients with a fad of limited appeal could detract from the seriousness of their business. Furthermore, before standards improved with the establishment of the networks, uplifters wished to avoid juxtaposing commercial messages with local programs of variable quality, many of which relied on unpaid and amateur performers. The inconsistency of program quality and the outrageousness of fraudulent advertisers such as Dr. John Brinkley, who promoted goat glands as a cure for impotence until his station license was revoked, tainted radio as vulgar, especially for uplifters. Consequently, beginning with NBC’s announcement in 1926 that it would improve programming,¹⁰ the networks continually stressed their ability to elevate the quality of programming precisely in order to attract advertisers and agencies concerned with potentially damaging associations.

Real pros dismissed radio for its ephemeral nature: No one knew how many listeners received a broadcast commercial message; it left no mark or solid evidence of its existence.¹¹ The historian Alexander Russo notes that this was the central problem of broadcasting, generating anxiety for both broadcasters and advertisers.¹² Unlike print media circulation, for which the advertising and publishing industries had

established “audited” figures overseen by the Audit Bureau of Circulations, radio’s reach or penetration could not be measured.¹³ Unlike film and theater, radio provided “no box office receipts, nor rising or falling subscriptions to measure the public’s approval or indifference,” as one agency pointed out.¹⁴ Some argued that this lack of hard data did not mean radio advertising was ineffective; they compared radio to billboards or transit advertising, for which there were likewise no circulation measurements.¹⁵ Some sought to measure listenership through fan mail and instigated promotions, contests, and giveaways to stimulate such mail. A high volume of mail could be used to persuade a potential sponsor of the size of radio audiences. John Sample, of the agency Blackett-Sample-Hummert, described the results of one premium offer made on the *Ma Perkins* radio program:

Then we offered a package of zinnia seeds for a dime. We drew about 1,000,000 dimes. The letters covered the floor of an office. . . . I took Mr. Deupree and some other top [Procter & Gamble] people and I went in there and we walked around on top of all those letters. That’s the first time P&G executives had demonstrated to them the power of this relatively new advertising medium.¹⁶

Detractors, however, dismissed such mail because fans usually gushed about the program rather than the product sponsoring it. Most letters requesting offered premiums expressed no gratitude toward the sponsor such as might manifest itself in the purchase of the sponsor’s product.¹⁷ Real pros, then, distrusted this measure of radio circulation. As the radio director of J. Walter Thompson (JWT) admitted in a private staff meeting, mail volume was no true indication of a program’s selling effectiveness.¹⁸ By 1930, the Association of National Advertisers established the first “circulation” figures for radio broadcasts.¹⁹ But though networks’ circulation claims thus gradually grew more credible, many admen worried that radio provided “wasted coverage” because networks broadcast to markets in which their clients did not sell, thus incurring increased expense without increased sales.²⁰

Some admen, including real pros, doubted the usefulness of “good will” advertising, arguing that good will advertising was simply not

worth the expense of program production for most advertisers. Good will advertising would be useful only to advertisers more concerned with national corporate image than with product sales. Many admen therefore viewed advertisers' interest in radio as simply a case of "acute inflammatory radioitis," or the desire of corporate leaders to scratch the "publicity itch"—to seek glory, not sales.²¹ Furthermore, the model of radio as a good will medium had obvious limits. As one dissenter at JWT pointed out, if two competitors each provided sponsored programs, such as Clicquot Club and Canada Dry for similar products, then which ginger ale company would reap good will from listeners? Would all that good will cancel itself out?²²

Many of the uplifters, on the other hand, extolled radio as a good will medium. Many in the professional middle classes regarded radio as a vehicle of cultural uplift for the masses through educational and high cultural programming.²³ Corporations applying enlightened self-interest would, they felt, sponsor opera, theater, and educational talks aimed at raising the level of cultural discourse.²⁴ Many admen regarded radio as a kind of home theater, to be quietly appreciated with all the dignity and gravitas that accompanied the attending of opera. Direct advertising of packaged goods and the like could only jar and offend audiences with such expectations. The fear that direct advertising would undercut the medium's effectiveness lay behind the consistent emphasis on indirect selling within agencies throughout the 1920s. Radio, according to *Advertising & Selling* radio editor Edgar Felix, should be recognized as "a medium for winning good will and as a method of establishing a pleasant association with a trade or firm name."²⁵ Admen who believed this often reflected the views of their clients. For example, in an exchange with the B. F. Goodrich Company in 1925, the advertising manager of the Kolynos Co., later a significant radio advertiser, was asked the value of radio advertising. He responded, "We feel that direct advertising through the radio would be more likely to antagonize rather than produce sales, and that anything that is done should be put in the form of entertainment."²⁶ The Goodrich advertising manager concurred, concluding that the "value of this advertising is in the indirect effect it has on its listeners."²⁷ By 1929,

an industry-sponsored survey indicated that just over half of radio listeners were “annoyed” by radio advertising.²⁸ Thus, as late as 1930, many in broadcasting and advertising remained certain that direct selling on radio would offend listeners.²⁹

The debate over the viability of direct advertising on radio repeated to some extent a similar debate over whether radio should be “selling its editorial pages.”³⁰ Following the print model, some admen argued that editorial and advertising functions on radio should be kept distinct, that advertisers should not be providing the editorial material—that is, the programs. In 1926 the advertising manager for General Electric, while enthusiastic about radio advertising, assumed that “[b]roadcasting will probably not be employed in direct selling until some plan is provided by which such advertising can be definitely segregated from all other programs.”³¹ An anonymous but “prominent” adman argued in the trade press that the conflation of editorial and advertising on radio by way of sponsored programs would eventually undermine the advertising effectiveness of the medium.³² In 1928, a staff member at JWT argued that because “All radio ‘space’ is *editorial space*” and because advertising space cannot be “skipped or delayed until time suits its reading,” advertisers risk earning “ill will” from listeners if the advertising is not “universally pleasing.”³³ In print media, the publisher has the responsibility to attract readers with editorial material; advertisers buy the attention of those readers only by purchasing space adjacent to editorial material. Some admen argued that broadcasters should likewise provide content instead of “scattering the responsibility” for it among advertisers and their agencies.³⁴ They suggested that, to guarantee the medium’s viability, the networks should take control over programming, leaving only brief periods, at intervals of a half hour or so, to the agencies and their advertisements.³⁵

Radio advertising’s detractors had other concerns about the value of the airwaves. By defining advertising as “salesmanship in print,” admen sought to associate selling not with the patent-medicine trade but with the sober, calculated, and literate venue of print. Radio brought this association into question. As one adman claimed, “The longstanding definition of advertising, ‘Salesmanship in print,’ passed

into the discard when radio made its debut.”³⁶ Radio “is oral salesmanship instead of salesmanship in print.”³⁷ The reliance on oral selling strategies raised uncomfortable associations with the carnival barker and the medicine show. Some admen cheerfully admitted that radio selling was not unlike the traveling medicine shows, in which the vendor would put on a show out of his wagon to attract crowds for sales of patent medicine. Robert Colwell of JWT conceded, “Get the crowd around, and then sell your wares. Good radio is just as simple as that.”³⁸ More often, however, radio critics of the 1930s would use the medicine show analogy to criticize commercial broadcasting.³⁹

Another objection, one that would affect debates over the role of the advertising industry in broadcasting well into the 1950s, was whether advertising men should be involved in entertainment. If advertising were to become a respected business enterprise, then involvement in show business would seriously undermine admen’s insistence that they were professionals, or “consumption engineers,” in Calkins’s phrase. The entire discourse of progressive business practice was predicated on the application of scientific principles to shape predictable outcomes. Many admen seeking the imprimatur of business professionalism viewed show business as an unpredictable and risky enterprise, operating in a marginal and disreputable social sphere populated by hustlers and subject to the disruptive sexuality of fallen women. As George Faulkner of JWT explained, “[T]he word showman carries an undignified, cheap connotation. It has a vaguely Semitic, Barnumish, Broadway air to it.”⁴⁰ How could respectable men of business enter show business and guarantee results for their advertising clients? Too many factors were difficult to control: the tempers of talent, the whims of popular taste, the risks of offending audiences, and other imponderables. The tension between the strategies of rational appeals and the strategies of the carnivalesque would shape the intra-industry debates throughout the history of advertising agency involvement in programming.

Advertising Agencies Found Radio Departments

Former WEAf staffer Mark Woods credits the William H. Rankin agency with being one of the first major agencies to “back this new

medium.”⁴¹ Rankin’s broadcast of actress Marion Davies promoting cosmetic company Mineralava on WEAJ in 1922 was probably the first agency-produced sponsored program.⁴² Pointing out that agencies had already experienced a change of function, from space brokers into marketing specialists, Edgar Felix urged agencies to consider radio as just one more function to add to an ever-increasing roster of services to provide clients.⁴³ However, many agencies signaled their reluctance to engage too deeply with radio by keeping their newly formed radio departments somewhat apart from other departments; and despite their increasing importance over the next two decades, many radio departments remained marginal. Many heads of agencies, such as Raymond Rubicam of Young & Rubicam, continued long into the radio era to view radio as “a necessary evil.”⁴⁴ According to one observer, agencies “resented the new form.”⁴⁵

Nonetheless, agencies began to expand into radio and counter the competition for clients who needed programming. Agencies competed with “radio service bureaus,” which were independent program producers. JWT radio executive Robert Simon dismissed these competitors as just “concert managers or broken-down actors or anybody who thought he could sell an idea.”⁴⁶ The independent bureaus, as well as stations, “do not have many seasoned advertising men” to help advertisers.⁴⁷ Advertising agencies’ competitive advantage was that they could put the advertiser’s marketing needs foremost and apply their selling expertise. According to Roy Durstine, one of the founders of BBDO, “The showman isn’t an advertising man,” and thus advertisers needed agencies to protect them from these dubious show business figures.⁴⁸ Felix urged agencies to learn the broadcasting and entertainment businesses, not necessarily to become full-time “showmen” but to have a “most wholesome and constructive influence” on the broadcasting industry, as well as to intervene to save clients from the “self-appointed unauthorized middlemen” who sought to profit from clients’ inexperience in show business.⁴⁹ The other major competitors to the agencies were the network programming departments. While network programming departments built programs and then looked for an advertiser to buy them, the advertising agencies’ competitive

advantage was that they began with the advertiser's needs and then located or developed programs to fit those needs.

As a rule, agencies did not have expertise in show business any more than the showmen had expertise in advertising. Ralph Hower, in his 1939 in-house history of the N. W. Ayer agency, notes that radio was "no special boon" to agencies because it "forced them into the entertainment business, a field in which they had no experience."⁵⁰ JWT's Colwell argued, however, that admen in radio therefore worked harder than showmen. The "average Broadway writer," for example, "takes his assignment with the attitude that he can dash it off with one hand." Admen were not only more modest about their expertise, they took the job more seriously.⁵¹ Mark Woods later suggested that the involvement of agencies in radio helped promote programming innovation in the late 1920s because agencies convinced advertisers to spend more on programming—budgeting for star talent and the like—in order to attract larger audiences. Furthermore, Woods pointed out that, unlike other producers perhaps, the agencies were motivated to distinguish their clients' programs from other programs so as to establish their unique radio presence, thereby spurring more program "diversification."⁵² With more hyperbole, the manager of the Erwin Wasey radio department suggested that advertising agencies were also "contributing to the daily contentment and culture of millions."⁵³

Whether or not agencies believed they belonged in radio, they felt pressure from their clients to get into radio. In the privacy of a staff meeting, a JWT staffer asserted that advertisers wanted to be involved with radio because it was the "more or less suppressed desire of every capitalist to become involved in show business" without "the suggestion of something naughty that goes with the backing of a show on Broadway."⁵⁴ Chester Bowles, founder of Benton & Bowles, claimed that once agencies realized that "radio was no passing phenomenon" and that "they would have to take a more and more active part in the building of radio programs," agencies began to recruit personnel who might bring them show business expertise.⁵⁵ Thus, many agencies that had been go-betweens for sponsors and broadcasters eventually began producing programs for sponsors directly. By 1929, according to one

count, 33 percent of one network's programs were produced by advertising agencies, 28 percent by the network itself, 20 percent by sponsors, and 19 percent by independent program packagers, or radio bureaus.⁵⁶ Network radio advertising revenues jumped from \$3.9 million in 1927 to \$19.2 million in 1929.⁵⁷

As advertising agencies began to respond to clients' interest in radio, many newly created agency radio departments included at least one man with network or broadcast experience who could explain the ins and outs of the broadcasting "game." According to Mark Woods, NBC began loaning out some of its personnel to help agencies set up radio departments; agencies also began to recruit network personnel, offering them higher salaries, so NBC "lost a number of men to the advertising agencies."⁵⁸ Advertising agencies also recruited from CBS; for example, Ralph Wentworth and Norman Brokenshire left CBS in 1929 to join radio departments in agencies.⁵⁹ Many of the network men recruited by the agencies were time salesmen who knew how to sell broadcasting generally. These men were often joined at the agencies by someone who could specialize in program building, and by a "statistician" who could present data to clients on radio's effectiveness. The salesman would sell the idea of radio to clients, the program man would present program ideas, and the statistician would supply circulation (or listenership) data.⁶⁰

N. W. Ayer, a well-established agency based in Philadelphia, became involved in radio as early as 1922 while serving its client AT&T, and by 1923 it was also helping produce *The Eveready Hour* for its client National Carbon Co. *The Eveready Hour* was probably the first sponsored program distributed to multiple stations simultaneously; a variety show, it featured the announcer Graham MacNamee and performers such as Will Rogers and Art Gillham, the "Whispering Pianist." N. W. Ayer, which had already claimed to have founded the first agency copy department, the first agency art department, and the first agency publicity department, now also claimed to have founded the first agency radio department.⁶¹ N. W. Ayer leader H. A. Batten claimed for his agency nearly every innovation that occurred in early radio programming, including the first "drama-type program designed for broadcasting" in 1924, the first adaptation of a full-length novel in

1926, the first variety show in 1926, and the first “informal commercials” with Jack Benny in 1932.⁶² Whatever the truth of these claims, they served to promote Ayer to potential clients, positioning the agency at the cutting edge of advertising practice.

National Carbon Co.’s incentive for sponsoring radio programming is obvious in a 1927 print advertisement (see Figure 3-1).⁶³ As manufacturer of Eveready radio batteries, National Carbon hoped to stimulate radio set and battery sales. Under the headline “Perfecting the gift of radio” and an illustration of a family enjoying gifts beside a Christmas tree, the text explains that “When you give the great gift of a radio set, remember that you are giving not merely a handsome, intricate and sensitive instrument, but you are also giving radio reception, radio enjoyment, radio itself.” N. W. Ayer’s ad copy thus emphasizes not just the technical quality of the product—radio batteries—but also the “enjoyment” of radio entertainment, the actual interest of radio listeners. Acknowledging that buyers seek radios that reliably provide entertainment, the text further explains that Eveready batteries are so dependable that they will provide “hours, days, weeks and months of use, of solid enjoyment of radio at its best.” Integrated into the ad is a reminder: “Tuesday night is Eveready Hour Night,” including a list of every radio station carrying the program. Along with the tag line “Radio is better with Battery Power,” the ad concludes with the urgent reminder that “The air is full of things you shouldn’t miss.”

Although its client AT&T was the impetus for N. W. Ayer’s initial involvement in radio, the agency culture at N. W. Ayer was not well suited for radio.⁶⁴ At least one agency leader, Wilfred Fry, disliked radio advertising.⁶⁵ The radio department was never well integrated into the rest of the agency and was dismissively called the “wireless department” by some.⁶⁶ N. W. Ayer’s longtime relations with print media such as the *Saturday Evening Post* predisposed its leaders to consider radio as an adjunct. Even at the peak of radio revenues, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, N. W. Ayer leaders believed radio should be used only moderately and in tandem with other media.⁶⁷ N. W. Ayer therefore did not pursue radio accounts, and other agencies quickly took the lead, especially after the Philadelphia-based agency moved its broadcasting department from New York back to Philadelphia. New

The Literary Digest for December 17, 1927

Perfecting the gift of radio

Radio is better

WHEN you give the great gift of a radio set, remember that you are giving not merely a handsome, intricate and sensitive instrument, but you are also giving radio reception, radio enjoyment, radio itself. So give a receiver that can use the best source of radio power—batteries, for batteries perfect the performance of a radio receiver. The power they provide is pure D. C., Direct Current, which is entirely silent. Battery Power will insure the enjoyment of the listener, for battery-run sets produce exactly the tone their designers built into them.

All Eveready "B" Batteries will give you the vital qualities of Battery Power. Behind Eveready Radio Batteries are 33 years of dry battery making, of pioneering, invention,

with Battery Power

discovery, continual leadership. Buy Eveready Radio Batteries and ahead of you are hours, days, weeks and months of use, of solid enjoyment of radio at its best.

For modern receivers, choose the Eveready Layerbilt "B" Battery No. 486, built according to a radically new design that gives it ample and even excess capacity to meet the demands of powerful sets. This battery is the longest lasting of all Evereadys. Its unique, patented construction packs the maximum possible quantity of active materials within a given space, and also

Eveready's greatest provider of Battery Power—the Eveready Layerbilt "B" Battery No. 486.

makes those materials more efficient producers of current.

NATIONAL CARBON CO., INC.
New York San Francisco
Unit of Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation

Tuesday night is Eveready Hour Night—
9 P. M., Eastern Standard Time

WEAF—New York	WOC—Davenport
WJAR—Providence	WCCO—Minneapolis
WEEI—Boston	WDAF—St. Paul
WFI—Philadelphia	WDAF—Kansas City
WGLR—Buffalo	WLSI—St. Louis
WGAI—Pittsburgh	WRC—Washington
WJAI—Cincinnati	WCI—Cincinnati
WJAM—Cleveland	WHAS—Louisville
WWJ—Detroit	WSM—Nashville
WGN—Chicago	WMC—Memphis

Pacific Coast Stations—
9 P. M., Pacific Standard Time

KFO-KGO—San Francisco	KFI—Los Angeles
KFOA-KOMO—Seattle	KGW—Portland

EVEREADY
Radio Batteries

The air is full of things you shouldn't miss

Figure 3-1. Eveready: "Perfecting the gift of radio." (*The Literary Digest*, 17 December 1927, n.p.)

York had developed as the center for most radio production, and when given the choice of going “ninety miles to Philadelphia as opposed to going across the street to a New York agency,” most broadcast advertisers found other agencies.⁶⁸ By 1932, in the estimation of competitor JWT’s Robert Simon, N. W. Ayer’s radio star had fallen. Its good reputation from producing *The Eveready Hour* had dissipated: “Since then, nothing important has emanated from the Ayer offices.”⁶⁹

The main competitor to the claim for first agency radio department was Batten Barton Durstine & Osborn. The Batten agency, before it merged with Barton Durstine & Osborn (BDO) in 1928, had hired George Podeyn (formerly of WEAf) to run its radio department, and BDO had hired Arthur Pryor Jr., the son of a bandleader, for his putative skills in the music industry.⁷⁰ As early as 1925, BDO oversaw, but did not produce, radio manufacturer Atwater Kent’s presentations of the Metropolitan Opera.⁷¹ BBDO hedged its claim by saying it had established the “first complete radio department” in about 1926.⁷² Among BBDO’s hires after the merger in 1928 were an NBC executive, Herbert Foster, and a former WEAf programmer, Annette Bushman.⁷³ Radio’s chief supporter at BBDO was Roy Durstine, a vocal proponent of agency involvement in the medium. Although one of its most important programs, the Atwater Kent program, was not produced by the agency, Durstine was convinced by client interest in radio that agencies should take a stronger role in programming.⁷⁴ In 1928, BBDO oversaw five programs in addition to the Atwater Kent program: *General Motors Family Party*, *Soconyland Sketches*, *National Home Hour*, *Happy Wonder Bakers*, and *The Armstrong Quakers*, all but the last broadcast on WEAf.⁷⁵ BBDO’s radio department soon became a general selling point for the agency; having a radio department indicated a facility for forward thinking, modern technical know-how, and serious commitment to the cultural uplift of the masses. In a 1930 advertisement to the trade, BBDO boasted of a radio staff of twenty-three, “which is becoming as familiar with this new art as it is with any of the older forms of advertising.”⁷⁶ BBDO also noted that, with three exceptions, “the creative work of writing, rehearsing and directing . . . is all ours.”⁷⁷ By 1933, the trade magazine *Variety* described BBDO as “innovators of

the big name and money star” programs for their institutional advertising clients, General Electric, General Motors, and Atwater Kent.⁷⁸

Lord & Thomas, the large Chicago-based agency led by Albert Lasker, became involved in radio on behalf of one of its clients, RCA, parent company of NBC. However, because of its relationship with the network, Lord & Thomas left program production to NBC.⁷⁹ Lord & Thomas’s most significant action in early radio was to pick up what would become *The Amos ‘n’ Andy* show, then locally syndicated out of Chicago, and put it on the NBC network in August 1929. The spectacular rise in sales for *Amos ‘n’ Andy*’s first sponsor, Pepsodent, helped establish national network programs as significant advertising vehicles.⁸⁰ *Amos ‘n’ Andy*, firmly based in minstrel traditions, featured white actors performing in aural blackface as versions of the minstrel characters Jim Crow and Zip Coon. Its explosive popularity single-handedly raised audience awareness of radio networks.⁸¹ Although it was closer in format to today’s situation comedies than soap operas, open-ended storylines about Amos and Andy’s migration north, their efforts to run a business, and their romantic entanglements continued over weeks and months, keeping listeners returning for the latest developments. Reputedly, movie theaters piped in the weekly broadcast in order to retain their audiences. Although the two performers wrote the program, L&T supplied the brief advertising announcements—one minute at the opening and a short announcement at the end. Announcer Bill Hay read this 1932 commercial after the opening theme song—note how it reflects the hard sell tenets of L&T’s Lasker:

As we have told you repeatedly, Pepsodent Tooth Paste today contains a new and different cleansing and polishing material. We want to emphasize the fact that this cleansing and polishing material used in Pepsodent Tooth Paste is contained in no other tooth paste. That is very important. It is important to us, because Pepsodent laboratories spent eleven years in developing this remarkable material. It is important to the public, because no other cleansing and polishing material removes film from teeth as effectively as does this new discovery. What’s more, this new material is twice as soft as that commonly used in tooth pastes. Therefore, it gives greater safety, greater protection to

lovely teeth. Use Pepsodent Tooth Paste twice a day—See your dentist at least twice a year.⁸²

The earmarks of reason-why advertising appear in the repetition of key points (“cleansing and polishing”), the claim of scientific progress (“Pepsodent laboratories”), use of superlatives (“new and different,” “new discovery,” “greater safety”), and multiple “reasons why” to buy the product.

By 1933, *Variety*’s assessment was that L&T’s admen were “specialists in human-interest script serials,” which also included *Clara, Lu ’n’ Em* (1931–36) and *The Goldbergs* (1929–46).⁸³ The former, one of the very first radio serials and sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive, sold Super Suds dishwashing soap while the three title characters chatted and gossiped. *The Goldbergs*, like *Amos ’n’ Andy*, was an ethnic humor situation comedy, in this case about a Jewish family in the Bronx, with continuing storylines written by their chief performers. Each program traced the struggles of immigrants (foreign and domestic) sympathetically, but through the strategy of illustrating their characters’ “cultural incompetence” with accents, dialect, cultural confusion, and “fish out of water” situations, perhaps flattering the potential user of Super Suds or Pepsodent for a superior level of general know-how that might be applied to the choice of “scientifically proven” domestic products.⁸⁴

By 1928, a number of other New York agencies had begun radio departments, including Lennen & Mitchell, Thomas & Logan, Young & Rubicam, Frank Seaman, Erwin-Wasey, and Calkins & Holden.⁸⁵ Lennen & Mitchell’s early programs featured stars such as Paul Whiteman and Fred Waring, well-known bandleaders.⁸⁶ Initially, Erwin-Wasey’s department operated almost independently of the rest of the agency. However, once the radio department was better integrated, according to JWT’s Simon, “What followed was a regime that probably holds all records for literal-mindedness. It obeyed all rules, including imaginary ones. If a music program had been approved by a client, no deviation could be made under any circumstances. . . . The agency allowed itself no latitude, no discretion.” Simon’s evaluation of the Erwin-Wasey radio department by 1932 was that, though headed by “a bit of an aesthete,” it still suffered from too much “adherence to routine” and

“very little creative talent.”⁸⁷ However self-serving Simon’s critique of a competitor, his summary points up an important dilemma in early radio departments: to hew closely to client demands, or to develop independent expertise?

H. K. McCann, soon to become McCann-Erickson, would found a radio department, as would Campbell Ewald. In 1930, McCann’s director of radio, Ruth Cornwell, asserted that radio should be regarded “as a supplementary medium” to print. The direct sales pitch should be made in print; on radio, only the advertiser’s name and product should be mentioned.⁸⁸ One of McCann’s first programs was for Chesebrough Manufacturing Co.’s Vaseline. In a series of sketches about small-town life, with a “simple, homely and old fashioned” atmosphere, characters integrated Vaseline into their conversations, introducing its various uses.⁸⁹ By 1933, McCann-Erickson oversaw programs for Standard Oil featuring the Marx Brothers and music stars.⁹⁰

Young & Rubicam (Y&R), founded by defectors from N. W. Ayer, started its department in 1928 in order to sell a daytime radio program for women called *Radio Household Institute*.⁹¹ The program consisted mostly of advice, tips, and recipes, many of which involved the sponsors’ household products. This early instructional format would soon be jettisoned in favor of more entertaining formats for housewives, specifically serials. By the mid-1930s, Y&R had developed a major radio department, led by Hubbell Robinson, who would later run programming at CBS Television. Despite founder Raymond Rubicam’s distaste for radio advertising, the radio department was an important innovator, developing a staff that wrote all of its programs and in which there was “a constant striving for novelty.”⁹² Y&R understood early the value of innovation and novelty for attracting audiences and developed its radio department to exploit that understanding.

J. Walter Thompson recruited former WEAJ staffer William Ensign to help start its radio department in 1927. Gerard Chatfield and Roosevelt Clark also joined JWT from NBC in 1928.⁹³ Ensign, who came to JWT as a radio man, not an adman, had to build interest in radio not only among JWT’s clients but among agency personnel as well. He wrote articles for the in-house news organ to promote radio use and in a staff meeting confessed that JWT’s relative slowness to

expand into radio might be his fault: "I probably have not been as aggressive as I should have been in trying to sell you gentlemen on the medium."⁹⁴ Ensign felt his closeness to radio, after his experience producing *Roxy and His Gang* at WEA, might have blinded him to how others perceived it. *Roxy and His Gang* had been an extremely successful musical variety show featuring Samuel Rothafel, the entertainment impresario; its success informed his enthusiasm for radio, which clashed with the skepticism of other JWT departments, which viewed it as new competition for billing dollars. In 1928, explaining that radio was in all their interests, Ensign remarked, "It's not billings alone but the fact that I feel that some J.W.T. clients are missing a good thing in not being on the air."⁹⁵ JWT leader Stanley Resor then exhorted his staff to cooperate with Ensign and help him with client contacts. At this time, JWT had only one client on the air, Maxwell House Coffee, but within a few years, it became one of the largest radio agencies. By early 1930, radio head John Reber reported that JWT oversaw thirty-one programs a week that were "successful from a business point of view."⁹⁶ JWT claimed 14 percent of the commercial radio "business" in 1932; by 1933, NBC recognized JWT as its "largest revenue producing agency."⁹⁷ By 1933, *Variety's* analysis of agencies placed JWT near the top as "the flashy lads of the air" and "a staunch proponent of the use of stage and screen names and one of the most successful air merchandisers in the business."⁹⁸

As advertising agencies became more involved with radio, their radio departments evolved. At first these departments were loosely structured and staffed, but gradually, as radio revenues increased, they expanded and professionalized. In a few years, more potential employees had had radio experience, and so the labor pool widened and deepened. An adman named M. Lewis Goodkind described this process as occurring in three phases.⁹⁹ First was the "delegated authority" stage, when agencies gradually took over more and more radio production tasks and, to run their radio departments, hurriedly hired anyone who claimed to know something about the medium, such as "the sponsor's nephew." During this phase, according to JWT's Simon, the radio department was often a "one-man" operation, run by announcers or "broken-down actors" or agency "relatives who had to have jobs, or for

venerable employees who had never been good at anything.”¹⁰⁰ The second phase was the “performer’s vogue,” when agencies looked to musicians and theatrical directors for guidance in running radio departments. The third and final phase was when an agency at last developed a fully professional radio staff. In the case of JWT, one of the first radio department heads was a musician named Henry Joslyn, who took over the radio department in 1929. When radio billings began to expand rapidly, Joslyn was replaced by former “new business” manager Reber, an account executive charged with finding new clients for JWT. His ability to “sell” (or sign) new clients won him the position of radio department head over competitors Joslyn and Aminta Cassares, who managed the women’s division.¹⁰¹ His appointment signaled the new importance of the radio department within the agency. Joslyn, the musician, and Cassares, the women’s specialist, despite experience apparently relevant to radio programming, lost the contest to an executive who was able to prove he could deal with clients effectively. Reber went on to build one of the largest and most stable agency radio departments.

The advertising agencies that first entered radio usually fit one of two categories: the well established and the upstart. The former, such as BBDO, JWT, or N. W. Ayer, developed radio departments as an extra service in order to retain already existing clients. However, these agencies were also staffed with many conservative executives who did not necessarily trust radio advertising. While the establishment connections of these agencies helped bring more conventional advertisers into the untested medium, their underlying bias toward print media may have undermined their ability to innovate in the aural medium of radio. The latter, the upstart agency, such as Benton & Bowles, founded in 1929, turned to radio as a way of getting started in business and to attract clients away from agencies unwilling to manage their clients’ radio needs. Benton & Bowles, unfettered by convention, changed radio practices in key ways. Another major radio agency, Blackett-Sample-Hummert, founded in 1927, focused most of its efforts on radio advertising, becoming one the single largest buyers of airtime during the 1930s. Whether an agency moved into radio for defensive

or offensive competitive purposes, by the mid-1930s radio was acknowledged as a powerful advertising medium.

Translating Print Strategies to Radio: “They Sway Millions as If by Some Magic Wand”

As radio advertisers moved away from indirect advertising approaches, such as naming the program after the product, and toward direct advertising approaches that included product information, admen accustomed to print media struggled to adapt. Many print strategies were obviously inapplicable; there were no visual illustrations and or typefaces in radio. Nonetheless, print-trained admen sought to translate what they could into the new medium. In a 1930 staff meeting, JWT staffer George Faulkner listed the challenges of radio: “1. Lack of visual aids. 2. Fleeting impression. 3. The human voice in place of type as medium. 4. Censorship barriers. 5. Need for showmanship.”¹⁰² The first issue, the lack of visual aids, stymied admen who distrusted a nonvisual approach to selling; one BBDO staffer worried that “the ear as a sense organ has never been educated as the eye has been.”¹⁰³ JWT radio department head Reber argued, in contrast, that communication was in the first instance an oral experience and thus radio, by “speak[ing] to a lot of people at once,” was “getting back to the first principle” of communication.¹⁰⁴ Unable to rely on well-known visual strategies, admen had to invent new aural strategies, such as sound effects, that would “educate the ear” to receive advertising messages.

The second problem, radio’s “fleeting impression,” was a result of its evanescence. Once the message was out on the air, it could not be recaptured, measured, repeated, or reviewed by listeners. Magazine readers were able to re-read an advertisement, but a radio listener had no means of re-hearing one. What if audiences did not listen closely enough, or grasp the meaning well enough? Rather than compare radio to print, consider it analogous to billboards, advised JWT staffer Colwell, and effective even though passing viewers may catch only a glimpse, an impression, and may not see the entire message. Colwell

advised radio copywriters to keep the advertising copy simple and “avoid quick transitions, complex ideas, or concepts which the listener cannot grasp as the words fly by.”¹⁰⁵ Keeping copy short and simple was also necessary because of the limitations of audience attention. Young & Rubicam radio department head Robinson underlined this principle when he explained that “the public’s memory is conspicuous chiefly for its brevity, its loyalty chiefly conspicuous for its ability to waver.”¹⁰⁶ Admen could not rely on audiences to focus or remember; they would have to catch an audience’s attention and make the message memorable.

As to the third issue, the use of the human voice as a medium rather than typeface or type size, some admen extolled the advantages of voice over print. Referring to the admen who wrote radio scripts that incorporated both program and advertising copy, adman George W. Smith claimed, “Continuity writers have transformed the *divinity* of the printed word into the still more divine eloquence of the spoken word. They tug at heart strings; they inspire appetites; they change deep-rooted habits. . . . In so doing, they sway millions as if by some magic wand.”¹⁰⁷ Other admen did not share Smith’s confidence in the power of speech to sway millions. BBDO staffer J. T. W. Martin argued that print was intrinsically more credible: “The very fact that advertising copy is printed lends it a sincere appearance. Any size or style of type seems to stamp a statement as truth.”¹⁰⁸ Advertising copy that seemed “sincere” in print, Martin argued, had a different effect when spoken on the air: “It is astonishing how exaggerated and ridiculous an extravagant claim for a product sounds over the air.”¹⁰⁹ While claiming that the differences between radio and print advertising had been overblown, another adman acknowledged, “It is, of course, easier to commit the sin of blatancy over the air than in print.”¹¹⁰ How could admen avoid the pitfalls of applying print strategies to radio? Hill Blackett, of Blackett-Sample-Hummert, argued, “There are two entirely different techniques” for copywriting. “One is the technique of the spoken word, and the other the technique of the printed word. . . . [I]n the early days of radio, the commercials sounded like somebody getting up and reading a piece of advertising.”¹¹¹ Continuity writers, those writing scripts that incorporated both advertising and program

text, must, according to one adman, avoid “unnatural or ‘advertisy’ dialog” that would undercut the seamless integration of program and advertisement.¹¹²

The program’s announcer translated the printed word into the spoken. Announcers mediated between the program and the advertising: When introducing the program and the players, they usually spoke the text of the advertisement as well, in effect representing the sponsor. After a short musical introduction, a 1930 broadcast of *The Coca-Cola Top Notchers* is introduced thus: “Good evening, ladies and gentlemen of the radio audience. This is Graham MacNamee speaking. We bring you a period of delightful entertainment sponsored by Coca-Cola, the pure drink of natural flavors, served nine million times a day.”¹¹³ Victor Ratner, from the Lennen & Mitchell agency, characterized announcers as “the ‘type-faces’ of radio,” and as in print, their proper use was essential: “the right announcer adds a dynamic quality to any copy he is given to deliver. He can step-up advertising ‘voltage’ as much as a poor announcer can step it down.”¹¹⁴ Some announcers were stars in their own right, announced by another, no-name announcer, as in an episode of *The Chase & Sanborn Hour* in which the first announcer introduced the program title “and your host, Don Ameche!”—who then introduced the stars and the sponsor.¹¹⁵ In a 1930 staff meeting, JWT staffer Colwell described the different styles of well-known announcers: “Graham MacNamee races along, Alwyn Bach is very slow and dignified, Alois Havrilla is about half way between.”¹¹⁶ Some announcers were prized for their skills at delivering the advertisement and setting up the comedy talent, such as Don Wilson for Jack Benny, Bill Goodwin for George Burns and Gracie Allen, and Bill Baldwin for Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. The continuity writers needed to take their announcer’s style into account. As Colwell explained, “A good continuity man will ‘write to his announcer.’ Like an actor in a play, an announcer suffers when he is given a part that is out of character. Listeners realize . . . when an announcer is saying something that does not sound sincere and spontaneous.”¹¹⁷ Ernest S. Green provided advice to copywriters in a *Printers’ Ink Monthly* article titled “What ‘Typeface’ for Your Radio Commercials?” (see Figure 3-2).¹¹⁸ The illustration depicts announcers labeled variously “corny” or “smooth” or

WHAT "TYPE FACE" for Your Radio Commercials?

by ERNEST S. GREEN



Figure 3-2. "What 'Type Face' for Your Radio Commercials?" (Ernest S. Green, "What 'Typeface' for Your Radio Commercials?" *Printers' Ink Monthly*, May 1938, 18–19.)

"punchy" or "factual" and then dressed to reflect that style: The "corny" announcer wears a farmer's hat, the "punchy" announcer wears boxing gloves. To emphasize the importance of announcement style consistency, a list of questions set in different fonts further illustrates the issue: "Am I being *smooth* in a Corny Commercial?" and so on.

Agencies worried about their reliance on announcers to mediate between the advertising and the audience. JWT's Colwell warned his co-workers that one could never be sure if an announcer would "say it in the right way." Consequently, JWT exercised close control over announcers. According to Colwell, "To insure this we have generally a production man at all of our programs to be certain that the announcer gives the words the exact shade of meaning that they should have."¹¹⁹ Fears that

listeners would be alienated by the apparent insincerity or wooden delivery of an announcer prompted another adman to urge agencies to use announcers whose “words must be felt as well as spoken.”¹²⁰ Credibility and sincerity depended on announcers’ emoting rather than reciting. An announcer who was too glib and smooth could undercut an advertisement’s effectiveness. For this reason, the JWT Radio Department would also, on occasion, use a radio performer who was not an announcer present the advertising message: He or she would provide a “fresh voice, a voice which may not be quite so much on its guard and more sincere, frank and open than [that of] the ordinary ‘announcer.’”¹²¹ Authenticity and credibility, then, occasionally required the employment of the not-announcer, whose sincerity would be less questionable.

The push to enter radio in the late 1920s came not from within the advertising industry but from without, especially from clients who wanted to sponsor programs and were frustrated with other program producers. Advertising industry resistance to radio arose primarily from its dependence on print publishers, who feared the competition of a new medium, in addition to concerns that the industry’s hard-fought path to professional respectability could be undermined by associations with show business and the memories of patent medicine “medicine shows.” Advertising agencies, facing competition for clients from other program producers, soon moved into radio with varying levels of enthusiasm and commitment. Well-established agencies founded radio departments to complete the range of services it could offer clients. Upstart agencies specialized in radio to gain the competitive edge over the more conservative agencies. Once in radio, agencies were responsible for overseeing programming and integrating it with advertising strategies. Translating their print strategies into an aural medium proved challenging because radio’s ephemeral nature, lack of visuals, and reliance on human voices limited admen’s options. Analogizing the human voice as a “typeface,” admen began to explore alternative strategies for engaging audiences. By the beginning of the 1930s, the significance of radio to the advertising industry had become clear. As a JWT staffer explained, “Rarely—if ever—can a single printed advertisement result in doubling returns. . . . In radio, however, this is a rather common experience, and one which we who are immersed in radio day and night are only beginning to understand.”¹²²

91. Felix, “To Broadcast or Not to Broadcast,” 23.
92. Letter from Henry O. Philips to H. B. Harvey, 19 December 1928, Box 3, Folder 81, NBC Records, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison (hereafter NBC Records).
93. Smulyan, *Selling Radio*, 75–77.
94. Martin P. Rice, “Radio Advertising,” *Advertising & Selling*, 30 June 1926, 72.
95. Frank A. Arnold, “High Spots in Broadcast Technique,” *Broadcast Advertising*, May 1929, 7.
96. “Broadcast Advertising,” NBC promotional booklet, 21, Box 1, Folder 9, James Papers.
97. M. H. Aylesworth, “Radio’s Place in the Advertising Career,” in James, ed., *Careers in Advertising*, 449.
98. J. H. P., “Good Morning, Everybody!” *Cheesekraft*, vol. 8, no. 2, May 1929, 6, Kraft Archives, Morton Grove, Illinois (hereafter Kraft Archives).
99. Association of National Advertisers, “What About Radio Advertising?” May 1928, 3, LAB.
100. James Interview, 28, James Papers.
101. Special Radio Report No. 1, *Ayer News File*, 10 April 1939, 5, N. W. Ayer Archives.
102. Martin P. Rice, “Radio Advertising,” *Advertising & Selling*, 30 June 1926, 72; “Broadcast Advertising,” CBS pamphlet, 1929, 5.
103. Hettinger, *A Decade of Radio Advertising*, 122.

3. They Sway Millions as If by Some Magic Wand: The Advertising Industry Enters Radio in the Late 1920s

1. Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers* (New York: William Morrow, 1984), 118.
2. “And All Because They’re Smart,” *Fortune*, June 1935, 82.
3. E. P. H. James, interview, 27, James Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison (hereafter James Interview, James Papers).
4. *Printers’ Ink*, 27 April 1922, 201.
5. “Radio an Objectionable Advertising Medium,” *Printers’ Ink*, 8 February 1923, 175–76.
6. Fox, *Mirror Makers*, 153.

7. “Inland Newspapers Demand Pay for Radio Programs,” *Printers’ Ink*, 2 March 1933, 33.
8. Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 26–28.
9. Ralph Starr Butler, “Radio Tomorrow,” *Printers’ Ink Monthly*, July 1936, 73; J. Walter Thompson Staff Meeting Minutes, 5 January 1932, 18, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising and Marketing History, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (hereafter JWT Staff Meeting Minutes).
10. “National radio broadcasting with better programs permanently assured by this important action of the Radio Corporation of America in the interest of the listening public.” Advertisement reproduced in Erik Barnouw, *The Sponsor: Notes on a Modern Potentate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 23.
11. “Agencies View Radio Advertising in Survey by Station,” *Advertising & Selling*, 30 April 1930, 90.
12. Alexander Russo, *Points on the Dial* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 7.
13. S. H. Giellerup, “It’s Time We Took the ‘Blue Sky’ out of the Air,” *Advertising & Selling*, 16 October 1929, n.p.
14. From a Batten agency memo, ca. 1924, quoted in Ed Roberts, “Radio and Celebrities,” unpublished manuscript, commissioned by BBDO, ca. 1966.
15. John Gordon Jr., “Says Mr. Gordon to Mr. Giellerup,” *Advertising & Selling*, 13 November 1929, 32.
16. Lawrence Doherty, “Adman Sample? He’s Florida Land Tycoon,” part 2, *Advertising Age*, 7 May 1962, 66.
17. Robert Cowell, JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 8 July 1930.
18. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 13 January 1931, 8.
19. George Lewis, “Audit Bureau for Radio Organized by ANA,” *Advertising & Selling*, 19 March 1930, 83.
20. “Agencies View Radio Advertising in Survey by Station,” *Advertising & Selling*, 90.
21. “Acute Inflammatory Radioitis,” J. Walter Thompson *Newsletter*, 15 February 1928, 81, 82, JWT Newsletter Files, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising and Marketing History, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (hereafter JWT *Newsletter*).
22. *Ibid.*, 82.
23. Clayton R. Koppes, “The Social Destiny of the Radio: Hope and Disillusionment in the 1920s,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 68 (1969): 367.

24. Clifford Doerksen argues that this class divide played out in early radio as AT&T/WEAF, seeking to protect commercialism in a “highbrow” context, went so far as to sue the local commercial station WHN, broadcaster of jazz and other “lowbrow” programs, for patent infringement for airing advertising. *American Babel: Rogue Radio Broadcasters of the Jazz Age* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), ch. 2.

25. Edgar H. Felix, “Broadcasting’s Place in the Advertising Spectrum,” *Advertising & Selling*, 15 December 1926, 19.

26. Letter from L. A. Jenkins to B. F. Goodrich Company, 26 May 1925, Box 3, Folder 126, NBC Records, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison (hereafter NBC Records).

27. Letter from L. A. McQueen, Advertising Manager, B. F. Goodrich Company, to L. A. Jenkins, The Kolynos Company, 3 June 1925, Box 3, Folder 126, NBC Records.

28. “Less Radio Advertising Asked,” *Advertising & Selling*, 27 November 1929, 73.

29. “Broadcasters and Agencies Condemn Blatant Advertising,” *Broadcast Advertising*, May 1930, 20ff.

30. An Advertising Agency Executive, “When Will Radio Quit Selling Its ‘Editorial Pages?’” *Advertising & Selling*, 22 July 1931, 17.

31. Martin P. Rice, “Radio Advertising,” *Advertising & Selling*, 30 June 1926, 72.

32. “When Will Radio Quit Selling Its ‘Editorial Pages?’” 17ff.

33. “Acute Inflammatory Radioitis,” 83.

34. “When Will Radio Quit Selling Its ‘Editorial Pages?’” 18.

35. *Ibid.*, 18.

36. Gordon Best, “Radio Has Brought a New Responsibility to Advertising Agencies,” *Broadcast Advertising*, July 1932, 6.

37. L. Ames Brown, “Radio Broadcasting as an Advertising Medium,” in Neville O’Neill, ed., *The Advertising Agency Looks at Radio* (New York: D. Appleton, 1932), 7.

38. Robert Colwell, “The Program as Advertisement,” in O’Neill, ed., *Advertising Agency Looks at Radio*, 26.

39. John T. Flynn, “Radio: Medicine Show,” *American Scholar* (Autumn 1938): 430–37; Peter Morrell, *Poisons, Potions and Profits: The Antidote to Radio Advertising* (New York: Knight Publishers, 1937). For more on radio’s critics, see Kathy M. Newman, *Radio Active: Advertising and Consumer Activism, 1935–1947* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

40. George Faulkner, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 12 August 1930, 2.
41. Mark Woods, “Reminiscences,” 11, *Oral Research History Office, Columbia University, New York (hereafter Woods Reminiscences)*.
42. William Banning, *Commercial Broadcasting Pioneer* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946), 103.
43. Edgar H. Felix, “Organizing Broadcasting and Publicity Bureaus in Advertising Agencies,” *Advertising & Selling*, 20 February 1929, 25; Edward L. Bernays, “What Future for Radio Advertising?” *Advertising & Selling*, 8 February 1928, 27.
44. M. Lewis Goodkind, “How Radio Department Can Add to Its Importance as Agency Adjunct,” *Printers’ Ink*, 23 December 1937, 83. Raymond Rubicam, founder of Young & Rubicam, a successful agency in radio, avoided listening to Y&R programs. Fox, *Mirror Makers*, 157.
45. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 2 February 1932, 3.
46. *Ibid.*, 2.
47. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 8 July 1930, 3.
48. Roy Durstine, “Function of the Agency in Broadcast Advertising,” *Broadcast Advertising*, June 1929, 29.
49. Felix, “Organizing Broadcasting and Publicity Bureaus in Advertising Agencies,” 84; Durstine, “Function of the Agency in Broadcast Advertising,” 15.
50. Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency: N. W. Ayer & Son at Work, 1869–1939* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939), 167.
51. “Why Writers Flop,” *Variety*, 5 September 1933, 57.
52. Woods Reminiscences, 51–52.
53. Charles F. Gannon, “The Agency’s Place in American Broadcasting,” *Broadcast Advertising*, August 1931, 15.
54. Robert Simon, JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 2 February 1932, 2, 3.
55. Chester Bowles, “Agency’s Responsibility in Radio,” *Printers’ Ink Monthly*, July 1936, 82.
56. J. Fred MacDonald, *Don’t Touch That Dial!* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979), 32.
57. Christopher Sterling and John Kittross, *Stay Tuned: A Concise History of American Broadcasting* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1978), 516.
58. Woods Reminiscences, 48.
59. “The News Digest,” *Advertising & Selling*, 13 November 1929, 104.

60. Woods Reminiscences, 49.
61. H. A. Batten, “A Confidential Statement of Policy and Practice in Radio Broadcasting,” 5 January 1938, 4–5, N. W. Ayer Archives.
62. *Ibid.*, 9–10.
63. *The Literary Digest*, 17 December 1927, n.p. Author’s collection.
64. Remarkably, N. W. Ayer kept AT&T as a client until the early 1990s.
65. Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency: N. W. Ayer & Son at Work, 1869–1949*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949), 178.
66. James Hanna, interviewed by Howard Davis, 2 May 1988, 33a.1, N. W. Ayer Archives.
67. Hower, *History of an Advertising Agency*, rev. ed., 179.
68. Fred McClafferty, interview with Howard Davis, February and March 1989, 29, N. W. Ayer Archives.
69. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 2 February 1932, 8.
70. Charlie Brower, *Me, and Other Advertising Geniuses* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), 87.
71. *BBDO Newsletter*, February 1966, 16.
72. *Printers’ Ink*, 7 July 1932, 38–39.
73. Bernays, “What Future for Radio Advertising?” 59.
74. Robert Simon, JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 2 February 1932, 5.
75. Ed Roberts, “Radio and Celebrities,” unpublished manuscript commissioned by BBDO, ca. 1966, 4.
76. “Audible Advertising,” *Advertising & Selling*, 16 April 1930, 31.
77. *Ibid.*
78. Quoted in “‘Variety’ Tells All,” *Printers’ Ink*, 24 August 1933, 90.
79. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 2 February 1932, 12.
80. One claim is that Pepsodent sales increased 100 percent in the first year of its sponsoring *Amos ‘n’ Andy*. Jeffrey L. Cruikshank and Arthur W. Schultz, *The Man Who Sold America* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2010), 275.
81. Melvin Patrick Ely, *The Adventures of Amos ‘n’ Andy: A Social History of an American Phenomenon* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).
82. *Amos ‘n’ Andy* Continuity Script, 1 April 1932, Box 13, Folder 1, NBC Records.
83. Quoted in “‘Variety’ Tells All,” 90.
84. And both *The Goldbergs* and *Amos ‘n’ Andy* would go on to television, albeit with less successful results. For an interesting analysis of these ethnic

programs, see Michele Hilmes, *Radio Voices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

85. William Ensign, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 11 July 1928, 3.
86. “The Story of Lennen & Mitchell,” *Advertising Agency and Advertising & Selling*, August 1949, 62.
87. Robert Simon, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 2 February 1932, 9.
88. Ruth Cornwell, “McCann Practice: What About Radio?” Pamphlet, McCann Company, 1930, 31.
89. *Ibid.*, 44.
90. “‘Variety’ Tells All,” 90.
91. Joan Hafey, “Young & Rubicam and Broadcasting,” in *Y&R and Broadcasting: Growing Up Together* (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, n.d.), 21.
92. Robert Simon, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 2 February 1932, 10.
93. *JWT Newsletter*, 15 May 1928.
94. William Ensign, “Radio-Raze,” *JWT Newsletter*, 5 May 1928, 17; William Ensign, “What Price Radio,” *JWT Newsletter*, 18 November 1928, 1; William Ensign, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 11 July 1928, 4.
95. William Ensign, *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 11 July 1928, 5.
96. *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 14 January 1930, 7.
97. *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 2 February 1932; Roy Witmer to Mark Woods, 21 July 1933, Box 22, Folder 28, NBC Records.
98. “‘Variety’ Tells All,” 90.
99. Goodkind, “How Radio Department Can Add to Its Importance as Agency Adjunct,” 26ff.
100. *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 2 February 1932, 4.
101. For a different perspective on the struggle over who would run JWT’s radio department, see Hilmes, *Radio Voices*, 144–46.
102. *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 12 August 1930, 2. The censorship issue is addressed in Chapter 4, “Who Owns the Time?” and the need for showmanship is addressed in Chapter 6, “The Ballet and Ballyhoo of Radio Showmanship.”
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104. *JWT Staff Meeting Minutes*, 21 December 1932, 2.

105. JWT Staff Meeting Minutes, 8 July 1930, 6; Robert Colwell, “The Program as an Advertisement,” in O’Neill, ed., *The Advertising Agency Looks at Radio*, 38.
106. Hubbell Robinson, “What the Radio Audience Wants,” in O’Neill, ed., *The Advertising Agency Looks at Radio*, 53.
107. George W. Smith, “Continuity’s the Name,” *Radio Showmanship*, September 1942, 301.
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109. *Ibid.*, 73.
110. F. B. Ryan Jr., “Copy on the Air,” *Printers’ Ink Monthly*, March 1934, 55.
111. Hill Blackett, “Agency Operation,” *Printers’ Ink*, 12 August 1937, 38.
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113. *The Coca-Cola Top Notchers*, broadcast on 19 March 1930.
114. Victor Ratner, “Maybe It’s ‘Copper and Brass?’” *Advertising & Selling*, 29 March 1934, 40.
115. *Chase & Sanborn Hour*, broadcast on 12 December 1937.
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