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## A History of Educational Radio in Chicago with Emphasis on WBEZ-FM, 1920-1960

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A History of Educational Radio  
In Chicago With Emphasis on  
WBEZ-FM: 1920-1960

by  
Jerry J. Field

A Dissertation Proposal Submitted to the Faculty of the  
School of Education of Loyola University of Chicago  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

MAY

1991

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A HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL RADIO IN CHICAGO  
WITH EMPHASIS ON WBEZ-FM: 1920-1960

The Chicago Board of Education was considered one of the pioneers in the use of educational radio in the nation. How radio programs were used by the Chicago Board of Education during the period of 1920 through 1960 is the focus of the dissertation.

The Board's use of radio programs as a supplement to the existing lessons was unique to the teaching curriculum. From 1937 through 1945, five Chicago radio stations were broadcasting educational programs. By 1945, the Board's own station, WBEZ, was the only Chicago radio station to regularly schedule educational programs.

The factors that influenced the Board to apply to the Federal Communications Commission for its own full time radio station <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ documented. The Board was influenced by the popularity of radio, the depth and scope of the subjects that were available via radio and the excitement radio might bring to the classroom. The broadcast day ran concurrent with the school day, and a published schedule could be adhered to.

The programming for various grade levels, from elementary through high school and adult education, was

scheduled. Examples of the types and formats of programs is discussed.

The pedagogy, collateral materials, and specific grades to which radio shows were directed are placed in chronological sequence. The methods of evaluation used to determine the effectiveness of radio in the classroom is discussed.

The methodology used to document this history of educational radio in Chicago was to recreate the history from available sources: text books, libraries, professional associations and interviews. The documents of the Chicago Radio Council from 1936 through 1971 had been destroyed. Tracing the history also covered interviews with school administrators and members of the Radio Council staff.

The documentation of the educational radio situation in Chicago might determine the factors that contributed to the early success and eventual demise of educational radio programs in Chicago. The previous use of radio in the classroom may offer some modern applications for the use of a medium in the classroom.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments		ii
I	RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY	1
	Overview of the Problem	1
	Research Questions	2
	Background and Rationale to Address the Research Questions	3
	Research Question One	3
	Research Question Two	4
	Research Question Three	6
	Research Question Four	8
	Research Question Five	9
	Research Question Six	10
	Research Question Seven	11
	Methodology	12
	Definitions of Terms	14
	Significance of the Study	17
	Limitations of the Study	21
II	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	24
	Introduction to Radio Instruction	24
	Educational Radio in Chicago	40
	Educational Radio Programs and Curriculum on Chicago Radio	44
	Selected Readings on Educational Radio	47
	Summary of Chapter II	60
III	DOCUMENTATION OF THE HISTORY OF WBEZ-FM	63
	Introduction	63
	The Years before 1937	64
	Development of the Chicago Radio Council	69
	The Development of the Chicago Radio Council: 1937	69
	Radio Education Division: 1937	72
	Chicago Radio Council: 1938	76
	Chicago Radio Council: 1939	85
	Chicago Radio Council: 1940	90
	Chicago Radio Council: 1941	95
	Chicago Radio Council: 1942	101
	Development of WBEZ-FM	107
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1943	107
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1944	110
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1945	115
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1946	120
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1947	123

	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1948	127
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1949	133
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1950	135
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1951	138
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1952	142
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1953	146
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1954	147
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1955	149
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1956	151
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1957	153
	Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1958	153
	Division of Radio and Television and WBEZ: 1959	156
	Division of Radio and Television and WBEZ: 1960	157
	Division of Radio and Television and WBEZ: After 1960	159
	Summary of Chapter III	163
IV	ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE DATA COLLECTED	165
	Addressing the Research Questions	174
	Question One	174
	Question Two	180
	Question Three	184
	Question Four	187
	Question Five	188
	Question Six	190
	Question Seven	192
	Summary of Chapter IV	194
V	CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION OF THE TOPIC	202
	Assessments and Implications	202
	Recommendations for Additional Research	213
	Results and Conclusions	215
	APPENDICES	220
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	228
	VITA	237



## CHAPTER I

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

#### Overview of the Problem

WBEZ-FM, the Chicago Board of Education radio station, was once considered one of the outstanding educational radio stations in the Midwest. It was a pioneer in the use of radio as a teaching aid. At one time, radio education played an important part in the Chicago schools' commitment to educate the varied communities of the city. Community support for this effort was displayed by the fact that at one time five Chicago radio stations and seven newspapers carried collateral materials to complement the WBEZ (91.5 FM) broadcasts. A history of radio station WBEZ documents the educational methodology used by the Chicago Board of Education and its Radio Council, which was organized to supply programs to the commercial stations as well as WBEZ.

Radio as a supplemental form of education was widely accepted in Chicago from about 1931 through 1939. In 1939, there began a rapid decline in the use of radio educational programs. By 1942, WBEZ was the only Chicago station to schedule educational programs regularly.

This study attempts to trace the history of radio

education in Chicago. In reviewing this history, it may be possible to determine what may have caused the rapid decline in radio's use in the classroom. In contrast to this a decline in the use of radio for education was a dramatic increase in radio's use by the general public. Radio as a form of information and entertainment has increased its audience each year since the inception of commercial stations.<sup>1</sup>

### Research Questions

- (1) How did radio stations use educational programs during the period 1920 to 1960 in the United States?
- (2) Why did the Chicago Board of Education develop an educational format on Chicago radio station WBEZ?
  - A. What curriculum was developed for radio?
  - B. What educational programs were broadcast?
- (3) What educational pedagogy was used for radio instruction by WBEZ?
- (4) To which grades were the radio programs directed? Why?
- (5) How did radio programs supplement classroom lessons?
- (6) What materials were developed for radio courses?
- (7) What method of evaluation was used for radio programs?

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<sup>1</sup>"Chicago Radio Revenes Up," Chicago Tribune, February 14, 1973 (Clipping), and "U.S. With 585 Radio Stations Leads World," The Chicago Daily News, January 22, 1934 (Clipping).

Background and Rationale to Address  
the Research Questions

Question One: How did radio stations use educational programs during the period of 1920 to 1960 in the United States?

Background

Administered by the Department of Commerce, the Radio Act of 1927 established a semblance of order among radio stations throughout the nation.<sup>1</sup> Congress determined that radio air rights were owned by the public. Therefore, private use of the air waves was to be granted by license to a radio station operator. One of the requirements of the act was that stations be operated in the "public good" and provide "a service to the community."<sup>2</sup> Educational and informational shows qualified under this regulation.

By 1934, Congress had established the Federal Communications Commission to regulate and establish guidelines for telecommunications and radio station operators.<sup>3</sup> Public service and education programs were allotted those time periods that were not appealing to commercial advertisers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, The Radio Act of 1927 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Section 2 and Davis Amendment (P.L. 195, 70th Congress), March 28, 1927.

<sup>3</sup>Federal Communications Act, Regulations 1934 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1934).

<sup>4</sup>Jerome Sill, The Radio Station (New York: George Stewart, 1946), 27-31.

Under this regulation, air time was given to schools free of charge by the stations' owners to fulfill the broadcast license requirement.<sup>1</sup>

Radio became a popular form of home entertainment in the Depression era of 1929-1939. Both radio stations and fledgling networks had a number of early morning and weekend day hours to offer "license fulfillment programming."<sup>2</sup> Education on radio flourished especially from 1936-1939, but by 1949 all the regularly scheduled educational programs had been cancelled.<sup>3</sup>

#### Rationale

A study of the radio programs broadcast between 1920 and 1960 should indicate how they were used for educational purposes and might indicate if the type of programs scheduled contributed to educational radio's rapid demise.

Question Two: Why did the Chicago Board of Education develop an educational format on station WBEZ?

A. What formal curriculum was developed for radio?

B. What educational programs were broadcast?

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Bilby, The General David Sarnoff (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 68-88.

<sup>3</sup>James F. Evans, The Prairie Farmer and WLS (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1969), 99-110.

### Background

The Chicago Board of Education became one of the leading forces in the use of instructional radio. In 1943, the Board applied for and was granted a license to broadcast over WBEZ.<sup>1</sup> The Federal Communications Commission had previously allotted frequencies on the AM radio band for educational use in Chicago.<sup>2</sup> Lane High School, The Moody Bible Institute, and Northwestern University were among the schools that had applied for and been granted licenses.<sup>3</sup>

The Board of Education established the Chicago Radio Council (CRC) in 1939 to supervise and produce educational programs until radio station WBEZ was formally established and operational.<sup>4</sup> At one time, the Board of Education, through the Chicago Radio Council (CRC), was producing educational radio programs for seven Chicago radio stations.<sup>5</sup>

In an effort to have radio instruction available within a short time when the schools were closed for two weeks during the 1937 polio epidemic, a series of lessons based on the curriculum was developed for the broadcasts. A study of

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<sup>1</sup>"WBEZ Celebrates Anniversary," Press Release (Chicago: WBEZ, 1986).

<sup>2</sup>Federal Communication Act, Regulations 1943.

<sup>3</sup>S. E. Frost, Education's Own Stations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937).

<sup>4</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Annual Report 1933 (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1934).

<sup>5</sup>"WBEZ Celebrates Anniversary."

the how the curriculum was selected and what types of programs were broadcast could offer some insight into the methods of instruction and pedagogy of the time.

The Board's educational radio format changed over time. The Radio Council in its early years produced programs for commercial stations and developed a curriculum during the polio epidemic based on existing lesson plans. Later, the Board sought its own station on WBEZ. The program format changed in the 1950's to a more popular one, and then to the National Public radio format in 1971. In the subsequent 20 years, the educational programs broadcast were during the teachers' strikes in 1981 and 1987.<sup>1</sup>

### Rationale

By understanding the format changes of Chicago radio station WBEZ, we might determine the educational philosophy and curriculum of the station. By noting the changing format, we should learn what educational programs were emphasized.

Question Three: What was the educational pedagogy used for radio instruction by WBEZ?

### Background

Education on radio was a new teaching device that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

became popular in the years between 1932 and 1939.<sup>1</sup> There was a national movement to assemble instructors favorably inclined to the new technology into councils and advisory committees. These advisory groups issued guidelines concerning radio instruction but were careful not to become involved in course content or methodology.<sup>2</sup>

Some classroom teachers objected that radio broadcasts would violate the local school districts' established curricula, and that control of the programs would be under the broadcasters. Thus, the teachers would lose control over the pedagogy.<sup>3</sup> As a result, several states set up committees or councils for administration of radio lessons to insure conformity with established educational philosophy.<sup>4</sup> The United States Office of Education established a Federal Radio Education Committee and helped organize an independent National Advisory Radio Council.<sup>5</sup> This Council held yearly meetings from 1933 to 1939 to help educators work with the new technology. Among other items on its agenda, the local advisory councils were advised not to interfere with the local

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<sup>1</sup>William B. Levenson, Teaching Through Radio (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1945), 26.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 24-28.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Saettler, History of Instructional Technology (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 224.

districts' philosophy and methods of education.<sup>1</sup>

### Rationale

By analyzing the pedagogy used by WBEZ for radio instruction, we might be able to determine if the radio programs were effective. The analyses should address the use of original programs or transcriptions from other stations used locally,<sup>2</sup> and the National Radio Advisory Council's suggestions on instructional radio methodology in the classroom.<sup>3</sup>

Question Four: To which grades were the radio programs directed? Why?

### Background

There has been little research on the use of radio in the classroom, except for that on the Fanny Smith music appreciation series in 1926. The research indicated that pupils like to listen to the radio.<sup>4</sup> Radio was a fledgling medium during the 1925-1935 era. The AM band was in almost full operation, although there was some static, and good reception was dependent somewhat upon clear atmospheric

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<sup>1</sup>Levenson, Teaching Through Radio, 26-28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>National Radio Advisory Council, Annual Report 1938-39 (Chicago: National Radio Advisory Council, 1939).

<sup>4</sup>"Public School Radio Concert Stirs Opposition," Chicago Daily News, October 5, 1926 (Clipping).



conditions.<sup>1</sup> Most programs were of a simple production style, such as a remote broadcast from a ballroom or supper club, or a dramatic play or story from a studio.<sup>2</sup> Education on radio was considered necessary by the stations<sup>3</sup>, as such programs helped fulfill the FCC public service requirement. But the production of these programs was given over to the educators with little, if any, supervision from the station management.<sup>4</sup> The School Board and the Radio Council had to determine the grades that would most benefit from radio instruction.

The Chicago Radio Council and the Board of Education arranged for five radio stations to broadcast programs for several grade levels.

#### Rationale

By examining the grades selected to participate in the radio education curriculum, educators may learn the accepted developmental learning theory of the era, and if the audio experiences were considered acceptable learning tools. This information could offer insight into the pedagogy used by radio educators, and the philosophy behind the use of radio as an instructional aid to classroom work.

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<sup>1</sup>Sydney W. Head and Christopher Sterling, Broadcasting in America, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 22-31.

<sup>2</sup>Sill, The Radio Station, 27-31.

<sup>3</sup>Federal Communication Act, Regulations 1934.

<sup>4</sup>Sill, The Radio Station, 27-31.

Question Five: How did radio programs supplement classroom lessons?

Background

At one time, educational programs in Chicago were broadcast on five radio stations. Seven Chicago newspapers supported the efforts of the Chicago Board of Education and the Chicago Radio Council by publishing collateral materials to be used with these broadcasts, and there was an effort to distribute some of these printed materials in the schools. But supporting the educational radio programs was a cumbersome task. Materials had to be written, distributed and scheduled in advance of the classes; also, the materials had to conform to the current lessons.

Rationale

By analyzing how radio programs were used to supplement classroom lessons and study assignments, we might determine the role given to supplemental radio instruction. This might define radio's role as part of the school curriculum.

Question Six: What materials were developed for radio courses?

Background

Since the printed word was the medium for most lessons, and radio was considered a supplemental teaching

tool, some of the collateral materials developed for radio programs were taken from standard texts. The radio division of the Bureau of Curriculum developed workbooks and other materials to be used with the radio broadcasts. The materials developed had three components: a preface, an outline of the broadcast, and a series of questions or discussion topics to reinforce the lesson.

### Rationale

An examination of the supplemental materials used for the programs offers a complete study of educational radio as used by the Chicago Board of Education. It is necessary to review the collateral materials used with the broadcasts, as they were part of the course of study. The materials developed and used as study guides, together with the collateral materials, should offer some insight into the philosophy of the programs broadcast.

Question Seven: What method of evaluation was used with the radio programs?

### Background

Assessment of the radio courses focuses on the methods employed to evaluate their use as a supplemental classroom activity and to measure the effectiveness of the course materials. The evaluation process, based on the raw data and methodology, if available, should determine if the results of the procedures justified the use of radio as a supplemental

educational medium. Before the overall effectiveness of radio in the classroom can be assessed, it is necessary to review the evaluation process used by the radio division and the Bureau of Curriculum.

### Rationale

By reviewing the methods and procedures used for the evaluation of educational radio programs, we could determine if radio instruction was effective generally or at specific grade levels. A review of the evaluation process would contribute to an overall understanding of the use of educational methods on radio.

### Methodology

The basic methodology of the research plan is to present a documented history of Chicago Board of Education radio station WBEZ. The Chicago Board of Education was one of the first public school boards to embrace radio as a supplemental teaching tool.<sup>1</sup> The Board decision to pursue such use of radio was the basis for the formation of the Chicago Radio Council (CRC), which was given the assignment of developing and producing educational programming.<sup>2</sup>

Additional research materials have been obtained from the Chicago Radio Council, The Federal Radio Advisory Council,

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Annual Report 1933.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

and the National Advisory Council on Radio Education. Libraries of universities and radio stations that were directly involved in broadcasting educational programs have also been included in this document. These universities are Loyola University of Chicago, Chicago Teachers' College (now called Northeastern Illinois University), Northwestern University, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

A General Outline of the  
Methodology

1. Review of educational radio publications published during 1920-1960:
  - a. National Association of Broadcasters
  - b. National Association of Educational Broadcasters
  - c. Educational textbooks on the use of radio
2. Archives and related documents
  - a. Chicago stations WLS, WGN, WMAQ, and WBEZ
3. Interviews
  - a. Personnel employed
    1. Educational organizations, radio stations
    2. Radio teachers and instructors
4. A chronological history of the Chicago Board of Education radio activities
  - a. A history of the Chicago Radio Council
  - b. Station WBEZ

## Definitions of Terms<sup>1</sup>

### Education Terminology

Audio-Visual Materials. The materials used in a classroom that involve audio, visual, or both senses to demonstrate an aspect of the lesson, or to supplement a lesson or unit plan. Audio-visual materials include hardware (equipment) as well as software.<sup>2</sup>

Curriculum. The planned experiences of the school provided through instruction.<sup>3</sup> Curriculum encompasses all learning opportunities provided by the school.<sup>4</sup>

Instructional Aid. A variety of printed and audio-visual materials for direct student use. Any material used by the teacher or the student to enhance learning.<sup>5</sup> Teachers select and use instructional tools (aids) that fit the needs of their students.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Definitions reflect common usage during the period of study.

<sup>2</sup>Marvin Smith, Radio, TV & Cable (New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1985), 38.

<sup>3</sup>Allan C. Ornstein and Daniel U. Levine, Foundations of Education, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 528.

<sup>4</sup>J. Galen Saylor and William M. Alexander. Curriculum Planning (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1966), 5.

<sup>5</sup>Ernest R. Hilgard, ed., Theories of Learning and Instruction (Chicago: National Society for Study of Education, 1964), 380-81.

<sup>6</sup>Arthur W. Heilman, Timothy R. Blair and William H. Ruply. Principals and Practices of Reading, 7th ed. (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing, 1990), 389.

Lesson Plan. A plan developed to guide learning.<sup>1</sup> A lesson plan is used to develop or define the content, concepts, skills, or values to be stressed by the teacher in connection with the total learning situation.<sup>2</sup> A typical lesson plan should also include classroom requirements, training aids, equipment, supplies, and handouts.<sup>3</sup> This also might include a list of audio-visual aids where appropriate.

### Radio Terminology

Broadcast Signal. Broadcasting is a technology that uses radio waves.<sup>4</sup> Radio waves are sound waves that are broadcast in several forms. The chief methods for imposing patterns on broadcast carriers are Amplitude Modulation (AM) and Frequency Modulation (FM). Television uses AM for the video and FM for the audio.

AM Signal. The AM signal is vulnerable to electrical interference and picks up random bits of energy that cause distortion in the radio frequency.<sup>5</sup>

FM Signal. FM carriers, relying on frequency rather

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<sup>1</sup>Leonard Nadler, Designing Training Programs (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1983), 124-26.

<sup>2</sup>Ornstein, Foundations of Education, 528.

<sup>3</sup>Jerry W. Gilley, and Steven Egglund. Principles of Human Resource Development, 3rd ed. (Reading MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1990), 138.

<sup>4</sup>Head and Sterling, Broadcasting in America, 3.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

than amplitude patterns, are relatively immune to electrical interference.<sup>1</sup>

Educational Medium. Refers specifically to lessons or courses that are part of the formal or planned curriculum. Any channel of communication--radio, television, or cable--that offers educational materials on a continuing basis is an educational medium.

Federal Communications Commission. The Federal Communications Commission, an agency of the Federal Government, grants a license to a radio or television station to broadcast over a specific frequency in the public interest.<sup>2</sup>

Local Origination. A program that originates live or is pre-recorded by a local station and only heard on that local station. This show may be offered via syndication to other stations on a live feed or by a mechanical reproduction.<sup>3</sup>

Public Service Program. An FCC license requirement of all stations to broadcast educational and/or informational programs or announcements that are of a benefit to the general public.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 130-40.

<sup>2</sup>Federal Communications Act, Regulations 1934.

<sup>3</sup>Head and Sterling, Broadcasting In America, 170-71, 440-41.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



Radio Network. Radio networks are a combination of stations owned by the network or affiliated with a network to offer advertisers national or regional coverage to broadcast their clients' commercials.<sup>1</sup> The early networks, NBC (National Broadcasting Company, the Red and Blue networks), CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), and Mutual Broadcasting System, also developed programming for the sole purpose of attracting a larger audience in order to have a better vehicle to sell advertising.<sup>2</sup>

### Significance Of The Study

A history of educational radio programming should offer an insight into various aspects of radio as an instructional tool. There are a number of educational disciplines that can benefit from this study, such as Communications, Adult Education, Early Child Development, and Instruction.

It also provides a history of the era of educational radio in Chicago which in turn contributes to the literature on educational history and the history of education in Chicago.

### Educational Radio in Chicago

Tracing the history of one Chicago educational radio

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Metz, Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye (New York: Signet, 1975), 3-5, 18-71.

<sup>2</sup>Bilby, The General, 68-78; Metz, Reflections in a Blood Shot Eye, 3-5, 18-71.

station, WBEZ-FM (91.5 FM), owned and operated by the Chicago Board of Education, should add to the student's information on curriculum and instruction. This information could be used for a background study to determine whether radio, or a derivative of radio broadcasting, can be used in the context of current curriculum development and instructional philosophy. As radio has developed in several new forms since the 1940's, it may be possible to develop or adapt radio lesson plans that fit within the parameters of the latest audio technology.

The history of WBEZ can document the use of radio as a supplemental teaching device and attempt to determine the success of specific educational courses.

#### Adult Education

The instructor or curriculum planner for adult education courses could benefit from the history of educational radio in Chicago from the perspective of early methodology. As of 1990, there were more than 100 colleges and school boards operating radio stations in the nation.<sup>1</sup> It might be possible to use the findings of this study to improve instruction methods via radio, help expose slow learners to lessons for reinforcement, and offer supplemental instruction in specific subjects.

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<sup>1</sup>Loyola University National Radio Conference, Annual Report 1990 (Chicago: Loyola University of Chicago, 1990).

### Media Students

As an academic discipline, the communications department is usually based in the school (or college) of liberal arts. A course in educational broadcasting is usually covered as a chapter or single unit in a broadcast programming course, if addressed at all.<sup>1</sup> There is a need to expand the thinking of communications majors to regard radio as a viable teaching tool. The students of media should be interested in the wide range of programs considered educational that were broadcast in the early days of radio. This study could help define the parameters of what educational radio programming should be.

### A Reference and Resource

It is interesting to note that the Chicago Museum of Broadcast Communications (CMBC) has few, materials or scripts of educational radio shows. All of the shows in the present CMBC library are commercially sponsored programs from the late 1930s to about 1960. Not one educational radio program or material associated with educational radio broadcasts is currently on file at the CMBC.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this study will help fill a gap in the current literature on local educational

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<sup>1</sup>Catalogs for 1990: Loyola University of Chicago, Northwestern University, DePaul University, Roosevelt University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>Chuck Shaden, Board Member, Chicago Museum of Broadcast Communications. Conversation, September 23, 1988 at the Museum, Chicago.

broadcasting.

### An Instructional Aid

As a historical document, this dissertation will contribute to the understanding of the early use of radio as a teaching aid, and the use of radio as a part of the educational delivery system. This distinction is made because in the embryonic days of radio, some educators thought it would replace the classroom teacher. There was also a considerable amount of reluctance on the part of some educators to acknowledge that radio could be used as a teaching aid, or that it could be part of the educational delivery system.<sup>1</sup>

### Underdeveloped Countries

Outside the United States, the attitude toward radio was very different from that of American educators.<sup>2</sup> The idea that radio could be a teaching aid and a supplement to classroom teaching was widely accepted in underdeveloped and Third World countries.<sup>3</sup> The foresight of early advocates in adopting radio as a teaching aid and supplemental instructional tool was vindicated, particularly in South

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<sup>1</sup>Frank E. Hill, Tune In For Education (New York: National Committee on Educational Radio, 1942), 65-75.

<sup>2</sup>Dean T. Jamison and Emile G. McAnay, Radio For Education and Development (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1978).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

America, the Middle East, and Africa.<sup>1</sup>

### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the historical record of education on radio station WBEZ in Chicago. It is not intended to be a detailed description of lesson plans, course content, or scheduling of educational programs. Among the considerations in limiting this study are changing media elements. The use of radio has undergone major changes in purpose and direction over the years, and the audience today is more educated and sophisticated in their listening habits.<sup>2</sup>

In the past ten years, technological improvements of radio receivers and portable radios, and the introduction of lightweight narrow band tape devices and players, have changed the methods by which radio is used by the public.

Another consideration offered for limiting this study to Chicago is a general lack of research materials. The major radio advisory councils, National Advisory Radio Council and the Federal Radio Council suspended their radio activities between 1940 and 1946, and their records were dispersed. Moreover, the radio stations did not keep archives of educational materials. Rather it was the responsibility of the educational broadcasters, who were selected from the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>"Radio Survey of Type of Programming 1930-1980," Broadcasting Magazine, December 31, 1988, 13-14.

educational facility, radio council, or board of education, to supply the programming and maintain all record keeping.

Two centers for the national study of educational radio were organized at Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin, Madison. However, the documentation available at Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin is concerned with national radio issues, not educational materials for Chicago radio.

This study will be concerned with the Chicago Board of Education's radio programs; that is, the study will be limited to a specific school board in a specific city. Thus, it will be difficult to make generalizations about radio programming beyond Chicago.

The study is also limited by several uncontrollable factors. The files and documents of the Chicago Radio Council from 1937 to 1943, when WBEZ began broadcasting, have been lost or destroyed. The documents and files from the beginnings of WBEZ in April 1943 to August 1971 have also been lost or destroyed. This was confirmed after an exhaustive search at the Chicago Public School Library and discussions with the present general manager of WBEZ, Carole Nolan. Neither did a search of the Chicago Teachers' College (now Northeastern Illinois University) Library and the Chicago Public Library produce any materials directly associated with the subject of the study. A collateral search was made at Loyola University, De Paul University, University of Chicago, and Northwestern

University, all of which had been active participants in educational radio during the period of study. But the results confirmed that the materials had been destroyed.

A visit to the University of Wisconsin, Madison library and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library did produce a few copies of the original newsletter of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB). The Chicago Historical Society produced one radio lesson plan. Also, one copy of a lesson plan, Art Goes To War, was discovered in a downstate Illinois Library at Urbana. Another lesson plan and several notes for speeches were made available from the estate of the late Harold W. Kent, who was the first director of the department of radio for the Board.

However, sufficient material to support the study was obtained from reliable sources: the Proceedings of the Chicago Board of Education and newspaper clippings from the Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Daily News, Chicago American, and the Chicago Tribune.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction to Radio Instruction

The use of media in the classroom has been an established instructional aid since the chalkboard and the introduction of pictures. One of the early mechanical developments was the slide projector invented in the early 1870s, and the first uses of technological teaching aids in the classroom were stereo slides.<sup>1</sup> The discoveries by Thomas A. Edison of the use of audio-visual materials, stereo slides, overhead projectors, and motion pictures became among the first mechanical teaching aids available in the classroom.<sup>2</sup> The availability and use of these mechanical teaching aids in the classroom depended upon the school's being able to afford the equipment and having progressive instructors to request and use the equipment.<sup>3</sup>

A stereo slide consisted of two 35 mm slides placed

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<sup>1</sup>Edgar Dale, Audio Visual Methods In Teaching (New York: Dryden Press, 1969), 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup>Frank E. Hill, Tune in for Education (New York: National Committee on Education by Radio, 1942), 85.



in a view holder which created a three dimensional effect on the subject matter by making the eyes focus on one point in the center of the viewer. The stereo slides were primarily used in the sciences and liberal arts curricula.<sup>1</sup> By 1890, stereo slides and drawings were the principal visual aids used in the classroom. The phonograph was a more recent addition to classroom technology. However, as this was a sound only dimension, it did not gain much in popularity. Edison's motion pictures brought another dimension to the classroom, but once again the cost of equipment as well as the difficulty of mastering it limited its use.

The invention of radio and its immediate widespread public acceptance in the mid-1920s fostered the introduction of this medium as a possible teaching aid.<sup>2</sup> An early use of educational radio was a means of offering special lessons at one location and broadcasting them to several other schools, thus supplementing the teacher's classroom instruction. The only skills needed to operate a radio were the ability to plug it into an electrical socket, dial the station, adjust the volume, and turn the radio to the front of the class. Radio programs were easier to distribute to other classrooms than phonographs or slides which had to be physically delivered. Radio was transmitted over the air for the cost of a few cents of electricity.

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<sup>1</sup>Dale, Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, 25.

<sup>2</sup>Hill, Tune in for Education, 6.

The high cost of purchasing a radio initially limited the use of this new teaching aid, as it was an expensive new machine to bring to the classroom. During the 1929 to 1937 Depression era, however, as little as \$15.00 could buy a vacuum tube receiver.<sup>1</sup>

One important factor in bringing the radio to the classroom was that early radios were readily available for both the consumer market and educational facilities.<sup>2</sup> Earlier teaching aids did not share a popularity with the general public.

Radio the new teaching aid, did enjoy a number of benefits that previous technological advancements had not enjoyed. Radio had a wide appeal to the general public. Thus large manufacturing firms began mass production, which lowered costs and in turn lowered retail prices. There was widespread use of radio as an entertainment medium as well as a source of news and other information. Radio was a growing business, and a commercial success -- a factor that other mechanical teaching aids had not achieved to that point.

From 1930 through 1940, radio flourished as a new commercial enterprise and as a new delivery system for educators in the United States.<sup>3</sup> The Depression in an unusual

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<sup>1</sup>Sydney Head and Christopher Sterling, Broadcasting In America, 5th ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 67.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>National Radio Advisory Council, National Radio Advisory Council, 1940 Report (New York: NRAC, 1940).

way helped radio's growth. By 1941, full tuning cabinet model radio receivers could be purchased for as little as \$15 a small price for many hours of entertainment, news, and sports programming.<sup>1</sup> To represent the educator's perspective regarding the use of radio in the classroom, Radio Councils, related Advisory Councils, and associations were organized throughout the United States.<sup>2</sup> Radio associations and councils advised boards of education as well as the fledgling networks and local station managers regarding the best use of radio for educational purposes.<sup>3</sup> Both educators and radio executives sought help from the progressive council members who offered guidelines and educational standards for educational programming. The National Radio Advisory Council (NRAC), as well as other associations, offered services in the form of bulletins, newsletters, conferences, and some guidelines for radio production<sup>4</sup>.

The National Radio Advisory Council held yearly meetings from 1933 through 1939 to discuss the role of radio and education. The National Radio Advisory Council (NRAC) was organized in 1930 and was composed of leading educators who had an interest in developing radio as an educational delivery

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<sup>1</sup>Head and Sterling, Broadcasting in America, 61.

<sup>2</sup>William B. Levenson, Teaching Through Radio (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1945), 144.

<sup>3</sup>Levering Tyson, Radio And Education (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), 99.

<sup>4</sup>Levenson, Teaching Through Radio, 142.

system and "to stimulate an interest in radio education."<sup>1</sup> Many of the National Radio Advisory Council recommendations were adopted by the networks. The networks in turn presented the new programming suggestions as guidelines to the local stations. In 1934, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) replaced the Federal Radio Commission, under whose jurisdiction were included telephone and telegram activities as well as radio.<sup>2</sup> A Federal Radio Education Committee (FREC) was organized to foster cooperation between educators and broadcasters under the new FCC regulations.<sup>3</sup> The FREC issued bulletins, offered assistance, and became a clearinghouse for educational radio information.<sup>4</sup>

By 1940, however, the popularity of radio as an educational delivery system had drastically diminished.<sup>5</sup> Its decline was complete by the middle of 1945. There are several factors that were responsible for this situation. For one, the World's Fair of 1939 in New York introduced television to the public. Although television did not become accessible to the general public until after World War II,<sup>6</sup> some educators who

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Saettler, A History of Instructional Technology (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 205.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 220-24.

<sup>5</sup>Saettler, A History of Instructional Technology, 205.

<sup>6</sup>Kenneth Bilby, The General David Sarnoff (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 133.

were not enthusiastic about one dimensional radio elected to wait for multidimensional television to become available. The War itself was another factor. As the War effort took shape, materials earmarked for radio expansion were diverted to the military.<sup>1</sup> In late 1941, the radio associations and councils disbanded or merged into other media-related organizations as interest in educational radio declined.<sup>2</sup>

Several other factors led the radio stations to begin cancelling educational programs: a growing lack of interest on the part of educators in being involved; the increasing quality of entertainment programming, due to the availability of stage and screen stars who now agreed to appear on weekly programs; and the rapid increase in the popularity of radio as a commercial venture. This last factor seems to be the most important. Radio, by 1938, was a profitable operation, and all the commercial time periods were being sold.<sup>3</sup>

#### Early Radio History

When the Congress of the United States enacted the Radio Act of 1927, it established some rules and regulations to correct the chaotic situation that had existed in radio

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<sup>1</sup>WBEZ-FM, Background of Station (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, undated), 2.

<sup>2</sup>Saettler, History of Instructional Technology, 205.

<sup>3</sup>Bilby, The General: David Sarnoff, 73-85.

broadcasting.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the enactment of the Radio Act of 1927, broadcasters were free to "go on the air" without regard to the signal used, hours of broadcast, or the power used by the station to broadcast its signal.<sup>2</sup> The Radio Act of 1927 established permanent frequencies for radio stations, as well as the hours stations could broadcast their programs, day or night.

Another regulation of the Radio Act of 1927 required that the broadcasters offer programs "for the public good," commonly known today as public service programs. The assumption of the Congress at that time was that the public owned the air waves and was entitled to have the broadcasters operate for the "public good" as well as make a profit.<sup>3</sup> The Radio Act of 1927 also required broadcasters to conduct a survey of their audiences to determine what programs would contribute to the "betterment of the population."<sup>4</sup> Before 1927, Chicago stations had a wide range of "educational programs" on the air at various hours of the broadcast day. Since the Radio Act of 1927 did not provide for stringent enforcement procedures, it was the broadcasters who developed

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, The Radio Act of 1927 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927).

<sup>2</sup>Saettler, History of Instructional Technology, 205.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Commerce, Radio Act of 1927.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

their own regulations.<sup>1</sup> The station owners established their own definition of a public service or educational program as "a program that increased the betterment of the population"<sup>2</sup> and that informed the public on "vital issues and current events."

The terms "vital issues" and "current events" at this point in the development of radio were broadly defined to allow the station owners greater flexibility in programming. Inexpensive programs on "vital issues, and current events could include discussion programs on topics of the day (similar to town meetings), news broadcasts, and discussions of local civic issues such as community improvements and the expansion of government services."<sup>3</sup> Station owners were given this latitude under the federal law. This FCC regulation was not strictly enforced. Included in the category of education would be the "National Farm and Home Hour," reading of the comics from the newspapers, and a wide variety of discussion programs. Radio station managers considered that farm news was both informational and educational. "The University of Chicago Round Table of the Air," and the "Northwestern University Forum of the Air" were also included under both the category of educational broadcasting and the category of "vital issues

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<sup>1</sup>Head and Sterling, Broadcasting in American, 72.

<sup>2</sup>Federal Communications Act, Regulations 1934. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

and current events."

In 1929 WGN, (owned by the same company that owned the Chicago Tribune), offered piano, French, and English lessons on the air.<sup>1</sup> For a short time, soap operas were also considered as educational/ informational programming, as the stories centered on such topics as "how a family that prays together, stays together"; "there are problems in everyone's life"; and "how to face and accept life's problems." Soap operas detailed how ordinary people faced crises in their lives and how they coped with the trials and tribulations of everyday living.<sup>2</sup>

These programs did meet the early definition of an educational program, according to the FCC.<sup>3</sup> The FCC defined an educational program as one that "informed, enlightened or contributed to the betterment of life," as well as presented a "vital issue" or was a "public service."<sup>4</sup>

The aforementioned programs fall short of an educational program as most educators would define one, either today or in the early days of radio. An early definition of education was to promote intelligent citizenship.<sup>5</sup> Most

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<sup>1</sup>Quin Ryan, WGN-AM audio tapes (Chicago: WGN-AM Radio, undated).

<sup>2</sup>Sill, The Radio Station, 33-45.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 16, 33.

<sup>4</sup>Federal Communications Commission, Regulations 1934.

<sup>5</sup>Henry J. Perkinson, The Imperfect Panacea, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), 7.



educators would define an educational program as a course of study having a lesson plan, making a contribution to the increase of knowledge on a specific subject, and/or contributing to the perpetuation of our culture.<sup>1</sup> An educator could point out that the radio programs did not include a lesson plan, or follow strict educational procedures for a course, unit plan or lesson plan.

Radio stations, by the early 1930s, eagerly wanted the federal regulatory agency to look favorably upon them in order to protect their broadcast licenses. The stations would broadcast educational programs before and after school hours.<sup>2</sup> Most of these types of programs combined entertainment with some basic educational information and "better living values."<sup>3</sup> Some of the programs were hosted by former schoolteachers, according to Quin Ryan, the late WGN program manager;<sup>4</sup> however, this assertion has not been substantiated.<sup>5</sup>

Program managers from the late 1920s through the late 1930s considered such radio programs as "Sky King" and "The Lone Ranger" as educational and/or informational programs

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<sup>1</sup>Gerald L. Gutek, A Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup>James F. Evans, Prairie Farmer and WLS (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), 165.

<sup>3</sup>Barbara Lee Rudman and Masha K. Rudman, Mind Over Media (New York: Seaview Books, 1982), 3-8.

<sup>4</sup>Quin Ryan, WGN-AM, Chicago, radio archive tapes.

<sup>5</sup>Judith C. Waller, Radio: The Fifth Estate (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), 404-5.

because their scripts promoted "moral and sound values." The "American Way of Life", such as the "Golden Rule of Living One's Life" in which people did not steal or cheat and the thief always received his due reward, was the hidden agendum within each show.<sup>1</sup>

The FCC was established in 1934. It placed a comprehensive set of professional regulations for educational programs upon the station owners, but not upon the networks.<sup>2</sup> The structure for radio networks during 1934 was a series of independent stations that had contracted with a network to carry certain programs for a small fee derived from a percentage of the advertising revenue.<sup>3</sup> Radio networks were then a commercial business supported by the large advertising agencies in New York.<sup>4</sup> As radio expanded from the East Coast to the West Coast, national advertisers could call upon a network to have its advertising run at the same time on the same date in more than one hundred cities. The FCC decided that the number of radio stations one person or corporation could own would be five.<sup>5</sup> It established this rule to encourage freedom of public access to the radio waves and not have the country dominated by a few broadcasters.

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<sup>1</sup>Rudman, Mind Over Media, xi-xiii.

<sup>2</sup>Federal Communications Commission, Regulations 1934.

<sup>3</sup>Bilby, The General David Sarnoff, 68-88.

<sup>4</sup>Head, Broadcasting In America, 150.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 38.

The networks were created to sell national advertising. In turn, the networks also created programming that would attract a wide audience in order to sell more advertising. As the radio networks expanded, and became successful and sold more advertising, the result was an increased demand that more local time be made available for network programs, the local time was sold to sponsors. The time taken from the local stations was generally the informational and educational broadcast time.

The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and the National Broadcasting Company (NBC had two networks, the Red and the Blue) elected to own and operate radio stations in five major cities: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. Alternate cities were Detroit and St. Louis.<sup>1</sup> The DuMont network was a smaller association of independent stations that carried some national (network) programs as part of their broadcast day.<sup>2</sup>

Under the FCC 1943 Regulations, the local stations present public service programs as part of the station's license renewal obligations.<sup>3</sup>

The FCC set up a standard procedure to review a

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 82.

<sup>2</sup>Francis Coughlin, WGN, A History (Chicago: WGN, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>Federal Communications Commission, Regulations 1934.

station's license before each of the three-year renewal periods, and it also put into motion an enforcement regulation at the local level. The review procedure was to have the local station file an application for renewal, stating what public service programs the station had broadcast and how the station acted in the public interest. Any individual who felt that the station was not acting in the public interest could file a complaint with the FCC, and the FCC would allow the station to address the complaint before taking any action. The action the FCC would take ranged from asking the station to mend its ways to refusing to grant the renewal.<sup>1</sup>

No longer were the local radio station program managers allowed to use an entertainment program or quasi-entertainment program to fulfill the station's public service or educational broadcast requirements. The public service requirement now included educational programs, but did not specifically state how the time was to be allocated.<sup>2</sup> The same held true for an informational program. The stations elected to review the general area of public service programming, since they had control of program content and an opportunity to have a major advertiser underwrite or sponsor the program.<sup>3</sup>

Educational and/or informational programs were now categorized as public service programs. The programs had to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Sills, The Radio Station, 19-22.

meet certain criteria established by the FCC, some of which were: (1) The programs would not pause for commercial announcements during the broadcast, (2) the program would be broadcast regardless if it were totally sponsored or not, and (3) the station would absorb all the production costs.<sup>1</sup>

Some creative radio station managers, however, stopped the program in the middle of the broadcast for station identification (SID), in accordance with FCC rules. During the pause for SID, the station could insert one or two commercials, which was acceptable under FCC regulations. Thus the station was able to gain some revenue during this public service time period.<sup>2</sup>

Local stations were willing to fulfill the new public service obligation contained in the FCC licensing agreement but were concerned about the obligation to have locally originated programming as part of it. Under the new regulations, each local station was required to present programs that originated locally and concerned local issues and topics.<sup>3</sup> As a boost for network programming, and as a saving grace factor for the local stations, the FCC looked favorably upon a local station that carried the broadcast of a network public service program which "would bring vital

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 63-67.

<sup>3</sup>Head, Broadcasting In America, 183.

issues of concern to the American People."<sup>1</sup> The use of these programs lessened the need for locally produced public service programs; in turn, this reduced the need for educational programs as part of the licensing requirement.

Radio as an educational delivery system flourished between 1934 and 1939.<sup>2</sup> The War effort, which began in early 1940, was a major curtailment to the expansion of this system.<sup>3</sup>

In 1938, television was in the experimental stage in the basement of the Chicago Theatre. The television experiments were publicly shown when NBC began to broadcast on April 30, 1939, at the New York World's Fair.<sup>4</sup>

As World War II ended, television began to capture the attention of the public, and the expansion of educational radio was "put on hold."<sup>5</sup> When materials that could have been used for radio construction became available after the War effort, such materials were instead diverted to television construction. Once again, as it had just before World War II, radio took second place to television.

This diversion of materials was to impede the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 268.

<sup>2</sup>National Radio Conference Report, 1939.

<sup>3</sup>National Radio Advisory Council, Report, 1941.

<sup>4</sup>Marvin Smith, Radio, TV & Cable (New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1985), 192.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

development of FM broadcasting as well as time the growth of AM and educational broadcasting.<sup>1</sup>

As early as 1939 during a National Radio Advisory Council meeting, the Education Conference on Radio committee announced it was the conclusion of some educators that television would be the classroom teaching aid of the future.<sup>2</sup> The one dimensional radio (hearing only) was already beginning to be relegated to a position of past technology.<sup>3</sup>

Consider that when the early radio sets and broadcasting systems were placed in schools, several leading educators such as William B. Levenson, Levering Tyson and Frank E. Hill heralded this event as a milestone of achievement in education. These educators believed that radio could offer quality education to every classroom in the nation.<sup>4</sup> Surveys in the late 1930s showed that the rural and one-room schoolhouses were among the most frequent users of radio and nationally distributed programs.<sup>5</sup>

Detractors predicted that radio would bring us to a remote controlled society, and that live classroom instruction

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<sup>1</sup>Frank Reel, The Network (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979), 191-94.

<sup>2</sup>National Advisory Council, Final Report.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Evans, The Prairie Farmer and WLS, 99.

would be in peril if radio were to be allowed in our schools.<sup>1</sup> In the years just before and during World War II, 1940 through 1945, the use of radio suffered a sharp decline for two principal reasons: (1) The lend-lease effort that began in 1939 took away materials needed for radio construction that were considered essential to the War effort and (2) educators saw the first television pictures at the World's Fair in New York. Many educators believed that with the advent of television, radio would become obsolete.<sup>2</sup>

#### Educational Radio in Chicago

Radio instruction in Chicago was a flourishing form of the educational delivery system from 1920 to 1949, but was not as aggressive or creative when compared with other school districts nationally. Other school districts were utilizing radio's potential to a much greater extent.<sup>3</sup> Radio also attracted the attention of the general public as a popular medium of entertainment. This created two conflicting problems for the educators and the station owners. For the educators, the question was how radio could be used to bring educational programs into the home and classroom.<sup>4</sup> But the station owners wanted to have more popular programs that would attract a mass

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>National Radio Advisory Council, Final Report.

<sup>3</sup>Levenson, Teaching Through Radio, 24.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



audience that would in turn attract more paid advertising.<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1930s, eight education associations had been organized and were functioning.<sup>2</sup> These associations and councils became clearinghouses for new methods in the use of radio, distribution centers for programs that had been produced, and sources of information on the new technology.<sup>3</sup>

The Chicago Board of Education, through the Chicago Radio Council, produced and arranged for educational broadcast time on Chicago commercial stations.<sup>4</sup> The programs were broadcast at times convenient for the stations. They were not necessarily times convenient for the students. As programs were divided by grade levels, it was often difficult to publish advance schedules since city newspapers had limited space for educational purposes. Also, the Radio Council had limited staff and funds for distribution of printed materials.

The history of WBEZ is an excellent example of the rise and fall of instructional programming at an educational radio station. At the beginning of educational programming on radio in the late 1920s, the Chicago Public School system had been in the forefront. By 1942, it lagged behind in the use of radio for educational programming.

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<sup>1</sup>Sills, The Radio Station, 143.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Hunt, Chicago Board of Education, Annual Report, 1941.

School boards in Cleveland (OH), Madison (WI), and several school districts outside Illinois applied to the FCC and received their own broadcasting licenses between 1938 and 1941.

The Chicago Board did not apply for a license until 1942, by that time placing the Chicago Radio Council slightly behind other school boards in radio's use. The scope of the Chicago Board of Education's use of radio includes the organization of one of the first radio councils in the nation. In addition, the CRC assisted with the program content and use of radio as a mass communication medium.

When the Chicago Board of Education closed the public schools for two weeks during the polio epidemic of 1937, radio was again used for public instruction. Four daily Chicago newspapers and seven radio stations cooperated with the Chicago Board of Education in bringing lessons into the home while the schools were closed.<sup>1</sup> The newspapers ran the lessons or instructions daily, and the radio stations broadcast the lectures to the students so they could follow the lessons with their newspaper instructions.<sup>2</sup> Instruction continued while the public schools were closed, but the lessons stopped as soon as the schools re-opened.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Annual Report, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>3</sup>Reference is also noted to an unpublished collection of newspaper clippings collected by Carole Nolan, current General Manager of WBEZ-FM, in her office.

After the epidemic was over and schools re-opened, educational radio was at its peak. By 1942, there was a steady decline of educational radio programming until 1949, when by that time, instruction on radio was almost non-existent.<sup>1</sup> Between 1937 and 1942, the Radio Council relied on commercial radio stations to broadcast educational programs, when air time was available. The Board felt that it was more cost effective not to run a station of its own. Between 1942 and the time when WBEZ came on the air in 1943, programming was from about 8:30 to 9:00 A.M. to 3:15 or 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.

The Chicago Board of Education's use of radio exemplifies the plight of a majority of educational stations owned and operated by public schools. The current format of WBEZ is primarily informational and carries the National Public Radio network programs. It carries no lessons or courses designed specifically for classroom use.

From 1937 till 1987, except when the Chicago Teacher's Union was on strike, there was little effort to use the station as a primary educational delivery system. What efforts there were usually did not address any specific grade level, and schedules were confusing. When a lesson was designed for a specific grade level, collateral materials were difficult to distribute on a mass basis. During the teacher strikes, the

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<sup>1</sup>Interview, Marion Ross, Librarian, Chicago Board of Education, Chicago, September 23, 1988 at the Library.

newspapers did not print lesson plans, and the only station to run radio lessons was WBEZ.<sup>1</sup> The commercial stations did not cooperate with the effort.<sup>2</sup>

Educational Radio Programs and Curriculum on Chicago Radio

The Chicago Board of Education was the fourth school district in the nation to broadcast educational programs on radio.<sup>3</sup> The New York Public Schools were the first to begin educational broadcasts in 1924.<sup>4</sup>

Chicago began educational programming on radio during the 1924-25 school year with an in-school program broadcast over WLS. Dr. Ben H. Darrow was host of The Little Red School House of the Air, heard twice a day, mornings and afternoons.<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that Dr. Darrow left the Chicago system a year later for a position as a radio educator in the Ohio school system, where he enjoyed a distinguished career in broadcasting.

Dr. Edward J. Tobin, Superintendent of Cook County Schools, was an ardent supporter of the use of radio and was the first to advocate that the Board of Education have its own

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<sup>1</sup>WBEZ, "History of Events, November 1971 to June 1987", unpublished paper written by Carole Nolan's staff at WBEZ.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Laroux, "WBEZ Programs Substitutes for Absent Teachers:", Chicago Tribune, October 10, 1983 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>5</sup>Evans, The Prairie Farmer and WLS, 165.

full-time station.<sup>1</sup> He was one of the few educators to support educational radio at that time (1924).

The Chicago Board of Education formed the Chicago Radio Council in 1937 to produce and arrange for broadcasting educational radio programs on commercial stations.<sup>2</sup> Three major factors influenced the Chicago Board of Education in taking this action: the poliomyelitis epidemic, the need of the broadcasters to have "public service programming" to maintain their licenses, and the emergence of radio as a popular medium.

Radio was continuing to develop as a major industry. Station operators and owners were instructed by the Federal Radio Commission<sup>3</sup> to operate in the "public interest, convenience and necessity" and to operate as a public service.<sup>4</sup> This phrase of the Federal Radio Act of 1927 was borrowed from public utility legislation as the discretionary licensing standard.<sup>5</sup> The broadcasting of educational programs

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<sup>1</sup>Charlotte M. Lawson, "Radio Education In the Chicago Public Schools" (M.A. Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, 1942), 6.

<sup>2</sup>William H. Johnson, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, 1937-1938 (Chicago: Board of Education, 1938), 149-54.

<sup>3</sup>The Radio Act of 1927, Public Law 632, 69th Congress February 23, 1927 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927).

<sup>4</sup>Frank J. Kahn, ed., Documents in American Broadcasting (New York: Meredith, 1968), 35.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

fulfilled this requirement. The Federal Communications Act of 1934<sup>1</sup> was largely based on the Federal Radio Act of 1927.<sup>2</sup> The Act directed the Federal Communications Commission to "execute and enforce the provisions of this Act"<sup>3</sup> and to enlarge the scope and authority of the granting and supervising of all types of radio transmissions.<sup>4</sup>

The formation of the CRC, with the encouragement of the commercial radio broadcasters, was a direct result of the decision to close the schools at the start of the 1937-1938 school year and broadcast lessons on commercial stations.<sup>5</sup> The lessons were published in the newspapers and broadcast over stations WLS, WMAQ, WENR, WJJD, WAIT, WCFL, WBBM, WIND, and WGES.<sup>6</sup> (WBEZ was not yet on the air at this time).

The Chicago Radio Council (CRC) was formed in 1937 to produce continuing radio lessons for commercial stations after the polio epidemic had been controlled and schools reopened.<sup>7</sup> It was not until 1942 that the board would decide to have its own station and not be dependent upon commercial stations.

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<sup>1</sup>Federal Communications Commission, Regulations 1934.

<sup>2</sup>Kahn, Documents of American Broadcasting, 54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 55-96.

<sup>5</sup>Carole Nolan, "School Broadcasts in Chicago During the Polio Epidemic," Private Papers Collection, 1937, available at her office at WBEZ.

<sup>6</sup>Lawson, "Radio Education," 32-48.

<sup>7</sup>Johnson, Superintendent's Annual Report, 1938, 149.

Harold W. Kent, then the principal of the Prussing School, was selected as director of the Board's new Department of Radio Education.<sup>1</sup> He had been active in school broadcasts of educational materials at WMAQ, and had written and produced scripts and had some production experience.<sup>2</sup>

Kent described his activities in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, dating from December 1938 to January 1945. He also issued the "radio bulletin" beginning on November 8, 1937, to announce the subject matter, time, date, and stations broadcasting the programs to the teachers and principals.<sup>3</sup>

#### Selected Readings on Educational Radio

##### Books, 1933--1952

The sources available reflect the rise and demise of educational radio from 1933 to 1949. The decline of radio education had begun in 1940, but with the delays in television construction, radio held on until about 1949. Television became the prime source of supplemental instructional learning from 1949 to the present. Videocassettes, computers, and interactive devices now hold a position of prominence as they can be played at a time convenient to the teacher and students.

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<sup>1</sup>Lawson, "Radio Education," 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 35.

Of the more than 60 book sources used in this dissertation, fewer than six have been used as texts. The present texts were used to obtain an historical perspective on educational radio. Of the text and instructional books used to assemble the background of this paper, 14 were published between 1933 and 1952. During this period, Levering Tyson and William B. Levenson each published two books, and 12 authors each published one book.

One of the most notable books was Jerome Sill's The Radio Station (1946). He outlined several reasons for the demise of educational radio on commercial stations. Sill pointed to the increase in popularity of radio and the rapid expansion in the selling of commercials that forced many radio stations to decrease public service and educational programming time.

About 40 book sources, as listed in the libraries used for this work, that offer some reference to educational radio have been published since 1952. For the purposes of this review of literature, seven books have been selected to provide a general insight into the history of radio as an instructional aid.

In his book CBS: Reflections in a Blood Shot Eye,<sup>1</sup> Robert Metz describes the attitudes of network executives toward educational programming after World War II. Just after the War, radio was coming into its own as a prime medium for

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<sup>1</sup>Metz, CBS: Reflections in a Blood Shot Eye, 175.



advertisers. A little known disc-jockey from Washington, D.C., asked the network for the time period with the lowest rating, so he could prove that he was a network personality and could bring the network advertising dollars. The CBS radio network was carrying The American School of the Air, an award-winning series early in the morning. Looking for additional revenue, the CBS network dropped the prestigious educational program and replaced it with Arthur Godfrey, who had been brought to the local CBS station in New York. Godfrey immediately began to bring in network advertisers and enabled CBS to sign up more affiliates.

William B. Levenson wrote extensively on the merits of radio as an educational device. He was Supervisor of radio for the Cleveland Board of Education, and one of the foremost exponents of using radio in education. In his book, Levenson discussed the development of educational radio<sup>1</sup> and quoted from Raymond Gram Swing's speech at the Sixth Annual Institute for Education by Radio in 1931. Mr. Swing said: "Radio is in its infancy, and infancy is a poor time to decide what character the adult is going to have."<sup>2</sup> Levenson commented that "more than a quarter of a century after modern broadcasting began, the same comments might well be repeated."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Levenson, Teaching Through Radio, 34.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Levenson pointed out that there was a lack of professional training enabling educators to use radio, as well as a lack of understanding on the part of station management that would allow educational radio to serve the needs of the students. As an advocate of advisory councils and other organizations to disseminate information, Levenson wrote a comprehensive guide to educational radio in 1945. Many of the points from this radio book were carried over to his book with Edward Stasheff in 1952 which encompassed television.<sup>1</sup>

One of the more comprehensive books on radio and its relationship to the school was written in 1945 by Norman Woelfel and I. Keith Tyler.<sup>2</sup> In the preface, Tyler stated: "American schools have hardly touched the surface in their adjustments to radio".<sup>3</sup> He sounded a clear warning that the end of the era (1939-1945) was near and summarized the shortcomings of school administrators.<sup>4</sup> "With the opening up of the FM field to education after the War, it is increasingly necessary for every teacher to be informed about radio and to know how to use it intelligently in the classroom."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William B. Levenson and Edward Stasheff, Teaching Through Radio and Television (New York: Greenwood Press, 1952).

<sup>2</sup>Norman Woelfel and I. Keith Tyler, Radio and the School (Yonkers-On-Hudson, NY: World Book Co.,) 1945.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., iii, iv.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

For the first chapter of the book, Norman Woelfel, the Project Director of Evaluation of School Broadcasts, and Seerley Reid, the research associate, spent five years gathering and writing up the results of their investigations on educational radio programs. The survey included about 2,000 teacher respondents who used or expected to use radio in the classroom. The survey showed that about 50 percent of these teachers did not have the equipment to receive radio programs and another 18.7 percent had unsatisfactory equipment. To add insight to this evaluation, 2 percent responded that a radio in the classroom was contrary to school policy.<sup>1</sup> About two-thirds of those responding had no experience with educational radio. In summary, Woelfel states that radio was not accepted by a majority of educators or administrators.

As described in the section of Norman Woelfel and I. Keith Tyler's book, Apathy Toward Radio In Schools<sup>2</sup>, and the "Ten Fallacies Concerning Radio,"<sup>3</sup> Woelfel and Tyler make it clear that not enough radio information was being offered to teachers and administrators. This was the main reason for the fallacy: "Radio will eventually replace the individual teacher."<sup>4</sup> The book also describes the working of a radio instruction department, citing examples of how to write and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4-17.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 6.

produce programs, and the use of network programs if available. It also describes in detail the working of the Radio Council of the Chicago Public Schools and the development and programming of WBEZ.<sup>1</sup> Once again the Radio Council and Harold W. Kent are cited for their outstanding use of radio as an educational teaching aid.<sup>2</sup>

A final point of this review was made by I. Keith Tyler, who wrote the introduction to William Levenson's book Teaching Through Radio. Mr. Tyler stated, "That radio has much to contribute few would deny. That schools are lamentably backward in making use of this important instrument is equally indisputable."<sup>3</sup>

The Fourteenth Year Book of the Institute for Education By Radio was a milestone in the dissemination of information on educational radio.<sup>4</sup> It comprised the proceedings of the Institute's fourteenth annual conference, the theme of which was "Wartime Broadcasting."<sup>5</sup> This was also the subtitle of the book. A wide range of topics was addressed by specific chapters in the book. In all, twenty-five topics covered aspects of broadcasting ranging from minority children

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 96-102.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 99.

<sup>3</sup>Levenson, Teaching Through Radio, v.

<sup>4</sup>Josephine H. MacLatchy, ed., Education on the Air: Wartime Broadcasting (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1943).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 5-44.

to music and art.<sup>1</sup> The conference proceedings covered the how to's and why's of educational radio broadcasting. It was one of the most ambitious conferences held and its published proceedings were probably the most complete source on radio education to that date. The members of the conference and the topics they covered set the trend for years to come. In 1943 the conference heard its first paper on television that was represented by Paul Thornton titled, "Television and Education."<sup>2</sup>

Chicago was well represented at the conference by Judith Waller (WMAQ), Maj. Harold W. Kent (then on active duty with the U.S. Army), George Jennings (Chicago Radio Council), Norman Woelfel, and I. Keith Tyler. All had presented their findings and alerted the group to the need for additional information and training in order to keep the spirit of educational radio alive.

The underlying theme of the book was that the benefits of educational radio were understated, the potential underestimated, and that educators were missing an opportunity to expand the knowledge and outlook of their students when they omitted radio from the classroom.

#### Dissertations

The dissertations and theses available on educational

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 207-18.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 181-184.

radio in general are numerous. About three hundred have been written, as listed in A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations in Broadcasting: 1920-1973.<sup>1</sup> Only six investigators have addressed educational radio in Chicago. All six of these papers will be discussed.

An overview reveals that three dissertations and one master's thesis addressed specific radio stations as a documented history or review of general programming philosophy. All six research papers imply that radio was used somewhat effectively, but only one master's thesis concludes that there were any positive aspects to radio as a teaching aid. Two master's theses were directly related to Chicago educational radio. Both these theses on the Chicago Board of Education were completed before WBEZ went on the air. Both were submitted as a requirement for a Master of Arts degree from the School of Education at De Paul University, Chicago. Neither discusses the history leading to the establishment of WBEZ.

Charlotte M. Lawson, in her thesis for a Master of Arts degree (School of Education) at De Paul University, discusses the Chicago Radio Council.<sup>2</sup> Lawson's research was most helpful in establishing the chronology of events leading

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<sup>1</sup>John M. Kittross, A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations in Broadcasting: 1920-1973 (Washington D.C.: Broadcast Education Association, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>Charlotte M. Lawson, "Radio Education", (M.A. Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, Il., 1942).

to the development of WBEZ radio, as there had been several delays in the application for a transmitter, and the first year's program schedule was detailed. Lawson explained the delays and placed the proceedings of the Radio Council in chronological order. She also addressed the radio division's relation to the curriculum division and its relationship to the teacher training program. Some of Lawson's supporting documents on the Radio Council are among the few surviving records available for study, because the Radio Council did not save program schedules or evaluation materials.

Lawson described the evaluation process of the Chicago Radio Council as it was conducted by a Council staff member, Ann Gottschalk. The methodology used a questionnaire for the teachers followed by an interview by Miss Gottschalk. This process covered pupils as well, with the results showing that radio had a slight effect on the students.<sup>1</sup>

During the first semester of the 1938-39 school year, twenty-four seventh and eighth classes were involved in an evaluation project. Twelve classes listened to "Let's Tell A Story" while twelve classes did not. All classes used the Radio Council handbook. There were three parts of the survey. The results indicated that students who heard the radio programs had a slight, but not significant, increase in their interest in reading over those who had not heard the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 75-77.

broadcasts.<sup>1</sup> The second part dealt with the amount of reading done by the pupils. The results showed that, during the period of time covered by the project, the radio class had a mean of 9.32 books read, while the non-listening group mean was 6.32 books read. The final part of the survey asked both groups to write a composition. One group listen to a radio program "Life in 1988" before writing and the control group did not hear the boardcasts. The radio class did write "slightly more interestingly and effectively."<sup>2</sup>

In the first semester of the 1939-1940 school year fifth and sixth grade classes used the "Science Story Teller" as the project base. Two schools were selected that had two classes in each grade. From the twenty classes, half heard the radio programs and the other half did not.<sup>3</sup> The results showed only the fifth grade radio pupils had gained slightly "in interest and information."<sup>4</sup> Both sixth grade classes showed similar results. The Council did not maintain a constant check on the evaluation process.<sup>5</sup>

James Francis Groark asked 200 students, 111 boys and 89 girls, of five Chicago Public Schools in the fifth to eighth grades to give their reaction to five radio programs

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 78-80.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 81-82.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Lawson, "Radio Education", 75-84.



they heard, three times a week, over a four month period in 1938.<sup>1</sup> The survey included a reaction to the discussions after the broadcasts.

Groark's results of four non-program categories indicated 97.5% responded yes to the question, "Was listening to radio a popular part of the school day." In answer to the question "Did you profit from the radio programs?", 95% of the boys and girls responded yes. The next two questions leaves some doubt as to the popularity and profit the pupils received. To the third question, "Was radio helpful in your studies?", 42% of the boys and 51% of the girls responded yes, for an average of 46.5%. To the fourth question, "Did you find radio interesting?", the boys responded yes with 37% and the girls 21%, for an average of 29%.<sup>2</sup>

The pupils' favorite type of program was a dramatization (90% yes to 10% no); the pupils enjoyed children of their own age on the broadcasts (80% in favor to 20% enjoyed other actors). The program portion of the study showed little difference in the reaction from grade to grade between boys and girls.<sup>3</sup>

All the lessons were produced by the Radio Council and were broadcast on commercial stations. The results of the

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<sup>1</sup>James Francis Groark, "Reaction of Pupils to School Radio Programs", (M.A. Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, Ill., 1939).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 8-21.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 10-21.

survey indicated that commercial stations broadcasting educational material was not in the best interest of the students. Groark pointed out that regular class lessons were interrupted to adjust to the commercial schedule. Cancellation of programs did occur, as well as pupils showing a lack of interest in radio. (Groark's thesis was also submitted as a requirement for a Master of Arts degree, School of Education, De Paul University.)

Chester Caton, in his 1951 Ph.D. dissertation from Northwestern University, traced the history of WMAQ radio from its inception to its joining of the NBC radio network.<sup>1</sup> The documented history covers a small portion of the station's long history in Chicago, as it went on the air in 1922 and joined NBC as a locally owned and operated station in 1931. Caton addressed the programming of the station and the history of the ownership from an independent to a network station. The section of this study that related to educational radio is a brief mention of Judith Waller. Miss Waller, NBC regional Director of Public Service Programs, was a member of various educational councils and associations. She made the station's major contribution to educational radio, as she began the first broadcast to a school. Miss Waller produced the first Chicago educational program on radio in the early 1920s.

Erling S. Jorgensen detailed the history of station

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<sup>1</sup>Chester Canton, "Radio Station WMAQ: A History of its Independent Years, 1922-1931" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., 1951).

WCFL, owned by the Chicago Federation of Labor [CFL] which operated on a clear channel of 1000 on the AM radio dial.<sup>1</sup> WCFL did play a role in educational broadcasting, and it used programs developed by the Radio Council. The station's program budget was limited, and it welcomed the educational programming. Jorgensen confirmed that the station, as an independent, needed to fill air time. To increase revenues, WCFL became affiliated with the Dumont Networks and later the station became a division of NBC. As a member of the NBC network, it no longer had air time available for unpaid educational broadcasts. The network was able to sell commercial air time. WCFL showed a small profit in its association with NBC.

Bruce Allen Linton traced the history of WGN and WMAQ in a Ph.D. dissertation from Northwestern University in 1963.<sup>2</sup> [Linton also wrote his master's thesis on a media related subject.] Both stations were prominent in broadcasting educational programming, and most of the programs they aired originated at the Radio Council of the Board of Education. Linton was concerned with the development of the programming philosophy and the management strategy of the stations. He

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<sup>1</sup>Erling S. Jorgensen, "Radio Station WCFL: A Study in Labor Union Broadcasting" (M.A. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., 1949).

<sup>2</sup>Bruce Allen Linton, "A History of Chicago Radio Station Programming, 1921-1931 with Emphasis on WMAQ and WGN" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., 1963).

made a comparative analysis of network owned and operated stations, and WMAQ and WGN, which had network ties but elected to be independent operations.

There was an occasional exception to the passive support of radio. In the fall of 1926, Fanny R. Smith, principal of Goudy School, asked Judith Waller, Public Service Programming Manager of WMAQ radio, to develop an in-school series on music and art appreciation. The reason for this unusual request was that the school's Parent Teacher's Association had presented the school with a radio. Smith asked her faculty to develop a series that WMAQ could broadcast during school hours. The result was a series of art and music appreciation programs as well as several programs featuring leading scientists discussing new technology and discoveries.<sup>1</sup>

Northwestern University created a number of programs in cooperation with WMAQ, under Ms. Waller's supervision, for broadcast on commercial time. At WGN there were several series of lessons, produced by the station, that included conversational French and piano lessons.<sup>2</sup> It is not known if the French lessons had a sponsor, but station records indicate that the piano lessons were sponsored by a piano manufacturer.

#### Summary Of Chapter II

Most of the books, guidelines, and other materials on

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<sup>1</sup>Lawson, "Radio Education," 7-16.

<sup>2</sup>Quin Ryan, audio tapes of WGN History, Station Archives, 1952.

educational radio faded from publication after 1946. Television was the new medium, and radio was destined to become an antiquated form of supplemental education. In retrospect, radio seemed destined for failure from its early stages. The combination of the early detractors, the group waiting for "pictures" and those who feared that radio and television would replace teachers, created a roadblock in the early days of radio.

Another factor was the availability of funds available for television from several governmental agencies. Radio had few national or state funding sources available, and limited research funds on the local level. The World War II effort contributed to the demise of educational radio by diverting scarce materials. FM was being researched and developed for the military, and limited information available to the public indicated that this new technology boasted a clear signal with little or no static. The very use of radio during wartime was discouraged, as it was possible that enemy airplanes could find a target by homing in on radio signals.

The experimental television station WX9BK, operating from the basement of the Chicago Theatre, offered a preview of the medium to Chicagoans.<sup>1</sup> As the Radio Council and others tried to organize their efforts, educational television was just around the corner, with more funding and a more exciting presentation than radio.

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<sup>1</sup>Smith, Radio, TV & Cable, 194

In 1979, the FCC passed an amendment deregulating radio. The deregulation of radio gave the stations the right to turn all available programming time into commercial air time. The stations no longer had to offer public service programs, only public service announcements. The stations responded by taking almost all educational and public service programming off the air.

Today the situation is that few, if any, educational lessons are on radio. The demise of educational radio in Chicago was complete in July 1990, with the announcement that WBEZ would be independent of the Chicago Board of Education. The station would program a more popular format of jazz music and current events discussions, along with the National Public Radio programs.

## CHAPTER III

### THE HISTORY OF WBEZ-FM

#### Introduction

An understanding of the station's history has been developed from sources other than the station's own archives and files. The manager of the radio station did not save any of the materials pre 1971 that could have helped explain the development of educational radio in Chicago. Neither did the Radio Council, or Radio Division, have anything in its files to document the station's history.<sup>1</sup> The history of the station was assembled piecemeal from association newsletters, newspapers clippings, and proceedings of the Board of Education meetings. With one exception, the stations that were involved with the Radio Council were sold several times, and records are no longer available. The one notable exception was WGN, which carried some of the Radio Council's programs. WGN's records on educational radio were not retained.

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<sup>1</sup>The name of the Radio Council and the Radio Division was changed several times between 1937 and 1960. All references are for the same council or division. The lines of authority also changed several times, although it primarily reported to the Bureau of Curriculum.

The Years Before 1937

The use of radio in the Chicago Public Schools system's classrooms started in 1926 when a Chicago school began testing the use of radio programs as an aid to classroom studies.<sup>1</sup> This event eventually led to the formation of the Radio Council in 1937. The test was to determine the feasibility of teaching certain subjects in classrooms through the use of special radio programs. Conducting the test were Chicago Public School officials in conjunction with the National League of Teachers' Associations.<sup>2</sup>

The first test programs involved music and poetry. Superintendent of Schools William McAndrew; Willis E. Tower, District Superintendent in charge of high schools, and R.R. Smith of the Chicago Normal College worked with the committee. A two-class experiment was scheduled.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the results of this early test were not published.

In the same year, Principal Fanny R. Smith of the Goudy School led her students to an assembly room to hear a musical program. The program was broadcast over WMAQ. Judith Waller, the Program Manager, was interested in the use of radio for educational purposes.

Miss Smith pronounced the program a success. William

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<sup>1</sup>"Chicago Schools Test Radio," Chicago Daily News, July 14, 1926 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



J. Bogan, Assistant Superintendent, also expressed a favorable opinion. However, Colonel Edward B. Elliott, President of the Board of Education, and Superintendent of Schools William McAndrew were against the use of radio broadcasts at that time.<sup>1</sup>

In 1932, when a lack of public funds indicated that public schools might be closed, the Chicago Tribune and radio station WGN offered newspaper space and broadcasting time to instruct the students.<sup>2</sup> Superintendent Bogan believed that a workable plan could be formulated by educational experts for radio instruction. He also believed that some arrangements could be made to put the school children near a radio, since many people could not afford a radio set.<sup>3</sup> As radio became an accepted medium for general use during the 1930s, the School Board also learned that other school boards around the country had elected to use radio as a teaching aid.

The Chicago Board of Education was the fourth school district in the nation to broadcast educational programs on radio.<sup>4</sup> The New York Public Schools began its broadcasts in 1924. Indianapolis, IN, and Oakland City, CA, began

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<sup>1</sup>"Public School Radio Concert Stirs Opposition," Chicago Daily News, October 5, 1926 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>"WGN to Teach by Radio If Schools Close," Chicago Tribune, January 5, 1932 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Smith, Radio TV & Cable, 3.

broadcasting the same year.<sup>1</sup>

In 1925 the National Association for Educational Broadcasters was formed under the name of the Association of College and University Broadcasting Stations. The organization published a newsletter, which focused on educational radio. Most of its members were busy keeping their stations on the air and trying to arouse interest in their educational radio programs. They did not have time to develop long term plans which would have allowed the organization to grow.<sup>2</sup> The association held a national radio conference and conducted an exchange of information among its limited membership.<sup>3</sup>

According to Norman Woelfel and I. Keith Tyler, the history of educational radio in Chicago covers three distinct periods.<sup>4</sup>

The first covers 1924-1925, when Ben H. Darrow originated the "Little Red Schoolhouse" broadcasts over station WLS. Lessons in art and music appreciation were directed at pupils in elementary schools in the city and suburbs surrounding Chicago. A special series, broadcast to high school and elementary pupils, included conversations by

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Papers, 1925-1965, State of Wisconsin Archives, Madison, U.S. Mass 76, A F, Box 16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Norman Woelfel and I. Keith Tyler. Radio and The School (New York: World Book, 1940), 96-102.

Jane Addams and Lorado Taft. The series ended when Mr. Darrow was terminated from his teaching assignment.<sup>1</sup>

The second period (1926-1934) centered around the work of Judith Waller, Manager of WMAQ radio, who was becoming a moving force in educational radio. She presented three series of programs for schoolroom listeners featuring art, music, and general interest talks by prominent local persons. The programs were broadcast twice daily, five days a week. These programs were developed and supervised by Miss Waller, with some help from Chicago teachers and principals. These programs were taken from the curriculum for ninth grade geography, science, music appreciation, literature, history, and current events. The broadcasts continued up to the 1933-1934 school year.<sup>2</sup>

The third period arose out of an emergency in the fall of 1937, when a poliomyelitis epidemic caused the Chicago public and private schools to delay the start of the fall semester. This unusual situation brought about a renewed interest in radio education and the creation of the Chicago Radio Council.<sup>3</sup>

So that the students would not fall behind, the Board of Education devised an emergency program of education by

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 96-102.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 97.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 98.

radio.<sup>1</sup> Seven Chicago stations donated time for broadcasts, and five of six daily papers donated space. The papers carried digests of the lessons to be broadcast.<sup>2</sup> The lessons were directed at third through eighth grades and covered math, science, English and social studies. They continued for two weeks, September 13-27, 1937.<sup>3</sup> The publicity given to the two-week lessons on the air in Chicago and around the nation captured the attention of the public and educators.

After the polio scare subsided, the two weeks of radio instruction were evaluated by the Radio Council.<sup>4</sup> According to this evaluation, three major issues emerged: The first was the unusual "amount of loose talk and careless pronouncements made by both proponents and opponents."<sup>5</sup> The use of radio instruction deepened many teachers' "feelings of insecurity and fear that radio, this new technology, might one of these days take away their jobs."<sup>6</sup>

Second was the test data gathered by Harold W. Kent, newly appointed Director of the Chicago Radio Council. He indicated that the results of the experiment "were not

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 98-99.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 98-99.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

particularly satisfactory."<sup>1</sup> They showed "that only half of the pupils in the Grades 4-8 listened to the broadcast, and that the test scores of these listeners were not impressively different from those of the non-listeners."<sup>2</sup>

Third, the education on the air project "eventually brought home to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education--the educational possibilities of using radio to supplement the curriculum of the schools."<sup>3</sup> Kent envisioned radio bringing prominent speakers and community leaders to the classrooms. Artists would discuss their work as the student viewed their pictures. Authors would describe their writing, after the pupils had read their books. National figures would offer their views on government, and philosophers would discuss the art of living.

#### Development of the Chicago Radio Council: 1937

In 1937, the Chicago Radio Council of the Chicago Public Schools was established, as a division of the Department of Curriculum.<sup>4</sup>

When the schools were closed on September 12, 1937, by order of Herman N. Bundesen, President of the Board of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 98-99.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>4</sup>William H. Johnson, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, 1937-1938 (Chicago: Board of Education, 1938), 149-54.

Health, School Superintendent William H. Johnson appointed Minnie E. Fallon Assistant Superintendent of Schools in charge of the radio program. Fourteen principals of elementary schools were assembled to study which courses should be presented on the air. Each grade was assigned a specific radio station and day for a subject.<sup>1</sup>

When school reopened on September 17, 1937, Miss Fallon announced that the radio broadcasts would continue and that she would begin a series of conferences in school auditoriums to "acquaint them [the teachers] with the latest trends in modern education."<sup>2</sup>

The Chicago Radio Council (CRC) was chartered to produce and arrange for the broadcast of educational radio programs on commercial radio stations.<sup>3</sup> Three major factors led the Chicago Board of Education to take this step. First was the recent poliomyelitis epidemic in Chicago which closed the schools and resulted in the two week experiment utilizing radio "classes". Second, broadcasters were mandated by the FCC to operate in the public interest. Educational broadcasting seemed to fulfill this requirement. Third, radio was becoming increasingly popular with the general public and educators who were intrigued by its possible uses.

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<sup>1</sup>"Chicago Pupils Go To School by Radio Tomorrow," Chicago Tribune, September 12, 1937 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>"101,011 Return To High School as Ban is Lifted," Chicago Tribune, September, 17, 1937 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Johnson, Annual Report, 1937-1938, 149-54.

The Radio Council was to produce continuing radio lessons for the stations after the polio epidemic had been subsided and the schools reopened.<sup>1</sup> Harold W. Kent, then principal of Prussing School, was selected as Director of the new Department of Radio Education.<sup>2</sup> Kent had been active with in-school broadcasts of educational materials over WMAQ where he had produced scripts and had gained some production experience.<sup>3</sup>

Harold W. Kent described his activities in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter.<sup>4</sup> According to the information published in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter and the "Radio Bulletin," issued by the CRC, Harold Kent spent a great deal of his time "selling" the use of radio to school principals and teachers. "How-to-use radio" educational training sessions were conducted by Kent's staff to "sell" radio to teachers. His frequent visits to the schools also gave him the opportunity to have the teachers evaluate manuscripts that had been submitted to the CRC for possible broadcast to the schools.<sup>5</sup>

With the expansion of program content and the scope of the CRC assignment, the idea that the Board of Education

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<sup>1</sup>Johnson, Annual Report 1937-38, 149.

<sup>2</sup>Lawson, "Radio Education," 33.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 48.

should have its own radio station was discussed by the CRC staff. The CRC pointed out that the Board already had in operation a broadcast quality studio with phone lines to carry programs to WJJD, WIND and WHIP.<sup>1</sup> It should be pointed out that Dr. Tobin, the former Superintendent of the Cook County Schools, had predicted in 1926 that radio would be a prominent instructional aid and that the Board of Education would eventually require its own station. His predication became a reality in early 1943 with the opening of WBEZ.

Radio Education Division: 1937

On December 20, 1937, the Chicago Board of Education, in directives 38307 and 38308, created the position of Director of Radio Education along with five additional teaching positions.<sup>2</sup> Superintendent William H. Johnson recommended that Harold W. Kent, a principal (Prussing Elementary) then serving in the Bureau of Curriculum, be transferred to the position of Director of Radio.<sup>3</sup> Funds were to be provided in the 1938 budget. The Division of Radio was started with a budget of \$1,235 per month. It called for a staff of 4 persons: a director, two teachers, and one junior clerk.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 71.

<sup>2</sup>Board of Education, City of Chicago, Proceedings, December 20, 1937, 581.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1938, 645.



In the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools 1937-38, Superintendent Johnson describes the immediate action taken by the School Board and the overnight success of placing the lessons on radio and in the newspapers. The advisory council that developed the lessons formed the basis for the Radio Council staff. The annual report also indicated that "The testing showed a general, marked tendency for improvement among the children who listened, as compared with those who did not."<sup>1</sup> This statement is a direct contradiction of the statement made by Mr. Kent in Radio and the School.<sup>2</sup>

The annual report also indicates that "at the very first meeting, there was evidence of the sincere desire of the press and radio to select some member of the teaching staff of the public schools to head a new department in education, that of the radio."<sup>3</sup>

In 1937, according to the Annual Report of the School Superintendent 1937-38, half the schools did not have radios. In a large percentage of those schools that had radios, the radios did not work. The report also cites the "attitudes of local stations, which, ever mindful of the Federal Communications Commission, as well as concerned with a sense of sincere civic obligation, were deeply anxious to cooperate with any kind of educational program that might be

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<sup>1</sup>Johnson, Annual Report 1937-38, 149-54.

<sup>2</sup>Woelfel and Tyler, Radio and the School, 98.

<sup>3</sup>Johnson, Annual Report, 1937-38, 150.

devised."<sup>1</sup> The commercial stations were willing to support this effort to protect their broadcasting licenses.<sup>2</sup>

Stations had time to fill. Educational programming was an inexpensive way to fill the less desirable (non prime) time periods, when commercials could not be sold or the networks did not have programs available.

The Radio Council developed five series of programs. The first was a Sunday evening history of education in Chicago. The second was a general science and biology series for seventh and eighth grades built around visits to Chicago's museums of science, including the Rosenwald Museum of Science (later known as the Museum of Science and Industry), the Field Museum, the Academy of Sciences, and the Chicago Historical Society. Third was a core English and literature program for the middle grades that included a story hour. Other topics included social studies, and occupational surveys utilizing a mobile van to interview people on the job. The last series was "Student Opinion," a round-table discussion. Students were encouraged to audition for parts in any of the five series or to write a script.

The report also mentioned the Midwest School-Broadcast Conference in which the Council took an active role. The conference included panel discussions on new radio technology and programming. The panelists, who had had some

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 151.

experience with radio, shared it with other teachers and administrators. George Jennings took an active role in the organization of the conference. An exchange of ideas and the sharing of common problems, both technical and curricular, were on the agenda.

Another interesting point in this report is the statement: "The field of radio is a supplementary classroom tool in that it reinforces and enriches the background of education."<sup>1</sup> The report compared the use of moving pictures in conjunction with textbooks with the use of radio can in a similar way. The report went on to say, "... certainly the radio program also has a rightful niche, granting the program has quality."<sup>2</sup>

The report also addressed comments about radio replacing teachers and the role of radio as an aid to education. The following statement, taken from the report, defines the role of radio in relationship to the teacher: The report stated ". . . the radio should never be used in the classroom unless the teacher knows something about the program and can give the proper set to the learning stage as the program is to be introduced."<sup>3</sup> The report also suggested that "the teacher should follow the radio lessons with a discussion

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 154.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

that would have a definite application into the class work."<sup>1</sup> Once again, the school superintendent had established the parameters for using radio in the classroom and had set the role of radio as a supplement to the lessons.

It seemed obvious that many teachers still feared radio and did not know how to use it. To accomplish his goals, Mr. Kent used a number of marketing devices including the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, monthly bulletins from the Radio Council, visits to the school to talk with teachers, and when possible, visits to the promotion staff of commercial radio stations that aired the programs. Mr. Kent had an excellent understanding of marketing and the influence of public relations techniques on an audience.

#### Chicago Radio Council: 1938

The first full year of operation for the Chicago Radio Council was 1938. The budget was approved, but had been decreased to allow for only two full-time teaching positions, down from the five positions provided for in the original budget. The second annual radio conference sponsored by the Radio Council and the Board of Education was set for November.

The Radio Council's activities grew. By April 1, 1938, 56 broadcasts had been produced.<sup>2</sup> By the summer of 1938 the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Charlotte M. Lawson, "Radio Education In the Chicago Public Schools," (M.A. Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, 1942), 45.

radio had become responsible for 17 in-school and out-of-school broadcasts.<sup>1</sup> Early in 1938, a program director, George Jennings, and an engineer, Emil Andresen joined the staff.<sup>2</sup> In the fall of 1938, the Council asked the students of Lane Technical High School to help design and build studio equipment that was to be installed under the engineer's supervision at the new offices. The new studio and offices were to be ready for operation in February of 1939.<sup>3</sup>

In his first "Radio in Education" article for the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, Harold W. Kent had to defend the position of his Council, which was just eight weeks old. The Council director attended the first Broadcasting in Education Conference at the Drake Hotel in December. Criticism was aimed at the poor quality of educational programs and at the clients' demands on advertising agencies.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Kent replied that the Radio Council was an innocent bystander, as he had no staff in December 1937. Mr. Kent was a vocal person who stated at the conference "that the purpose of radio in education is largely to stimulate and enrich and has not proved definitely its value in direct

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 60.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 61.

<sup>4</sup>Harold W. Kent, "Radio in Education," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 30, No. 4 (January, 1938): 10.

teaching."<sup>1</sup> He went on to say, "A radio program is useless without careful preparatory work by a teacher. This, perhaps, reveals the true nature of the radio as merely a tool in education, somewhat analogous in utility to the moving picture film and the textbook."<sup>2</sup> He also described the difference between network educational programs and the guidelines for local educational programs.

In this first article, Mr. Kent's view of the future of radio and its usefulness in the classroom looked forward to the Radio Council's having its own station. He described the "feasibility of sometime finding the Chicago School System with its own shortwave transmitter, where it could carry on its own educational programs with recourse to nonselective time spots on the local station." Mr. Kent pointed to an interdisciplinary academic and vocational program and said, "This can well be an enterprise carried on by the technical schools, and may prove some outlet for vocational experience of a very modern order."<sup>3</sup> Another farsighted Kent suggestion was an interdisciplinary academic curriculum. "This offers us a wide opportunity to provide students in the high schools for participation in a Radio Workshop type of activity where the English teacher and the dramatic coaches will combine efforts to develop the arts of scriptwriting, production, and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

acting."<sup>1</sup>

The same issue of the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter included an article, "Radio Presents A Challenge"<sup>2</sup> by Mrs. John Sharpless Fox, Radio Chairman, Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers. She described the December 1937 educational radio conference as a gathering of college presidents, radio officials, and radio personalities from all over the United States, England and Canada. Parent-Teacher representatives from Oregon to Maine and from Texas to Minnesota were present.

Mrs. Fox said that "educators were willing to admit lack of showmanship and need for training in radio technique, but objected to the broadcasters' insistence that all programs must be planned for the same age group."<sup>3</sup> The statement was provoked by the general nature of network educational programs, geared to the youth market. Mrs. Fox pointed out "that the 150,000 PTA members in Illinois could join with the teachers, librarians, the social and civic workers in helping Illinois solve some of its educational problems by means of the radio."<sup>4</sup>

The first broadcast of the Radio Council was heard on

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. John Sharpless Fox, "Radio Presents a Challenge," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 30, No. 4 (January, 1938): 12.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

January 9, 1938, over WBBM at 7:30 p.m. This was the first of 20 weekly programs on the history of Chicago. The other broadcasts were to include dramatizations of high school social studies lessons, and special programs for pre-school children. Harold W. Kent, Radio Council Director, noted that all scripts were prepared by Radio Council staff, the actors were pupils, and broadcast time was donated by the stations. The first regularly distributed bulletins were available at about the start of the spring term, February 1, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Harry L. Tate, not identified as to title or position, reported on a survey taken at the Whitney School which involved 401 students, grades fourth to eighth. Students who had listened to at least one radio lesson gave thirteen different reasons for liking and twenty reasons for disliking the method. Mr. Tate suggested that the Radio Council conduct a far-reaching investigation in this new field and strive to remedy the defects that were brought to light. He pointed to a general attitude that was prevalent. "There exists at the present time very little education value to broadcast programs as compared to the regular school schedule."<sup>2</sup> But he seems to have had a hidden agenda: "However, when television is developed to the point where reasonably priced receiving sets can be installed in school rooms and homes, lessons through

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<sup>1</sup>"Chicago Pupils Go to School On Air in February," Chicago Tribune, January 10, 1938 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Harry L. Tate, "Radio Lessons and the Pupil," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 30, No. 9 (June, 1938): 34-35.



the air will be of extreme value."<sup>1</sup>

The weekly radio bulletin was sent to 394 principals on Tuesdays, and they were asked to distribute them to their staff. The bulletin recommended programs and listed broadcasts during school hours and on week ends. Each program listing was followed by a notation of the appropriate school grade to which it applied.<sup>2</sup> Teachers were asked to suggest other programs related to education to which pupils should listen.

The first workshops to instruct teachers on the use of radio in the classroom were announced by Superintendent William H. Johnson, "The workshops would be held every day for four weeks starting on June 20, and would meet in the radio education council room at 228 N. LaSalle Street."<sup>3</sup>

The special radio workshop series, operated by the Chicago Normal College, was directed by Harold W. Kent and featured guest lecturers. James Whipple of the University Broadcasting Council taught continuity; Paul Dowty of the Columbia Broadcasting System taught production, and individual lectures were given by leaders in the field.<sup>4</sup>

At a dinner in the Morrison Hotel, Dr. William H. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, presented the next

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>"Radio Programs to Supplement School Studies," Chicago Tribune, February 1, 1938 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>"Radio Workshop Class to Teach City's Teachers," Chicago Tribune, April 24, 1938 (Clipping).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

semester's radio schedule to a score of representatives of broadcasting stations and others interested in educational programming. Harold W. Kent commented that the number of receivers had tripled during the season and that five of every seven schools now had radios.

New programs for the coming year included a newscast for pupils above the fifth grade. A choral appreciation program and programs on science, social studies, and literature were to be broadcast during school hours.

Radio education progressed from a new technology to a required course when Superintendent Johnson announced that Luella Hoskins, of the Council staff, would teach a new course in classroom use of radio programs. This course, to be offered at Chicago Teachers' College on the south side, would be required for graduation.

Harold W. Kent recapped the story of education on local radio in the October issue of the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter. He described the crisis of the polio epidemic (1937) and the classroom setting at the Century of Progress Exposition in 1932, when eight weeks of school broadcasts were written and presented by student actors. The purpose of the article was to show the progress of radio in the past ten years. Mr. Kent quoted Frank E. Hill who in his book Listen and Learn described "education by radio" as a "process of training that happens to use the radio apparatus as an

agency."<sup>1</sup>

In the November issue of the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, Mr. Kent described the production of radio shows in cooperation with Chicago's museums. The series called "The Science Reporter" would cover the Field Museum, the Rosenwald Museum of Science, and the Adler Planetarium. He noted that the Chicago Herald and Examiner would print a full page of pictures that would be pertinent to the program each Monday preceding the broadcasts.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Kent went on to describe the working of his department and the vast amount of preparation needed to broadcast a program. "Other interesting angles to this picture are station contacts and relations, and the thousand and one details connected with the production of a broadcast."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Kent promised to write additional articles to bring to focus some of the other "thousand and one details."

Mr. Kent devoted his December article in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter to the Second School Broadcast Conference. He was head of the executive committee of The School Broadcast Conference. Other executive committee members were David Heffernan, Assistant Superintendent of Cook County

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<sup>1</sup>Harold W. Kent, "Education Gets on The Air" Chicago Principals' Club Reporter (CPRC) 31, No. 1 (October, 1938): 11-14.

<sup>2</sup>Kent, "Education Gets on The Air," CPCR, 31, No. 2 (November, 1938): 21-23.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Schools; Lavinia Schwartz, Columbia Broadcasting System Educational Director; and Judith Waller, Midwestern head of the National Broadcasting Company educational department.<sup>1</sup>

He described the need for such a conference and the results he hoped to obtain. The December report included the entire schedule of events for the three days.<sup>2</sup> As the conference was open to all who wished to attend, he called attention to the six demonstrations devoted to the utilization of radio, featuring "classrooms and groups actually receiving programs."<sup>3</sup>

More than 400 educators interested in the use of radio in education attended the meetings at the Morrison Hotel in December. The conference was sponsored by the Board of Education and the Radio Council.

The opening general session featured brief talks by William D. Boutwell, Director, Federal Radio Project; Franklin Dunham, Education Director, National Broadcasting Company; and Sterling Fisher, Director of Education, Columbia Broadcasting System. James Francis Groark, who conducted a session on social studies, was to complete his Master's thesis on "Reaction of Pupils To School Radio Programs" at DePaul

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<sup>1</sup>"2d School Broadcast Conference to Open Dec. 1; 400 to Attend," Chicago Tribune, November 24, 1938 (Clipping); "Educators Will Discuss Use of Radio in Schools," Chicago Tribune, December 1, 1938 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Kent, "Education Gets on The Air" CPCR, 31, No. 3 (December, 1938): 25-27.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

University in 1939.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced during the year that it had reserved 25 channels in the ultra-high frequency (FM) band for non-profit educational broadcasting.<sup>1</sup> This was a major victory for educators. However, most of them were not especially interested in FM at that time. After a series of hearings in 1940, the FCC reserved the frequency band from 42,000 to 50,000 kilocycles for FM broadcasting and specifically set aside five of the remaining 40 channels for educational stations.<sup>2</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council: 1939

The information on the activities of the Chicago Radio Council during this year was taken from the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter. The articles were written by Harold W. Kent to encourage principals and teachers to use radio and become part of the new technology. Mr. Kent pointed out some interesting facts about the use and growth of radio. He related that half a dozen stations -- WGN, WCFL, WBBM, WAIT, WJJD, and WMAQ --<sup>3</sup> were broadcasting educational radio programs. He also commented on the number of network educational programs that were being carried by the local

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<sup>1</sup>National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Background. State of Wisconsin Archives, U.S. Mass. 76, A F, Box 16, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Kent, "Education Gets on The Air" CPCR, 31, No. 5 (February 1939): 34-35.

stations. Among these programs were: "Let's Pretend" and "So You Want To Be.." on CBS (WBBM), "The Nation's School of the Air" on Mutual (WGN), and the "NBC Music Appreciation Hour with Dr. Walter Damrosch" on NBC (WMAQ). Mr. Kent reported that there was some problem with one local NBC station, WCFL, that did not want to carry the Damrosch program. The number of educators who protested caused the program to be returned to the air at 4 P.M. in the afternoon on WCFL.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Kent, in this issue, pointed to the power the FCC had over a radio station under its authority to protect the public's air waves. Each station's license was up for review every six months. Mr. Kent said: "Among the provisions under which they are allowed to conduct their business is one which serves as the wedge for educational broadcasting: Programs must be in the "public interest, convenience, and necessity."<sup>2</sup> He attacked the heart of the matter, the advertising income for radio stations, now showing a remarkable increase: "Roughly, only one-third of the time of the average network station is sold. The other two-thirds is made up of sustaining programs--that is programs not paid for by the advertisers."<sup>3</sup> This explained the increasing demand for radio time by advertisers and the increasing number of public-service programs that the network would not broadcast because the time

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 35.

had been sold.

Mr. Kent pointed out that local stations WAAF, WIND, and WJJD were currently broadcasting the Radio Council's shows. These independent stations did not have the network obligations as WMAQ and WENR. WMAQ and WENR, both owned by the National Broadcasting Company, and WCFL and WGN, both associated with the Mutual Network, carried all the network programs on a priority basis. The canceling of local programs to accommodate an increasing number of commercials sold by the advertising sales department was becoming a common practice.<sup>1</sup> Kent concluded, "It has been our experience that if Radio Council programs have merit--showmanship and color, built around careful research and adequate continuity--stations actually go out of their way to cooperate in the production of our programs."<sup>2</sup>

Harold W. Kent reported, in the March issue of the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter (CPCR), that a February workshop was attended by 170 teachers. The teachers "picked the night of an electrical storm" to attend the first radio meeting. The result of the meeting was a decision to have more meetings, but it was not decided whether the meetings should be monthly or bi-monthly. The participants did suggest that there should be a more permanent group to attend to the problems of education on radio. A program committee was

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

appointed. Mr. Kent made it clear that the committee would not be an adjunct of the Radio Council, but would function as an independent organization that wanted to know more about radio and how to use and evaluate it.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Kent also mentioned three new studies. The entire January 1939 issue of "Educational Method," was devoted to radio in education. The January 1939 issue of "Education By Radio" contained a study by Elizabeth Laing of motion pictures and radio. And the February 1939 issue of "New Letter", published by the Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University, carried an article, "Why Listen To Music?" by Dr. Alton O'Steen. Mr. Kent did not detail the contents of the three articles, but used them as a method of pointing to the importance radio education was taking in the classroom.<sup>2</sup>

Another article written by Mr. Kent for the CPCR in April 1939 described the research of Dr. Charles H. Lake, Superintendent of the Cleveland (Ohio) Public School System. The Cleveland system was a pioneer in educational radio. It had its own station, WBOE (FM), with 150 sets, one for each school, to receive the broadcasts. The radio sets were attached to the public address system in each classroom. Dr. Lake gave a copy of the Cleveland manual of procedures to the

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<sup>1</sup>Kent, "Radio in Education," CPCR, 31, No. 6 (March, 1939): 24-25.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



Chicago Radio Council for its use.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Lake said that through his district's use of radio, they hoped to test its effectiveness as it applied, among other things, to: (1) direct teaching, (2) supervision of instruction, (3) problems of administration, (4) promotion of special types of education, and (5) promotion of the unification of parent-teacher groups and of other cooperating agencies.

An item in the May 1939 issue of the CPCR announced three workshops, for appropriate college credit, open to all teachers attending Chicago Teachers College (now Northeastern Illinois University). Beginning June 28 and extending for four weeks, three workshops would be in simultaneous operation.<sup>2</sup> The workshops were scheduled from 8 a.m. to noon. The three subjects were radio production, continuity, and writing for radio and utilization, for the teacher who asks: "How can I use a radio program in a good way in my classroom?"

A Chicago Tribune newspaper story carried an announcement for high school students to attend radio auditions. The article described a series of radio programs based on high school reading assignments that would be produced as radio programs. No date for the audition or the

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<sup>1</sup>CPCR, 31, No. 7 (April, 1939): 31-34.

<sup>2</sup>CPRC, 31, No. 8 (May, 1939): 28.

name of the programs were given.<sup>1</sup>

Frank E. Schooley, Executive Director of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB), invited Mr. Kent to join the association in a letter dated April 15, 1939<sup>2</sup>. The Radio Council became active in the NAEB. Mr. Kent spoke at a meeting in June 1939. The general topic of his 30-minute talk was what the Council had accomplished in the past year. The contents of his talk were from CPCR articles.

#### Chicago Radio Council: 1940

The continued development of the Radio Council under Harold W. Kent was reported in the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, 1940-41.<sup>3</sup> Superintendent William H. Johnson discussed the success of the Council in "establishing the medium as a promising instrument of instruction."<sup>4</sup> During its four years (1937-1940), the Radio Council had produced seventy-two programs in the first year, 407 in the second, 531 in the third, and 557 in the 1940-41

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<sup>1</sup>"Offer High School Pupils a Chance to Go on Radio," Chicago Tribune, November 23, 1939 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Frank E. Schooley to Harold Kent, dated April 15, 1939, obtained from the State of Wisconsin Archives, U.S. Mass 76, A F, Box 16.

<sup>3</sup>William H. Johnson, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, 1940-1941 (Chicago: Board of Education, 1942), 114-116, 230-32.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 114.

school year.<sup>1</sup> The total number of classes where the broadcasts were carried and the number of children who listened to them had also increased. No count was made during 1937-38, but in 1938-39, 276,955 children in 7,498 classes listened to the programs. From September, 1939 to June, 1940, in 9,277 classes 321,606 pupils heard the broadcasts. During the 1940-41 school year, the figures increased to 9,284 classes and 365,050 children.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that the Radio Council staff had subjected its work to review by competent "specialists, and committees in planning, writing, and producing programs".<sup>3</sup> However, evaluating radio's contribution to the classroom was "analyzed by the members of the Council staff."<sup>4</sup>

The radio programs addressed current news events, travel, Chicago history, and geography.<sup>5</sup> While Superintendent Johnson claimed in his report that there were no "hard and fast divisions of the content field, it would be unreasonable to assume that a science teacher would direct the pupils to a news or historical broadcast."<sup>6</sup>

The Superintendent also mentioned that the quarterly

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 114-16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 114.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 114-116.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 116.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

dinner meetings of the Chicagoland Radio Teachers Club had been "an influence in bringing closer understanding and cooperation between commercial broadcasters, the Radio Council and the teachers."<sup>1</sup>

Another interesting point in the Superintendent's Annual Report of 1940-41 that was the work of the Radio Council was mentioned twice.<sup>2</sup> The report described the new art program for both high school and upper-elementary grades and experiments with the use of transcriptions of radio shows in the classroom. The transcription required a playback machine that could be used at the teacher's convenience. There was an expanding library of radio show transcriptions available from the Federal Radio Education Committee Library. Various professional groups, such as the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB) had started a similar service.

The first mention of an FM educational station was described as a method for the Radio Council to "present repeat performances of its own programs several times a day. . . . and to offer outstanding programs by the networks and Chicago stations."<sup>3</sup> The progress report continued with a prediction that the transmitter and other necessary equipment could be installed and in operation before January, 1942. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 114-116, 230-31.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

"schools of Chicago will enjoy a more extensive use of radio in the classroom."<sup>1</sup>

Two events took place in 1940 which established the influence of the Radio Council in the NAEB. First was the NAEB convention at the Morrison Hotel in Chicago on September 1, 1940. George Jennings, Assistant Director, offered a two-and-a-half hour session on "Script Writing the Educational Show."<sup>2</sup> The other highlight of the conference was a tour that included the FM headquarters of Zenith Radio Corporation (505 North Michigan Avenue), the CBS studio in the Wrigley Building (410 North Michigan), dinner at the Wrigley Building Cafe, and attendance at a show at the WGN studios across the street (441 North Michigan). The tour of the FM station was a preview of the future of educational broadcasting, and the AM stations visited were the studios that fed many programs to the regional and network stations.

The October issue of the NAEB Newsletter listed the Chicago Radio Council as one of nineteen national sources where literature on radio education could be obtained.<sup>3</sup>

The fourth annual School Broadcast Conference held under the auspices of the Radio Council on December 4, 1940, had 1,200 representatives of educational broadcasting in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 231.

<sup>2</sup>National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB), Newsletter, unnumbered (Urbana, Ill., September, 1940), 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., October, 1940, 2.

attendance. The conference leader was Harold W. Kent, and three leading radio commentators of the day attended: Raymond Gram Swing, Mutual network news commentator; George Denny of NBC's "Town Meeting of the Air"; and Lyman Bryson of CBS's Board of Adult Education. Demonstrations of the use of radio in teaching were held featuring Clifton Utley, WGN commentator and Director of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, as the conference chairman.<sup>1</sup>

With much of the world already at War, Dr. James R. Angell, former President of Yale University and then an educational consultant to NBC, set the stage for using radio in the schools as a national defense tool: "Radio, while used by dictator states to plunge nations into war and suffering, is a potent force in developing patriotism in a democracy. No agency can control public opinion so quickly and widely as radio."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Angell ended his remarks by saying that, "the success of the national defense drive will be increasingly beholden to radio."<sup>3</sup>

War was still a year away from America, but the evil influence of foreign powers and the use of radio as a mass communication device were duly noted. Gladstone Murray, Director of the Canadian Broadcasting Company, told the

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<sup>1</sup>"1,200 to Convene Today for Radio School Parley," Chicago Tribune, December, 1940 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>"Radio Is Termed Potent Force in Patriotic Work," Chicago Tribune, December 5, 1940 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

conference participants that Canadian, British and United States broadcasting agencies were pooling artists and cultural resources "to strengthen the free way of life in both war and peace."<sup>1</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council: 1941

The February 1941 issue of the NAEB Newsletter reported on two works produced by the Chicago Radio Council. Let the Artist Speak was a set of handbooks for use with a radio program of the same name. Eleven books and one set of visual aids from this series were distributed to Chicago schools.<sup>2</sup> The newsletter omitted the name of the workbooks' author, but she was a teacher in the Chicago Public School system, Elizabeth E. Marshall. Mrs. Marshall became the Director of the Council after Harold W. Kent was called to active duty during World War II and George Jennings had died at an early age.

It was the policy of the Department of Curriculum to omit any mention of the individual authors of an article or workbook. All the writing credits listed the Radio Council Director.

The same issue of the NAEB Newsletter reported on the Chicago Radio Council's script of "A Radio Assembly for an

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, February 15, 1941, 1.

Elementary School." According to Mr. Kent, the script was to be "used for assembly work, using a radio technique but not for the purpose of broadcasting."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Kent also mentioned that two Council programs had regular broadcast times on commercial stations in Chicago. "Young America Answers," heard on Saturday mornings over WBBM, was a series with emphasis on social studies. It featured two competing high school teams each week. "So You're Going to College," also broadcast on Saturday mornings on WCFL, was produced in cooperation with the Bureau of Occupational Research and was designed to help high school students select the right college for their interests.<sup>2</sup>

The FCC authorized a change in frequencies to take place on March 29, 1941, for all but three of Chicago's AM stations. There were several reasons for this change. One was to protect clear channel stations and not interfere with Mexico's stations. Another reason was to create a better signal which in turn would improve reception for radio listeners.<sup>3</sup> This was another effort by the FCC to improve local reception and attempt to lessen interference.

The May 1941 issue of the NAEB Newsletter reported the existence of a new organization, the Association of Education

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 15, 1941, 5-6.

<sup>3</sup>Paul R. Leach, "Better Reception Near: New Frequencies March 29," Chicago Daily News, March 17, 1941 (Clipping).



by Radio (AER). The AER's purposes were the "promotion of education by radio and a national organization to coordinate efforts and help educational FM stations get on the air." Mr. Kent was an important committee member as he was always marketing his ideas for education by radio.

The NAEB Newsletter declared "[It] will be glad to receive suggestions from anyone who cares to comment on the above purposes, or any other reasons for the existence of such an association."<sup>1</sup> In a humorous vein, the editor of the NAEB Newsletter asked those who were interested to send in their names, "to become a charter member, and be assured that the constitution will be democratic in its provisions."<sup>2</sup>

The first mention of the new Chicago Board of Education radio station appeared in the June 1, 1941, issue of the NAEB Newsletter.<sup>3</sup> The announcement concerned the application for a 1 KW, FM, non-commercial educational broadcast station. In the same issue, the Chicago Radio Council asked for transcriptions of outstanding programs that could be used for the summer session workshop. George Jennings, Program Director, asked that the material arrive before July 1, and said that it would be returned in late August.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>NAEB Newsletter, May 15, 1941, 2-3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 1, 1941, 2-3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

In The Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1939-40, the Radio Council is mentioned as having been granted a construction permit by the FCC. The purpose of the broadcast license was to "serve the elementary, high school, junior college, and adult education programs." The station would be authorized to operate on 42,500 kilocycles with a power of 1,000 watts [1 KW].<sup>1</sup>

The August issue of the NAEB Newsletter reported on activities of the Chicago Radio Council. The Council was now "broadcasting 25 programs a week over standard broadcast stations [commercial stations WBBM, WMAQ, WCFL, WJJD, WAIT and others], and now proposed to transmit scholastic programs during school hours, and for perhaps one hour in the evening on five days a week."<sup>2</sup> The subject matter was the standard fare covering music, art, science, literature, news, social studies, safety, national defense, and Pan Americanism.<sup>3</sup>

The Board also decided that the new station's transmitter would be located at 228 North LaSalle Street.<sup>4</sup> This was the beginning of WBEZ, which had not yet assumed its call letters. It was the seventh educational station to be authorized by the FCC. The Board of Education appropriated

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<sup>1</sup>William H. Johnson, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools 1939-1940 (Chicago: Board of Education, August 1, 1941), 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, May, 15, 1941, 3.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

\$10,750 for this purpose.

The official public announcement of the new educational station was made by William H. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools. Superintendent Johnson stated that the FM station would have a transmitter atop the 228 North LaSalle building, with three studios and several offices. He said that with "our own station we can broadcast from 8 A.M. to 3 P.M." A direct wire will be installed in Superintendent Johnson's office so he may broadcast bulletins to the entire student body."<sup>1</sup> He also remarked that by having its own station, the Board would be independent of advertisers.

In the October issue of the NAEB Newsletter, the call letters of the new station were officially announced as WBEZ. The newsletter also reported that a Chicago manufacturer was developing an FM set especially for use in the Chicago Public Schools.<sup>2</sup> The "FM set especially for use" was a special set, indeed. The Board was concerned that the price of FM receivers was more expensive than that of AM radio sets. If the new set could pick up only the WBEZ signal, then the set would not be worth stealing from the schools, as were AM sets.

The same newsletter reported that Captain Harold W.Kent,<sup>3</sup> on active duty with the public relations bureau of

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<sup>1</sup>William Thompson, "School Board to Operate FM Station in 1942," Chicago Sun, September 21, 1941 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, October 15, 1941, 5-6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 5.

the War Department, would serve as Chairman of the new Association for Education by Radio. Retaining the title of Director while on active Army duty, Kent was granted leave for military service by the Board effective April 29, 1941, for one year. His official assignment was Captain of the Infantry Reserve, Office of the Chief of Staff of the Department of War, at Washington, D.C.<sup>1</sup>

The same issue of the NAEB Newsletter made a another call for a script exchange among educational radio stations. The Radio Council reported that it had resumed its 10 regular in-school series as well as two leisure-time programs during the week of October 6, 1941.<sup>2</sup>

The Annual Report of the Superintendent for 1941-42<sup>3</sup> was delayed by the war years. The next annual report covered two school years, 1941-42 and 1942-43. The Radio Council reported that the 1941 series "Let the Artist Speak" was revised as "Art Goes to War." Another series altered for the war years was "Pieces of Eight." This show, originally a program for third and fourth graders, had centered around social sciences. During the War, the program was devoted to basic principles of democracy. The "I Will" series replaced

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, April 1941, 1381.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, October 15, 1941, 5.

<sup>3</sup>Chicago Board of Education, The Chicago Public Schools in Wartime, 1941-1943 (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1943), 199-203.

the "Traveltime" series. "I Will" was the history of Chicago and its famous citizens.

The Council also worked with various government agencies including the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) and the Office of War Information (OWI). It also broadcast information on gas rationing and other wartime measures. The Board's programming at this time was considered of sufficient importance that the FCC granted priority materials status to WBEZ to continue construction of the FM station. According to the annual report ". . . in the very near future WBEZ will be reality. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council: 1942

The War took its toll on every phase of American life, including education and the Radio Council. Additional materials for the construction of the FM station were not available. The FCC curtailed issuance of permits and ordered existing materials to be directed toward the war effort. <sup>2</sup> A pooling effort for spare parts was undertaken by the NAEB. The number of public service shows with a war effort theme increased.

The Radio Council held weekly utilization clinics in Chicago to "aid teachers in the use of educational radio." <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 203.

<sup>2</sup>"FCC Cuts Down on Building of Radio Stations," Chicago Tribune, January 31, 1942 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>NAEB Newsletter, January 15, 1942, 2.

Unfortunately, the lesson plans of these weekly clinics were not saved. The only description available was found in the NAEB Newsletter which reported that in addition to teachers, the clinics would "aid planners, producers and writers toward producing more useful programs."<sup>1</sup> Possibly these clinics were the summer radio workshops conducted by the Radio Council and Chicago Teachers' College from June 29 to August 7.<sup>2</sup> Conducted by George Jennings, the sessions ran from 9 a.m. till noon for five days and provided the teachers with six semester hours of credit. Emphasis was on public service programs and the use of radio as an educational medium.<sup>3</sup>

Harold W. Kent, then on leave from the Chicago Board of Education, was installed as President of the Association of Education on Radio (AER). He was by then a U.S. Army major at the Radio Branch, Bureau of Public Relations, War Department.<sup>4</sup> On April 23, 1942, the Board of Education noted that Mr. Kent, Director of the Radio Council, was on active military duty and had been acting only in a consultative capacity. Superintendent of Schools Johnson said that the Radio Council work was "highly specialized and requires constant supervision," so he recommended that George Jennings

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>"Radio Workshop Course Offered by City Schools," Chicago Tribune, May 14, 1942 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>NAEB Newsletter, March 15, 1942, 2-3.

be appointed Acting Director, effective March 9, 1942. The motion was passed.<sup>1</sup>

The delays in the construction of the radio station WBEZ were reported in the NAEB Newsletter. On April 4, 1942, the FCC granted an extension to July 1, 1942.<sup>2</sup> On May 21, 1942, the station applied to the FCC for another extension of time.<sup>3</sup> On June 11, 1942, the FCC granted a modification of construction permit.<sup>4</sup> In November, another extension was granted by the FCC for completion of construction by March 7, 1943.<sup>5</sup>

The Board of Education approved a budget for the station to rent space for offices at the Morrison Hotel, Clark at Madison Streets, room 4123, at a rental of \$150.00 per month for one year beginning June 1, 1942. The Board approved an additional rental allowance for transmitter space at the Morrison.<sup>6</sup> The FM signal broadcasts on a line-of-sight basis, [the receiver has to be on a sight plane with the transmitter], and the hotel provided one of the five highest

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, April 22, 1942, 1499.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, April 15, 1942, 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 1, 1942, 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., July 1, 1942, 4.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., December 1, 1942, 4.

<sup>6</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, June 25, 1942, 1734-35.

points in the city.<sup>1</sup>

The generator for the transmitter was rented from the Zenith Corporation at a rate of \$12.00 for the first month and \$7.00 dollars per month thereafter. Generators were a priority item and could not be purchased during the War. The Board also paid the expense of moving the equipment from the Chicago Towers Club (now the Forum Hotel, 505 North Michigan Avenue) to the Morrison Hotel. At the expiration of the contract, the generator was to be moved to Zenith Corporation headquarters at 6001 West Dickens Street.<sup>2</sup> Thus, a major component of the transmitter, the generator, was contracted for on September 30, 1942.

The only significant events during the remainder of the year were the start of the new program schedule on October 5, and the sixth annual School Broadcast Conference on November 11, 1942.

The Radio Council began its fifth season with 12 school-hour broadcast series. The school-hour programs were heard over WIND, WJJD, and WAIT. Out of school, or after-school hours, programs were scheduled to be broadcast on other stations. George Jennings, the Acting Director, stated, "This season the Radio Council's programs will be integrated with the war effort as well as the regular curriculum." The Chicago Tribune report on the programs referred to Mr. Jennings as the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., September 30, 1942, 356.



Director of the Radio Council.<sup>1</sup>

The programming followed the basic pattern of previous years. Some current events programs were added to inform students in the upper grades about the War. As an example, "Art Goes to War" and "Your Job Review" were directed to the War effort, but the radio programs for younger pupils remained unchanged.<sup>2</sup>

The November 11, 1942, convention of the NAEB, chaired by Harold W. Kent, was a success according to the Chicago newspaper accounts. The wartime role of radio was discussed, along with a series of internationally known speakers. The speakers supported the educators' point of view that radio was an excellent supplemental teaching aid.<sup>3</sup> All spoke of the importance of radio to education as well as the War effort. Among the speakers at the convention were a young British actor, Laurence Olivier; Charles R. Delafield, of the Canadian Broadcasting Company; and Kenneth Caple, Director of Education for British Columbia. The opening remarks offered by William H. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools in Chicago, were not reported in detail.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Chicago Schools Begin New Radio Programs Oct. 5," Chicago Tribune, September 24, 1942 (Clippings).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>"Radio Wartime Role to Be Topic of Schools Group Meeting Here," Chicago Tribune, November 9, 1942 (Clipping).

<sup>4</sup>"Parley Studies Role of Radio in U.S. Education," Chicago Tribune, November 11, 1942 (Clipping).

According to the NAEB Newsletter, the purpose of the conference was to define and reaffirm the NAEB's mission, which was:

1. Continued development of broadcasting facilities in member institutions.
2. Promotion of cooperative broadcasting councils.
3. Encouragement of educational agencies to make application for ultra-high frequencies then set aside for education.<sup>1</sup>

The NAEB membership was composed of educators who were engaged in broadcasting through their own facilities or using the facilities of others. The NAEB was organized to protect the interests and facilities of educational broadcasting stations. The Association of Education by Radio (AER) activities were expanded to include discussion and action on all problems of educational broadcasting.<sup>2</sup> The stage was set for the AER to become associated with the NAEB, to operate as a combined organization devoted to all phases educational radio. It is interesting to note, too, that the stage was set for the NAEB to include educational television as part of its mission and purpose.

In October 1942, the NAEB, at its fall meeting in Madison, WI, agreed to cooperate with the War Department's radio bureau of which Major Kent was Director. The NAEB printed the report of the resolutions committee, which advised

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<sup>1</sup>NAEB Newsletters, November, 1942; January, 1943.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June 1, 1942, 2.

the membership that it would cooperate on joint studies with the AER and other events [undisclosed in the Newsletter], as well as become part of the School Broadcast Conference in November in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> As 1942 ended, the various groups were beginning to cooperate and address specific areas of interest.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF WBEZ-FM

##### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1943

Radio station WBEZ went on the air on April 18, 1943. Wartime shortages continued to create problems for radio operation. Nonetheless, the original program schedule was immediately expanded and the demand for programs increased dramatically. Programs were obtained through the NAEB exchange, and a library of educational programs was leased. It is not known if WBEZ obtained programs from the Federal Radio Library or other sources.

In the March 1, 1943, NAEB Newsletter, William H. Johnson, Superintendent of the Chicago Schools, wrote about the first five years of the Radio Council. Johnson said approximately 400 radio programs had been planned, written, and produced for classroom use. He commended the use of radio in helping win the War and praised the new programs that aided the War effort.<sup>2</sup> In the same issue the full WBEZ schedule was printed along with short descriptions of each program in the new series (Appendix 1).

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1942, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 1, 1943, 4.

On April 6, 1943, WBEZ began testing its radio signal in preparation for the official start of broadcasting on April 18.<sup>1</sup> This historic event took place 14 years after Harold Kent had first suggested that shortwave radios be installed in all the schools. Kent commented that this could allow the Radio Council to broadcast in-school programs during school hours and in the evening.

In a few years, radio technology had made enormous advances. The War effort had accelerated scientific research, promising more new discoveries just after the War. Television technology was just around the corner.

The opening of WBEZ was a milestone, but there were some serious drawbacks. Programs continued to be broadcast on commercial stations because FM receivers were not being manufactured. Of the more than 400 Chicago public schools, only twenty-five had FM receivers. All, however, had AM receivers.

WBEZ was the fourth Chicago area FM station to begin broadcasting. W59C, sister station to WGN-AM, W51C and W67C were the other FM stations on the air. WBEZ's broadcast day Monday through Friday was from noon to 3, with ten weekly in-school program series and four out of school programs.<sup>2</sup> The NAEB Newsletter reported, "WBEZ, the non-commercial

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<sup>1</sup>"Schools' Own FM Station Is Ready for Test," Chicago Tribune, April 6, 1943 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

educational FM station of the Chicago Public Schools, went on the air April 18. To be known as, The Radio Voice of the Chicago Public Schools, the station went on the air with many special programs that Sunday."<sup>1</sup>

Studios and offices were located in Rooms 701-719, 228 North LaSalle Street, and the transmitter was located at 79 West Madison, in the Morrison Hotel, room 4123.<sup>2</sup>

The official dedication of WBEZ was held on April 19, with a transcribed message from Superintendent of Schools William H. Johnson. A model broadcast of the type used to supplement the work of the teachers was demonstrated. A number of Chicago civic leaders and School Board members attended. George Jennings, Acting Director of the Radio Council, presided over the dedication.<sup>3</sup>

The Standard Radio Program Transcription Service was then contracted with to lease the "Standard Radio Program Library." This consisted of a library of 500 musical selections, which were augmented by forty new releases each month. The music library was used for broadcasting between programs.<sup>4</sup>

Other workshops were presented by the Radio Council

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<sup>1</sup>NAEB Newsletter, May 1, 1943, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>"School Board's New F-M Station, WBEZ, Dedicated," Chicago Tribune, April 19, 1943 (Clipping).

<sup>4</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, May 17, 1943, 1492.

June 28 through August 5 at the station offices. The topics covered were production, writing, and programming. Representatives of major networks, as well as the Army and Navy, attended the workshops. The participants received six hours of college credit from Chicago Teachers' College.<sup>1</sup>

In August, George Jennings, Radio Council Director, announced that educational radio programs would be broadcast to the city's schools five hours a day, beginning September 20. The broadcast day would be from 10:30 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. There were now 100 classrooms with FM receivers. Commercial stations would carry the same programs.<sup>2</sup> Fifteen shows per day were scheduled for the elementary grades and some for the high schools.<sup>3</sup>

The NAEB Newsletter reported a statement from the FCC: that FM licenses would now be issued for a three-year period instead of two years, as originally planned.<sup>4</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1944

As WBEZ expanded its program day, the Standard Library contract was extended; the station subscribed to the Press Association, that is the radio subsidiary of The Associated

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<sup>1</sup>"Practical Radio Course Drafted in Air Workshop," Chicago Tribune, June 14, 1943 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>"Radio Programs to Aid Work in Classrooms," Chicago Tribune, August 27, 1943 (Clipping.)

<sup>3</sup>NAEB Newsletter, October 1, 1943, 6.

<sup>4</sup>"FCC Will Issue Radio Stations 3 Year Licenses," Chicago Tribune, December 16, 1943 (Clipping).

Press. For a fee of \$35.00 per week, the Press Association would transmit to the station news stories of the day. These stories would be in an edited, rewritten format. This would increase the station's service to both the elementary and high schools. The Press Association was one of three news services that had been evaluated as a supplier.<sup>1</sup>

The number of FM receivers in the schools had increased to 1,000 by March 20, 1944. However, 200 other sets had been lost or stolen.<sup>2</sup> FM sets were not readily available for purchase. Some schools held scrap paper and metal drives to raise funds to buy FM sets. Other schools just waited until the funds and a supply of FM sets became available.

Larry Wolters, a Chicago Tribune farm reporter, was given the assignment of covering radio. Mr. Wolters was assigned as the radio writer because in the early days of radio, most of the programs were farm reports. It seemed logical that if most of the shows were about farming, then Mr. Wolters would be the choice. In writing about school radio programs, Wolters reported that George Jennings had stated that 182,110 students in 3,981 classes during the previous semester had participated in radio instruction. Mr. Jennings also referred to 1,370 students who participated in school radio programs by being in a play, or helping to write or

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, March 15, 1944, 1309.

<sup>2</sup>Larry Wolters, "School Radio Program Hit By Many Thefts," Chicago Tribune, March 20, 1944 (Clipping).

produce a script.<sup>1</sup>

As a follow up to the Wolters story was another George Jennings statement that was published in the NAEB Newsletter. He noted that during the first semester of the 1943-44 school year (October-January), the Council had prepared 206 hours of in-school programming. In presenting these programs, 1,370 students took part as actors, sound technicians, announcers, or visited the studios as audience members. In addition to the 206 hours of WBEZ programming, the Radio Council presented 147 broadcasts over local commercial stations. Station WIND led the list with 69 programs for 17 hours and 15 minutes. WJJD followed with 58 programs, 14 hours and 30 minutes; next was WMAQ, 14 programs, 7 hours; and WBBM and WCFL shared the balance of 2 hours and 45 minutes. WBEZ had increased its broadcast day by 1 hour and 56 minutes for a four-hour day.<sup>2</sup>

Jennings announced a plan to use The Associated Press wire service, so that WBEZ could present four newscasts per weekday, at 10:15 and 11:45 A.M. and 1:45 and 3 P.M. The last newscast would be directed at adults. These were the first newscasts for students on radio in the country which were part of an overall radio supplemental curriculum.<sup>3</sup> The newscasts started on April 13, 1944.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, March 1, 1944, 1.

<sup>3</sup>"Start Special News Programs for Students," Chicago Tribune, April 14, 1944 (Clipping).



The Radio Council began the 1944-45 school year with programs on five major commercial stations. WBEZ alone brought programs to 5,800 classrooms. The semi-annual report of this school year stated that 263,561 students in 403 schools heard one or more broadcasts during any average week.<sup>1</sup>

On September 18, the station went on the air from 9:15 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. as an expanded broadcast day for the new fall semester. Programming from four commercial networks, newscasts, and thirteen especially written programs were added to the schedule. The new programs were to supplement the course of study for the elementary and high schools grades. Among the new programming were news commentators from the Mutual Network, WLS and the NBC Blue network, and BBC and CBS. Twice each week the superintendent's office broadcast a bulletin of news and information.<sup>2</sup> (Appendix 3).

At the October 24, 1944, meeting of the School Board Conference, several events of interest to educational broadcasters took place. The keynote speaker and award recipient for outstanding service was Ohio educator and author I. Keith Tyler. The NAEB Newsletter<sup>3</sup> quoted Tyler as seeing some important changes coming after the War. "Let's not fool ourselves," he said, "if we achieve our objective in

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<sup>1</sup>NAEB Newsletter, September 1, 1944, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 5.

developing radio fully in the schools, it will mean a revolution in education."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tyler also pointed out, "Only one school in five has a radio today; only one teacher in 30 understands the use of radio in teaching."<sup>2</sup> After the War, Dr. Tyler predicted, "There will be a radio in every classroom and a television theater in every school."<sup>3</sup>

In light of Dr. Tyler's statement, the pioneering achievement of the Radio Council was impressive. It is easy to understand why the Radio Council was considered one of the outstanding educational radio operations along with the Ohio Public School radio system and Wisconsin station WHA. All three radio systems were producing and distributing educational programming. All three had an early start in the development of radio programs.

Dr. Tyler was correct in his prediction that television would be in every school. What he saw in 1945 was a growing interest in television, and he also saw a diminishing excitement over radio's influence in education.

Dr. Tyler was president of the Association for Education on Radio at the time of his remarks. He was also the Director of the Institute for Educational Radio at Ohio State University; the Institute conducted several surveys on

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the effect of radio in the classroom in the coming years.<sup>1</sup> Frank Schooley, Program Director of WILL (Champaign-Urbana, Illinois), was elected President of the NAEB, and the newsletter moved to his office.<sup>2</sup>

As the year ended, WBEZ announced four programs under the umbrella title "What We Defend," produced in cooperation with the National Parks Service of the U.S. Department of Interior. The programs were heard weekly starting on Monday, November 27, at 2:30 P.M.<sup>3</sup>

The FCC began hearings on several postwar problems, including what frequencies should be given to FM (50 MC or 100 MC). Several other issues were discussed that would not directly affect educational broadcasting, such as the length of time between license renewals, and the number of commercials to be allowed per hour.<sup>4</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1945

This year produced several events of interest. The FCC had placed a freeze on new radio stations till V-J day.<sup>5</sup> The FCC announced in October (before V-J Day) that 1,000

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<sup>1</sup>Larry Wolters, "School Broadcast Award Is Given to Ohio Professor," Chicago Tribune, October 24, 1944 (Clippings).

<sup>2</sup>"Hails Post-War Radio's Growing Role in Schools," Chicago Tribune, October 25, 1944 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>NAEB Newsletter, December 1, 1944, 2.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>5</sup>"No New Radio Stations Till V-J Day," Chicago Daily News, May 11, 1945 (Clipping).

applications had been received and 200 licenses would be granted.<sup>1</sup>

Some labor unions began applying for FM licenses. At the same time, James C. Petrillo, President of the American Federation of Musicians, halted transmission of network programs by special line from station WGAR to the Board of Education station, WBOE, in Cleveland.<sup>2</sup> Some of the unions to apply to the FCC were: the CIO for FM stations in Chicago and four other cities, and the International Garment Workers seeking licenses in three cities. The FCC also reported that eight companies in Chicago, including two from Evanston, were seeking FM station approval.<sup>3</sup>

Another significant event occurred on Friday, May 11. At 8 P.M. the Radio Council presented a half hour television program over WBKB (now WLS-TV). The program was produced by the art department, as part of the Western Arts Association meeting.<sup>4</sup> A. James Ebell, writing in the NAEB Newsletter, offered several comments about the possibility of an airplane in the sky broadcasting classroom lessons on television. "The Westinghouse Stratovision plan makes sense, but how do you

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<sup>1</sup>Larry Wolters, "200 New Radio Stations Will Be On the Air Soon," Chicago Tribune, October 16, 1945 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>"Petrillo Cuts Off Programs to Students," Chicago Tribune, October 30, 1945 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Wolters, "200 New Radio Stations," (Clipping).

<sup>4</sup>NAEB Newsletter, May 1, 1945, 3.

make a quick trip to the transmitter?"<sup>1</sup> He also commented on the current demand for television licenses: "The free-for-all is on. There are many stations being planned. Some of them won't last long in the stiff competition which is being created. We hope that the number of educational stations to fall by the wayside after the initial surge will be small."<sup>2</sup> Ebell reminded educational broadcasters of the decline in AM broadcasting and the loss of interest in FM stations. "We should remember what happened in the early days of AM broadcasting." In conclusion, he made mention of the Chicago Radio Council entry into television. "Sounds like George Jennings has really taken on an ambitious television program, more power to you George."<sup>3</sup>

There was no mention of the "ambitious television program" in the documents available. It is, however, worthy of note that the Radio Council was moving into television.

In April 1945, the Radio Council co-sponsored a one day workshop with the Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers' Radio Department. The workshop brought together principals, school radio chairmen, and local P.T.A. radio chairmen. Two class demonstrations, one on the use of The Associated Press news wire and the other on the radio show "Science Story Teller," were heard. This workshop, held in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1945, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the studios, was yet another example of the aggressive promotion and marketing that George Jennings practiced at the Radio Council.<sup>1</sup>

On May 16, 1945, the Radio Council won an award from the ninth American Exhibition of Educational Radio programs sponsored by Ohio State University's Institute for Education by Radio. I. Keith Tyler, Director of the Institute, presented the award. The Radio Council won first place for "Our America," planned and produced for broadcast over WBEZ, in the category of "Programs for Use in School by Junior and Senior High Pupils."

On June 27, the FCC announced the final allocation of channels for FM, television, and facsimile. Since television and FM were located in the same broadcast band, it was necessary for the FCC to allocate the placing of channels. The decision would take effect over all postwar allocations, thus outdating present FM equipment.

Ninety channels would be created between 88 and 106 megacycles, shifting from the band of 42 to 50 megacycles. Television would be fixed at 44 to 50, 54 to 72, and 76 to 88 megacycles. The new FM band would be between 88 and 92 for noncommercial education, and between 92 and 106 for regular stations. All transmitters and receivers would have to be changed to conform to the new FCC allocation of channels. The FCC reported that approximately 400,000 sets had been produced

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., March 1, 1945, 7.

using the lower band. They could be converted for about \$10 each.<sup>1</sup>

Wrapping up the year was the Ninth Annual School Broadcast Conference held October 22 and 23, 1945, at the Morrison Hotel. Among the guests were Hervey Allen, author of Anthony Adverse; Frank Ernest Hill, author of a book on radio education; and Malcolm Clare, radio story teller.<sup>2</sup>

A panel discussion addressed the topic "In the Public Interest, Convenience, and Necessity," a key phrase in the FCC Regulations that was the basis for stations scheduling educational programming. According to A. James Ebell, editor of the NAEB Newsletter, four major areas were identified by the panel.

The first was that the listener had "a responsibility to determine what is broadcast and should be vocal about the programs they prefer and be as vocal against those which are in bad taste."<sup>3</sup> The second, in a time when "scientific developments have made the thought of a future war, a prelude to total destruction, radio has a great obligation to see that it cannot happen again--and the time is short." The panel's third point concerned the rights of the individual, but such rights could "bring forth many interpretations based on individual philosophy." The last point referred to the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., July 1, 1945, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1945, 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., November 1, 1945, 1.

discovery of the increased interest of advertisers in "11:00 P.M. which hour with its low level of program competition is better for public service than a 7:00 A.M. hour with terrific commercial competition."<sup>1</sup>

The panel examined forthcoming issues that might adversely affect educational radio programming on commercial stations. Advertisers were beginning to discover the morning drive time. Morning drive time was attracting advertisers, thus less time was available for educational programs. More radio divisions were spending more time developing television programs; subsequently, radio was turning into the "lost child."

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1946

This was a year of change and transition. There is no record of the complete personnel changes, only records extracted from the Proceedings, a few NAEB reports, and the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter newsletters.

On March 2, 1946, Colonel Harold W. Kent returned from active duty with the U.S. Army, where he had been since April 27, 1941, and was authorized to return as Director of the Radio Council.<sup>2</sup> On July 15, Mr. Kent resigned his position effective August 15, 1946.<sup>3</sup> He was to be appointed Director

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, March 13, 1945, 1032.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., July 15, 1946, 5.



of the Kamehameha School, a well supported private school, in Hawaii. This school was considered to be one of the best funded private schools in the world.

Elizabeth E. Marshall, an elementary school teacher, was assigned to the Radio Council for the summer.<sup>1</sup> The appointment of George A. Jennings as Director of the Radio Council was authorized by the Board on October 23, 1946.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Kent's first recorded public statement after his return from military service appeared in the May issue of the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter. He evaluated the progress of the Radio Council during his five-year absence by looking at "the differences, the improvements, and what remained to be accomplished."<sup>3</sup>

He praised George Jennings for having displayed "good sense" in guiding the "complicated and delicate business of building radio education into a supplement to teacher activity in the classroom. He has firmly established in objective practice the fundamental principles which we adopted at the time that radio education started in Chicago."<sup>4</sup> Radio programming by then covered "every supplementary area--news, English, science, history, music, art, vocations--and for several hours a day." The handbooks that teachers use in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1946, 80.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., October 23, 1946, 265.

<sup>3</sup>Harold W. Kent, "Radio In Chicago Schools," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 35, No. 5 (May 1947): 23-24.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 23-24.

classrooms, "have become standardized at a high level of usefulness, and coordination with the Bureau of Curriculum and other staff agencies of the Superintendent's office has brought the radio into a more practical integration with school procedures."<sup>1</sup>

"Of the future," Mr. Kent concluded, "I would like to suggest the ultimate possibility of color television and facsimile; radio repair service; increased student participation in producing programs, and increased teacher participation in planning programs."<sup>2</sup> Kent once again saw radio not as the cornerstone of an educational program, but as a supplement to classroom work.

Mr. Kent was a visionary, who looked to television as a major possibility for the Council in the future. Television, he commented, would be more exciting to the student.

The year-end NAEB conference was not mentioned in the history of the NAEB<sup>3</sup> or the Proceedings of the Board of Education. There is only one sentence in the May 1947 Chicago Principals' Club Reporter that "The Tenth Annual Conference in 1946, perhaps was the most successful of its kind ever held but the Advisory and Executive Committee, plan on making the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>National Association of Educational Broadcasters Papers, State of Wisconsin Archives, Madison. U.S. Mass 76, A F, Box 16A.

1947 meeting of greater value."<sup>1</sup>

Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1947

Herold C. Hunt became General Superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools in 1947. Among the changes that he introduced was a monthly report from each of the bureaus, departments and divisions. The first Radio Council report appeared in November, 1947. The FCC re-allocation procedures in moving the FM band required several directives from the Board that were issued to conform to local and federal regulations.

1947 would be a year of many new radio stations, according to Larry Wolters of the Chicago Tribune.<sup>2</sup> Larry Wolters reported that there were 1,051 station on the air, as of January 2, 1947, about 100 more since than there were when the war ended. There had been 420 construction permits granted and 635 applications pending. On the FM band, 100 stations were now on the air, about 60 more than there were when the War freeze was lifted, with 395 construction permits granted [not counting 228 conditional grants], and 286 applications pending.

The television statistics showed that seven stations were on the air, 39 construction permits had been issued, and 21 remained to be processed. The Radio Manufacturers

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<sup>1</sup>"Radio Director Announces Conference," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 36, No. 6 (May 1947): 47.

<sup>2</sup>Larry Wolters, "Many New Radio Stations Are Forecast in '47," Chicago Tribune, January 2, 1947 (Clipping).

Association reported that 60 million radio sets were in American homes, with 18 million sets to be produced in 1947.<sup>1</sup>

This was also the year in which Chicago educational radio entered the atomic age. Two series, "The Atomic Bomb" and "Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy", became available. For \$12.50 per series, a set of two phonograph records, (78 rpm), a teachers' manual, students' handbooks and publicity materials could be obtained from the Radio Council.<sup>2</sup>

In April, 1947, the President of the School Board, J.B. McCahey, appointed a committee to investigate the radio situation in the Chicago schools. Mr. B.L. Majewski, a Board member, was Chair, with five other board members on the committee. No record of the report of this committee could be located.<sup>3</sup>

What appears to be the first monthly report from the Radio Council to meet the General Superintendent's new requirement was a one paragraph statement. The Council reported that broadcasting for the fall semester started on October 1, 1947. Broadcasts were on WBEZ and commercial stations WJJD and WIND. In conclusion, the reported stated that the Radio Council "prepares and presents from its own studios 10 major programs a week over the commercial stations and operates station WBEZ from 9:15 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. each

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, February, 1947, 4.

<sup>3</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, April 9, 1947, 959.

day."<sup>1</sup>

In December 1947, the report did not describe any specific activities. The report stated that: "... the month just closed has been one of the most active in the always busy Radio Council."<sup>2</sup>

The 11th Annual School Broadcast Conference was held at the Hotel Sheraton from October 26-29, with a registration of about 1,200. The estimated attendance was over 1,500. Many of the registrants were from the Chicago Public Schools, but Cook County, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, downstate Illinois and Minnesota were well represented. Educators from New York, Kansas City, Cleveland, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Washington, and other major cities were in attendance.<sup>3</sup>

In the December monthly report, from the period October 1 to November 7, the following stations and times were used for school broadcasting by and through the Radio Council:

	Hours	Minutes
WBEZ (FM) .....	156	
WBBM .....		45
WGN .....	2	30
WIND .....	6	45
WJJD .....	6	45
WBKB (TV) .....	1	

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., December 10, 1947, 366.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 444.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Total time on the air                      173                      45<sup>1</sup>

The monthly reports gave the various department managers an opportunity to herald their accomplishments. The Radio Council did not miss an opportunity. It was excellent at public relations.

To conform with the 1948 budget, George A. Jennings's title was changed to Director, Radio Education, from Director of Radio. No other explanation was given.<sup>2</sup>

The Chicago Principals' Club Reporter carried an unsigned article in the October 27 issue briefly describing the Eleventh Annual School Broadcast Conference.<sup>3</sup> Herold C. Hunt welcomed the group at a luncheon and "spoke enthusiastically of the value and interest of radio in general and of educational radio specifically."<sup>4</sup> A presentation was given by two Chicago schools, Scammon and Kenwood, on "Educational Values of Radio and Television." It marked the first presentation on television at the School Broadcast conference. The sessions were described as a "lively and controversial meeting."<sup>5</sup> Few details were available.

The year can be summarized with another quote from the conference: "There are many problems unanswered. There are

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1947, 333.

<sup>3</sup>CPCR, 37, No. 2 (December, 1947): 18-19.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

many phases of educational radio yet to be touched upon, but the opportunity to meet and discuss them in a healthy fashion and take back to the schools new ideas . . . is a real privilege."<sup>1</sup>

Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1948

Dick Hull, of radio station WOI, Ames, IA, and President of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB), wrote a four-page memo to William Levenson asking that a special session be held at the forthcoming Institute for Education by Radio (IER) at the May 3 meeting in Columbus, OH. Dick Hull expressed the need for a solid effort to address the problems of educational radio, and "not miss the boat again." He stated that about 30 stations were still on the air, others having sold out, "traded" out, or let their license lapse owing to lack of interest. Mr. Hull encouraged all educational broadcasters to take advantage of the specific allotment of non-commercial educational frequencies on the FM band. Mr. Hull's memo evaded the issue of the growing number of entertainment and popular shows that forced better educational programming off the air.<sup>2</sup> A report on the meeting and the special session is not available.

Following along the same line of advice as Dick Hull's

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB, Papers, State of Wisconsin Archives, RBH 1. 1-4.

memo, Benjamin Cottone, General Counsel for the FCC, addressed the members of the NAEB at their annual meeting on October 12, 1948. It should be noted that none of the FCC commissioners were able to attend.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Cottone's remarks were a stern warning that, "I would be less than frank if I told you the FM frequencies set aside for your exclusive use in the 1945 allocation were inviolate. They are not."<sup>2</sup> Mr. Cottone told the convention that the commercial interests wanting to obtain the frequencies were articulate, resourceful, and well organized. On the other hand, "comparatively few educators and trustees of universities and state legislators yet seem to realize that educational radio is in the public interest. Consequently, the case for reserving frequencies does not have the force it should."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Cottone's reference to the speech by the Chairman of the FCC, Mr. Coy's, at Indiana University reminded the group of Mr. Coy's warning: "I must point out that radio channels are too valuable to be left in idleness. If educators fail to utilize them, they will have lost their second and perhaps last chance to own and operate radio stations."<sup>4</sup> The FCC counsel reminded the audience that the agency had tried to help in several ways, one being to allow an educational radio station to have 10 watts of power or

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<sup>1</sup>Remarks by Cottone, NAEB, Papers, State of Wisconsin Archives, RHD 32, October 12, 1948, 1-5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



less. "I am sure," Mr. Cottone continued, "that I would be loath to see such low power stations develop into little more than training centers for commercial broadcasting personnel. I look forward to the day when a representative of the NAEB can be reached as easily in Washington as a representative of the NAB [National Association of Broadcasters]."<sup>1</sup>

The Radio Council continued to be one of the more successful educational radio efforts in the nation. The monthly reports requested by Superintendent Hunt became part of his own monthly reports to the board and were recorded in the Proceedings.<sup>2</sup>

In January 1948, the Council reported a total of 103 hours of broadcasting over WBEZ from November 8 through December 8, plus 15 hours and 30 minutes on local stations. The programs were for both school and home listening. The first series of television programs had been completed and a new series had been arranged. The relocation of the transmitter from the Morrison Hotel to the playground at Marshall High School was in the planning stages. The schools were to receive 500 new FM receivers purchased by the schools themselves.<sup>3</sup>

The Radio Council was moved to the Department of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, January 14, 1948.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 498.

Instruction and Guidance from the Department of Curriculum. No explanation was given.<sup>1</sup>

The Radio Council's activities in January 1948 included preparing for the beginning of the second semester starting February 16, and scheduled appearances at P.T.A meetings. Voluntary evaluations of radio programs were sent to teachers. The evaluations were returned by 105 teachers.<sup>2</sup>

During February 1948 the Council distributed 15,000 "Handbooks for Teachers' Use" with a schedule of second semester radio programs. The staff made 106 visits to schools and received 217 evaluations during this month.

NBC asked the Council to prepare a weekly high school discussion program to begin early in March.<sup>3</sup> In April 1948, the Council reported on its experimental work in television. A show called "Reading Readiness" had been prepared, and requests for scripts were received from several universities. The Council also continued its workshop activities, serving as a radio laboratory for five local colleges.<sup>4</sup>

In April, the Superintendent requested that each division of the school administration submit a functions statement. The radio division submitted the following:

Division of Radio

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., February 11, 1948, 1035.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 10, 1948, 1090.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1948, 1244-45.

#### Composition of Division

The director of radio, and assistant director of radio, approximately 10 assignments from educational personnel, and approximately 5 assignments from civil service personnel.

#### Division Head

Title: Director of radio.

Responsible to: Director of instructional materials.

Supervise: No other units.

#### General Statement of Functions (Function Statement No. 230)

The functions of the division of radio are: (1) to maintain, program, and operate station WBEZ; (2) to prepare educational materials suitable for broadcasting on other radio and television stations; (3) to circulate schedules of broadcasts and assist principals and teachers in the techniques of using these programs for instructional purposes; (4) to provide facilities for informal education in the field of radio; (5) to serve as a radio consultant in other schools and in the community; (6) to recommend suitable electronic equipment for school use; and (7) to perform such other related functions as may be required.<sup>1</sup>

In May 1948, the monthly report in Proceedings announced that Director Jennings was elected to the office of President of the Association for Education by Radio (AER). The organization then had 1,800 members.<sup>2</sup>

With a limited television audience, the Council nevertheless continued to prepare television shows, pointing to 7 hours and 45 minutes of programming for the last month.

WBEZ, by May 1948, was broadcasting 138 hours and 30 minutes per month.<sup>3</sup> During that month, 450 FM receivers were installed in schools. Student participation in radio

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., April 28, 1948, 1264.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1948, 1341.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

programming activities included 154 high school and 164 elementary students.<sup>1</sup> "It's Our Turn;" a radio program jointly presented by the education department of WMAQ and the council, was awarded a "first place" by the Federated Advertising Club.

During the semester that ended on June 18, 940 hours of supplementary radio programs at all grade levels had been presented over WBEZ and 131 hours of programming over other stations.<sup>2</sup>

In August 1948, the Proceedings report contained only one sentence, "The Director of the Division of Radio has a space problem; this has been given considerable thought and consideration."<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth E. Marshall was selected as Assistant Director of Radio, effective September 6, 1948. Mrs. Marshall was first assigned to the division in the summer of 1940 and had been with the division since that time. She had a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Chicago and was a graduate of Chicago Normal (now Chicago Teachers) College.<sup>4</sup>

To begin the new semester, the Radio Council prepared and distributed 24,000 Teachers' Guides for the new term.<sup>5</sup> The 12th Annual School Broadcast Conference, previously

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., June 9, 1948, 1436.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1948, 23.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1948, 121.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1948, 135.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., September 22, 1948, 193.

mentioned, was held on October 12-14 in Chicago. Director Jennings received the annual Award of Merit from the NAEB for his services. Four Chicago schools received citations for radio programs. In addition to the warning about missed opportunities, the problems discussed related to the use of modern communication aids and equipment including radio, television and transcriptions in the classroom.<sup>1</sup> In November 1948, the schools ordered 53 new FM receivers and leased additional space atop the Morrison Hotel.

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1949

By 1949, television was becoming more important to educators as well as to the general public. When reviewing the monthly reports, more time and effort was being directed toward television.

In January 1949, activities included the inauguration of the new transmitter and antenna system. The Council staff tested 253 new radio receivers.<sup>2</sup> The following month, 194 hours of radio instruction were heard over six stations.

WBEZ started full-time operations on February 14, with broadcast quality reported to be equal to that of commercial stations. There were 1,000 FM receivers in the schools.<sup>3</sup> WBEZ would broadcast 135 different programs in addition to those

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1948, 294; and November 24, 1948, 359.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1949, 1280.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., February 23, 1948, 1138.

programs broadcast on six commercial stations. Some programs were heard after school hours and on Saturdays. The Radio Council produced 109 radio hours in February and 170 hours in March.

In addition to producing shows, the Radio Council had a continuing program of seminars and workshops with the P.T.A. The Council also hosted the National Conference of the Association of Women in Broadcasting.<sup>1</sup> The total hours produced for WBEZ and the commercial stations for the school year, 1948-1949 was 785, with 3,070 school visits. Educators from all over the United States toured the station facilities.<sup>2</sup>

On the television side, a spelling bee show on WENR-TV and "Quiz Down" on WBKB were the TV shows prepared by the Radio Council.<sup>3</sup>

During August 1949, the Radio Council reported on its participation in the Curriculum Orientation Workshop. Television and audio tape recording were exhibited to the teachers for use in the classroom.<sup>4</sup> During September and October 1949, the Council produced and distributed 40,000 teacher handbooks.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., March 23, 1949; and April 27, 1949, 1340.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., July 27, 1949, 120.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 23, 1949, 1282.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., August 24, 1949, 215.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., October 26, 1949, 474.

The highlight of the School Broadcast Conference in 1949 was 21 demonstrations and exhibits of TV equipment. No mention of demonstrations or exhibits of radio equipment was noted.<sup>1</sup>

The year ended as "These Things Are America," a Radio Council production, won the Freedom Foundation national award for "furthering the American way of life." The competition had included entries from commercial stations. This show was the only winner from an educational station.<sup>2</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1950

This year was a progressive one for the Radio Council and WBEZ. Equipment was available, and renewed interest was shown in radio once again. The new medium of television was desperate for programming, as was radio in the early days. TV was asking any and all sources for programs. The renewed interest in radio, however, would soon be overshadowed by television, tape recordings and other new technology.

The January 1950 report was simple and uninformative. "The Division of Radio reported the completion of the most successful year of educational broadcasting in the history of the Radio Council."<sup>3</sup> No other details were given. The February 1950 report indicated that several new advances had been made.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., November 23, 1949, 610.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., December 28, 1949, 709.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., January 25, 1950, 1300.

Among them were the tape recording of meetings, loans to other stations of transcriptions, and the purchase of audio playback equipment. Also mentioned was the 371 hours of radio broadcasting during the first semester (September to December 1949).<sup>1</sup>

Another new aspect of the Radio Council's activities was mentioned in the Proceedings of March 1950. Cooperation with other divisions was mentioned. This collaboration included "broadcasts arranged in cooperation with the Divisions of Music, Libraries, Commercial Subjects, and the R.O.T.C."<sup>2</sup>

The report indicated that Director Jennings was indeed accomplishing his goal of having radio cover all disciplines and including co-productions. The cooperative spirit extended to outside groups as well. Productions in association with the Western Arts Conference, Mathematics Council, the Conference for Exceptional Children and the Principals' Workshop were in development.<sup>3</sup> Other services offered was the judging of contests and participation in educational meetings which were tape recorded.<sup>4</sup>

The summer months followed the pattern previously reported: preparing "Teachers' Handbook" for the 1950-51

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., February 23, 1950, 1399.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 22, 1950, 1499.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., April 26, 1950, 1617.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., May 24, 1950, 1729.



semesters; and counting the number of broadcast hours on WBEZ and other stations. The Radio Council had been responsible for 84 hours of educational programs on stations other than WBEZ. The Council had broadcast 535 hours of programs on the Board's station during the past semester.<sup>1</sup> As usual the Radio Council conducted summer workshops for teachers to increase their skills with radio.

During the World Trade Fair in Chicago (1933), the Radio Council helped set up a network of 27 stations to carry interviews and talks, via the Ministry of Education, in Chile. The United States Department of State requested that the Radio Council assist with a similar program for Indo-China.<sup>2</sup>

The Director also participated in a number of discussions with the Civil Defense Program (CDP) regarding the possible use of the station, and agreed that the station would play an important part in CDP communications.

The station extended its broadcast day from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. without any increase in expenses.<sup>3</sup> The average monthly output of program hours was about 130 for WBEZ and about 14 for commercial stations.<sup>4</sup>

Another example of the versatility of radio broadcasts started on March 4, 1950. A coal emergency caused schools to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1950, 97; and August 23, 1950, 155.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., September 27, 1950, 258.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., October 25, 1950, 339.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., December 27, 1950, 518.

close, except for those heated by oil. Elizabeth E. Marshall, Assistant Director of the Radio Council, estimated that 30 percent of the city's pupils gathered around FM receivers for their lessons.<sup>1</sup> The apartment on North Sheridan Road of Sylvia Cohon, a grade school teacher, was turned into a schoolroom with the help of WBEZ. Seven boys and six girls, ages 7 to 13, gathered around the radio as Mrs. Cohon held class.

The annual School Broadcast Conference was held on December 12-14 at the Sherman Hotel, according to the monthly Superintendent's report. The Radio Council report mentioned that there would be three closed-circuit television demonstrations. No other details are available.<sup>2</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1951

A major story in the Chicago Tribune told of the success of educational radio just as television was beginning to increase its role at the Council. In 1951, television gained more space in the monthly reports. Reports later in this year were devoid of any mention of radio activities.

At the beginning of 1951, the Radio Council distributed 20,000 teacher handbooks to cover 13 series of

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<sup>1</sup>Patricia Wood, "Pupils Get 3 R 's by Radio; Find It Fun--For While," Chicago Tribune, March 4, 1950 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, December 27, 1950, 518.

programs.<sup>1</sup> Total programming hours were reduced to 103, of which six hours and twenty minutes was television time. The finals of the annual "Spelling Bee," seen over WENR-TV, was the only educational type of show broadcast on television in March 1951.<sup>2</sup>

Each Wednesday at noon, the Radio Council produced a television program of a public relations nature, not educational, over WGN-TV. The series featured an interview with the General Superintendent, a portrayal of the activities of the R.O.T.C., and programs on industrial arts, extension and vocational education.

The Radio Council participated in numerous outside conferences including the Chicago Herald-American Oratorical Contest, the State Welfare Community and Youth Commission meeting, and a number of Parent Teacher Association meetings. Most important was the National Association of Broadcasters meetings. A new pre-Thanksgiving home economics program was developed for television.<sup>3</sup> Staff visits were made to schools to test reaction to TV programs.<sup>4</sup>

The direction of the Council turned more and more toward television. According to the report of June 1950, the council's first TV-films were aired on WGN-TV and WBKB-TV. A

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., February 28, 1951, 1176.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 28, 1951, 1259.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., December 26, 1951, 571.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., May 23, 1951, 1431.

series of 360 radio spot announcements aired and four five-minute talks on the school bond issue were recorded for use on local TV stations. The Council also undertook to place the Superintendent and other administrators on commercial radio and television programs to discuss the bond issue.<sup>1</sup>

The Council's yearly activities report was now called the "Annual Survey of Radio-Television Activities."<sup>2</sup> The division undertook the development of supplemental materials for the Superintendent's annual report to be seen on TV-film, as well as other TV projects.<sup>3</sup>

Year-end activities were standard: preparation of 50,000 handbooks for teachers, and production of new semester programs for WBEZ. This year, only two local stations, WJJD and WIND, would broadcast the Radio Council programs.

In a Chicago Tribune article by Mary Jane Eriksen, George Jennings reported that there were 2,500 to 3,000 radio receivers in the Chicago schools (high school and elementary). Teachers from all over Chicago had sent him samples of radio inspired classroom work. Everything from broom-stick microphones to paintings, from stories to quiz questions, had been received from children of all grades. Mr. Jennings pointed out that suburban schools had broadcast General Douglas MacArthur's retirement speech, and that Senator Estes

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., June 27, 1951, 1552.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., August 22, 1951, 158.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., September 26, 1951, 266.

Kefauver's crime hearings were WBEZ broadcasts.<sup>1</sup>

The 15th Annual School Broadcast Conference was held December 4-6 at the Sherman Hotel.<sup>2</sup> At the conference, six awards were given to radio stations. The "Outstanding Service to Educational Radio" award presented by Judith Waller, Public Affairs and Education Director for NBC in Chicago, to Dr. Franklin Dunham, Chief of Radio and Television, United States Office of Education. The content of Dr. Dunham's speech was not reported.<sup>3</sup>

The Superintendent's Annual Report, 1950-1951, mentioned that the WBEZ broadcast day was extended to 4 P.M. On several occasions, in cooperation with the University of Chicago, the station used evening broadcasts. WBEZ's evening broadcasts introduced the visiting lecturers at the University of Chicago to a wide audience. This lecture series showed that there was an audience for educational programming in the evening.

Two other notes in this report concerned new remote broadcasts made without the aid of telephone lines and reusable tapes as replacements for recording discs. The remote broadcasts without telephone lines offered greater flexibility to producers, because the location of a broadcast was no

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Jane Eriksen, "Give Added Meaning to Old Subjects," Chicago Tribune, September 19, 1951 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1951, 483.

<sup>3</sup>"6 Broadcasting Stations Given School Awards," Chicago Tribune, December 6, 1951 (Clipping).

longer limited to its proximity to a telephone. Reusable tapes offered a wide variety of rerecording possibilities.

Previously in the monthly reports, there had always been a numbers count of the radio hours produced. This report did not mention the radio hours produced.<sup>1</sup> It did, however, mention that ten thirty-minute television programs had been presented over WGN-TV.<sup>2</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1952

The inclination toward television, and away from radio, was indicated in the May 1952 monthly report. The title of the division was listed as the "Division of Radio and Television." In June 1952, the title returned to "Division of Radio" but then changed back to "Division of Radio and Television" in August. George Jennings, in his article in the December Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, listed his title as "Director of Radio and Television, Chicago Public Schools." However, the title of the article was "The Radio Council--WBEZ."<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth E. Marshall, Assistant Director, won a national award from McCall's Magazine for public service in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Herold C. Hunt, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools 1950-1951, 12, 13.

<sup>3</sup>George Jennings, "The Radio Council--WBEZ," Chicago Principals' Club Reporter 42, No. 2 (Chicago: December 1952): 7-9.

radio and television.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Marshall, who was active in parent-teachers meetings, and a member of the State of Illinois P.T.A. groups, was instrumental in encouraging the P.T.A. to become active in the Radio Council.

The reports for the first three months did not offer the total number of hours of broadcast. The March 1950 report stated the following: 87 hours over WBEZ, 6 hours over WIND and WJJD, 3 hours over other commercial stations, and 3 hours over WLS-TV and WENR-TV.<sup>2</sup> The other programs on WBEZ as best can be determined were newscasts, library selections, and transcriptions from other educational stations.

In April 1950, the broadcast hours returned to 130 for WBEZ, and 46 hours for commercial stations.<sup>3</sup>

In June 1950, another television series, formed in a newsreel technique, was added at WBKB. The films were made in actual classrooms and school situations. In the following month, spot announcements were produced for radio and TV local stations to recruit teachers for schools, students for practical nurse training, and to help reduce glass breakage for schools.<sup>4</sup>

During this semester regular operating procedures

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<sup>1</sup>Ruth MacKay, "Radio Award Winner Brings Honor to City Schools," Chicago Tribune, January 4, 1952 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, March 26, 1952, 1315.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., May 28, 1952, 1509.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1952, 113.

included: the preparation of handbooks, service training programs, summer sessions for teachers, and training in field camera work. Filming for the television shows were now becoming standard for the division.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1950, the first recorded meetings with WTTW Channel 11 were reported. The meeting covered "much preliminary research as to costs and programming."<sup>2</sup> The WGN-TV series that centered around the Superintendent's report was renewed and was to begin in October.

WBEZ's broadcast day was expanded from 8:55 A.M. to 4:15 P.M. The station and the transmitter moved to the Bankers Building on November 1, 1952, to have four times as much space as at the Morrison Hotel location. WGN-AM broadcast a series of choir music programs for Christmas, and the Carl Schurz High School choir was heard over the American Broadcasting Company network (formerly the NBC Blue network).<sup>3</sup>

The Chicago Tribune reported that the Bankers Building was the new home of WBEZ and the possible site of an educational television station. The FCC had reserved channel 11 for educational use, and the city had till June 1953 to begin the television project. The Radio Council staff was used to assist in the television project, the first step of which was an appeal to the Ford Foundation for funds.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., August, 27, 1952, 245.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., September 24, 1952, 334.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., December 22, 1952, 696.



Herald C. Hunt, Superintendent of Schools, estimated costs for a television station at more than 1 million dollars. A spokesman for Dr. Lawrence Kimpton, the University of Chicago Chancellor who was serving as Chairman of the educational TV planning committee, asked the Ford Foundation for \$4 million dollars to cover the first six months of operation. There were twelve institutions, colleges and museums cooperating in the television venture.<sup>1</sup> The significance of the Chicago Tribune story lies in the report of the vast amounts of funding available for television, while allocations barely covering salary expenses were available to radio.

In the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter of August 1952, George Jennings made the point that the division of radio and television was a service unit using the tools of communications, which were radio, television and recordings. The major function of the division was, according to Jennings, to present "a meaningful program of supplementary educational materials for use in the classrooms at all levels." Mr. Jennings referred to only two commercial radio stations, WJJD and WIND, that carried the school broadcasts on Saturdays, and two television stations.

WBEZ carried the Tape-Network of the National Association of Broadcasters. The station broadcasted the same

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<sup>1</sup>"Schools Lease Space as Step Toward TV Unit," Chicago Tribune, August 14, 1952 (Clipping).

program several times a day to accommodate teaching schedules. The station had network programming from the British Broadcasting Company, the American Broadcasting Company, the National Broadcasting Company's Blue and Red networks, and the Mutual Broadcasting System in addition to WBEZ's own newscasts from the wires of the Associated Press.<sup>1</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1953

Only two of the Radio Council's nine monthly reports for 1953 were published in the Proceedings of the Chicago Board of Education. One report was on its activities that had become standard, with handbooks, teacher training on use of radio, and radio programs for all grades, plus the added dimension of television. The January 20 Presidential Inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower was carried by television into classrooms. Utilization reports were provided to the teachers as a form of evaluation to judge the effectiveness of television in the classroom, and the indication from the forms was that it was acceptable.<sup>2</sup>

The second report from the Radio Council to the Superintendent stated that it was engaged in "continued cooperation in the planning of the Educational Television Channel 11, and the planning of its facilities, financing, and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Jennings, "The Radio Council--WBEZ," CPCR, 7-9.

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, February 25, 1953, 1380.

tentative programming schedule."<sup>1</sup> The Superintendent's report indicated that the sum of \$150,000 to build a television studio at Manley Vocational School had been included in the 1953 budget, but there was no mention that the studio was actually built.

Directive 58585 of the Board described the history of the educational channel dating back to 1946. The Radio Council had been active in attempting to secure a license from the FCC for the educational television outlet. The directive stated that 20 percent of the schools now had television receivers, at no cost to the Board. In compliance with State Senate Bill 467, enacted by the 68th General Assembly, which amended Section 34-17 of the school code, the Board of Education was authorized to ". . . provide television studio facilities not to exceed one school building and to provide programs for educational purposes. . . ." <sup>2</sup> For some reason, Section 34-17 provided that the "board shall not construct, acquire, operate or maintain a television transmitter." This section of State Senate Bill 467 prompted the creation of the Chicago Educational Television Corporation (CETV) and WTTW, Channel 11.

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1954

The radio and television division established a set

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., August 26, 1953, 286.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., October 14, 1953, 480.

of yearly objectives according to the 1954 monthly reports published in the Proceedings. In April 1954, the radio broadcast hours totaled 167 for WBEZ, 14 hours for commercial stations and six hours of educational television.<sup>1</sup> Exhibits were prepared for the WLS Advisory Council, the State Parent Teacher Association, and the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters.<sup>2</sup> In September 1954, 75,000 handbooks were distributed. The radio division produced and distributed a sound film of Dr. Benjamin Willis, by then Superintendent of Schools, giving his annual greeting to students and faculty for use on the opening day of school and on television stations.<sup>3</sup> The balance of the year was standard radio programming, and a vocational television show with WGN. Kenwood School student council sessions were also broadcast over WGN-TV.<sup>4</sup>

The Radio Council was the subject of two articles in the Chicago Tribune during 1954. In October 1954, Martha Overholser wrote about the Council's progress since 1943. There were now between 2,500 and 3,000 radios, about 5 per school, as compared with a total of 100 sixteen years ago. The staff of 25 were all responsible for programming. All the staff members held teaching certificates and were familiar

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., April 28, 1954, 1577.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June 23, 1954, 1788.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1953, 490.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., December 22, 1954, 718.

with the curriculum in Chicago schools. Mr. Jennings again was quoted as saying, "Radio cannot replace the teacher, in fact to be useful at all, the teacher must know how to use what radio offers."<sup>1</sup>

The November 1954 story contained some new information. WBEZ now reached 400,000 pupils, and about 80 suburban schools as far away as Waukegan, Elgin, and Gary. The total budget for the station was \$150,000 per year covering 21 staff members. As Mr. Jennings, subject of the story, said, "The budget was less than the cost of some single TV spectacles." Some students appeared and worked on various shows as part of a training program. So successful was the student training program that it prepared more than 250 persons for jobs in radio, TV, or allied fields. Mr. Jennings noted that, "In case of an emergency, we can reach every public school with complete instructions in just 40 seconds using WBEZ."<sup>2</sup>

#### Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1955

Standard operating procedures for the radio television division included: preparation of handbooks and programs for WBEZ, materials for commercial stations, and the continuing television shows. Other activities included exhibits on how

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<sup>1</sup>"WBEZ Gives New Slants to Old Angles," Chicago Tribune, January 31, 1954 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Joan Beck, "School Aids Adults, Too," Chicago Tribune, November 29, 1954 (Clipping).

radio and television can be used in the classroom. The staff attended various education, radio and television association, and civic meetings.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the year's highlights were mentioned in the report for June 1955. They included a total of 148 hours and 45 minutes of programming on WBEZ, 14 hours on commercial radio stations, and 3 hours and 30 minutes for local television were produced. The two television shows were: "Learning Brings Adventure" on WGN-TV; and a new series of shows for teens on WBKB-TV, produced in cooperation with the Coca-Cola Company, at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday mornings.

Another Saturday morning television show was seen from 8:35 till 8:50. It was for teachers and administrators and was the first effort by the radio division to offer teacher instruction on television publicly. Mr. Jennings became a member of the NAEB program and planning committee.<sup>2</sup>

The last entry of the year was a statement of the function of the department taken from the Proceedings:

4c. Division of Radio and Television

Division Head

Title: Director of Radio and Television

Responsible to: Dir. of Instructional Materials

The functions of the Division of Radio and Television are: to maintain and operate station WBEZ; to prepare educational materials for use on other radio and television stations; to prepare and distribute schedules of broadcasts; to assist school personnel in techniques of using such broadcasts; and to initiate and perform such

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, June-December, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 23, 1955, 541.

other related functions as may be required.<sup>1</sup>

Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1956

This was another year of increased activity for the television section. The construction and use of the first studio devoted entirely to educational television was completed. WTTW, the educational station, had used the radio division's studio for the first several months of its operation. The first broadcast on the new TV station featured the General Superintendent and his five Associate Superintendents.

After WTTW moved to its own studio, the division of radio and television continued to use the studio for preparation, rehearsal, and presentation of TV programs for both educational and commercial stations.<sup>2</sup> As another indication of the increased scope of the radio division, the monthly report made mention that there was "significant growth in the production of motion pictures for use on television and their further use by divisions and departments as a public information medium<sup>3</sup>. Thus, the transition from a radio division to a total media division had rapidly taken place.

Another first was achieved by the "Spelling Bee" show, which was reported to be the first educational show broadcast

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., December 28, 1955, 620.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., February 29, 1956, 1349.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

in color on WNBQ-TV. Nevertheless, the evaluation reports, made by the division staff, indicated that WBEZ was fulfilling a need and was being used by teachers in the classroom.<sup>1</sup>

The broadcast time for the division as reported at the end of the 1955-1956 year, showed an increase over the previous year:

	Hours	Minutes
WBEZ (FM) .....	564	41
WIND .....	28	15
WJJD .....	39	0
WMAQ .....	0	32
WNBQ-TV .....	4	0
WBKB (TV) .....	19	0
WGN-TV .....	9	30
WTTW .....	19	0
Total TV time	51	30
Total radio time	632	28
Total time on the air	683	58 <sup>2</sup>

The scope of the division had changed, but the mission of radio was well on its way to becoming a model of in-school instruction. The division was now involved in as many mass communication activities as educational projects.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1957

Grants and other outside sources of funding from national sources for television projects continued to grow. A television project on physics was financed by the Advancement of Education Fund (AEF) and Encyclopedia Britannica films. The AEF also provided \$165,000 for the second year of a junior college TV experiment.

WBEZ continued to grow, but at a slower speed. Continued attention to public relations and mass communication events took a great deal of time, as did the production of television shows and special reports for the Superintendent.<sup>1</sup>

Chicago Radio Council and WBEZ: 1958

The highlight of 1958 was a Time magazine story on the WIND "Back To School Rally".<sup>2</sup> It was also covered by the Chicago Daily News<sup>3</sup>. Top disc jockeys and entertainers rallied the pupils to get them back in school when the semester began the following week. This rally addressed the increasing drop-out rate.

This was the year that FM began to attract the attention of the general public. Paul Molloy's column in the Chicago Sun-Times described the three major events that would

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., September-December, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>"Try School Today," Time Magazine, September 8, 1958 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>"7 P.M. Scholars Lose Out At Back To School Rally," Chicago Daily News, August 25, 1958 (Clipping).

take place for FM in 1958.<sup>1</sup> WBBM-FM radio would have programming independent of its sister AM station; there would be stereophonic broadcasting of WFMT-FM and WTTW-TV, and Chicago Lyric Opera performances would be broadcast over WBBM-FM. Mr. Molloy pointed out that FM listeners had enjoyed WBEZ for the past 18 years. He described the supplemental nature of the broadcasts to education and the general interest of some of the topics, even for listeners not in school.

The functions of the division remained the same: development of a handbook for teachers; providing workshops to train students for careers in radio and television; the production of radio tapes and TV films to "interpret the schools to the community, and to even repair and service the schools' radio-TV equipment."<sup>2</sup>

It was obvious that the radio division's original purpose to function only in radio had been changed. Its assignment had been altered to include the production of mass communications programs and announcements, and the development of a public relations program for the Superintendent.

During the first semester of the school year 1957-1958, 586 hours of programming were produced at WBEZ, and 13 hours on television.<sup>3</sup> The division enlarged its scope of

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Molloy, "FM Bringing Knowledge To Chicago Pupils," Chicago Sun Times, October 31, 1958 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, March 26, 1958, 1580.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.,

assistance to include other departments' programs. Among the departments that used the radio division were the Department of Special Education, the Division of Libraries, the Division of Americanization, the Bureau of Health and Physical Education, and the Bureau of School Population.<sup>1</sup> It was clear that WBEZ had found support among colleagues within the public school system and listeners to the station.

New programming for the year included science lessons produced in cooperation with the Zenith Radio Corporation; economic geography classes led by school instructors; and Canadian Broadcasting Company programs acquired on an exchange basis. The Canadian shows were interviews with consuls and international visitors.<sup>2</sup>

The first offering of a grant-in-aid for program expansion was mentioned as the Assistant Director, Elizabeth Marshall, met with the NAEB. Mrs. Marshall also met with 100 pre-practice teachers at the Chicago Teachers' College to discuss radio and television in the classroom.<sup>3</sup> 125,000 handbooks were distributed covering 35 broadcast series. Guides on how to use radio and television as a supplement in the classroom were also available.<sup>4</sup> The radio division report for December 1958 listed six remote broadcasts, 338 guest

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1958, 1691.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1958, 1809.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1958, 142.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1958, 552.

interviews in the studio, a score of requests for WBEZ produced shows from around the nation, a number of new television shows, and expanded service to other divisions. Radio repairs and newscasts that once were a major part of the radio division's mission were now standard operating procedures.<sup>1</sup>

Division of Radio and Television  
and WBEZ: 1959

The radio division was now listed in the Proceedings as the division of Radio and Television.<sup>2</sup> The major emphasis was on placing more equipment in the classroom. The media inventory stood at 485 TV receivers, 1,292 AM-FM radio receivers and 392 tape recorders, from the 446 schools inventoried.<sup>3</sup> With the increased inventory, the number of classes using equipment increased by 3,036. The list of regular activities included the distribution of School Board Bond Referendum materials, visits to P.T.A. groups, in-school visits and in-service training.

As the activities of the radio and television division continued to increase, more assignments became routine. Hundreds of hours of programs were written, produced and broadcast over WBEZ and three commercial radio stations. The more costly and time-consuming television productions were

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., December 10, 1958, 684-85.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., February 25, 1959, 1570.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

supplied to three stations. The number of meetings of associations and related professional groups that required attendance grew. Once there were fewer than four meetings a year; now there were three or four a month. The radio and television division was held in the highest regard, both locally and nationally.

Division of Radio and Television  
and WBEZ: 1960

The last year of this report can best be summarized by two statements from the Proceedings, and a comment from the Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Schools - 1960.

In November of 1960, the schools reported 6,614 hours of listening.<sup>1</sup> This was not hours produced, but time recorded by the teachers of their pupils' listening to the supplemental education offered on radio. It is interesting to note that the lower the grade, the more time the pupils were tuned into education on radio.

In total hours of time spent listening, not total numbers of students, kindergarten and primary grades spent 2,655 hours of listening time; intermediate grades, 1,963 hours; and upper grades, 1,399 hours. High school accounted for 419 hours, and the balance was divided by general education and in-service training.

French and Spanish were added to the broadcast

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1960, 757.

schedule as were subjects from other educational divisions.<sup>1</sup> Educational broadcasting on WBEZ had attained a high level of acceptance and usefulness in the classroom, but over the past eight years this level had not increased. There was, however, an event that was about to occur which would cause a major decline in radio's use.

A short paragraph in the Superintendent's Annual Report, 1960-61, indicated that WBEZ was using radio, tape recordings, and handbooks. However, the television section of the annual report included two full pages of text and several photographs. With Midwest Airborne Television; closed-circuit television; and "TV College," now in its fourth year with outside funding, the visual aspects to supplemental education were beginning to take over the radio and television division.<sup>2</sup>

Now part of the Bureau of Instruction Materials,<sup>3</sup> the radio and television division would undergo several changes in the coming year. Radio seemed to have served its purpose. It was now time for television, tape recordings and film strips.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Benjamin C. Willis, Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Schools 1960-1961, 35-38.

<sup>3</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, January 22, 1960, 1528.

Division of Radio and Television  
and WBEZ: After 1960

On April 5, 1961, George Jennings died after a long illness.<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Marshall took over as Director and remained in that position until she retired in 1971, by which time she had been with the radio and television division for 30 years.

Between 1961 and 1965, the radio and television division operated as two separate units, one for radio and the other for television. The mission and responsibilities of the radio division had not changed since 1943. Most assignments of the radio section had become standard operating procedures: the preparation of teacher workbooks, some seminars, and attendance at the few professional conferences that were still held.

The major focus of the division's resources was directed toward television. Television had the excitement of a new technology, offered the pupils both sight and sound, and had established the added dimension of color.

Several events took place that changed the focus and programming of WBEZ in the late 1960s. The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 awakened educational broadcasters to the fact that funds were available for educational radio stations for

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<sup>1</sup>"George Jennings Memorial Rites Slated for Saturday," Chicago Sun-Times, April 6, 1961 (Clipping).

expansion and for broader services.<sup>1</sup> The radio division of NAEB met in Madison, WI, in August 1969, with 425 noncommercial stations represented to discuss the implications of the Act.

The delegates recommended to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) that it establish an independent entity to be known as National Public Radio (NPR) "which would produce programs and handle station interconnections."<sup>2</sup> Among the requirements imposed upon the stations by NPR for subscribing were those of having at least three full-time professional broadcasters, and broadcasting at least eight hours a day, six days a week, 48 weeks a year.<sup>3</sup>

The mold was set for changing the concept of educational broadcasting on WBEZ.

The forthcoming federal funds, due in 1970, would require changes in format and program content for WBEZ. In view of the fact that NPR would have a series of network produced programs and other requirements as mentioned above, the original concept of WBEZ would slowly be phased out. In fact the Board had decided that, with the NPR requirements of full time help, longer broadcast days and having the station on the air almost year around, it might be necessary to close

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<sup>1</sup>George Gibson, Public Broadcasting (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1977), 158-59.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



the station, or offer it for sale.

When the Board decreased the budget for WBEZ, Mrs. Marshall took her plight to the newspapers. Norman Mark, a television reporter for the Chicago Daily News, sympathized with her and reported on the budget cuts in a special story.<sup>1</sup> According to Mrs. Marshall, the Board of Education was not ready to make the necessary changes to qualify the station for NPR funds. She pointed out specifically that the Department of Curriculum, under whose jurisdiction the station had returned, was unwilling to make the necessary administrative and budget changes to keep the radio division alive.

Mrs. Marshall urged that changes should be made that would keep the WBEZ format and also join with other stations to include NPR in the broadcast day.<sup>2</sup> During the interview, Mrs. Marshall declared that "800,00 children listen to WBEZ, and the station is worth its weight in gold. The federal government has some funds for new ideas, for so-called innovative projects, but none for projects which have proven themselves."<sup>3</sup> After a year long fight, which was reported in the newspapers, the Board funded the station for another year.<sup>4</sup>

The following year Norman Mark ran the announcement

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<sup>1</sup>Norman Mark, "Countdown for 91.5 on Your FM Dial," Chicago Daily News, February 28, 1970 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Norman Mark, "One Last Plea to Save Schools' Radio Station," Chicago Daily News, August 12, 1971 (Clipping).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Norman Mark, "School Board Saves FM Station," Chicago Daily News, June 16, 1970 (Clipping).

of Mrs. Marshall's retirement. Her criticisms of Board policies had been reported by Mr. Mark in the story.<sup>1</sup>

The Board later applied for the NPR money and eventually allowed the station's format to be changed to accommodate NPR requirements. At the same time the Board removed the station from the Department of Curriculum, establishing a separate department for it. The Board also created the post of Radio General Manager in the fall of 1971. Carole Nolan was appointed to the new position.

The station became one of the foremost NPR radio outlets in the nation. Several locally originated shows attained network placement, and more than a dozen Chicago trained reporters advanced to national prominence.<sup>2</sup>

In 1990, the Board again elected to change the administrative structure of the radio station. Under the latest school reforms, decreasing the budget was a prime consideration. The radio station was operating at a financial loss, which was unacceptable to the reform Board. The options were to close the station, as mentioned in 1970, sell the station, or lease the station to a management team.

The Board voted to lease the station to the newly formed WBEZ Alliance, Inc., with Carole Nolan, General Manager of the station since 1971, remaining in that position, and as an officer of the Alliance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Carole Nolan, WBEZ General Manager, interview with author, at the WBEZ office, September 7, 1990.

<sup>3</sup>Carol Nolan, Business Plan, WBEZ Chicagoland Public Radio (Chicago: WBEZ Alliance, Inc., September 1990).

### Summary of Chapter III

The Radio Council began as a noble effort attempting to bring a wide range of experiences to the classroom. The Council had set forth to expand the scope of a teacher's lessons by offering the sounds of the text books to the minds of the pupils. Radio as a supplemental aid to the student's assignments was conceived and programmed as a complement to the existing curriculum.

Several uncontrolled circumstances may have prevented radio from reaching its apex of acceptance. At a time when radio may have been accepted, several unrelated factors occurred. The research necessary to prove or disprove the effectiveness of radio in the classroom may not have been completed with a degree of acceptance. Without some substantial research to support its contribution to the classroom, radio was not as generally accepted as it might have been.

Shortages of materials due to World War II caused the limitation of construction of AM educational stations. The same shortages also stopped for several years the allocation and construction of FM stations.

The material shortages coupled with a changing Federal Communications Commission policy may have kept the expansion of education radio in abeyance for several years.

During this lull in expansion, television was developed and rapidly replaced radio as the new medium for supplemental classroom instruction.

Funds were another key factors. Radio was developing

during the end of the Depression. Funds for construction, program development and research were limited. Television was in an expansion mode just after World War II, when funds were available from private industry, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and other government agencies.

Radio may have developed a place in the classroom. It might have been used as a supplement teaching aid as successfully in the United States as it had been used in developing nations. The lack of research to prove or disprove this premise is not available.

CHAPTER IV  
ANALYSIS OF AND RESULTS OF THE  
DATA COLLECTED

The documentation was collected from sources in the City of Chicago and archives of educational broadcasting libraries in the area. The Municipal Reference Library of the City of Chicago, the reference libraries of the Chicago Sun-Times and the Chicago Tribune, the reference library of the Chicago Public Schools, the reference section of the Chicago Public Library, and the reference sections and archives of Loyola University of Chicago, Northeastern Illinois University, Northwestern University, and De Paul University were used. The State of Wisconsin Archives at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the Chicago Historical Society, the University of Maryland, and the Chicago Museum of Broadcast Communications were also consulted.

With three exceptions, the records, lesson plans, radio scripts, and documents from radio station WBEZ, prior to 1971, were not available. The three existing examples of station materials are: first, the workbook for the Elizabeth E. Marshall series Let the Artist Speak, used between October 1942 and January 1943, as part of the Art Goes To War program.

This single copy of Art Goes To War was in the Urbana, IL., Public Library.

Another workbook found was the Lesson Plan for the 1933 Century of Progress Science Series, a week-long presentation by students from the Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago. The lessons were written and produced by Harold W. Kent and his students. A viewing copy was obtained from his estate.

The third source was a single lesson plan from the "Story Teller," found at the Chicago Historical Society. The lesson plan summarized several radio shows in the "Chicago Is My Home" social studies series. Each segment contained six units: (1) the title of the broadcast and a synopsis, (2) identification of the people in the story, (3) vocabulary, (4) discussion, (5) creative expression, and (6) other activities.

The Chicago Board of Education library and the reference library of the Chicago Public Schools did not have materials from the period covered in this dissertation. The materials were obtained from secondary sources. These secondary materials were limited to the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, Annual Report(s) of the General Superintendent of Schools, and the Proceedings of the Chicago Board of Education.

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB) was absorbed in the late 1960s into the National Association of Broadcasters, and some historical materials

were given to National Public Radio (NPR) at that time. However, none of these documents were related to the history of educational radio in Chicago. The Federal Archives and the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB) had few materials related to the Chicago effort. However, useful materials were researched from the NAEB Newsletters.

The archives at the State of Wisconsin Historical Society had the NAEB Newsletter from its inception in 1937 to its demise in 1945. Both the NAEB Newsletter and the Proceedings of the Chicago Board of Education provide factual information, but not the reasoning or rationale behind the decision-making process.

The archives of Loyola University of Chicago produced some collateral materials. Father Samuel Knox Wilson, S.J., President of Loyola University of Chicago from 1933 to 1942, was interested in expanding the University's influence in the area of educational radio and was active on several committees.<sup>1</sup> He refused to allow a Loyola University program on a commercial station. He wanted full control over the broadcasts and wanted to be assured that the commercial announcements would be of the highest quality. This seems to be the first request for sponsorship approval. When the radio station would not agree to his request, he first delayed the program's start and later cancelled it.

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<sup>1</sup>Loyola University of Chicago, archives, Father Samuel Knox Wilson, private papers.

Father Wilson did serve on a joint committee to explore the use of radio as an educational medium. Other colleges in Chicago on the committee were De Paul University, the University of Chicago, and Northeastern University.

Except for the Harold W. Kent Estate, the Chicago Historical Society, and State of Wisconsin Archives, the other reference libraries did not produce any collateral materials.

The libraries and archives of Loyola, De Paul and Northwestern Universities produced a number of dissertations, theses and research papers that touched on the subject indirectly. Two of these papers were written by Charlotte Lawson and James Francis Groark, both of De Paul University. The Lawson master's thesis covered the period from the beginning of the Radio Council's inception through 1942, a year before WBEZ went on the air. The Groark thesis covered radio program evaluations through 1939, when educational radio was just beginning. Groark's evaluations were excellent, but were early in the history of broadcasting.

Another source of secondary information were persons involved in broadcasting and school administration. Sandra Gair, an actor in the Chicago Radio Council (CRC) programs and currently a radio show host on WBEZ, pointed out that a number of current radio personalities in Chicago received their training and first broadcast experience as part of radio division student activities. Many have made their radio debuts on WBEZ. Ms. Gair was a member of the "Chicago Theatre of the



Air," appearing in a number of radio plays.<sup>1</sup>

The student members of the Chicago Radio Council staff were introduced to various assignments from writing, directing, and acting, to working the sound effects. Assignments were given to the students with a series of instructions on how to produce a radio program. The results were actual programs that might have been heard on the air.

Among the members of the CRC and WBEZ staff were a number of actors and students who related some of their experiences. The shows were given to the regular staff to produce and direct, often in a rotating order. Among those interviewed were Herb Graham, Ken Nordine, Jerry Kauffeur, and Russell Reed.

Ken Nordine, a radio announcer, related many fond memories of the CRC days. He recalled that many excellent plays were written, produced, and directed by the CRC staff. Mr. Nordine's prime assignment was as an actor and writer. He felt that as a learning experience, working at the CRC was second to none.

Herb Graham, now speaking in commercials on radio and television, credited the CRC with offering him exposure to the radio business and giving him the training needed to develop a professional career. For a youngster in high school, Graham related, radio was a new and exciting field. The CRC had given

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<sup>1</sup>Sandra Gair, WBEZ talk show host, Conversation, November 3, 1990 at Loyola University, Chicago.

him the opportunity to learn all phases of radio broadcasting and develop his talent.

Jerry Kauffeur had much the same experiences as did Mr. Graham. Mr. Kauffeur made a special point of commenting on the professionalism of George Jennings and Robert R. Miller. Their striving for perfection for the programming to be used in classrooms, was "second to none," commented Kauffeur.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) sent a few writers to the Radio Council to script shows,<sup>1</sup> but no records were found that would allow expansion of this point.

Russell Reed was the first employee hired as a staff performer by the Radio Council.<sup>2</sup> Reed recalls receiving scripts from the writers and performing at the WBEZ studios. Reed felt that there was no formal philosophy or rationale behind the selection for the curriculum materials presented.

The source of assignments, according to Reed, was from George Jennings or Robert R. Miller. Mr. Miller retired some years ago and moved to southern California. Reed also related that the actors and staff were simply on assignment, they had no direct involvement with any decision-making process.

Each of the interviewees agreed that there was little contact between them and the Radio Division Director or

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<sup>1</sup>Russell Reed, Radio Actor formerly of WBEZ, Telephone conversation, December 9, 1990, from his home, Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Assistant Director. The students did have evaluation sessions, but were given the latitude to be creative and to ask for help when needed.

Mr. Graham said that he was not given any curricular guidelines; he was simply told to be faithful to the original story and to script an interesting program. What was mentioned by those interviewed was that quality was most important.

All had fond memories of the CRC and WBEZ. They could not contribute to the details [or documentation] required to address the research questions in this dissertation. The persons interviewed were actors, writers, and students, while the decision makers were in the hierarchy of the Board of Education.

Graham said that as a younger man he had had a great opportunity to learn and be a part of radio programming; that questioning the philosophy behind the curriculum was not his concern.

Professionals in the field of education, or those who were in some way associated with radio education, had little to contribute along these lines.

Among the educators consulted were Dr. Jerome Sacks,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Jerry Rich,<sup>2</sup> and Dr. John Beck.<sup>3</sup> Their opinions generally

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Jerome Sacks, Retired President, Chicago Teachers's College, Telephone conversation from his home, November 2, 1990, Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Jerry Rich, former Chicago school administrator, Telephone conversation, October 19, 1990, Chicago.

formed a summary of the view that radio education was not a professional part of the curriculum. To their minds, radio was "just there". It was on the air a limited number of hours; there was little excitement about its potential; it was commonly treated like a stepchild, and considered not nearly as exciting as television. As an option to classroom work and a supplement to the curriculum, radio was offered to the teachers on a "take" or "not take" basis.<sup>1</sup>

The lack of support for the radio station was obvious when the budget cuts prompted Elizabeth E. Marshall to take her case to newspaper columnist Norman Mark in 1969 and 1970. To do so was against unwritten Board policy. The Board kept the radio station as it was for another a year. However, the situation of winning the battle, but losing the war became clear the following year. Mrs. Marshall was retired in 1971.

There was some concern on the part of the school Board about keeping the radio station. This concern focused on two points: cost of operation, and the direction the station should take in the future. Mrs. Marshall, like her predecessors, Harold W. Kent and George Jennings, saw a potential in radio that neither the Bureau of Curriculum nor

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<sup>3</sup>Dr. John Beck, former Chicago school administrator, Telephone conversation, October 19, 1990, Chicago.

<sup>1</sup>Most of the supervisors and school administrators of the time have moved away from Chicago or are deceased. A few educators to whom inquiries were addressed elected not to answer.

the Board of Education seemed to understand or appreciate.

There was considerable conflict between Mrs. Marshall's attitude regarding the benefits and future of educational radio and the school Board's attitude toward its future. Some of Mrs. Marshall's suggestions were altered and incorporated in later years. The station was on the air at that point from 9 A.M. till 3 P.M. Mrs. Marshall did schedule a program in the evening once in a while, but evening programs had difficulty in attracting an audience. Evening broadcasts incurred extraordinary costs, such as engineering overtime and other overhead expenses.

There was a conflict between the Department of Curriculum and radio station management. This seemed to be based on the lack of a firm direction for the station and the increasing popularity of television. Another consideration was the increasing amount of funding available for television.

Moreover, there was growing support for the conversion of many educational radio stations to the more popular format of National Public Radio (NPR). The NAEB had lobbied for the inclusion of NPR funding in the same public law that had created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).<sup>1</sup> The NPR had been allocated public funds available to convert educational stations to its new format.

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<sup>1</sup>William Harley, retired director, NAEB. Telephone Conversation, November 2, 1990, from his home in Falls Church, Va.

## Addressing the Research Questions

The following questions were answered, using available documents, interviews with surviving sources, and evaluation of the limited quantity of materials.

### Question One

How did radio stations use educational programming during the period 1920 to 1960 in the United States?

#### Background

The answer can be divided into three sections, each devoted to a separate period of time. The first section covers the 1920 to 1935 era when the phenomenon of radio was capturing the American public's dream of having world news, sporting events, and nationally known entertainers in their living rooms via radio. The depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s caused incomes to be limited thus outside the home entertainment and travel declined, radio gained acceptance. It became a popular source of the nation's home entertainment.

Educators looked at radio as a means of bringing the "world to the classroom," and sought ways to enrich and supplement their pupils' studies through its use. Educational radio began to develop in 1925, when Fanny Smith called upon Judith Waller, station manger of WMAQ radio, to broadcast a

music appreciation program to her school.<sup>1</sup>

Ben Darrow started the Little Red School House, in 1925, a morning radio program on WLS radio, but he had little or no support from the Chicago School Board.<sup>2</sup> Darrow, after leaving Chicago, joined the Ohio school system educational broadcasting staff, he became an outstanding authority in educational radio.

Two examples of educational radio during this period can be found in the histories of WBOE in Cleveland, and WHA of Madison, WI. The Ohio radio experience was centered within the Cleveland school system, with cooperation from the University of Ohio.<sup>3</sup> The educational radio system in Wisconsin was centered in Madison, assisted by the University of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin system was similar to the ones in Ohio and New York inasmuch as it included assistance from educators throughout the state.<sup>4</sup>

Educational radio stations were beginning to develop around the country. The newness of the technology and the untried supplemental teaching methods forced many schools to delay a commitment for financial support and staff assistance. A financial commitment was needed to construct a radio station. Valid research could not prove or disprove that

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Daily News, October 5, 1926 (Clipping).

<sup>2</sup>Evans, The Prairie Farmer and WLS, 165.

<sup>3</sup>Frost, Education's Own Stations, 289-91.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 464-474.

educational radio might be worth the investment.<sup>1</sup>

In some situations, schools used radio stations to train engineers and other staff people for local commercial stations. Programs for this type of training station could be obtained through the Federal Radio Council or the exchange system of scripts and transcriptions from other NAEB members.<sup>2</sup>

Since the Depression caused high unemployment, the government was holding the line on expenditures. Funding for new ventures was almost nonexistent. It was not until President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal in 1933 that federal funds became available for new projects.

The use of radio in the classroom divided educators. Valid points were voiced for and against radio's use in the classroom. Both sides of the issue presented equally valid arguments of radio's inclusion or exclusion in the classroom.

The second period of educational radio development was from 1935 to 1945, when radio became a nationally acceptable form of home entertainment and was somewhat accepted as a supplemental delivery system for educational materials. One of the drawbacks was that receivers at the time were AM; this generated a great deal of static and caused poor reception. Drifting signals meant that teachers might periodically lose

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<sup>1</sup>National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Papers, 1925-1965, State of Wisconsin Archives, Madison, RBH 1, 1-4.

<sup>2</sup>NAEB Newsletter, February 1947, 4.



the broadcast altogether.<sup>1</sup>

National associations began to form to aid schools in developing programs of a supplemental nature. At no time, however, did any of them advocate the replacement by radio of teachers in the classroom.

Just as radio was beginning to be accepted as a teaching aid, World War II started. Construction materials, spare parts, and the highly skilled engineers needed to build studios and transmitters and to operate radio equipment were pressed into military service.<sup>2</sup>

The third period of this sequence began after World War II, from 1945 to 1960. After the War, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) decided that the FM band of broadcasting would be opened for commercial development. The FCC also decided that a section of the FM band would be allocated to educational broadcasting. But many school systems and colleges and universities did not have the funding to place a station on the air. Some stations did not have sufficient support from their sponsoring agencies to stay on the air. Some stations lost their FCC licenses or just did not renew them.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Carole Nolan, General Manager, WBEZ. Conversation in her office, September 20, 1989 Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>William H. Johnson, Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Schools 1941-1943 (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1943), 199-203.

<sup>3</sup>NAEB, Papers, State of Wisconsin Archives, RBH 1, 1-4.

Another problem was a lack of academic research to support the use of radio as a supplemental means of instruction.<sup>1</sup> The point is that federal, state and foundation funds were simply not available for radio research. Among the few assisting agencies funded by the federal government was the Federal Radio Council (FRC) which acted as a program exchange service. The FRC was an administrative agency that functioned only to distribute radio scripts from the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Funds were not available for program development or station construction and equipment.

For the first time, large amounts of money from both private and public sources were allocated for the construction, program development, and management of television stations. Radio was ignored. Warnings to educational broadcasters were repeated: they had lost an opportunity with AM and were about to lose another with the allocation of the FM band.<sup>2</sup> Educators continued to look toward television because of the novelty of the technology and the availability of funding.<sup>3</sup> By now, the unfounded motion that radio would replace teachers in the classroom had long been forgotten. Television was considered one of the new methods

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, September-December, 1957.

of bringing the future to the classroom.

In the 1950s funds became available for expanded television programming and the development of new supplemental teaching techniques. Several foundations notably the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Fund for the Advancement of Education, were some of the underwriters for the early phases in the development of educational television.<sup>1</sup> Grants were made for construction, equipment, and program development. Such expansive funding had not been available to educational radio.

Chicago was unique in that few school boards operated both a radio and a television station.<sup>2</sup> The Chicago public broadcasting system station, which started in the studios of WBEZ radio, was named WTTW or Window To The World.<sup>3</sup> So complete was the transformation from radio to television that the 1964 Havighurst Report did not mention educational radio at all.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the Havighurst Report was to survey the Chicago Board of Education, evaluate procedures, and make

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 81-85.

<sup>2</sup>Benjamin C. Willis, Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Schools 1959-1960 (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1960), 35-38.

<sup>3</sup>William Natale, Director of Communications, WTTW/Channel 11. Conversation in his office, August 1, 1989 Chicago.

<sup>4</sup>Robert J. Havighurst, The Public Schools of Chicago, (Chicago: Board of Education, 1964), 12.

recommendations for improvements.<sup>1</sup> The educational television portion of the Report covered over four pages, with educational radio devoid of any mention. The Report recommended that the television instruction become expanded, be part of the curriculum, and be used for high schools and colleges.<sup>2</sup>

### Question Two

Why did the Chicago Board of Education develop an educational format on Chicago radio station WBEZ?

- A. What formal curriculum was developed for radio?
- B. What educational programs were broadcast?

The Chicago Board of Education adopted an educational format for WBEZ that was the same as the one that had been developed from the early days of the Chicago Radio Council (CRC). When the station went on the air in 1943<sup>3</sup>, until November of 1971, the object was to present supplemental educational lessons for kindergarten through the high school level.

The successful experiment with broadcasting lessons on radio during the 1937 polio epidemic developed into a supplemental curriculum for most elementary grades and high

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 132-42.

<sup>3</sup>"New FM Station," Chicago Tribune, April 19, 1943 (Clipping).

school. The lessons during the epidemic were directed at in-school elementary classes during school hours only. By contrast, early television grants were directed toward programs of home study for college students.<sup>1</sup> Most of the CRC lessons continued to be directed to the lower elementary grades -- featuring story telling, music appreciation, lectures, and talks by famous people.<sup>2</sup>

A. What formal curriculum was developed for radio?

The radio curriculum was based on the regular school curriculum. The radio division was part of the Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction in the early period of the CRC.<sup>3</sup> There were no documents to indicate that any special curricula were developed for radio instruction. Nor were there any records showing that funds were allocated to study the differentiation between radio instruction and regular class instruction.

The major effort was to support current classroom lesson plans with teacher workbooks, school visits, and the radio bulletin. These collateral materials informed the teachers of the time, location of the stations on the dial, and the specific programs that would be broadcast. The

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, September-December, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Johnson, Annual Report 1940-41, 230-31.

<sup>3</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, December 20, 1937, 581.

relevance of the radio programs to the regular classroom assignments was spelled out in the radio bulletin. There were no major differences between the regular classroom curriculum and the radio programs, except that the radio programs appealed to a wider spectrum by enlisting the use of the pupils' imaginations. Radio created a picture in a child's mind, and the radio scripts used this quality to full advantage.<sup>1</sup>

B. What education programs were broadcast?

From the earliest records, music and art appreciation programming were in the forefront of educational programs. Other popular radio programs were lectures and talks by famous people who would not ordinarily be in a classroom setting. Examples of this type of programming were the recording of a lecture by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, the General Douglas MacArthur speech and presentations by other famous persons including authors and artists. Among those to appear, in person on live radio, were Jane Addams and Lorado Taft.<sup>2</sup>

Travel, career development, and geography were the most popular programs during the CRC administration. Consider that the CRC was asking commercial stations to run these programs free of charge.

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<sup>1</sup>Kent, CPCR, January 1938, 10.

<sup>2</sup>WBEZ Celebrates Anniversary, undated, press release, 1963.

The CRC had to accept the times that the commercial stations could not sell commercially. Most of these time periods were in the morning and a few were in the afternoon. What was needed was a full-time station available for the entire school day. Having the school Board's own station would eliminate preemptions and enlarge the number of hours a radio could be used in class. Commercial stations scheduled educational programs with the right of preemption. If the time was sold, then the station had the right to preempt the educational program. This situation had an effect on the types of programs that schools offered to commercial stations. The stations preferred more general subjects and lessons that could be followed without a workbook.

The radio programs did address reading, however, as adaptations of literary classics were offered with school children playing all the roles. On occasion, more creative teachers would add sound effects and music if the show was recorded in the studio.

The rationale for developing the school Board's own radio station was to continue the presentation of supplemental radio programs on a station that was devoted exclusively to education. As commercial stations gained in popularity, it became more difficult to schedule educational programming on them. Time periods throughout the day were now sold to advertisers. Educational shows were not generally popular enough to acquire much of an audience rating; hence, no

advertiser wanted their commercials on such low rated programs. The FCC at this time did allow for commercials to be run within an educational show, but stations avoided this potential conflict.

### Question Three

What educational pedagogy was used for radio instruction by WBEZ?

It is unfortunate that records from the Bureau of Curriculum and the radio station are not available to answer this research question fully. We can assume that the learning experiences that were fostered on radio parallel the pedagogy that was used in regular classroom work.

An interview with Carole Nolan, who became general manager of WBEZ in 1971, confirmed that the same curriculum and pedagogy were used.<sup>1</sup> Miss Nolan also agreed that there was no indication that a separate pedagogy was developed.

The prevailing pedagogy was based on an education philosophy popular in this time period. Emphasis was placed on reading, writing and mathematics, with added courses such as social studies and the arts.

The teachers were given instructions on how to use radio by the CRC. Radio lesson plans were integrated into the standard curriculum, which was offered to the teachers in the

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<sup>1</sup>Carole Nolan, General Manager, WBEZ. Conversation, December 5, 1990 at a Phi Delta Kappa meeting, Chicago.



form of a workbook. The teachers were given the radio workbooks that contained an outline for them to follow in class and an outline for student discussion of the lesson. Harold W. Kent maintained that the teacher had to be aware of the program content, and the point of the lesson had be clear to both teacher and pupil.<sup>1</sup> This is the same pedagogy that was used by the department of curriculum throughout the school system.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from monthly reports in the Proceedings that some type of evaluation and post testing was used to evaluate the effectiveness of radio in the classroom. All the evaluations that were reported were administered by the radio division's own staff, except those for the Groark thesis<sup>3</sup> and for a 1938 story in the CPCR by Harry L. Tate.<sup>4</sup>

Groark studied listening reactions of Chicago elementary school pupils.<sup>5</sup> The pupils he observed over a four-month period enjoyed educational radio programs and engaged in a lively post broadcast discussions. He also reported that a radio broadcast without the proper visuals still could generate student interest, but that pictures and maps in the

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<sup>1</sup>Kent, CPCR, November 1938, 21-23.

<sup>2</sup>Kent, CPCR, January 1938, 10.

<sup>3</sup>James Francis Groark, "A Study of The Reactions of Pupils to School Radio Programs" (M.A. Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, 1942), 75-78.

<sup>4</sup>Tate, "Radio Evaluation," CPCR, June, 1938, 34-35.

<sup>5</sup>Groark, "Reaction of Pupils", 78.

classroom during a travel program would have been helpful.

Aside from brief reports in the Proceedings, as part of the Superintendent's monthly report, evaluation records were not available for review and analysis. The Proceedings usually contained a brief paragraph written by staff for the Superintendent. The monthly report was concise, reported on in-house evaluations only, and did not mention any criticism of the programs.

The Superintendent's monthly reports also indicate that the radio division staff had direct instructional contact with the Chicago Teacher's College. This was to indoctrinate the young teachers to the benefits of using radio to supplement their classroom lessons. According to statements made in Proceedings, teachers were not given any special training for radio. The only difference was the expansion of the subject matter to include mental exercises for the pupils to help them listen and use their imagination in their "mind's eye."<sup>1</sup>

The book on Chicago Schools and Politics states that the early pedagogy of the Chicago Public School System was implemented by Ella Flagg Young, the Superintendent of Schools from 1909 to 1934.<sup>2</sup>

Radio was an experience that could be presented in the

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<sup>1</sup>Nolan, Conversation. December 5, 1990.

<sup>2</sup>Mary J. Herrick, The Chicago Schools (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), 114-17.

classroom. Mrs. Flagg regarded the child as a socially active human being, and thought that all phases of the environment were as much a part of the learning experience as textbook materials. Radio in the classroom could expand the pupils' scope of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

#### Question Four

To which grades were the radio programs directed? Why?

#### Background

In the beginning of the Chicago Radio Council (CRC), almost all grades were included in radio instruction because of the school closing in 1937 due to the polio epidemic. Initially CRC programs were written without printed lessons because supplementary materials were printed in Chicago newspapers. The Chicago Tribune, Chicago Daily News and Chicago Examiner were among those daily newspapers to print the lessons. For this short period, radio with the aid of the newspapers became the main means of instruction by the public schools.

CRC was a regular part of the Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction. The radio division's responsibility was to develop supplemental programming for all grades. The basis for the programs was existing lesson plans. The schedule was cumbersome. Not all high schools had the same classes meeting at the same time. The upper elementary grades were often not

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

on regular class schedules either. This made it difficult to set specific times for radio listening. In the end, the lower grades became the recipient of the most radio programs, as lower grades had a regular schedule of instruction.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the CRC radio programs were a supplemental program activity for the elementary schools. An airplane flying just south of Chicago beamed educational programs to a five state area. In an interview with Dr. Jerome Sacks, former president of Northeastern Illinois University (the successor to Chicago Teacher's College), he remembered the Sky Plane in great detail. But his recollection of radio was that "it was just there."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Sacks recalled the instruction conducted by the CRC during the summer months was directed at elementary school teachers. The radio programs were directed toward elementary school pupils, and the radio course "fit into the curriculum under an elementary school subject."<sup>3</sup>

#### Question Five

How did the radio programs supplement classroom lessons?

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, December 28, 1955, 620.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Jerome Sacks, Past President Chicago Teacher's College (Northeastern Illinois University). Conversation November 16, 1990 at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The indications were that the supplemental materials sent to the classrooms consisted of workbooks issued every semester and a weekly radio bulletin produced by the CRC. The bulletins suggested two types of program listings: those on commercial stations considered to be worthy of classroom discussion, and programs produced by the CRC for educational use. After WBEZ was on the air, the schedule for the school board's own station was printed in detail. This bulletin listed a brief summary of the programs, the educational value of commercial programs, and pertinent points about the broadcast that teachers might use for classroom discussion. Leadership guides were sent to the teachers as a supplement to their classroom discussions.

The in-school visits by Radio Council staff and the summer workshops at the Chicago Teachers' College were designed to increase the use of radio in the classroom. The objective was to have teachers understand how and when radio could be used as a supplement to their lesson plans.

The bulletins and workshops gave teachers an overview of each radio program, what points should be brought out before hearing it, and suggested topics for discussion after the broadcast. The Council also prepared a short quiz, for use if the teachers wished to quiz the pupils.<sup>1</sup>

Another type of WBEZ broadcasts was live interviews. To the radio station's studio came famous people who were

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, 1945-1955.

visitors to the school Board or main office. The interviews were carried over the air or taped. Tapes might be played later at the convenience of the teacher. The nature of the taped interview allowed the teacher more flexibility, decreased the need for the radio station to schedule live interviews and increased the general use of tape recordings in the classroom. The teacher no longer had to conform the course work to the radio schedule.

The upper elementary classes might schedule previously recorded interviews of civic leaders for social studies. Classes could play radio programs of recorded music or lectures by famous artists.

#### Question Six

What materials were developed for radio courses?

The materials that were developed to complement the radio programs were based on three items: the radio bulletins, the workbooks, and the curriculum of the schools. Each of the programs were based on a lesson within the standard curriculum. The radio workbook, no matter what the length of the broadcast, had a preface, several points that were important to the supplementary nature of the program, a guide to point to the major thrust of the lesson, and a summary and discussion points to be used after the program was broadcast. Most programs were fifteen minutes in length, except for the dramatization of literary classics, which were longer. The Radio Council and the station staff developed the workbooks

and supplemental materials; unfortunately, none of these materials were saved.

From an analysis of the monthly reports that appeared in the Board of Education Proceedings, the radio division was more concerned about the Superintendent's being on radio [and later on television] than in updating the backlog of outdated programs. Between each program, march music was played. "This was an antiquated procedure," remarked Carole Nolan, "I cancelled the marches in 1971 when I became General Manager of WBEZ."<sup>1</sup>

Prior to 1971 the radio division programmed hundreds of hours of radio broadcasts for grade school levels. Not all the efforts were directed toward educational programs. Some of the programs and spot announcements were for other subjects of interest to the school Board, such as a series on revenue bond issues. The number of new programs produced to fill the limited broadcast day of 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. was not available.

The materials developed followed the same pattern regardless of the grade level. They contained an overview of the program, new vocabulary words, some questions to start a discussion, and some graphics. The teacher could hold up the chart or diagram for the class to see. Pictures, photographs, and line drawings were seldom part of the distributed materials.<sup>2</sup> As the radio programs had a new audience each

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<sup>1</sup>Nolan, Conversation. December 5, 1990.

<sup>2</sup>Groark, "Reaction of Students," 76-78.

year, the CRC did change the covers to attract attention and hopefully maintain interest for the teachers, but the study guides were often duplicated on ditto paper and would not last the semester due to excessive student wear and tear.<sup>1</sup> Some guides were mimeographed, which made graphics even more difficult to reproduce.

From the monthly radio division reports found in the Proceedings, and the lack of materials found in school board files, it appears that the radio handbooks were considered expendable.

#### Question Seven

What method of evaluation was used for the radio programs?

The method of evaluation used by the radio division and its predecessors was a self evaluation questionnaire. The teachers were sent a questionnaire each semester and were asked to return the form to the radio office.

The questionnaire addressed the following: the interest level of the program content, how the students reacted to the radio broadcasts, what educational points were accomplished by the teacher and the class, and how the teachers evaluated the use of radio in their classrooms.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Marion Ross, Librarian, Chicago Public Schools. Conversation, at Chicago Public School Library, August 5, 1989 Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, 1945-1955.



Neither the original questionnaires or any tabulated answers are available for inspection or evaluation. These questionnaires were returned directly to the radio division. Only the results were mentioned in the Proceedings. These results were part of the radio division's monthly report to the Superintendent.<sup>1</sup> Neither the background data nor the evaluation files has been recovered.

In the monthly reports to the Superintendent of Schools, the Radio Division would report on the results of the evaluations. The results reported how many teachers filled out the forms, how many workbooks were distributed, how many classroom hours radio was used, and how many pupils had heard the broadcasts within a given period of time. The evaluations often counted how many times a semester radio was heard per class meeting.<sup>2</sup> There was no record or mention of an outside consultant who might have participated in an independent evaluation of the radio programs, the radio division, or any phase of the radio operation.

There is no acceptable method to evaluate the effectiveness of the radio programs from the information available. The interviews of the educators previously mentioned and the monthly reports obtained from the Proceedings are inconclusive and not objective.

The handbooks and other materials cannot be properly

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 1946-1950.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1945-1955.

evaluated as only three handbooks were discovered. Only the Elizabeth Marshall handbook "Let the Artists Speak" contained the six elements of a lesson plan previously discussed. The Harold W. Kent lesson on the "Science Series" was used for live broadcasts from the 1933 Century of Progress Fair in Chicago. The comparison between a handbook for a live broadcast and a classroom handbook is not valid. The third handbook found at the Chicago Historical Society was incomplete. The "Story Teller" handbook discovered was incomplete. Only a table of contents and a brief description of the contents were available. A valid assessment of these radio handbooks could be summarized by stating that each may have served its own purpose effectively. Each handbook was distributed for a different purpose.

#### Summary of Chapter IV

1. The lack of records and documents indicates that radio was not an integral part of the curriculum. "It was treated as a step child," commented Dr. Jerome Sacks.<sup>1</sup> The monthly reports of the Board of Education's Proceedings, instituted under Superintendent Hunt, indicated a great deal of radio activity. But a careful analysis points to the fact that the same shows were being produced year after year in the same format and within the same parameters. Little new information was added to the shows

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Sacks, Conversation, November 16, 1990.

that had been produced.

2. The Board's radio division updated some radio programs that had been recorded in prior years, so that the shows conformed to the revised dates of the new school year but the marketing aspects for the shows did not change from year to year. As students were promoted, they often heard the programs as they had on radio for the previous grade level. The upper grade students heard last year's programs with only new introductions aimed at that level.
  
3. At the end of World War II, the educators' attention was directed toward television. A comparison of the dollars available from grants and foundations indicates that radio was not given the opportunity to develop as a supplemental educational medium as was television. In the first year of the college programs for television, more money was spent on equipment and program development than in the first five years of radio. The first television grant from outside sources in 1952 was for \$160,000, whereas the first budget for radio in 1937 was \$1,235.<sup>1</sup> The radio budget reached \$9,354 in 1939<sup>2</sup> and remained about the same for the next five years. The radio budget, in its best

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, January, 1937, 645.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June, 1939, 156.

year, prior to the end of World War II, reached above \$45,000.

4. There was some federal assistance for the Radio Council in the form of a writers' project under the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The WPA was a 1935 New Deal program under President Roosevelt's effort to find work for the underemployed.<sup>1</sup> The only other source of federal assistance was the Federal Radio Bureau (FRB) in the early years of radio, but it acted as a clearinghouse for the exchange of scripts. It was not involved with curriculum or program content.

5. From the lack of documentation that was <sup>?</sup> ~~saved~~ <sup>wasn't?</sup>, missing lesson plans, workbooks, and other materials, it appears that few administrators took educational radio seriously. If radio had been given an opportunity to grow and expand to its potential, educators might have made better use of it in the classroom.

6. The Radio Division did its own evaluation. The original data from the teachers is not available for inspection and analysis. The self evaluation by the Radio Division on the use of radio in the classroom was not confirmed or denied by an independent source. Only teachers who responded to

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<sup>1</sup>World Book Encyclopedia, s.v. "New Deal."

the questionnaire were considered. An evaluation in an orderly and logical manner was not available.

7. From 1943 through 1971, WBEZ was on the air only during regular school hours, beginning from about 8:30 to 9:15 A.M. till 3:15 to 4 P.M. Seldom was the station on the air in the evenings. As a supplemental teaching device, radio could have offered reinforcement or enrichment of lessons, and homework help for the students after school hours. It did not, however, address these needs of the students after school.
  
8. Circumstances indicate that the Radio Division had little control over its own mission. This may have contributed to its lack of acceptance in classrooms and by the administration. The Radio Division, from its inception, was always a division of a larger section of the school Board structure. In several monthly reports in the Proceedings, the division was referred to variously as the Radio Division, the Division of Radio and Television, and the Media Division. It was difficult to know what the mission was when the name of the division was changing. The Radio Division or department was moved from Curriculum and Instruction to Bureau of Instructional Materials and then back to Curriculum.

9. Just as radio was gaining some acceptance, World War II brought about a scarcity of construction materials, the Director of the Radio Division, Harold W. Kent went into active military service. The Acting Director, George Jennings, did an outstanding job during the War years with the limited resources available. There was a lack of interest, and funds were not allocated for expansion or research to show that radio was effective in the classroom.
  
10. The problems of Chicago's radio division were echoed throughout the nation. As indicated by NAEB Newsletters, there were over 130 stations on the air in 1939. More than 75 of these left the air or changed formats by 1970.<sup>1</sup> The Wisconsin and Ohio systems still exist, having changed from a pure educational format to a mix of more popular programs.
  
11. The rationale behind the development of the Board's station was understandable. The concept of having radio programs as a supplement to classroom work may never have been fully developed. A broadcast schedule of approximately 8:30 A.M. till 4:00 P.M. allowed students to listen to the radio only during school hours. This

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<sup>1</sup>NAEB, Papers, State of Wisconsin Archives. RBH 1, 1-4.

meant that regular class time had to be taken to listen to broadcasts. Had the broadcast day been extended, the students might have listened to lessons during off-school hours for reinforcement and comprehension.

12. A shortcoming of the Radio Council was its failure to develop special programs for radio's exclusive use. The Radio Council followed the lead of the Department of Curriculum in developing programs that fit within the current lesson plans and course objectives. But radio was a new medium, without a good research base to guide the division directors. It was also difficult to present a plan for change that might have fit within the parameters of the school system's bureaucracy.
  
13. There seemed to have been an acceptance on the part of lower-grade teachers of radio's inclusion as a regular part of the school day. This was gleaned from monthly reports in various Proceedings. The programs used for the lower grades were story telling, the reading of books, and music appreciation, all of which fit well into the general curriculum. There were several opportunities to enrich the curriculum of the upper elementary grades with supplemental instruction in the sciences, humanities, and fine arts.

14. The Radio Division started with excellent intentions. The strong leadership of the Radio Division, with Harold W. Kent and George Jennings, helped the radio division move from a dream to a reality. But the mission of the station did falter after World War II. It became somewhat antiquated in a era of rapid technological advancements.
15. From the time WBEZ went on the air in April of 1943 until September of 1971, the programming of the station remained the same. The broadcast hours ranged from about 8:30 A.M. to approximately 4:00 P.M. with little change in program format or operations.
16. In 1971 when Elizabeth Marshall retired, the Radio Division was formally merged with the Television Division and returned to the Bureau of Curriculum.
17. In 1971, to conform to the new National Public Radio (NPR) format and obtain funding under its guidelines, the station format was changed. Educational programming was reduced to a minimum. NPR programs of news, public interest, and information were broadcast throughout the day. The evening schedule included jazz, folk, and traditional music.  
  
The station had attracted a large upscale audience with the NPR morning news and information program "All Things



Considered." This program is often used as part of current events class assignments.

18. The change from an educational program format to a primarily public interest program was completed in about 1973 at WBEZ. This change had fulfilled the projections of Harold W. Kent, the first Director of the Radio Council; I. Keith Tyler, the Ohio Broadcasting director and author; Dick Hull, former President of the NAEB, and Benjamin Cottone, Assistant General Counsel of the FCC. Each had predicted, during the late 1940s, that educational radio, if it was to survive, should consider changing its format to more popular programming.

## CHAPTER V

### ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Based on the available information, radio did not seem to enjoy a prominent place in the esteem of the administrators and teachers of the Chicago Board of Education. In retrospect, it seemed that radio might have been treated as a stepchild by a number of administrators and teachers. The Board of Education's hidden agenda for the Radio Division might have been to promote the Superintendent's policies and special interests via radio. The Superintendent's unwritten policy seemed to include shows on commercial stations that discussed school Board issues.<sup>1</sup> As the public increasingly accepted radio along with its abundance of commercial announcements, the school Board established its own radio outlet. With the granting of the license for WBEZ, the Department of Curriculum had its own means of delivering supplemental instruction to classrooms. It does not, however, appear that educational radio was developed to its fullest potential.

The school system now had a means of virtually instant communication with all the schools by means of special announcements in the mornings before regularly scheduled

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<sup>1</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, various, 1945-1950.

programs and between programs at pre-arranged times.

The basic premise of educational programming on radio might not have been universally understood. Not enough was known about the use of radio to make it a dominant force in the educational learning process. Before World War II, the radio pedagogy was borrowed from existing curricular models. The Radio Division staff was taken from the Curriculum Department staff or from those teachers who had expressed an interest in the new technology. The staff was required to write, produce, and arrange for the distribution of the radio shows.

Newsletters, workbooks and other materials were part of the division's responsibilities. The Radio Division, as part of the Curriculum Department, followed the department's educational guidelines.

By understanding that the Radio Division was part of the Department of Curriculum, the parameters for program content and methods of instruction were established. The converting of existing portions of the curriculum to a radio format had become the Radio Division's major responsibility.

The expansion, reaffirmation, and development of the research needed to perpetuate radio's existence in the classroom became the mission of the national radio conferences. The Radio Council sponsored and played a dominant role in these radio conferences in order to learn what other school boards and universities were doing in the field.

At the conferences, information was exchanged and scripts and transcription were traded. There is a lack of evidence that the results of substantive research was presented. An assessment of the annual meetings suggest that the purpose of the meetings was simply to bring together a group of people with a common interest in educational radio. They seemed to arrange for the trading of programs and discuss operational problems. Research about radio in the classroom seemed not to be a high priority.

The conferences established some parameters for professionalism among radio teachers and offered guidelines for the use of radio in the classroom. It is unfortunate that external factors interfered with the goals and missions of the various associations. The lack of funding and administrative support, the War shortages of materials, and the excitement over television were among the external factors. The National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB), Association for Educational Radio (AER), and the Federal Radio Council (FRC) attempted to professionalize the educational radio effort, but they did not seem to have much success.

There were a few educators -- Levering Tysen, I. Keith Tyler, Norman Woelfel, William Levenson, and Frank E. Hill -- who had studied the effects of radio in the classroom and its potential uses as a method of supplementing the educational process. The external circumstances that arose were beyond the control of the educators and the few

researchers of radio in the classroom. These external circumstances may have deterred the research from being fully developed.

What research there was that evaluated the effectiveness of educational radio broadcasts often produced mixed results. There were a number of questions that were not addressed with proper research procedures. This number can be segmented into four categories: the school administration, the teachers [who had the responsibility in the classroom], internal factors [such as the selection and preparation of the types of programs and supplemental materials], and the external environment [as mentioned: the War shortages, and a lack of funding and administrative support].

Some school administrators, along with Superintendents Johnson and Willis, may have been somewhat in favor of educational radio. The effects of broadcasts were debated in various professional journals, but only as an experimental device and not as an integral part of the curriculum.

Not enough validated research had been published on the benefits of radio in the classroom to firmly establish radio as a useful part of the curriculum.

The Chicago Board of Education was forced to use radio for educational purposes during the school closing in 1937 due to the polio epidemic. The Superintendent Johnson decided to continue the experiment with the formation of the Chicago Radio Council. However, budgets were lean and

available personnel was at a minimum. The acceptance of radio by the classroom teachers was passive even among those who had receivers. Whether radio was perceived to be a benefit in the classrooms cannot be determined. Any research that may have been performed on the topic does not seem to be available. Also, few workbooks or lesson plans used with the broadcasts were available for evaluation.

An early classroom survey of the effects of radio on two groups of students was published in the Chicago Principals' Monthly Newsletter in 1938. However, neither the title, or affiliation of the author Harry L. Tate's was listed nor was his methodology clearly stated. The conclusions were not presented in scientific terms, nor did the article offer any conclusive evidence for or against radio education. His opinions were somewhat negative observations. Among his observations were that radio had not developed a format for teaching, it was a poor technology, and needed more time to develop in the classroom before it might be considered as a part of the lesson plan. Mr. Tate also indicated that not enough was known about radio and that it had a long way to go before being accepted.

The support educational radio received from the administration could be interpreted, aside from classroom use, as based on other benefits. Many vocational students were being trained in the operation of a radio station. Young performers had an opportunity to learn the radio trade by

writing and producing various types of programs. The key benefit to the school Board was the publicity materials that the Radio Division generated to promote the passage of school board related bond issues. The media contacts of the Radio Division seemed to be above average and were used to perpetuate the Board's policies.

Teachers were reluctant to use radio between 1939 and 1942, as is evidenced by the small numbers that actually used it.<sup>2</sup> In addition, not all classrooms had radios, and for those that did, some needed repairs. Another recurring item in the monthly reports of the Radio Division was reference to the number of school visits. These visits acquainted teachers with the radio workbooks, and listed the number of repairs Radio Division had performed on existing receivers.

Several internal and external factors might have influenced the decline of radio in the late 1940s.

First may have been the introduction of television in 1946. This may have caused radio's position to be relegated to a lesser place on the list of priorities. As WBEZ went on the air, teachers seemed to be looking toward television as the prime media learning device. Television had entered the curriculum with grants and other support services.

An effort to instruct teachers in the use of radio and its contribution to the classroom function was made by the

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<sup>2</sup>Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings, various, 1939-1949.

Radio Division. A core course in teacher educational radio was added to the Chicago Teachers' College curriculum. However, it seems that the insertion of this one course was not enough to increase interest. The course was taught only in the summer session; only a week or two of the eight week course was devoted to radio programs and classroom work.<sup>1</sup> Guest speakers lectured about the technical aspects of radio, but this meant that less time was available for discussion of the practical application of radio programs to classroom instruction.

Another factor may have been the lack of vigorous support by the General Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Curriculum for radio lessons. It appears that there may have been a fine line between freedom in the classroom and suggesting that new technology might be used in the classroom. This fine line might have prevented administrators from making any type of suggestion that radio be used in the classroom. The Superintendent's office may not have offered radio a great deal of classroom support. In contrast, television did receive the support from the Superintendent's office between 1945 and 1960. The Superintendent's office personnel seemed to be active in appearing on local television programs discussing school Board policy. They helped raised the funds needed for the new medium among outside sources. These activities were not associated

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



with the primary assignment of the Council which was to prepare the current curriculum for use on radio.

The third factor was internal: materials such as workbooks, the programs themselves, and encouragement of the teachers to use radio as part of their lesson plans. It was not possible to find a wide selection of lesson plans and workbooks. Only three were available, one from the pre-Radio Council era and two from the Radio Council. It is clear that the workbooks were a by-product of the existing curriculum.

Radio programs and materials, according to NAEB Newsletters, were freely exchanged. The assumption seemed to be that programs would be interchangeable even with school districts in other states. Other school districts seemed to have the same general curricular philosophy. This could be supported by the exchange programs of the Federal Radio Council and the NAEB.

External factors had more of an influence on the demise of radio than internal indifference. Although radio's popularity was a commercial success, less time was available for educational and informational programs. More air time was sold commercially. The FCC tried to help by adopting the utility based rule for radio: radio stations would be required to operate "in the public good, necessity and convenience." This FCC regulation did foster a number of cultural and educational programs, but educators were not immediately responsive to the situation.

Commercials became a major source of income for radio stations and networks. With this new revenue, the networks began to flourish. The programs that did not attract a large audience were replaced with more popular shows. About this time, the rating services, among which was the Hooper Audience Rating System, began to measure the size of audiences for the stations and advertisers. This rating base told the stations how many people listened to a particular program. The advertising sales departments of stations were responsive to this growing audience and could establish higher advertising rates based upon its increasing size. A number of educational shows were cancelled during the War years. Faced with a shortage of talent, the stations initially kept the educational shows, but only until commercial replacements were found.

Just after World War II, the population shift from city to suburbs had a profound effect on educational radio. Before the War, many educational shows were scheduled in the early morning hours, but this period of time now emerged with a prime audience and was now called "morning drive." The affluent audience was largely male, owned homes, and had white collar or management positions. Early morning radio became a prime market for advertising homes, autos, and major purchase items. When driving in the auto to work, the audience was captive, provided the program content was acceptable.

Another external factor was the FCC change of FM band

frequencies among commercial and educational stations. Along with the establishment of an educational allocation at the far end of the FM frequency band, the FCC gave greater flexibility to educational stations. This eventually allowed educational stations to broadcast a more general program schedule, which in turn led to the establishing of the National Public Radio (NPR) in 1965.

In the beginning stages of educational radio, external factors played a small but critical role in the development of the industry. The technology developed at a rapid rate, and major corporations had a vested interest in all phases of broadcasting. Several companies that owned radio stations manufactured radio receivers. The station owners were operating a business, and the primary goal of the business was to show a profit.

There is only one avenue of income for a radio station: selling advertising. William S. Paley, the late founder and longtime Chairman of CBS, used radio to sell his family's cigars. David Sarnoff, who held a similar position at NBC, operated two radio networks, the Red and the Blue divisions. These divisions programmed different formats to attract two different demographic profiles of listeners that in turn appealed to two different types of advertisers. The entire NBC radio operation was owned by RCA, the largest manufacturer of radio receivers, transmitters, and parts.

A manufacturer of radio receivers and equipment was

General Electric, owner of KDKA, in Pittsburgh, the first commercial station in the nation. Westinghouse, another radio receiver manufacturer, was also in the radio station equipment business. The telephone company tried to enter the broadcasting business, but the corporations currently owning stations held that the phone company would have a monopoly since they already owned the phone lines over which radio programs were transmitted from city to city.

If World War II had been delayed, or not taken place, there might have been an opportunity for educational radio to develop. However, the fact remains that physical equipment, technological development, and the engineering talent needed to help radio growth at this critical stage was directed toward the War effort.

An additional external factor was the development and testing of television in the basement of the Chicago Theatre in 1938, and the introduction of this new medium at the New York World's Fair of 1939. Television, to this point only envisioned in science fiction novels or in comic books, was now a reality.

In retrospect, mainly due to the external factors, radio did not seem to have an opportunity to develop equally as television. The diversion of talent, equipment, and technology to serve the War effort, coupled with accelerated advances in television technology, contributed to radio's rapid demise.

There seemed to be a lack of time to expose radio fully to the primary user market of classroom teachers. If time had been available, teachers might have had a better understanding of the use and benefits of the medium as a supplemental classroom device. There seemed to be few opportunities for the development of a pedagogical base intended solely for radio. Radio depended upon and used existing curriculum formats and pedagogy. In hindsight it is easy to determine that an attempt should have been made to develop for radio its own pedagogy and style, rather than trying to adopt classroom curriculum into a radio format.

#### Recommendations for Additional Research

A documentation of curriculum use on radio in the pioneering days could be a basis for a comparison of curriculum techniques and systems designs of lesson plans and curricula covering all phases of education. It would be interesting to note if any substantial changes in radio curricula were made after the acceptance of Ralph W. Tyler's book, Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, in 1949.

As John Naisbitt pointed out in his book, Megatrends, we are turning from an industrial society to an informational society. Training has become a key factor in corporate operations. Increased emphasis may be placed on new modes of training and re-training. Radio might be sought as a possible form of training. A possible research project could explore the use of radio for corporate education and training.

Dean T. Jamison and Emile G. McAnany, in their book Radio Education and Development,<sup>1</sup> have documented that radio has played an important part in the development of children's learning skills in underdeveloped countries. Specialized subjects were broadcast, with lesson plans delivered to the schools before classes. In these countries, few teachers possess a full range of pedagogical skills. However, with radio, a teacher of somewhat limited skill has an unlimited amount of supplemental assistance. Another research project could compare the systems, which have worked successfully in Africa, Asia, South America and the South Pacific islands. The project might also consider how radio could be used in rural regions or with underprivileged segments of the population in the United States.

The late S.K. Wilson, S.J., President of Loyola University of Chicago, was a active member of the National Committee of Education by Radio, having joined the group in 1931. In 1938, President Wilson formed a Radio Educational Committee at Loyola. From his letters, available in the archives at Loyola University, it is clear that his enthusiasm for radio was strong. It would be of interest to the existing university owned stations to study Father Wilson's thoughts on radio to establish his philosophy of radio. He was one of the first to advocate approval of commercials within an educational program, and to put together a committee to study

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<sup>1</sup>Jamison and McAnany, Radio Education Development.

the benefits of radio to a university.

A comparative study could be undertaken of the use of education on radio in Chicago with station WHA in Madison, WI, and WHO in Cleveland, OH. The Wisconsin radio system was one of the more enterprising systems in the country. It was cited by the National Radio Advisory Council as exemplary in its programming and educational innovations. The Cleveland system, headed by William B. Levenson, was another of the early systems that gained national recognition for excellence. Mr. Levenson's book, Teaching Through Radio, was published in 1945. Few documents on the subject of radio education, methodology or course content have been published since that time.

Another study, which would be difficult due to the lack of data, would evaluate the lesson plans, curriculum styles, and philosophy of the early radio education pioneers. This could be updated and compared with today's guidelines. It is obvious that the philosophy of education and the curriculum standards have changed along with methods of instruction over the years. A comparison between radio lesson plans and course content of the period between 1929 and 1939 and the plans and content of today would offer a striking contrast.

### Results and Conclusions

One of the conclusions that can be accepted is that educational radio did have a place in the curriculum. However,

it did not have the opportunity to develop fully as a supplemental teaching system. This failure might have been based on external factors, one of which was that technology developed faster than educational research.

To cite an example: just as AM receivers became affordable, because of mass production in response to general public demand, the FCC allocated a portion of the FM frequency band for educational use. The FCC had encouraged [by directive] all educational stations to relocate to FM. Just as the FM band became accepted by the general public and receivers were made affordable, television became generally available for educational use. Private and federal funding became readily available for television to spur its growth. Radio had never enjoyed the availability of such federal and private funding.

In contrast, research has shown that in third world nations and in some remote rural areas, radio has proved to be an excellent supplemental teaching aid. This type of research did not appear until the late 1960s. Most of the results of the studies can be found in the book by Dean T. Jamison and Emile G. McAnany,<sup>1</sup> and in United Nations publications on radio education.<sup>2</sup>

The Radio Division of the Department of Curriculum was operated on a small budget, with limited staff and limited

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<sup>1</sup>Jamison and McAnany, Radio Education and Development.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.,



support from the Board of Education. It appears that the major objective of the Radio Division was to offer the existing course of study in a radio format. This stifled the development of the Radio Division as a creative source. The division's creativity seemed to be limited to the Department of Curriculum's guidelines and the instructions of the Superintendent.

There are a few examples of the use of the new technology to train students in a vocational program. A cadre of radio repair staff developed basic skill training for an FCC first class engineering license. Students with an interest in writing and performing for radio had the opportunity. This was the method used by the Radio Council. The creative atmosphere seemed to be acceptable.<sup>1</sup> The senior radio staff was small, allowing the students to use their imaginations and present their final efforts as a finished radio program.<sup>2</sup> Most student produced programs were broadcast. This training seemed to be a practical learning experience for the students, although it was only a by-product of the Radio Division's original mission.

Conversion from an educational to a National Public Radio (NPR) station was the only alternative for the station to pursue if it wanted to survive as a viable part of the Board of Education. However, the NPR format was not

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<sup>1</sup>Graham, Conversation November 18 1990.

<sup>2</sup>Graham, Conversation. November 21 1990.

commercial enough to attract the number of sponsors needed to break even. The station also would have to made an effort to attract underwriters and subscribers. Underwriters have no control over program content, but can select the type of program that they wish to support. The option of soliciting underwriters were not available until 1965, when the FCC regulations were changed to create the NPR network. In 1971, WBEZ became part of the NPR program format.

Programming after the conversion to NPR was educational in theory, but not in a manner practical for use in schools. The news broadcasts are lengthy, featuring in depth reporting by international teams of reporters. Programs are information-oriented and can be used as a supplement to education of a broad general nature, but no longer are specific grades addressed. The lower grades are no longer the focus of the broadcast day.

If there were some shortcomings of the Chicago Radio Council, they could be considered a lack of (1) reliable research, (2) a history of documents that could shed some light on the effectiveness of radio, and (3) some research to indicate if radio was accepted in the classroom.

Educational radio may have some success in other parts of the world, especially in third world nations and in rural communities. These areas can use radio to bring into the classroom many resources locally unavailable. Consider that in Chicago, a class can actually visit the Art Institute of

Chicago, The Museum of Science and Industry, the Shedd Aquarium and other places of interest. In remote rural areas or third world nations where television may not readily be available, radio might be a significant help to the classroom teacher.

Educational radio was effective for a short period of time, within a narrow spectrum. It may be possible that with additional research, and the use of modern technological innovation, educational radio may once again find a place in the realm of educational learning devices.

## APPENDICES

Appendix i	1943 Schedule	1
Appendix ii	Five year History	2
Appendix iii	New programs 1943	3
Appendix iv	Handbook- Chicago	4-6

1943 Schedule

NAEB NEWS LETTER.....PAGE 6.....OCTOBER 1, 1943

CARLO OPERA PERFORMANCES. AT TEN O'CLOCK, WNYC SIGNS-OFF --AFTER PRESENTING 15 HOURS OF DIVERSIFIED AND INTERESTING PROGRAM FEATURES --A TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHEDULE "FOR THE INSTRUCTION, ENLIGHTENMENT, ENTERTAINMENT, RECREATION, AND WELFARE OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY".

WBEZ - "THE RADIO VOICE OF THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

STATION WBEZ BEGAN ITS FIRST SCHOOL YEAR OF FULL-TIME BROADCASTING FOR USE IN THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH. THE STATION WILL BE ON THE AIR THREE AND A HALF HOURS EVERY SCHOOL DAY, FROM 10:30 A.M. UNTIL 2:15 P.M., UNTIL OCTOBER 4TH, WHEN THE STATION WILL SIGN OFF AT 2:30 P.M.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE - PROGRAMS FOR IN-SCHOOL LISTENING HEARD OVER WBEZ ONLY

*DESTINATION UNLIMITED	MONDAYS	10:30 A.M.
BEFORE THE DOCTOR COMES	MONDAYS	10:45 A.M.
LEST WE FORGET	MONDAYS	11:00 A.M.
*LANGUAGES IN ACTION	MONDAYS	11:30 A.M.
*THE MOTHER GOOSE LADY	TUESDAYS	10:30 A.M.
THE THOUSAND MILLION	TUESDAYS	11:00 A.M.
*NUMBERS AT WORK	TUESDAYS	11:30 A.M.
*NEW WORLDS FOR OLD	WEDNESDAYS	10:30 A.M.
CHINA AND INDIA SPEAK	WEDNESDAYS	10:45 A.M.
PAN-AMERICAN NEWS	WEDNESDAYS	11:00 A.M.
*LET'S TELL A STORY	WEDNESDAYS	11:30 A.M.
LIFE FOR WILDLIFE	THURSDAYS	10:30 A.M.
CHINA	THURSDAYS	11:00 A.M.
*BY FREEDOM'S LIGHT	THURSDAYS	11:30 A.M.
*CONTACT	FRIDAYS	10:30 A.M.

\* INDICATES REPEAT BROADCAST OF PROGRAMS HEAR ON STATION WIND, 560 KC; WJJD, 1160 KC; AND WBEZ, 42.5 MC.

WKAR ADDS AP NEWS SERVICE

TO GIVE THE NOSE COMPLETE INFORMATION POSSIBLE, WKAR HAS NOW INSTALLED A DIRECT WIRE FROM PRESS ASSOCIATION, INC., THE RADIO SERVICE OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS. NEWS BROADCASTS WILL BE GIVEN ON A REGULAR SCHEDULE EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY BEGINNING OCTOBER 1.

FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS NEWS HAS BEEN BROADCAST THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF THE LANSING STATE JOURNAL BY DIRECT WIRE FROM THE NEWSROOM. THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS VERY SATISFACTORY BUT BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY OF TRANSPORTATION IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE MORE THAN THREE NEWS BROADCASTS PER DAY. WITH THE TELETYPE INSTALLED IN OUR OWN STUDIOB THE NEWS CAN BE GIVEN AS SOON AS RECEIVED.

THE NEWS WILL BE HEARD EVERY HOUR, AT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE HOUR, EXCEPT AT 10:00 A.M. AND AT 12:00 WHEN IT WILL BE ON THE HOUR. TWO SPECIAL FIFTEEN MINUTE NEWS SUMMARIES ARE SCHEDULED AT 11:15 AND AT 6:30 EACH DAY. THESE BROADCASTS WILL MAKE THE NEWS SERVICE OF THIS STATION AS COMPLETE AS CAN BE OBTAINED.

Five Year History

NAES NEWS LETTER.....Page 4.....March 1, 1943

In behalf of the WNAD staff, Miss Hawk stated, "We consider it an important effort at WNAD to build a farm program for farm people in Oklahoma. Through a service of news and information to farmers we hope to reach a wider listening audience for WNAD, Oklahoma's educational station."

FIVE YEARS OF RADIO

By William H. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, of Chicago:

Just five years ago this week, the Radio Council put its first broadcast on the air. Since then it has done an average of four hundred programs every year....programs planned, written and produced for classroom use.

Now we are living in war-times. Our entire educational system is geared to the war effort. Not only is this true in the high schools but in the elementary schools as well. Our educational picture has changed. Stress upon subject matter has been changed. No longer is it sufficient to teach the history of yesterday, we must train the youngsters to live in the world of tomorrow.

Aviation, mathematics, languages, geography and social sciences, these subjects are important now and will be more important as our elementary youngsters grow into high school and then into maturity. For these are the foundation upon which our elementary students will base their lives, and in basing their lives on this foundation do they not become the very basis of our city, state and nation?

The new radio program of this semester, the WORLD OF WINGS series; the NUMBERS AT WORK programs; the THOUSAND MILLION social science and geography series; the LANGUAGES IN ACTION programs have been planned, written and will be produced with but one purpose in mind...to supplement the work of the teacher in the subject mentioned above.

CHICAGO RADIO SPRING PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED

Aviation, its history, the science which makes it possible, its increasing effect on the world, and the story of its first inventors and fliers, will be told in three broadcast series for use in the classrooms of the Chicago Public Schools via station WIND during the February-June semester. George Jennings, Acting Director of the Radio Council, Board of Education school broadcast department, announced that the new aviation series when it started on February 17.

"WORLD OF WINGS" is the title of all three series. "New Worlds for Old," the history of transportation and communication, will be broadcast Wednesday station WIND, 1:30-1:45 p.m., for the students of the middle elementary grades. On Thursdays, same time and station, "Contact", the scientific side of aviation, will be broadcast. "Destination Unlimited," the story of the aviation's inventors and fliers, will be broadcast on Fridays throughout the semester, also at 1:30-1:45 p.m., on station WIND.

Schools will receive pictures, flight maps, north pole projection maps, transport plane menus, the informational material from all the major airlines and from all U. S. Air Corps and government agencies. These are to be displayed during the radio broadcast and studied later.

New Programs - 1943

NAEB NEWS LETTER.....Page 5.....March 1, 1943

Other new radio series to be broadcast by the Radio Council include "Numbers at Work," to be broadcast Mondays, station WIND, 1:30-1:45 p.m., a series designed to motivate students to study mathematics courses now and elect them in high school; and "Languages in Action," heard Tuesdays, 1:30-1:45 p.m., also a motivation series toward understanding of languages and their study.

For kindergarten and primary listeners "We Visit Story-Land," will be broadcast each Monday, station WJJD, 2:14-2:30 p.m., On Tuesdays, same time and station, Let's Tell a Story, a series of dramatizations from books for students in the upper elementary grades, will be broadcast.

The Thousand Million, geographical and social science background on the United Nations, will be broadcast on Wednesdays, station WJJD, 2:15-2:30 p.m., for the upper elementary and high school students. That's News to Me, a student news commentary, will be broadcast on Thursdays, same time and station.

Battle of Books, quiz program for upper elementary students, to be heard each Friday, station WJJD, 2:15-2:30 p.m., presents teams from two schools each week in a contest of questions on children's books. This program is produced in cooperation with the Board of Education Library.

Four Radio Council programs for high school students will continue during the second semester. They are:

YOUNG AMERICA ANSWERS, high school current events quiz, heard on Saturdays, WBBM, 12:30-1:00 p.m.,

HIGH SCHOOL STUDIO PARY, variety show of student talent, also broadcast each Saturday, station WHAQ, 11:30-12:00 p.m.,

YOUR JOB IN REVIEW, interviews with executives of various trades, profession and U. S. armed service branches, will be broadcast on Thursdays, station WJWC, 4:45-5:00 p.m. Students of careers classes of Chicago Public High Schools submit questions to the Council to guide the speakers on this program.

PREP SPORTS, student news commentary, is broadcast each Thursday, station WAAF, 1:15-1:30 p.m.

U. K. SERIES PLANS FOR KENTUCKY POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT

Plans for a comprehensive economic development to take place in Kentucky after the war, are contained in a series of 32 weekly radio broadcasts over station WHAS, Louisville, which started Sunday, February 14. The programs, arranged by the University of Kentucky, and broadcast from its studios in Lexington, feature talks by University and other experts on specialized subjects germane to Kentucky's future industrial development, including manpower, mineral wealth, transportation facilities, taxes, schools, forests, tourist possibilities, agriculture, and technology.

Dr. H. L. Donovan, president of the University, opened the series, and Dr.



Handbook-Chicago

BROADCAST HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS' USE

CHICAGO IS MY HOME

A SOCIAL STUDIES - ART PROGRAM

for

UPPER ELEMENTARY and HIGH SCHOOL GRADES

\* \* \*

SCHEDULE

MONDAYS	Station WBEZ (FM-42.5 mc)	11:00 - 11:15 P.M.
WEDNESDAYS	Station WJJD (1160 kc)	2:15 - 2:30 P.M.
FRIDAYS	Station WBEZ (FM-42.5 mc)	1:45 - 2:00 P.M.

\* \* \*

This Program Presented

in Cooperation with

The ART DEPARTMENT - Chicago Public Schools

and the

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

\* \* \*

2nd Semester, 1945 - 1946

RADIO COUNCIL - CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BROADCAST HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS' USE

Handbook-ChicagoW B E Z - FREQUENCY MODULATION - 42.5 mc

WBEZ - "The Radio Voice of the Chicago Public Schools," is owned by the Board of Education and operated by the Radio Council under license from the Federal Communications Commission. During this semester WBEZ will be on the air from 9:15 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. each school day and may be heard on Frequency Modulation (FM) receivers at 42.5 mc.

For a complete SEMESTER SCHEDULE of WBEZ write or call the offices of the RADIO COUNCIL at 228 North La Salle Street, Chicago 1, Illinois - Telephone DEArborn 7801 Extension 251.

The Radio Council publishes a weekly PROGRAM BULLETIN which is sent to each school with the Superintendent's Bulletin. This publication lists all Radio Council WBEZ programs for the current week, as well as programs recommended for classroom use which are heard on other stations and networks.

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C H I C A G O      P U B L I C      S C H O O L S

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. . . . .

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Handbook-ChicagoC H I C A G O I S M Y H O M E

The Chicago Historical Society and the Art Department are cooperating with the Radio Council in the presentation of a group of eight programs in a new series for upper elementary and high school grades - CHICAGO IS MY HOME. Not only do these programs supplement the Course of Study for Fifth and Eighth Grades, but they may be used as motivation in the ART EXHIBITION sponsored by the Chicago Historical Society and the Art Department.

• • •

Handbook Prepared By

GEORGE JENNINGS  
and

ELIZABETH E. MARSHALL

• • •

S C H E D U L E

MONDAYS	Station WBEZ (FM-42.5 mc)	11:00 - 11:15 A.M.
WEDNESDAYS	Station WJJD (1160 kc)	2:15 - 2:30 P.M.
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<u>Program Title</u>	<u>Mondays</u>	<u>Wednesdays</u>	<u>Fridays</u>
• FORT DEARBORN	MARCH 4	MARCH 6	MARCH 8
• THE CHICAGO RIVER	MARCH 11	MARCH 13	MARCH 15
• COLORFUL OLD CHICAGO	MARCH 18	MARCH 20	MARCH 22
• RAIL HUB OF AMERICA	MARCH 25	MARCH 27	MARCH 29
• THE CHICAGO FIRE	APRIL 1	APRIL 3	APRIL 5
• CHICAGO BUILDS	APRIL 8	APRIL 10	APRIL 12
• PROGRESS ON DISPLAY	APRIL 15	APRIL 17	APRIL 26
• CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES	APRIL 22	APRIL 24	MAY 10

• NOTE: Programs started tie in directly with exhibits on display at the Chicago Historical Society. Your students are invited to visit them both before and after the broadcasts.

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Additional copies of this HANDBOOK may be obtained at the Offices of the RADIO COUNCIL, the ART DEPARTMENT, or the HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Teachers are requested to call the attention of their students to the program CHICAGO STORY heard on WGN Thursdays at 9:30 - 10:00 P.M.

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## VITA

Jerry J. Field was born is a native Chicago and educated in the Chicago Public School system. During the Korean War, he was a member of Gen. Mark Clark's Army Field Forces as a staff instructor and trainer. Returning to Chicago, he obtained a Bachelors of Science degree in Commerce at Roosevelt University. He later earned an interdepartmental M.B.A. degree from Roosevelt University in 1976.

His first professional position was as the Midwest director of Advertising and Publicity for Walt Disney's film distribution company, Buena Vista. In 1965 he re-joined the Chicago Sun-Times as a member of Herman Kogan's staff for the new TV station WFLD-TV. After nine years with the station, having been a writer/coordinator with the "Bill Veeck Show" and a member of management, he left to freelance as a marketing consultant.

In 1978, he became a radio television columnist and department manager for the Lerner Newspapers. His duties included writing a weekly radio and television column.

His professional credits include more than a dozen papers prepared for a client base that includes I.B.M. (Marketing Division-Chicago), Distron Corporation (Burger

King), Associated Booking Corporation (Fred C. Williamson) and the Jupiter Corporation (Gerrold Wexler). His academic credits cover a wide range of teaching assignments: 14 years at the Walter E. Heller School of Business Administration of Roosevelt University three years with the Federal Express Education program; and three years as an instructor in the Communications Department at Loyola University. Since 1989, he has been on the staff at Northeastern Illinois University as an instructor in the marketing department and as acting executive director of the Business Service Bureau.

His professional affiliations include the Chicago Press Club, eight years as a board member and its 34th President, as well as a board membership with the Society of Professional Journalists, Chicago Press Veterans, Illinois Freedom of Information Council, National Studies Center for Freedom of Information at Loyola University, American Indian Center, and various charities.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Jerry J. Field has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education (Ed. D.).

4/18/91  
Date

  
Director's Signature