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PANEL: RADIO IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 26, 2016

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The Panel met in the Library of Congress West Dining Room, 101 Independence Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C., at 1:30 p.m., Bill Siemering, Panel Chair, presiding.

PANEL MEMBERS

BILL SIEMERING, Panel Chair; Developing Radio Partners

DAVID GOODMAN, University of Melbourne

JOY HAYES, University of Iowa

ALEX KUPFER, New York University

RESPONDENT

JACK MITCHELL, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Developing Radio Partners Bill Siemering.....	3
Sounding out the Good Neighbor Policy; Brave New World Broadcasts and the Political Aesthetics of the New Deal Joy Hayes.....	6
Hearing "Immigrants All" David Goodman.....	23
Extension Programming on the Network Air: NBC's The Land-Grant College Radio Hour Alex Kupfer.....	43
Respondents Jack Mitchell.....	66
Comment Period	75

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(1:31 p.m.)

CHAIR SIEMERING: Good afternoon. I'll try to start on radio time. This session is Radio in the Public Service. So if you're looking for something else, why this isn't it.

Actually, Radio in the Public Service is really what we're all about. I mean, so it could include really everything that we're doing.

But we have a distinguished Panel that will give us particular areas of their specialty.

Just as a way of beginning, when I hopped in the cab to come over here this morning, of course, they were listening to Morning Edition. Because the cab drivers in Washington, D.C., most of them are from Ethiopia or Africa and they're always listening to public radio. I would say nine times out of ten.

I generally take Metro, but I needed to take a taxi this morning. And the driver was from Eritrea. And he was talking about what was on

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Morning Edition, he was talking about his life and how important it was.

And I had met an Indian businessman and he said, you have no idea how important public radio is to the immigrant community. And he said, this is how we learn about the cultural life of America.

So that's radio in the public service, if you will. In ways, there are just millions in countless ways that we can document how it's changed lives. And it begins early.

Sally Kane just told me at lunch today that she was talking to a friend in a grocery store and she walked out, well, you can tell the story because it was your story.

MS. KANE: Well, I watched a little 5-year-old girl do a double take when I spoke up to my neighbor and she disappeared with her mom around the corner. And she came back around the corner and marched up to me and said, I know you. And she said, you were in my car.

I was telling Bill that she didn't say,

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you know, I've had some exposure to what you're doing. She knew me, and I was in her car. So the intimacy of that moment.

CHAIR SIEMERING: And it's a wonderful story. And an example of how early listeners become to identify with public radio.

MS. KANE: Yes, she was 5.

CHAIR SIEMERING: Yes. One of my earliest encounters with public radio is when I went to a two-room country school outside of Madison. And we listened to the Wisconsin School of the Air

So I learned about science, nature, music, art, social studies, all by radio. And so my first education was with radio, in that sense. And I learned that radio was a source of information, education and imagination.

And we'll be talking today about some of those examples of educational radio on, not the Wisconsin School of the Air, but anyway, our first speaker is Joy Hayes. And she's studied radio, cultural history of radio and the history of

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broadcasting in the United States and Mexico.

And some of her current recent work is on what U.S. Radio offers as a counter interpretation of the War of the World's broadcast and examines the performance of White middle-class family life in the serial, One Man's Family. How many remember One Man's Family?

And she's currently writing on the construction of the radio body in the Howard Stern Show. And researching radio's role in the New Deal cultural and social policy.

So she's published a number of works and distinguish work in both Latin American, Mexico and the United States. Joy.

MS. HAYES: Thank you very much. Let me get my power point here.

Okay, I think like some other presenters are, what we're actually going to present today is perhaps a little different than the original title that we had in the book there.

But I am going to be talking about Radio

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Education and the Good Neighbor Policy. And with a focus on a particular program, which is called, Brave New World.

And this is one of the pieces of publicity that they put. That they created for the show.

This was broadcasted between November 1937 and April 1938. It was produced by the Office of Education, which was part of the Department of Interior with the U.S. Government and in cooperation with the Pan-American Union and CBS. So it was broadcasted Monday evenings over the CBS National Radio Network.

It's a program that was really designed, well, it had really accomplishing a number of things. Given the fact that it was employing WPA relief workers, it was doing a number of things.

But the sort of ideological project was to teach the American people to appreciate and to sympathize with Latin Americans as part of the Good Neighbor Policy.

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I'm not sure the visuals of this poster capture that exactly. It's more of a, kind of an electrified ring around South America there.

But anyway, the program consisted of sort of a, I don't know that you can see this very well, but programs that dealt with the early history, the colonial history and then leading up to sort of the nation--building period.

And then some programs that dealt more with issues of interdependence between the U.S. and Latin America. Issues of economics.

And then moving into more sort of cultural issues. Cultural trends in Latin America and that period.

So it had a -- and the style was historical dramatization. It's sort of like the Cavalcade style of kind of the sort of, you know, kind of glorious sort of march through history. But with a little more, with those sort of little excerpts. Little colorful dramatized vignettes sort of within that.

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So what I want to do is talk about how this program represented Latin America. And if I have time, I'll talk a little bit about some of the listener responses, because there is actually a really pretty significant number of letters written in response to the program available at the National Archives.

This is on the one hand really sort of a combination of really ancient research that I did as a graduate student. And research that I did yesterday.

So it's going to be an interesting mixture. So I'm hoping I can keep up with my power points. My mind and the power points will be on the same page, but I'm not convinced that's going to happen.

But what I'm going to try to do is just give a little bit of background to this unique radio project, right. That involved the combination of New Deal government agencies with commercial radio networks to disseminate education programming.

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I'm going to talk just a little bit about that, because my colleague David Goodman is going to go into that a little bit more in his presentation.

And also a little bit of background on Good Neighbor Policy. And then look into the sort of the key themes in the show and something about the aesthetics of the show as well.

So this, and like I say, I won't go into this in very much detail. But there was a Federal Radio Education Committee that was created as sort of the fallout from the call for reserving more space for educational broadcasting.

And this committee was designed to help disseminate more educational programing over the commercial networks. And also do a lot of other things as well. That's kind of what I'm focusing on.

It required the -- sort of the basic sort of material means that it used were WPA allocations. Money through the Office of Education. And then of

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course the networks donated time and, mostly time.

And the Office of Education, and the sort of two main agencies that were super productive in radio were the Office of Education and the Federal Theatre Project Radio Division. And they did really disseminate programing, dozens of programs over the nation networks that got millions of dollars of air time.

Now, the way this government and network cooperation worked, is that William Boutwell was the head of the radio division of the Office of Education. And he and his, sort of people in the Office of Education, came up with a number of ideas for programs.

And then they brought them to this committee that included representatives from the networks and other sort of learned people that were brought together.

And in the case of CBS, that representative was Edward R. Murrow, who came to the advisory committee. And he chose, you know,

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they brought like 20 ideas and he chose three or four that his network, that he thought his network could help produce.

So this is kind of, the division of labor was the Office of Education, hired the script writers and the researchers and they produced the shows. And then CBS offered the studios and the production equipment. And obviously the air time was the big thing.

And there's kind of some interesting interaction and overlap between the producers that came from the Office of Education and the producers that were at the networks. And that wasn't obviously always a wonderfully happy situation.

So you kind of get a sense of the type of cooperation this is. That the networks have sort of fundamental say over what's going to be, what they think is going to be a viable programming.

There is approval throughout the process. They choose the air time. So for example, this Brave New World was broadcast at 10:30 East

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Coast time on Monday night.

They also had built up a lot of interaction with the schools. And of course most school kids couldn't stay up to listen to it at that time, so you clearly CBS was doing what was best for them and not necessarily what was best for disseminating the material there.

So there's a couple of ways, I mean sort of polar opposite ways to think about this kind of cooperation. On the one hand you could look at it as the New Deal government sort of blackmailing the commercial networks into disseminating New Deal propaganda.

On the other hand, you can look at it as the New Deal government essentially subsidizing the education departments of the commercial networks and helping them to do what they were required by law to do. Which was broadcast in public interest.

So I'm not sure where I fall in those two interpretations.

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But I think the thing that we can kind of focus on and think about, in terms of the implications of this cooperation, are that it does sort of create some models for new kinds of educational programming that are sort of underlaid by the idea that they have to sort of do what commercial programs do. Right? They have to be appealing to millions of people.

Even the people that worked in the Office of Education often had the history of working in the commercial industry. These weren't separate things.

And just there's really a sense that whatever was going to be broadcast sort of had to be inherently entertaining. That that was what absolutely had to be done.

Okay, so let's look at a little more detail. Oh, let's look at the context of the Good Neighbor Policy. Probably people have a sort of general idea of this.

It's sort of a transformation of the

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relationship between the U.S. and Latin America. Sort of as the economic relations are transforming in the 1920's, the 1930's.

So that Latin America is no longer seen. It's just a sort of source of raw materials, but it's seen as a market, potential market for goods. And so it's sort of the shift from the big stick to sort of more of a, you know, kind of more of a hegemonic approach of persuasion, cooperation in the appearance of including the interests of Latin Americans.

Fred Fejes wrote, writing a quite a while ago, talked about this being a sort of creative transformation of U.S. imperialism. Sort of took on a happier face. And lost a little bit of the overt intervention that it had had before.

The Good Neighbor Policy is a continuation of a lot of the policies from the 1920's, in the sense of the Government choosing corporate interests to basically achieve strategic goals. And so through the, chose an instrument

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strategy which is, you know, in the communication area is an old strategy.

You know, Pan-American Airways is another chosen instrument that becomes relevant to the Brave New World broadcast. And so just different, sort of the same objectives but kind of different, different strategy for achieving that.

Okay. So in terms of some of the issues, sort of how the Good Neighbor Policy was formed, there's sort of some interesting, even literature about this.

And again, our arguments in terms of how to interpret this. You know, whether it was sort of ultimately a positive thing or sort of a happy gloss on an unhappy thing.

But the Depression, sort of the state of the U.S. being put into a position of insecurity, made it more willing to sort of look upon others that it might have looked down on in a slightly more positive way.

There's some interesting discussion of

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how FDR kind of fit the model of a Latino political because he could actually treat people with a semblance of respect. And he wasn't that kind of straightforward, do it my way or the highway kind of a person. On the surface in any event.

So there's a bunch of things that happened in the 1930's. Different conferences where there's an official recognition of non-intervention, different kind of trade reciprocities established.

The idea, as the war approaches, the idea that the nations of Latin America will, of the America's, Canada always gets sort of left out here, but, sorry. But sort of the idea that they would all consult each other in the event of war and that they would not get caught up in fighting themselves.

So those are some, that's part of the, sort of the context.

And this program, again, as I mentioned earlier, it's really, you know, I think it's safe to use the word propaganda. You know, it was an

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effort to sort of soften up American opinion about Latin America in order to have us be less offensive to Latin American's when we interacted with them in all kinds of contexts.

And then the themes that the actual program takes up are, you know, partly address that issue, but then also sort of deal with some things that you wouldn't necessarily expect.

So one of the strategies, with the historical focus, is to sort of point out all these similarities between the U.S. and Latin America. You know, having had their wars for independence, you know, the struggle for democracy. Things that were sort of seen as an American experience.

And then also the question of interdependence, in terms of economic and political. Right? And ultimately strategic issues.

And then another sort of big theme is tourism. Which is a little unexpected, except for the fact that the Pan-American Union, which is sort

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of this governmental organization that, you know, it promotes the cooperation of the American Nations, is also sort of, has a sort of branch that promotes tourism between the America's. So that becomes an element.

And exoticism becomes part of that construction of Latin America as a tourist destination.

This is just the, I'm sorry I don't have sound. Although I did recently find two programs, parts of two programs in the National Archives and the Library of Congress has two programs as well.

But this is how it started out. And there was a choral, kind of a choral introduction that sort of had, was very kind of religious sounding.

And it says, open the book of Latin America. Let the pages come alive with saints and sinners, beggars and kings, tyrants and rebels, scholars and adventurers, blood and tears, laughter and comedy.

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The chronicle of country is from the Rio Grande to the Straights of Magellan. Twenty nations with a history and culture to be admired. And a democratic ideal we share.

We the people of the United States have common hopes and common dreams with our Southern neighbors.

The Office of Education and the Columbia Broadcasting System present the first chapter of this mighty book of a Brave New World, Latin America.

So that was kind of the glorious sort of intro. And then there would be different historical and other themes played out.

So there's a couple things that, and I'm not keeping track of time, so hopefully somebody will, so when am I supposed to be done?

CHAIR SIEMERING: Two or three minutes.

MS. HAYES: Two or three more minutes? Okay.

Okay, so I found it interesting, like I said, in some ways I'm just getting back into this

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material. But some of the strategies, for the use of telling this history of Latin America has just sort of raised the opinion of Americans, about Latin Americans, by drawing on this link to these high civilizations.

The sort of patriots, right, that all the other countries have in common. And then also sort of taking different historical examples and talking about they sort of preview what might happen in the future.

So why does the President of Mexico stop the foreign invader, Maximilian, and he might have to do it again. Right? If the Germans or the Italians end up coming into the New World. So that we have to have this sense of interdependence.

I think I said a little bit about the sound aesthetics. And again, just to emphasize, there's kind of this inter-streaming sort of contradiction of representing the Latin Americans as, you know, just like us.

There's a description of Kind Dom Pedro,

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Brazil, and they describe him as, a man who would have been a Lincoln, but he was born a king.

So that's on the one hand, they're just like us. And then on the other hand, there's this exotic destination, these amazing colorful, wonderful things are going to happen.

Like I said, the emphasis on tourism. And clearly a relationship with Pan-Am Airways, which obviously had a close relationship with the U.S.

And conclusion. So a number of contradictions are sort of embodied by the particular program. But one of the ones that I'll just sort of conclude with, is the idea of right.

This, in many ways, this is an important revision of U.S. understanding some Latin America and Latin American history. There's some very positive and progressive kinds of representations.

But at the same time, like the ultimate goal of the program is very much strategic. And it's very sort of much, sort of about the ends that

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are out there, ultimately going to be achieved by making Latin America less worried about U.S. imperialism and willing to see the U.S. as more of a friend than a threat.

I'll end with that. Thank you.

CHAIR SIEMERING: So our next speaker gets a prize for coming the farthest. From Melbourne, Australia.

And David Goodman has, he did his undergraduate work and graduate work at the University of Melbourne where he has taught. His PhD was from the University of Chicago.

And his most recent book is, Radio's Civic Ambition, American Broadcasting and Democracy in the 1930's.

And his recent publication, have been on the History of the United States. He's now completing one on, This Role in Getting into World War II. David Goodman.

MR. GOODMAN: Can you see that? Okay, so Joy and I are potentially on the brink of a larger

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project on this Federal Radio Education project. She's described some of the context.

Maybe we'll get some feedback from you. You can vote us off the island or tell us if you think this is a worthwhile thing to pursue.

I'm looking today at another of the Radio Project shows -- probably a Brave New World and Americans all, Immigrants all, were two of the most well-known series that this federal unit produced.

And this comes out, it just reiterates some of the things Joy said came out of, that comprised after the passage of the Communications Act in 1934, the creation of the Federal Radio Education Committee. Which I think it's fair to say, has had a pretty bad press.

First of all, from radio reformers at the time who were so disgusted by their loss, political loss in the struggles, saw this committee, which was set up to study educational radio, they thought it was just an insult. They'd been doing it, they knew all about it.

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You know, this committee was meant to be dedicated to studying educational broadcasting. And specifically to fostering, because this would set us up for the fate of the amendment, which would have set aside 25 percent of frequencies for educational purposes.

Specifically, their project was all about fostering cooperation between commercial broadcasters and educators. So that's the context for what we're looking at.

And I said this at another conference last year, you know, I think there's space now for cautiously revisionist account of the Federal Radio Education Committee, which would note, that it may have been a sop and the remnant of a political defeat, but it was productive. A whole lot of things happened in the next six or seven years, which perhaps deserve a bit more attention than they've had.

It made 12 major series for network radio, but didn't stop there Like all adult

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educators at the time, it was sort of a mantra of adult education internationally in the 1930's, that it was all to do with the follow ups.

So just putting on a radio show was far from being enough. You had to provide a lot of contextual material, you had to encourage people to listen together in discussion groups and talk about it. And the Office of Education saw their role, partly, as providing that sort of follow up material.

As Joy said, this was a New Deal, it was a WPA project. Remarkably 95 percent of the workers on this project were employed on relief programs. And 85 percent of the funds were spent on employing relief workers.

So I just think it's worth bearing in mind, I mean one of the things I'll say later on is, I think historians understandably, haven't been a little condescending towards the productions of this unit, but the degree of difficulty was very high.

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There was an 18-month limit on WPA employment. Just as soon as someone got good, you had to let them go and started again with someone else. So this was not an easy thing to do.

It was also not easy ideologically. Bear in mind, one of the images of the New Deal is how much the American people loved FDR. But we tend to forget that another significant proportion of the American people absolutely hated him and were suspicious of, a classic American fear really, of the establishment of monopoly that the New Deal was trying to entrench itself in power forever, by producing government propaganda.

And as Joy said, getting the networks to broadcast New Deal propaganda for free just looked like an incredibly Machiavellian strategy. And some of the conservative press you can see there, right from their very first broadcast, is starting to ridicule the idea that politically partisan shows should be put on a public expense.

But one of them was that this Federal

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Radio Education Project. I mean every kind of radio program maker wants their program to be popular, but they were very, very focused on the popularity of their programs, as measured in volume of mail.

People could write in for a script or this and that. And they did generate successfully, very large volumes of mail.

I'll just put this up. I've also done a lot of research on this topic in the last week. And someone said to me yesterday, it's not quite just in time research. It's sort of not quite in time research. But I can at least, I can tell you what I know and give you some glimpses of other things.

But here's, just to show you for example, here's one week in January 1939, this show that I'm talking about, Americans All, Immigrants All. You can see every day they're getting over a thousand letters.

So imagine, most of those letters, unfortunately almost all of them, have been lost

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to us. But imagine the job of the person opening the mail. It would take you much of a day probably to open a thousand letters and respond to them.

The Radio Project, given that ideological climate, was anxious to define the educational content and justification for the broadcasts.

There were numbers of people, I think we can identify, working on this project. It brings a really interesting cluster of people together.

They were influenced, as so many educators of their generation were, by the currents of progressive education stemming from John Dewey in Teacher's College of New York and watching across the nation.

So just as a little glimpse of this. One of the project workers, Ben Brodinsky, lead a staff workshop in which he tries to get the people working on these radio shows to think about, well, what does it mean to produce an educative radio show as opposed to any other kind.

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And the first thing he wants to tell them, it's not about the shoveling out of facts. A factual approach, disseminating facts, is kind of the least educative part of communication.

And in this progressive education tradition, of course it's more to do with individual growth and experience, and the development of admirable, personal characteristics.

In the case of Americans All, Immigrants All, of course the desired goal was tolerance. Which I'll talk about.

But here, this is from that Brodinsky workshop where, I don't know if you can read that, but an activity is educative when it contributes to social values and social worth.

Brings about desirable changes in the individual. It assists the learner in adjusting himself to live situations in the changing world.

It contributes to the development of worthy character, development of skills, development of reflective thinking. Very

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characteristic, progressive education ideas. So this is kind of the way they're thinking about the shows.

Now, some of those of course perhaps sound like propaganda goals. You want to change people's values and so on.

One of my favorite people who works in the Federal Education Office, on this Radio Project, is Chester S. Williams. I've written about him previously, because his previous job was in another interesting New Deal Program, The Federal Forum Program, organizing forum discussions all over the country.

He's moved into the Radio Project. And I can tell, he's a really interesting liberal figure. He has personal access to Eleanor Roosevelt. He's quite influential in some ways.

I think he really exasperated his colleagues because he was always quite critical of what they're doing. And it's a very self-critical project.

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You can see in the memos they're criticizing each other, thinking the whole time about what they're producing.

There's a handwritten document in the files in National Archives called, "Chester's position on Americans All." That could have been written by Chester Williams, but I think it wasn't.

I think it was written by one of his exasperated colleagues who is trying to summarize what Chester was saying to them and how impossible it would be to follow his prescriptions. But here's what the note said. Handwritten note:

So Chester Williams believes apparently education and dramatic programs are two different worlds. That educational radio lies between them, in an area defined as like a Third of the Nation without propaganda or like a textbook.

That to organize a script in order to create an attitude, such as tolerance of all races or faith in the civil rights, is an error for three reasons. If the attitudes are open to question,

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then for government to promote them is to indulge in facile tactics.

If the attitudes are broadly accepted, there is no use promoting them, because everyone agrees with them anyway. It is futile for us to use drama, because we can never be as good as Orson Welles.

So you can see his colleagues would find this kind of frustrating. But the first two points.

What are we actually doing? If everyone already believes in tolerance, we don't need this propaganda. If many Americans don't agree that tolerance is a good value, then what are we doing?

It's sort of sad when you sit in the archives and you look forward to reading someone's memos, but he's clearly one of the sharpest people working on this. And I think he posed genuine dilemmas that this project faced.

You've educational radio. It's about teaching, not facts, but attitudes.

Even a democracy, well, in a democracy,

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could teach and advocating tolerance, legitimately be presented as an educational function. And what if the democratic majority, or even a democratic minority, were proudly and stubbornly intolerant.

I gave a presentation on a different topic a couple of days ago saying, of course, you know, none of this is relevant at all to the United States today. But you might try and think about some contemporary parallels!

So some of the idea for the program came from this woman, Rachel Davis-Dubois. Director of the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education. She had been working in pro-tolerance intercultural education for 15 years or so, before she comes to this show.

Part of the stimulus for her is Charles Coughlin's broadcasts, and his dissemination of the idea that the U.S. was really, at heart, a white Christian nation.

She's also back at not a young age, to study again at Teacher's College. Deeply

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influenced by John Dewey. She did the research and Gilbert Seldes and others wrote the scripts.

So this is the same question I'm posing: were tolerance and understanding really uncontroversial? In the background is the whole controversy about Charles Coughlin.

I wrote about, in an article last year, the whole debate about free speech and whether Coughlin should be allowed to speak or not. There's basically two paths you could take on that. And this program is taking the positive one.

In 1936, the League of Nations established Convention on the Use of Broadcasting in the Course of Peace. The United States doesn't sign up to that.

But they're interested in both prongs. The negative one of getting nations, to not allow the broadcasting of hateful speech that might ferment war. And on the other hand, to encourage nations to broadcasting things, which would foster international understanding, toleration, enhance

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peace.

U.S. Commissioner of Education, John Studebaker, who's the boss of all of this, went out of his way, given that context, to define tolerance and understanding as legitimate government goals. The development of sympathetic understanding contributes to this self-realization of the person. And this was a legitimate government goal.

So this is the series. I feel that I'm running out of time.

CHAIR SIEMERING: You're all right.

MR. GOODMAN: Okay. Twenty-six half-hour episodes from November '38 to May '39. This is obviously a tumultuous time in the world to be putting out a series about sympathetic understanding of other ethnicities.

It's getting, as you can see, a really good radio audience and the mail, is very high. These are the 26 episodes. This program really seemed to exemplify what the Federal Radio Education Committee was all about.

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And I'm, just to give you a flavor, I'm going to play you the opening of every episode.

(Audio playing)

MR. GOODMAN: So I'm really going to speed up, if I can --

CHAIR SIEMERING: That's all right.

MR. GOODMAN: -- can I have three more minutes?

CHAIR SIEMERING: Sure, go ahead.

MR. GOODMAN: The governing metaphor of the series was the gift. These immigrants come bearing gifts for the nation. And the gifts they bring are their own special talents.

Diana Selig's written a really interesting book on this kind of gift metaphor of thinking about ethnicity in the United States. And as she quite rightly says, the gift orientation have erased differences within groups.

So every group, you can guess which ones they are, but every group brings its own special talent. You know, some just have strong arms and

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some understand law and government.

You know, even the English, who might be the heroes, it turns out, left alone would not have contributed so much; they understand freedom and law, but without other people, the country would have been sadly lacking.

The Near Eastern peoples bring excellent food habits. So there's a whole range of gifts that the people bring.

So the characters in this story are national types. They're a bit static. And this creates a narrative problem.

And as I said, this project was highly self-critical. And there's lots of memos in there saying, Seldes just doesn't know how to write scripts.

And it's this basic issue. It's just a litany of achievements and there's not really, a story. Boutwell wanted both narrative and emotion. And internally, all other programs seemed to be very successful with audiences. But they felt that it

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wasn't working as drama.

Chester Williams, again, thought there was really a philosophical problem, that the programs over emphasized racialism. He said, we're advocating of tolerance of Germans as Germans, not some more universal thing.

And the international threat to civilization comes from this philosophy of race and blood. Aren't we just buying into this in some ways?

The tension was not unique to this show. You might look at, I will look at, Margaret Mead for example. Peter Mandler's recent book on her is a fascinating on this issue of the tensions between cultural relativism and more universal values.

He makes clear she's hovering between the kind of cultural relativism that a lot of these people have and a national character analysis. She goes to work for the federal Government during World War II, helping Ruth Benedict and others work out the national character of different people.

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So this kind of tension between a true progressive cultural relativism, and national character, runs through the series. They're also of course running a line about mixing. That's what makes the United States great is the mixing of peoples, the creation of an alloy, which is different from both. Which has both strength and beautiful.

And I think, in the actual United States, of course not only in the South but in many other places, talking about an alloy and that kind of mingling of people, is controversial. So the alloy, yes, it's a melting point metaphor, but it's far from simple melting pot assimilationism.

They were constantly emphasizing connections and interdependence. And, you know, there's some complexity there.

It's true, as Barbara Savage well points out, that they don't have enough to say about prejudice and intolerance in some of the mail. Here's a Swedish immigrant who says, "Look, I've

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done all the right things, but I've found myself abused by the Dutch immigrants who just trample me down."

I just, if I can conclude, just the music I think is fascinating. A 20-piece orchestra. A lot of work for the choir.

(Audio playing)

MR. GOODMAN: The question I pose, it sort of sounds -- Boutwell complained that the use of music had a slight artificiality. And I'm posing the question, it has a sort of modernist sound to me. The way the choir is constantly intervening. And maybe that's something we can talk about.

So I'll just conclude by saying, I think all our historians have noticed this show, of all the shows in the project, they've noticed this one quite a bit. But they tend to point out the now obvious limitations, awkwardness, condescension in its gift bearing account of immigrants.

So yes, but, you know, compared to what? And I think it's more remarkable that tolerance

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education happened on this scale at all.

It tied in, in 1938, every public school in New York was having pro-tolerance assemblies. The program became linked to that.

And I probably want to emphasize that end of it more. Wasn't it remarkable that they got this far?

It comes to an end in World War II. Studebaker tried to get this linked into wartime morale work and he failed and the project ends in 1941. Okay, thank you.

CHAIR SIEMERING: Thank you very much. It's amazing how it seems like we've devolved or something, isn't it? We've gone backwards.

Many of the messages, the very simple message that, all the immigrants bring gifts, is such a beautiful thought. And we need to be reminded of that today more than ever it seems like. So thank you, David.

Our next speaker is Alex Kupfer. And he's a research associate with the Radio

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Preservation Task Force.

He recently received his PhD in Cinema Studies from New York University. His research in teaching interests focus on American film and radio history, the intersection of educational and entertainment media and sports culture.

Alex is currently working on a book about the Relationship among American higher education, intercollegiate football and the film industry during the interwar period. Thank you.

MR. KUPFER: Can you see it? Okay, great.

So in January 1940 the acting president of Louisiana State University wrote to Lenox Lohr, president of the National Broadcasting Company, to express his appreciation to the network for the school's appearance on the Land-Grant College Radio Hour.

Even LSU had operated its own radio station since the mid 1920's, the university had eagerly accepted the opportunity to produce a show,

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which would promote its extension and agricultural efforts, to a national audience.

My presentation today explores one facet of the complex relationship between colleges and commercial networks, during this period.

I focus specifically on the Land-Grant College Radio Hour, a monthly program which aired on NBC Blue affiliates in the 1930's. First on Saturday's and then moving to Wednesday's at 12:30 p.m. Eastern standard time.

The show was initially broadcasted from Washington, D.C. and featured three lectures on agricultural and domestic topics, delivered by speakers, supplied by university extension programs or the United States Department of Agriculture, or USDA for short.

However, illustrative of radios constant negotiation between its educational and entertainment ideals, halfway through the shows run, it underwent a significant change in format.

Starting in 1936, in an effort to make

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the program less formulaic, as well as more appealing to both rural and urban listeners, the Land-Grant hour decentralized its production so that each program focused on an individual Land-Grant institution.

Each month now, the show originated from a different university, which produced the show and provided all of the speeches, sketches and musical content. While maintaining a strictly noncommercial and non-politicized orientation.

Practical advice for farmers and homemakers was replaced by the general promotion of each school's service through a range of local and regional groups. As well as more populous entertainment in the form of college bands and concerts.

The collaboration between NBC and Land-Grant universities provided a popular platform for the networks sustaining programming.

Since it drew on the widespread public recognition, for these institutions, as well as each

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school sizeable alumni base around the country.

NBC additionally hoped that the program would ensure the continuing goodwill of colleges and universities, at a time when the number of stations operated by educational institutions, had dropped significantly.

Historian Hugh Slotten notes that college radio stations, particularly at Land-Grant universities with extension programs, were often used to publicize or advertise the school through the general public. Yet in the face of the rise of network commercial broadcasting, these radio stations had closed or been sold in large numbers.

According to Slotten, the number of stations operated by Land-Grant colleges went from nearly 40, in 1924, to less than 20 by 1930.

Scholars have generally treated commercial broadcasting and higher education as largely separate spheres. And I think only recently have really begun to examine the connection between networks and colleges during the interwar

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period.

Overlooked shows, like the Land-Grant Hour, demonstrated the potential for a wide range of universities, including ones with their own stations, to work within the heteromonic structure of commercial broadcasting, to publicize their extension efforts and research break through student national listening audience.

Through a consideration of an XM radio recording of the July 1938 Land-Grant Hour, from the University of Nevada in Reno, I intend to show how universities embraced working within the commercial system, which constantly, again, start to bolster its public service programing, even if it was only within a relatively limited context.

And hopefully this overlook history will open the door to further reconsideration of the relationship between colleges and commercial broadcasting.

So a proposal to create a network radio programming focusing on university extension

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efforts, had circulated at NBC since at least 1928. In an internal report entitled, Summary of Agricultural Broadcasting, the anonymous author explained that it would be worthwhile to consider how NBC might cooperate with educational institutions. Particularly Land-Grant colleges.

Specifically, the report suggested developing "an intercollegiate faculty, that might arrange a series of educational hours, with perhaps, some radio extension courses given in subjects such as poultry, flower growing, et cetera."

And it should be noted too here that college stations, such as WHA at the University of Wisconsin, had already been offering extension course by radio for a number of years. They were trying to sort of follow this already developed platform.

It took NBC three years to bring a version of this proposal through the air. The Land-Grant College Radio Hour was created in 1931. Around the time that the networks were fighting the

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growing concerns about their consolidation of broadcasting.

One of the strategies employed by NBC and CBS to combat these concerns, was to highlight how the networks were the most effective stewards of the airways. Specifically, by criticizing universities use of both the commercial and educational radio.

Network representative claim that even though college radio stations disseminated some valuable information, as a whole, they were unable to build or maintain large audiences, due to the lack of variety in their programming.

Additionally, the network charts that most commercial stations were already offering plenty of unsold air time to educational institutions at no charge. Of course, these were in less desirable time slots, which could be moved at any point.

However, it was the universities, the networks claim, that were either uninterested or

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were not properly equipped to put on appealing programming. NBC hoped their show, like the Land-Grant Hour, could thus demonstrate to the public and regulators, that the system, as presently structured, could work for both, could work for noncommercial and educational interests as well.

So it was within this regulatory and industrial context that NBC announced a creation of the Land-Grant Hour, to be broadcasted on its Blue network. It would be a sustaining program presented by the association of Land-Grant College and Universities, in cooperation with the USDA and NBC.

The show would be a monthly feature of the national Farm and Home Hour, an agricultural program on the Blue Network, produced by NBC, in collaboration with the USDA. And broadcasted live from the WMAQ studios in Chicago, six days a week.

And though USDA officials were involved in the Land-Grant Hour of broadcast, it really, in the behind the scenes capacity, the agency insisted

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that a different title be used for the shows presented by outside programs or institutions.

This is the same thing with the association of Land-Grant colleges and universities, as well groups like the 4H and National Grange.

So in a July 1931 press release, sent to university extension directors around the country, C.W. Warburton, director of extension work at the USDA, explained that they envision the Land-Grant hour would be a platform for university and extension staffers to discuss the important of extension services. As well as a way for rural men and women to recount how they adopted extension methods.

Notably, in addition to a try and to appeal to farmers and their families, the USDA also wanted to reach extension employees with the program. Specifically, the agency hopes to acquaint state and county extension agents, with the problems facing their counterparts in other

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parts of the country and explain how these problems are being met.

In a process that mirrored radios perceived nationalizing abilities, the USDA believed that the show could help nationalize extension efforts, by connecting isolated state agencies.

Throughout the Land-Grant College Radio Hours first four seasons, the episodes followed a standard formula. The U.S. Army Band provided musical performances at the opening and closing of each show.

In between there were three or four speeches on extension topics, given by speakers supplied by university extension divisions or the USDA. At least one always offered advice on an agricultural issue and was delivered by an extension staffer or university professor.

Another focused on domestic issues. And adhering to gender stereotypes, was invariably delivered by a homemaker or female extension

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employee.

The final talk tended to examine a topic related to agricultural extension or Land-Grant colleges from a more macro level, often considering them from abroad national or historic perspective.

However, by 1936, NBC executives decided that the show needed to be more appealing in order to draw larger audience of urban listeners, in particular.

The idea for the change seemed to come directly from William E. Drips, NBC's director of agriculture, when a memo to John Royal, NBC vice-president for programs, listed a number of benefits that the new format would have for the network.

Drips was particularly concerned that the show originated from Washington, D.C. And as a result, the university and extension staffers who appeared on the show, were too often from the Eastern seaboard. And Land-Grant colleges from around the country were considerably under represented.

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Furthermore, while the purpose of the hour was to present farming topics, the show was really potentially missing a valuable source of information. Mainly agricultural colleges in each and every state.

Framing radio as a populous democratic median, Drips argued in the memo that it could reach many more people with news from agricultural colleges than local newspapers or publishing in academic journals ever could.

Drips suggested that NBC air a monthly program focused on the work being done at individual colleges. Instead of originating from a single location, each 60-minute program would be broadcasted live from the campus of that months designated Land-Grant institution.

This way too college music groups could supply the entertainment component of the program, while professors, administrators and students could report on the academic activities.

Notably, the relaunch Land-Grant

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College Radio Hour could also help NBC remain non-partisan in this agricultural programming during the New Deal era.

As Drips explained in the memo, the show "would direct attention to longtime agricultural development, not of a New Deal nature, and avoid a political propaganda."

In other words, by shifting the focus of the show from the USDA to more local perspectives, the show could thus discuss agricultural and extension issues, without promoting the policies of the Roosevelt Administration.

Drips argument proved successful with NBC executives. And at the November 1935 meeting of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, he announced that the newly reformatted program would begin with the University of Illinois.

The new Land-Grant Hour certainly fulfilled Drips goal of having greater geographic diversity. Between 1936 and '40, the show was

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broadcast from 47 different universities in 44 states, and the Territory of Hawaii.

All parts of the country represented reactively equally this time, with mid-western and western Land-Grant goals now appearing on NBC about as often as eastern and southern schools.

So to illustrate how this relationship between NBC and Land-Grant colleges was reflected on the on-air programming, I want to turn now to a specific example of the show.

Fortunately, at least two episodes of the program have been preserved in the university archives. And as a case study, I want to focus on the Land-Grant Hour broadcast from the University of Nevada in Reno, from July 20th, 1938.

So preparation for all these broadcasts started at the top of university hierarchies. As either NBC or the USDA reached out to college presidents, at least nine months before they wanted the show to be featured on, or they wanted the school to be featured on the program.

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Network representatives promised school administrators that they would cover all of the expenses for the broadcast, including installing equipment and leasing wires.

NBC or USDA executives often helped schools, particularly ones which did not operate their own radio stations, throughout the entire production process. Including everything from recommending specific university employees to produce the show, helping cast each role and rehearsing the final script.

Ultimately though, it seems like the final decisions regarding what to include in the broadcast, were left up to school administrators.

The land-Grant Hour scripts consisted of four primary components. Music, narration, reenactments of historical events and speeches.

Live music was prominent throughout the broadcasts. Seventeen different musical pieces, for instance, were used by UNR, ranging from the school's alma mater to traditional cowboy songs to

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organ pieces used to set the atmosphere during the reenactments.

NBC provided two of the songs. The Farm and Home Hour's Homesteaders Orchestra played The Patriots and Pioneers March at the beginning of the show and Covered Wagon Days at the end, helping set the tone for the program by evoking the settlers in the West, as well as filling about seven minutes or air time and making it less difficult for the university.

After the opening musical number, there was a short introduction to the campus and the State of Nevada by the chairman of the UNR Board of Regents. This was followed by reenactments of historical events, related to the founding of the state and the college.

Here the sketches portrayed settlers stopping in Nevada because of the mining opportunities, the state's first constitutional convention, whereas decided to established a Land-Grant College and the opening of the University

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in 1887.

These reenactments emphasized both the similarities and differences between the University of Nevada and other Land-Grant institutions, by chronicling its specific history, here with specific emphasis on the mining industry, while also emphasizing Nevada's connections to the Land-Grant college effort to democratize education.

One way this was achieved throughout the broadcast, was by highlighting the school links to national figures like Abraham Lincoln and Vermont Congressman, Justin Morrill, the sponsor of the Land-Grant Act of 1862.

So I want to play a short clip now from the broadcast, which gives a sense of how the show incorporated a discussion of Nevada geography, the service the university provided to the state and the musical performance by students.

(Audio playing)

MR. KUPFER: So the historical

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reenactments were followed by multiple antidotes documented the university service, particularly as it related to farmers. Examples from the Nevada broadcasts included how extension faculty helped eradicate red water diseases in cattle and the efforts to combat malnutrition in the state's rural youth.

The longest part of the shows were usually dedicated to discussions of the schools most notable department. In the case of Nevada, this was the famed Mackay School of Mines. And through an interview with the director at the department, who is dressed in this prospecting outfit, as well as two undergraduates, they discuss the history and the mission at the department.

The final portion of the Nevada program consisted of a speech by Cecil Creel, chief of the state's agricultural extension service and president of the association of Land-Grant colleges and universities.

In his talk, Creel once again linked the school to a great man tradition to U.S. history,

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hereby linking the development of Land-Grant colleges to the Jeffersonian ideal of universal higher education.

So by the end of 1941 though, a number of issues converged, which affected the shows ability to reach its target audience, as well as find a permanent sustaining slot on the network schedule. Five years after the shows format had been re-hauled, nearly every Land-Grant college in the country had been featured in its own program.

When the show was renewed for 1941, NBC decided that colleges, which had participated early in the series, could once again be featured on the show. So for instance, the University of Wisconsin had appeared in 1937 and again in 1941.

However, the enthusiasm on the part of most colleges to appear twice on the program seems to have waned. This lack of enthusiasm may have also been exasperated by the shows shrinking time slot.

By February 1942, the Farm and Home Hour

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slot had been reduced to 30 minutes. Largely to allow for more coverage of war related issues.

This obviously would have shrunk the amount of time each school would have had to promote themselves to a national audience, as well as to reduce NBC's incentive to pay for the expensive line charges from the campus or install any necessary broadcasting equipment.

Furthermore, affiliates were increasingly pressuring NBC to let them sell the show to advertisers, or at least move it to a less desirable time slot than 12:30 p.m. However, moving the show to a different time slot was problematic for NBC executives, since program aimed at farmers was often scheduled to coordinate with the times that they were inside.

So while the female audience may have followed the Land-Grant Hour to a new home, NBC officials were concerned that the men would be out of the house working.

The Land-Grant College Radio Hour never

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seems to have been official cancelled, rather its monthly time slot was quietly returned to the Farm and Home Hour programming.

Universities of course continued to work with the networks and speakers continued to be supplied to schools to address extension topics on various NBC programs. However, the network really no longer had a show which could promote as an example of its willingness to work, not just with specific institutions, but with each and every Land-Grant university.

So to conclude quickly, over the course of more than a decade, and nearly 110 episodes on the Blue Network, the Land-Grant College Radio Hour demonstrated that there was at least the potential for long-term collaboration between commercial broadcasters and universities.

This program, particularly in its post 1936 iteration, where each episode was produced by and originated from a different school, exemplified how the network system could be simultaneously

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constraining, as well as beneficial for universities interested in radio.

Regardless of whether they operated around stations or not, Land-Grant University all seemed to be eager to work with a network like NBC, in order to promote their extension work and scientific breakthroughs to as wide of an audience as possible. Even again, if it was for only a single one-hour live broadcast.

And while our rival resources begin to offer some answers about the institutional motivations behind the program like the Land-Grant Hour, through the continuing rediscovery and critical examination of overlooked text, like this one, scholars can hopefully continue developing more nuance conceptions of the shifting relationship between higher education and commercial broadcasting throughout the 20th century. Thank you.

CHAIR SIEMERING: Thank you very much, Alex. If I might add just a tiny personal footnote.

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My work now is with an organization, a nonprofit, called Developing Radio Partners. And we work to bring the most important information and development, to those hardest to reach in developing countries.

And we bring agricultural information, we enrich the program in the local stations about farming, how to improve livelihoods, women's health, youth programing. So in a way, it's some of this continuation of the same spirit, an intention of some of these things.

So now we have Jack Mitchell, who will be our Respondent. And many of you may know Jack as the first producer of, All Things Considered. And he deserves all the credit for forming the sound and content and what has become the public radio sound, really, in journalism.

And Jack's also been a member of the faculty at University of Wisconsin in Madison. And are you emeritus now?

MR. MITCHELL: Emeritus, yes.

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CHAIR SIEMERING: Now emeritus.
Distinguished emeritus.

MR. MITCHELL: I deserve respect.

CHAIR SIEMERING: That's right.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I took a lot of notes and I'm not sure I'm going to make any sense out of them as I try to respond here.

At lunch, I was talking to someone who asked my definition of public radio. And I said, I would rather think of it as public service radio. That's what my sense of it has been over the years.

Which is why I was glad to see that was the title of the session that I was asked to respond to. Because I do have some sense of what public service radio is all about.

Which would be radio not for profit. That it's to serve the public interest, not to serve private profit.

The BBC was setup that way, and educational broadcasting was setup that way. And, surprisingly, commercial radio allegedly was setup

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that way in the very beginning. It was to be public service. Yes, they sold commercials too.

Well, it sort of got out of hand, and the question was could you have had a system where education really was done on commercial radio? It was for a while. As we just found out.

But the argument against that, and it was certainly true at Wisconsin where one of the pioneers said, education cannot be done by anybody, except an educational institution. Commercial radio just can't do education.

There were efforts, in the early days of WHA, to sell the station to a commercial broadcaster. And the deal would be that the university would get four hours a week of programming on this big boomer station that would cover the whole state.

And they rejected it because that very argument. It can't be done commercially; it has to be done by an educational institution in an educational environment.

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If you put a few educational programs in an environment of commercialism, it's just not compatible. It can't work. Educational programs were going to have to fight for the audiences, to attract audiences, as we've heard, on commercial terms. And you're going to lose. It's not going to happen.

And so this notion of trying to make educational radio palatable to a commercial audience, has been a dilemma from the very beginning. But even on their own stations, educational broadcasters tried to do pretty much what the commercial broadcasters did. That program we just heard ["The Land Grant University Radio Hour"] sounds an awful lot like stuff that was done at WHA in the 1930's.

It was trying to be dramatic and draw people in. The basic problem they had was attracting audience. And your noncommercial people were trying to do it just as well as the commercial.

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The difference is that the noncommercial people could fail and still survive. Universities, you know, don't change. Once it's in the budget, the radio goes on and on and on, even if nobody is listening.

And that's been the secret of success in university radio stations through much of the history.

But a couple of things stuck me in the presentation this afternoon. One is this notion of propaganda versus education. It's really important. And it is something that applied to educational radio stations, as well as the broadcasting on commercial stations.

The distinction is not clear between education and propaganda.

And some of these kid's programs, of course, were propaganda. I mean they weren't trying to get the kids to think, they were trying to instill ideas in them.

But when you get into adult programming,

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the notion of propaganda becomes a more scary, scary thing.

We heard today about educational program that were really propaganda about tolerance and world peace, that were trying to foster a point of view. And I happen to agree with both of them. But they in fact, you have to admit, that that was more propaganda than education.

The other thing that struck me was this notion of entertainment versus education. And here again, the entertainment programming, in particular dramatic programming, almost inevitably had to deliver a message.

And it is based on emotion. You know, the human voice, music, the choirs of angels. This is emotion, and it's not rational.

It's necessary to engage audiences, but it does work against the educational, the notion of abstraction and ideas. Because music is, and drama, it goes somewhere. And it doesn't leave it up to the audience to decide.

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One of the things that I'm proud about in Wisconsin is that from the very beginning, there was a strong sense that WHA should be a forum. Not a place that has a point of view or that tries to instill certain ideas. There was enough of that.

We want to be a place where everybody gets to have their voice heard and let the people decide. And that was not what you get out of these dramatic programs. I mean they had a point of view. And rightly so.

(I just finished a book about a hundred years of broadcasting in Wisconsin. So I've been immersed in this for the last couple of years.)

But the distinction between delivering a message and creating a forum did strike me as an important difference. Which leads us into the notion of public radio.

I was involved in that transition from educational radio to public radio. And we got rid of the propaganda, dramatic programs that tried to teach something.

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And went to this notion of journalism that is not, doesn't really start with the point of view, or at least theoretically doesn't, but draws together on the information and presents it as a coherent product. Which is different from the old educational programs.

And the idea that we are a place where all voices could be heard. Not just those in authority, not those just from the government agency, the USDA or whatever.

So the public radio is definingly different from what educational radio was. Although it grew right out of it. I mean there was a transition. There's no question that public radio has many roots in educational radio. But it was a different animal.

And I'd finally like to just observe about the agricultural stuff. Which was a big part of cores educational broadcasting in the early days. And is a much smaller part now.

But what made it work was that it was

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information that farmers actually wanted and needed. And so it didn't have to be decorated, it didn't have to be full of bands and things of that sort. Here's the information you want, we've got it for you.

Ninety percent of the population didn't want it. And you had to accept, okay, this is for the farmers.

And what I was impressed with, in "The Land-Grant College Radio Hour," was that it was trying to make it popular with people who couldn't care less about agriculture. And probably shouldn't.

And so what do they do. They decorate it. You put in the music and put in the little skits. You add the entertainment elements.

In my days, in the early days of NPR, as well as subsequently I didn't want decorations. You can't make something interesting that's not interesting by putting music in or decorating it with this, this stuff. It's not going to work.

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It's got to be inherently interesting.
It's got to be inherently valuable to an audience.

And in this day and age, when we have so many choices on the dial, it's not just NBC and CBS, things have to be inherently valuable to the listener. And if you don't have that, you're not going to have success at all.

I really enjoyed what I heard about these attempts in the past to educate the audience. On commercial broadcasting as well as noncommercial.

And I guess with that, we're going to open it up and see what kind of reaction you all had. Yes?

PARTICIPANT: Well first, thank you, it was fascinating. I look forward to your Southern volume that you elaborated one --

(Simultaneous speaking)

PARTICIPANT: Oh.

MR. MITCHELL: I forgot about my AV guy.

PARTICIPANT: So thank you. My question is for Alex, because as I understand it,

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you're now looking at the relationship between radio and sports, right?

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. You have this long attempt to build this relationship between higher education and commercial broadcasting. And now we all know what that's become, which is college football at that great university.

So I'm curious, in your research, have you found any evidence that any relationships were built through this process in the '30's and '40's that maybe lead to, in the post war years, that boom in college sports on radio?

MR. KUPFER: I found a lot, for instance, on NBC and Notre Dame. Not a Land-Grant University, obviously, where Philip Carlin worked very closely with Notre Dame Coach Knute Rockne at the end of the '30's.

And they basically had this non-exclusive policy. Schools like Michigan also had it, Yale. Through most of the '30's where they

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would let any station or any network who wanted to broadcasted their games do so.

So by the second half of the Great Depression, schools like Michigan said, we actually want exclusive rights. Because we want, or we want to sell exclusive rights because we want the money.

But whereas Notre Dame decided to have this non-exclusive policy. I also found this a case with newsreels as well. And which helped sort of create this athletic powerhouse.

And then lead to sort of these huge evaluations for college sports. Became this huge moneymaker for allowing this sort of widespread proliferation.

But it seems like very different sort of personnel and very different departments that worked on sports versus sort of other programming.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes?

PARTICIPANT: It was a great Panel. This question is for David, but Jack also touched on this.

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So propaganda in the '30's, in Europe, we tend to view as pretty sinister, and propaganda in the New Deal may be less sinister. But still propaganda.

Is the term so like greazy, or greasy, that it's meaningless? That it really has no form and no definition to the point where we maybe shouldn't talk about propaganda but should talk about something else.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: I think the same is true with, in terms of education. That it's propagandistic by nature, but not necessarily sinister. So if you could just respond to that.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, persuasion.

MR. GOODMAN: I mean I found your comments about, of course propaganda towards children is acceptable. We want them to brush their teeth and learn arithmetic and so on, you know, there's no moral dilemma there.

But yes, propaganda for adults is -- I

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mean looking at this late '30's going to the war period, it's a fascinating moment. Because American intellectuals had been widely invested in the propaganda analysis movement, which was putting out good pedagogical materials saying, here are some analytical tools, to use when you're listening to Father Coughlin on the radio.

You know, you can recognize how it's the very same people, of course who were pretty significantly drafted by the U.S. Government, once the war gets going, to start making propaganda themselves.

And its propaganda very similar to what we're looking at here in the late '30's. It's pro-pluralism, pro-tolerance, all of these things. So they, some of them are quickly backpedaling about the innately sinister nature of all propaganda.

We've given propaganda such a bad name -- but I think the term still has utility. But we need to look at the way they're kind of squirming with the contradictions added.

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I also, I mean my friend, Chester S. Williams, your comments about NPR being more comfortable with forums than the sort of dramatic documentary, which has a pointed view, that's exactly Chester S. Williams's view, who comes out this forum movement.

He'd be perfectly happy putting a forum on the radio. And then there were lots of them which said; he is for exposing people to diverse views and then they make up their own minds.

MR. MITCHELL: Right.

MR. GOODMAN: The reason he's so interesting is he finds himself the deputy director of this project, which is doing something quite different.

And he's really -- so he's reading all these scripts in a program, but he has exactly the reservation you're talking about. And that is a really interesting tension at the heart of this.

And just finally, I was going to say, the war, in terms of propaganda, the war, in the

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background, and mainly very much in the foreground, is absolutely essential to this. So why would the U.S. Government be interested in pro-tolerance propaganda, in this kind of strength and beauty of the alloy theme?

You know, the underlying question is will this ethnically polyglot nation fight when it comes to a war? Will their loyalties be all over the place?

There's a kind of practical propaganda purpose in emphasizing unity within diversity. On the other hand, given the majority, it's a majority isolationist nation at this point.

Rachel DuBois was very strong that she didn't like the word tolerance. She thought it was a very condescending word. She wanted to talk more about empathy and sympathy.

And you take that -- once you start sympathizing with the Chinese people, for example, why is it just the Chinese in California that you're sympathizing with? What about the Chinese in

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China?

And then that's a really dangerous thought because they're being massacred by the Japanese. And, you know, you go too far down that humanitarian path and you start to want to go to war to protect the human rights of people in other parts of the world. And that's a dangerous thought.

MR. MITCHELL: Persuasion is more neutral than propaganda. Works always. It could be good, bad, otherwise. Yes?

PARTICIPANT: Hi, thank you. So my question is for Joy and David.

As the programs that you guys talk about were government run, you could tell from your research that the government was, at the time, more concerned or did they consider archiving, and if so, has that helped to this point where these programs are more readily available today?

MS. HAYES: I would say it's definitely helped. And it's helped to a large extent, but not particularly, like for the recordings per se. But

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there's the documentation.

Because it's not a private entity, it's more much accessible. And in some cases, the recordings would be more accessible as well.

But yes, it's easier to do research with the government materials than it is to do elsewhere.

MR. GOODMAN: We'd be grateful for any advice from the brain-trust here. My strong sense is, what we've talked about today are two of the most well-known programs.

So Americans All, Immigrants All, I think there's sound recordings of all of them. If we go further with this, I'd be very interested in writing a chapter.

There's a whole lot of programs about government democracy and action. A fascinating 15-part series on municipal government in the United States.

A long series on Roof over America about housing and the role of government providing housing.

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I have not seen surviving audio of any of those kind of productions of this outfit. And if anyone knows, maybe they can tell me later where to look.

But it would be disappointing if it was only these more prominent shows that had survived.

PARTICIPANT: There was a program called Cavalcade of America that --

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, I remember that.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

MR. MITCHELL: I also remember the Farm and Home Hour. But of a different generation. Yes?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, first of all, Alex, sorry for the interruption during your presentation. I was quickly triangulating between what you were saying and some research we've done at the University of Illinois, the archives there in the University of Illinois broadcast archives at WILL, and the University Library, which, especially in the post-war era, this word propaganda.

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Things that the cooperative extension service was producing. There was a thing called, For You at Home, in the family home hour.

And a lot of these programs were educational. But they also, very clearly, got into a promotion of particular gender roles.

And as the Cold War wore on, the definition of the American family, which was in opposition to what was happening in the Soviet Union. So it's very interesting.

Not to say that these were, again, not sinister, that they were intended to be confining people to particular roles, but they were advocating for those particular definitions of gender identity and role.

And what strikes me as most interesting about that is to be able to access those archives to understand what we were thinking at that time. And contrast that with what we're thinking today. It gives a whole new dimension to understanding our own attitudes about those things.

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And again, all I'm saying is, that's another reason why these things are so valuable for us to gain a different kind of deep review.

MR. KUPFER: Yes, I have just one sort of small note to that. By '34, '35, the speeches on domestic topics start to get less and less. They phase those out for sort of more practical agricultural life. And the number of women speaking on the show got less and less.

So they never sort of stopped mobilizing these very strike gender stereotypes on the show. It's sort of fascinating to see how women speakers became less sort of prominent in these agricultural programs.

PARTICIPANT: Well indeed. And comment further on that, there's a flyer advertising for talents on the radio station. And it says, men only.

MR. KUPFER: You sure? Okay.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes?

MS. HAYES: Can I just add one more

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things about the, you know, sort of thinking about what's a better strategy creating a forum where we can have opinions contrasted and challenge and stuff or whether we have a dramatic program.

And I think, you know, we tend to maybe think of it as, that's just, like you said, window dressing or it's just decorations.

MR. MITCHELL: Decorations. Yes.

MS. HAYES: But there was some interesting audience responses to Brave New World where they, you know, they were appreciating the educational and the entertainment elements.

So like for example, this Turner phrase just kind of caught my attention. It was one, a woman who was responding and said, this is more than education. She said, this is arousingly informative.

MR. MITCHELL: Nice phrase.

MS. HAYES: You know, let's not take that too far, but --

PARTICIPANT: Public health show.

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MS. HAYES: No, that I mean it's the dramatization that can maybe be inspirational as far as seeking more information or engaging you. I mean we don't have to draw that kind of absolute line between education and entertainment.

MR. MITCHELL: Other questions? Yes.

(Off microphone response)

PARTICIPANT: -- a thought to what you were saying just now, John.

As I listened to the very fascinating, you know, sound recordings, I began to get a distinct feeling that there was a distinct radio voice.

The term that they used in the BBC at the time, I don't know how meaningful it is over here, was uplift. And it is this sort of vaguely aspirational, educational, propagandist sort of thing that eventually became so tedious in the years during the war at any rate.

A British lesson. And so I don't have information about it over here.

And finally, the one thing that I really

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loved out of everything that we heard, was Git Along Little Dogies. That really has the charm of its time. And a real kind of authenticity to it that I found quite touching.

MR. MITCHELL: We had a lot of uplift too. And it got tedious. Any other questions? Yes?

PARTICIPANT: Alex, I have a quick question for you on the Land-Grant Institution. And it was WCAX out of the University of Vermont, which stood for College of Agriculture and Extension.

And its holdings disappeared at some point. It is no longer WCAX. WCAX is the local TV station. And so as with many of these stations, they've changed hands over the years.

I'm wondering if you're finding where these holdings went from some of the early Land-Grant radio stations?

MR. KUPFER: So I thought, for this show, I only found two available episodes. One was

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at University of Nevada, Reno from July 1938. One was actually from Wyoming from the month after. Why only those two, I don't really know if there's stuff elsewhere.

I use sort of the Nevada archive as well as the Wisconsin Historical Society. For the NBC papers.

But in terms of sort of where a lot of this stuff went, I haven't found much. I mean I know for instance there was a couple letters between the person in Nevada who was in charging of planning the program and the person at Vermont who did it a few months before.

So there was sort of this informal network among these sort of producers of these programs, within these university extension divisions. But specifically where sort of the collection ends up, I don't know unfortunately.

And shows like this, where it seems to have been scattered to, you know, that was preserved, if it was at all by the individual

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institutions, I'm not sure sort of where everything went unfortunately.

MR. MITCHELL: Michelle?

PARTICIPANT: I'm torn between my desire to ask a question and my desire to keep our conference running on schedule.

MR. MITCHELL: Oh, ask your question.

PARTICIPANT: Okay, really quickly. I'm just wondering, I think, who was it, Joey, you mentioned, or maybe it was you David, that lots of listener response, I remember in your book you mentioned that.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: But where is that in the historical record? If you could just all three like briefly say, how wonderful it would be to be able to look at thousands or tens of letters that came in. What happened to those?

MR. GOODMAN: Well for the federal radio education project we found three boxes which have a selection of mail for one program. People's name

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starting, surnames starting with B and C for one program. And that's three boxes.

Barbara Savage, whose chapter on this is terrific in her book, *Broadcasting Freedom* said, the listener mail is gone. And after spending quite a bit of time at the College Park recently, I think that's true. I think it has gone.

Barbara Savage relied on a 1942 master's thesis written by somebody who did have access to the letters and was quoting from them. But sadly, that may be all we've got.

And then there's scattered letters through the other correspondence. But it seems to be there when somebody wants to make an issue. You know, he's a listener who said this and what can we do about it.

But it's sadly, because listener mail is my favorite thing, but it seems to be gone.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

MS. HAYES: I think it was just an accident that the *Brave New World* stuff got saved.

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It's sort of in a weird location where it seemed like they just randomly saved it by accident.

(Off record comment)

MS. HAYES: Yes. About 1,500 letters.

MR. MITCHELL: WHA radio, they never threw away any of those things. It's all in the archives. They don't have the programs, but they have the letters. And little postcards, you know, somebody scribbled something on something.

In other words, just one point, in terms of, if you're looking for old programs, at least in WHA radio, look for the programs that were produced by the station manager. They were kept. Everything else, poof. So there are a few.

CHAIR SIEMERING: I'm talking about voice that you raised, Patty. And there was still, in the commercial radio, when we were starting, All Things Considered, there was still a commercial voice of authority from New York.

And I think, Jack and I have talked about this, the stations were kind of expecting that.

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Because now, for the first time, we had live interconnection and we were going from education to public.

And they were quite uneasy when they started hearing our conversational style. And when they heard women's voices actually.

Some said, well, you know, women, okay, they can do the soft features but they don't have the authority to do the hard news. And so it's been an evolution of this.

And of course we ignored all that, but

--

MR. GOODMAN: Can I just say really quickly? I found last year a lovely letter from someone from rural Nebraska in 1927. You're talking about the Voice of Authority from New York.

And they wrote this whole letter to their senator complaining, what an insult it was. They turned the radio on, then someone in New York who told them to standby. They were not going to take orders from --

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(Laughter)

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

CHAIR SIEMERING: So thank you, Jack. By the way, Jack was the first employee of NPR. Thank you all. Thank you Panel for an excellent presentation and your engagement. Thanks.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 3:08 p.m.)

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