

AN ANALYSIS OF ABC TELEVISION NETWORK PROGRAMMING

FROM FEBRUARY 1953 TO OCTOBER 1959

A THESIS

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for the Master of Arts Degree

by

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Approved by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

One of the most important developments in the broadcasting industry in the winter of 1953 was the announcement of the long-awaited merger between the American Broadcasting Company and United Paramount Theatres. Negotiations had begun as early as 1951; in May of that year, ABC first presented its merger case to the Federal Communications Commission.

Both companies had much to gain by the proposed alliance. United Paramount Theatres, after its divorcement from movie-making Paramount Pictures, had the largest chain of motion picture theatres in the world, but was under court orders to reduce its over 1400 theatres to no more than 650.<sup>1</sup> With millions of dollars available for investments, United Paramount was eager to acquire interests in other areas of show business. Television, in particular, attracted its attention because of the successful operation of WBKB, Chicago, a pioneer television station owned by theatre operators Balaban and Katz (a regional subsidiary of UPT), and the inherent growth potential of the new medium, evidenced by a declining theatre business in those areas served by television. United Paramount had originally planned to acquire separate television properties. When, however, ABC was placed on the market, the company changed its plans and decided on a merger with the network.

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<sup>1</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, XII (June 15, 1959), 30.

The American Broadcasting Company was in a less favorable position, lacking the funds necessary for a successful broadcasting operation. Its television network, in particular, was in peril because it had virtually no affiliates, and as such, could not provide a competitive program service. To understand this situation, one must turn the calendar back to 1945--the beginning of commercial television as it is known today.

### I. THE CLEARANCE PROBLEM

In 1945, the Federal Communications Commission revised its provisions for commercial television, increasing the number of television channels from the seven set aside for use in 1939, to the thirteen in the present VHF band, and announced an "allocations table," providing for the operation on those thirteen channels of commercial stations to be located in 140 of the nation's largest cities. During the next few years, it authorized construction of 108 commercial stations on the basis of this 1945 "allocations table"--the "pre-freeze" stations of today.<sup>2</sup>

This plan of limited construction of commercial stations to only 140 cities drew widespread protest. Consequently, in 1948, the Commission modified its 1945 position. It announced a proposed new allocations table, withdrawing channel 1 from commercial availability

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<sup>2</sup>Dr. Harrison Summers, "Broadcast Programs and Audiences" (Ohio State University: mimeographed material prepared for Speech 652).

(that channel was to be used by portable transmitters), and increasing to 345 the number of cities which were to be served by the remaining twelve channels. Hearings on the proposed new set of allocations made it evident that to attempt to serve this number of markets by use of only twelve channels would create tremendous interference between stations on the same channel. So, in the autumn of 1948, the Commission withdrew its 345 city proposal and announced a "freeze" on consideration of all new applications for television stations until the matter of channels and allocations could finally be resolved.<sup>3</sup>

This "freeze" lasted for three and one-half years--until April 1952. During that period, new stations went on the air, but only those stations that had been authorized by the Commission prior to October 1948 when the "freeze" began. The Commission held hearings on almost every subject that had any bearing on the sort of allocations plan to be adopted--from the requirements of color television to the desirability of reservations of certain channels for educational stations.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1952, the Commission issued its "Sixth Report and Order," providing for the use of twelve VHF and seventy UHF channels for television broadcasting, for the setting aside of some facilities for non-commercial educational stations and for the assignment of specific channels--from one to several channels each--to 1256 cities

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

4

throughout the United States.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the Commission ended its "freeze" and announced that it would now consider applications for construction permits for new stations based, of course, on the allocations table provided in the FCC's "Sixth Report and Order."

The Commission's order of April 1952 provided for a possible total of 562 VHF stations, 71 of them educational, on VHF channels 2 to 13, inclusive--an average of 47 stations for each VHF channel. It also provided for a possible 1441 UHF stations (including 162 educational stations) on channels 14 to 83 in the UHF band.<sup>6</sup>

During the remainder of 1952 and in 1953, 108 VHF stations and 106 UHF's went on the air. Unfortunately, however, operators of the new UHF channels discovered that owners of television receivers originally constructed to tune in only VHF stations were not willing to spend the additional money required to receive UHF. Consequently, the audiences of these new stations were only a fraction of those tuned to the VHF's, if both types of stations served the same markets. Only in communities where there were no VHF stations did the UHF's attract appreciable audiences. Advertisers, therefore--especially national advertisers--were loathe to buy time on the UHF outlets, making the stations worthless to the networks. In practice, the creation of the UHF band had done little to relieve the shortage of available channels; the few allocated VHF stations were more valuable than ever.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



The Commission's 1952 allocations table provided for competitive facilities of three stations or more in only 27 of the top 50 markets in the country. In addition, 8 other markets ranging in size from 25,000 to 330,000 people were granted three stations each. With only 30 of the largest 89 cities (200,000 population or more) assigned three VHF stations or more, it was practically impossible for each of the television networks to provide adequate service to listeners in more than half of the nation's largest cities.

#### The Effects of the Freeze on ABC

NBC and CBS were in the network business before ABC. Consequently, the majority of the choice stations were divided up among them before ABC began operations in 1948. These new channels in one and two station markets which had their choice of all three networks favored affiliation with the two older companies. This was understandable, for CBS and NBC, because of the extent of their financial resources, had been able (particularly in the early days of television when large losses were incurred) to give their affiliated stations a better program service than that supplied by ABC. Furthermore, many of the television licensees were also the owners of NBC and CBS affiliated radio stations and had been inclined to favor these networks for television station affiliations and clearances. As in radio, NBC and CBS had affiliated with most important station outlets. Consequently, in one and two station markets (and they included all but 35 markets in 1953), stations had a basic television affiliation with either NBC or CBS, and cleared

TABLE I

THE DISTRIBUTION OF VHF TELEVISION STATIONS AS PROPOSED  
BY THE 1952 FCC ALLOCATIONS TABLE

Number Cities With	Top 50 Markets	200,000 to 330,000	100,000 to 200,000	25,000 to 100,000	Less Than 25,000
7 VHF Stations (Stations -)	2 (14)	-	-	-	-
4 VHF Stations (Stations -)	6 (24)	-	-	-	-
3 VHF Stations (Stations -)	19 (57)	3 (9)	3 (9)	2 (6)	-
2 VHF Stations (Stations -)	15 (30)	13 (26)	16 (32)	21 (42)	16 (32)
1 VHF Station (Station -)	3 (3)	13 (13)	25 (25)	57 (57)	111 (111)
No VHF Station	5	10	17	*	*
<hr/>					
Total cities with VHF Stations	45 (128)	29 (48)	44 (66)	80 (105)	127 (143)

considerably more time for programs of these networks than for either ABC or Dumont.<sup>7</sup>

A television station desires a network affiliation not only for additional revenues, but also to attract major audiences.<sup>8</sup> Large "circulation" enhances the stature of the station in the eyes of national-spot and local advertisers, which together represent the largest part of a station's revenues.<sup>9</sup>

ABC could not possibly compete with its larger rivals on either count. The network's facilities disadvantage kept the advertisers away. Without advertisers, there were little or no revenues for developing and producing good programs. Without these programs, the network was considered undesirable for local stations, and so on.

An advertiser buys time on a national network, hoping that his sales message will reach as large a potential audience as possible. He establishes the efficiency of his advertising message by using the radio-television yardstick "cost per thousand" homes reached--obtained by dividing the approximate size of the delivered audience by the costs of both program and time. The network television situation, where large sums of money are expended for both program and time costs, makes it imperative for the advertiser to achieve maximum program amortization

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<sup>7</sup>Oren Harris, Network Broadcasting, A Report of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1958), pp. 80-81.

<sup>8</sup>"ABC-UPT - Its Meaning to Advertisers," Sponsor Magazine, VII (February 9, 1953), 90.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

for maximum dollar efficiency. If an advertiser is to spend several thousands of dollars for a program, he normally expects that program to reach a large segment of the television audience. There are exceptions to the rule, as in the case of advertisers with limited marketing facilities, or those who are concerned with producing "prestige" programming.

The national advertiser looking at ABC-TV in 1953 discovered a network of "live" affiliates, with national coverage of 34 per cent of the United States, and an additional 57 secondary affiliates--basic NBC or CBS stations which carried a limited number of ABC programs on a delayed basis, most often in "fringe" time.<sup>10</sup>

Advertisers strongly favor "live" clearance, especially for the more expensive evening programs, for primarily four reasons.<sup>11</sup>

1. The number of sets in use during evening "network option time" (6:00-11:00 pm) is higher than at any other period of the day, providing the greatest audience potential.

2. There is uniform sequence of lead-in and lead-out programs in all markets. This is based on the theory that there is a considerable "flow of audience" from one program to another; that is, many people keep their sets tuned to one particular channel and consequently programs adjacent to strong programming will benefit from holdover audiences.

3. The program can be given uniform national promotion and merchandising since it is broadcast on the same day and at approximately the same time (give-or-take an hour or two for the different time zones) throughout the country.

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<sup>10</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "Growth, Man, Growth!" (New York: Marketing and Media Facts, #143, May 1, 1959, Mimeographed).

<sup>11</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "1957 Mother Goose Rhymes" (A special report to ABC-TV affiliates, read at the Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 7, 1957).

4. The program can be uniformly scheduled so that it will attract the largest number of the right kind of listeners. An example would be the scheduling of Rin Tin Tin during the early evening when children have most control over the television set.

Delayed broadcasts, on the other hand, are looked upon with disfavor by the national advertiser.<sup>12</sup>

1. They are scheduled in other than "Class A" prime evening time--at periods when there are lower "sets-in-use" figures and less of an available audience.

2. Delayed broadcasts destroy any type of sequence programming, and are usually scheduled without regard to program lead-in or lead-out.

3. Uniform national promotion and advertising are made increasingly difficult because of the irregular scheduling, both time of day, and day of week, of most delayed broadcasts.

4. Delayed broadcasts can affect the audience composition of a program. People of a particular age or socio-economic-age level might view the program at one time of day, but be unavailable during fringe hours (early afternoon, early evening, and late evening--usually after 11:00 pm).

Consequently, ABC-TV was favored by only a handful of advertisers, most of whom had been turned away by NBC and CBS (whose prime time periods had almost invariably been sold out). To these smaller advertisers, and one or two larger companies such as General Mills, ABC represented a third place in which to sell their wares--a place where a better discount could be afforded because of the scarcity of advertisers--where the rate card itself was lower because of the network's smaller "circulation"; and where an almost tailor-made station lineup could be arranged for a small advertiser's particular marketing

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<sup>12</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, Director of ABC-TV Station Clearance (personal interview).

needs.<sup>13</sup>

## II. ABC PROGRAMMING BEFORE THE MERGER

There was no planned program philosophy as such for the ABC Television Network prior to its merger with United Paramount Theatres. The network's primary concern was to fill as much time as possible with sponsored programming. Little or no stress was placed on program adjacencies, flow of audience, block programming or similar findings of audience research.

This was a time of limited program budgets at ABC Broadcasting Division. Dollars had to be stretched as far as possible, merely to get the shows on the air and provide some type of program service to the few affiliates it had. If the network failed to do so, it would lose its handful of stations. Consequently, the majority of ABC programs were inexpensively produced.

### The Program Department

In the months before the merger, ABC Television maintained a skeleton program department. There were six men who dictated program policies; of these, two were also administrative executives of the network.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>"Television Executives," Television Magazine, IX (March, 1952), 95.

Robert E. Kintner	President of ABC Broadcasting Division
Alexander Stronach	Vice President of the Television Network
Harold L. Morgan, Jr.	Vice President of the Television Program Department
William Mayer	Executive Assistant to the Vice President of the Program Department
Charles Underhill	National Director of the TV Program Department
Ward Byron	Executive Producer

Because few programs were produced by the network, the majority of shows were brought to ABC by sponsors, agencies, and "packaging" organizations. The work of the program department was for the most part administrative--including the scheduling of shows, negotiations with advertising agencies, sponsors, and producers, and general supervision over all programming.<sup>15</sup>

The creative activity of the department was kept at a minimum in the fall of 1952. There was little or no ABC program development; no more than a handful of studio originated entertainment programs could be considered network created and produced.

#### Program Control

Half of the weekly program schedule was produced and in some way controlled by ABC Television. Lest these figures be deceiving, it should be pointed out that most of this "house-created and produced" programming consisted of news, public affairs, and sports--all of which came under the direct supervision and control of the ABC News and Public Affairs Department. The Program Department scheduled the shows,

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<sup>15</sup>Statement expressed by Slocum Chapin, former Vice President of ABC Television (personal interview).

but played only a minor role in their development.

There were two reasons for the extensive news and public affairs programming; the network was fulfilling its obligation to operate in the "public interest," and the production of these shows was quite inexpensive, offering a means of providing many hours a week of program service.<sup>16</sup>

The telecasting of sporting events was also dictated by limited program budgets and the low price at which these shows could be delivered. In addition, sports programs were very popular at that time and attracted reasonably large audiences. When provided on a cooperative basis, as most of them were, they were quite saleable at the local level, proving extremely profitable for the affiliates.<sup>17</sup>

The other ABC produced shows, constituting only a few ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of programming, were low-budget variety programs--Super Circus, the Paul Whiteman TV Teen Club, and the Billy Daniels Show.

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet was the only scheduled program jointly controlled by ABC and an independent producer. The network had financed a pilot film a few seasons before and had acquired partnership rights in the series with Music Corporation of America.

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<sup>16</sup>Statement expressed by Fritz Littlejohn, Director of ABC News and Public Affairs (personal interview).

<sup>17</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.



TABLE II

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS PRODUCED AND/OR  
CONTROLLED BY ABC TELEVISION

<u>Type of Program</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours Per Week</u>	<u>"House Created" % of (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours Per Week</u>
News, Public Affairs	23	52%
Remote Sporting Events	14	32
Variety Programs	7	16

From the network broadcast schedule for the week of November  
2-8, 1952.

All other programming on ABC Television (over half of its schedule) was developed, produced, and controlled by independent producers, advertisers, and advertising agencies.

#### The Number of Hours of Program Service

The standard affiliation contracts entered into by networks and stations provide that, subject to certain conditions, the affiliate will accept and broadcast all network programs offered to it during designated hours of the broadcast day. The hours in which such rights may be exercised by the network are known as "network option time." Under Section 3.658 (d) of the Federal Communications Commission's chain broadcasting regulations, "network option time" is hedged about with the restriction that not more than a maximum of three hours of the affiliated station's time may be under network option under each of the following segments of the broadcast day--8:00 am-1:00 pm; 1:00 pm-6:00 pm; 6:00 pm-11:00 pm; and 11:00 pm-8:00 am. (The 11:00 pm to 8:00 am period is rarely, if ever, used.)

The three hour evening period is usually programmed by the networks from 7:30 pm-10:30 pm. During these hours, the number of television "sets in use" (television sets in operation at a given time) is at a peak, making them the most desirable from the advertiser's viewpoint. CBS and NBC were virtually sold out during this prime time, with perhaps one or two periods available. ABC, on the other hand, filled its three hours of "option time" on only two evenings--Sunday and Wednesday. The network programmed only two and one-half hours a night on Monday, Thursday, and Friday, and only one hour on Tuesday

TABLE III

THE NUMBER OF HOURS OF PROGRAM SERVICE FOR EACH OF THE  
NETWORK OPTION TIME PERIODS

<u>Day of Week</u>	<u>hours from 8 am - 1 pm</u>	<u>hours from 1 pm - 6 pm</u>	<u>hours from 6 pm - 11 pm</u>	<u>hours from 11 pm - 8 am</u>
Sunday	0	$4\frac{1}{4}$	3	0
Monday	0	0	$2\frac{1}{2}$	0
Tuesday	0	0	1	0
Wednesday	0	0	3	0
Thursday	0	0	$2\frac{1}{2}$	0
Friday	0	0	$2\frac{1}{2}$	0
Saturday	0	$1\frac{1}{4}$	1	0

From the broadcast schedule for the week of November 2-8, 1952.

and Saturday. Of a possible twenty-one hours of evening "network option time," ABC Television provided network service for only fifteen and one-half hours.

By 1952, NBC and CBS were telecasting in the morning and afternoon, and deriving substantial revenues from their daylight operations. ABC, on the other hand, was not in service before 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. There was, however, more activity on the weekend, with programming on Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon.

#### Program Types in the Schedule

In the fall of 1952, there was a complete absence of comedy and musical-variety, prestige drama, and audience participation games and quizzes (which were quite popular at the time) on ABC. NBC and CBS, on the other hand, provided comedy-variety featuring Jackie Gleason, Jack Benny, Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, and Red Skelton; prestige drama with Studio One, Kraft Television Theatre, the Philco Playhouse, and Robert Montgomery Presents; musical variety with Perry Como, Arthur Godfrey, Ed Sullivan, Fred Waring, and Dinah Shore; and popular audience participation games and quizzes including Beat the Clock, Two For the Money, and You Bet Your Life.

The ABC budgetary limitations were evident in the form of an inexpensive, highly specialized program service--news, public affairs, sporting events, and only a few hours of variety, adventure, drama, and panel games.

TABLE IV  
THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR NOVEMBER 1952

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>7-11 pm Nighttime</u>	<u>Until 6 pm Daytime</u>	<u>Total Nighttime and Daytime</u>
News and Commentary	16	1	17
Sporting Events	4	10	14
Adventure Drama	4	4	8
Public Affairs	4	4	8
Religious Programs	4	2	6
Situation Comedy	6	0	6
Children's Variety	0	6	6
Straight Drama	4	0	4
Police Det. Drama	4	0	4
Panel Quiz	4	0	4
Talent Variety	2	0	2
Human Interest	2	0	2
Sports Features	2	0	2
Musical Variety	0	1	1

From the ABC schedule for the week of November 2-8, 1952.

### Program Costs

Four of the eighteen sponsored ABC programs cost at least \$15,000 (at that time, the average television program could be produced for about \$15,000-\$25,000).<sup>18</sup> The remaining fourteen were priced at less than \$15,000--inexpensive shows insuring the advertiser a reasonable "cost per thousand."

There can be little doubt then, that ABC, in the months before the United Paramount merger, was definitely not a competitor in network television.

Until it could acquire large amounts of working capital with which it could invest in new programs, talent and facilities, the company's future would remain as questionable as its past. The proposed merger with United Paramount Theatres was to provide the solution to many of these problems.

### III. THE MERGER

The Federal Communications Commission, while considering the merger of the two companies, indicated a major concern for promoting competition at the network level. The regulatory agency noted that there were few if any companies other than those already in the field willing to enter network competition and provide the resources required for a network programming operation to effectively compete with CBS and NBC.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>"Network Program Report," Television Magazine, IX (October 1952), 10.

<sup>19</sup>Harris, loc. cit.

TABLE V

PROGRAM COSTS FOR COMMERCIAL ABC TELEVISION  
PROGRAMS IN NOVEMBER 1952

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<u>Program</u>	<u>Program Cost</u>
Ozzie and Harriet	\$25,000
Lone Ranger	17,000
Beulah	15,000
Stu Erwin	15,000
Ellery Queen	12,500
Tales of Tomorrow	12,500
Walter Winchell	10,000
Date With Judy	8,500
Super Circus	8,500
You Asked For It	7,500
Hollywood Screen Test	7,000
Name's The Same	7,000
Mystery Theatre	6,500
Chance of a Lifetime	6,500
Space Patrol	6,000
Tootsie Hypodrome	4,500
Life Begins At Eighty	3,500
Pud's Prize Party	2,500

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Program and production costs, exclusive of time charges, as estimated by Television Magazine, October 1952.

The extensive financial resources of the other networks have enabled them to take greater program risks and to erect and staff more elaborate facilities. The lack of adequate and diversified resources has been the principle obstacle which has precluded ABC in the past from providing the vigorous competition which might have been expected from the establishment of ABC as an independent competitive network. There is a reasonable basis for belief that if ABC were able to take more risks and to spend more money on programming, over a period of time it would build larger audiences, which in turn would result in more station clearances for television programs and more wide-coverage AM stations as affiliates.

The financial resources which the merger would provide for ABC will enable it not only to improve its physical properties, but also its program structure so as to compete with NBC and CBS. The ABC program structure would be improved in radio as well as television, both by the conduct of research and analysis, and by the acquisition of the necessary talent, creative people, producers, and program material.<sup>20</sup>

American Broadcasting-United Paramount Theatres, Incorporated, the newly formed company, also believed that this alliance would promote a competitive network situation, serving advertisers, the broadcasting industry, and the general public. Full-page advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and trade journals across the country confirmed this belief.

The most important news in the radio and television industry in years has been announced. The long planned union of ABC and United Paramount Theatres has been approved by the Federal Communications Commission, and the two organizations are now one company.

The event is of far more significance than any statistics of the corporate merger. The new company will be impressively stronger and more flexible, and possess a greater potential for growth.

The combination is a 'natural' if ever there was one. United Paramount's great history of showmanship and superb experience discovering and developing new talent will now be available to the American Broadcasting Company.

But the really great thing about the news is the tremendous promise the merger holds for the radio and television audience.

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.



New programs will be developed. New stars will be attracted. New techniques will be introduced. New facilities will be developed. Not tomorrow, of course. Not next week, or next month. But ABC intends to be a leader in radio and television, and it intends to grow like an oak, not a mushroom.

The future began yesterday, so keep your eyes and ears on the new ABC.<sup>21</sup>

#### IV. THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

A period of six and one-half years has passed since February 1953, during which time ABC has undergone a pronounced growth. The television network's gross billings for both time and programs have increased from \$21,000,000, or 9.3 per cent of total network billings, to \$103,017,000, or 18.2 per cent in 1958. "Live" or basic affiliates have mushroomed from six stations with U. S. coverage of 34.0 per cent in 1953 to the 1959 total of ninety-seven stations covering an estimated 85.9 per cent of the country.<sup>22</sup> The most significant advances, however, have been in the area of programming. In 1958-59, many ABC Television programs dominated their time periods in competitive three station markets--with shows like the Real McCoys, Maverick, Wyatt Earp, and the Rifleman listed in the Nielsen "top-ten."

This study of ABC Television programming is twofold in purpose--to determine the direct effects of the United Paramount merger, and also the effects of external conditions upon the ABC program structure.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Advertisement appearing in Sponsor Magazine, VII (February 23, 1953), pp. 8-9.

The influence of the merger will concern, for the most part, the programming itself. Each of the seven broadcasting seasons from 1953-1959 will be analyzed in terms of the organization of the Program Department; the underlying program philosophy; the relationships of the other television networks to ABC programming; program development and acquisition; the effects of independent producers; advertisers, and their agencies; a listing of the new programs; an examination of the program structure to determine costs, and the extent of network service; an evolutionary description of the schedule; and finally, an evaluation of each season.

The analysis of external factors will include station clearance, changes in the size and composition of the television audience, an expanding national economy and its relationship to the growth of ABC, and the contributions of other network areas--with an evaluation of research, sales, and promotion.

#### V. THE PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Program schedules of the national television networks were secured for the first weeks in November, March, and August--for each of the past seven years. By November, all new fall programming would be installed; by March, past the end of the traditional first thirteen week advertiser's cycle, most of the program changes and revisions would be made; and by August, all summer programming would be on the air. These sample schedules were gathered from issues of the New York Times, and then crosschecked with comparable schedules appearing

in Sponsor and Broadcasting-Telecasting magazines, and information supplied by the networks.

Nielsen audience ratings for commercial programs were also acquired for each of the above mentioned weeks. Two sets of rating figures--the National and MNA "average audience" reports--were gathered as crosschecks. The national Nielsen "pocketpiece" provides ratings for the entire country, including many areas where there are only one or two television stations in the market--while the MNA (Multi Network Area) lists those cities where the three networks are represented by equal facilities. Combining the results provided by the two services, one could roughly determine the relationship of a program's ratings to its station lineup. If the program had a low national rating, but did well in the MNA markets, its national coverage factor could indicate if this had any effect on the show's popularity. Though other factors had to be considered, such as the program's appeal and delayed broadcasts, a wide discrepancy between the two ratings would indicate that clearance could be an important factor. These ratings, though not conclusive, could nevertheless be used as rudimentary guides for determining a program's popularity, providing some insight into program renewal and cancellation, and clarifying other program decisions made by network or agency management.

The season-by-season analysis presented one major problem--the comparative importance of each of the sample weeks. The majority of the new programs begin in the fall quarter. Winter-Spring, on the other hand, is for the most part a continuation of the fall, with only a few

changes made. In the summer, most of the programming consists of re-runs and replacement material, usually scheduled for less than thirteen weeks. With these factors in mind, the researcher decided to place most emphasis on the fall quarter, or November schedule--providing detailed information on every aspect of the programming. The other portions of the year, represented by the March and August schedules, would be detailed only when there were significant changes to report in philosophy, programming or scheduling.

In order to obtain a complete body of information about ABC programming, interviews were arranged with those executives who made the decisions and policies for each of the seven seasons. This material, supplemented with extensive research in the 1952-1959 issues of Variety, Sponsor, Broadcasting-Telecasting, and Television magazines, as well as other "non-trade" publications, furnished the necessary information for the completion of this study.

## CHAPTER II

### NETWORK PROGRAMMING

The programming viewed by the public under the American system of commercial television results from the complex intermeshing of a number of entities, the chief of which are the television network, the advertiser, and the advertising agency, the independent program producer, the commercial television station, and the research organization.<sup>1</sup> Each of these components plays an important part in the formation of the network broadcast schedule, though the relationships between them change proportionally according to each given programming situation.

These operational relationships can be described as follows.<sup>2</sup> The advertiser, advised by its advertising agency, provides the economic support for the telecasting system. Station facilities are used for three broad classes of advertising, known in the industry as network, national spot, and local. The television station is licensed by the Commission to operate in the public interest and may be, and in fact is, conducted as a business venture. The stations enter, with limited exceptions, into an affiliation relation with a network. The network provides a broad program service, acts as an agent for the sale of the station's time as part of the network line-up to the advertiser desiring

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<sup>1</sup>Oren Harris, Network Broadcasting, A Report of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1958), 37; and a statement expressed by Fred Pierce, Manager of the ABC-TV Research Department (personal interview).

<sup>2</sup>Harris, pp. 37-49.

national coverage, and arranges with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the common carrier, for interconnection to deliver the network service. Programs created especially for television are produced by the network, the station, the advertising agency, and the independent program producer. While the programs may be purchased or produced by the network, it is the advertiser who in the last instance bears their cost, except to the extent that some programs are carried on a sustaining (unsponsored) basis.

## I. THE NETWORK

A network buys time from its affiliated but individually owned stations and then resells the combined time to an advertiser for a simultaneous national broadcast. It also has an obligation to supply these same affiliates with a program service at specified times in the broadcast day. It must develop or acquire programs to fill its schedule; sell the programs and/or the time period in which they are broadcast; schedule the programs; produce a portion of the programs broadcast; and promote audience acceptance of the programs.

### Development or Acquisition of Programs

A television network may develop some of its own "house-created" programs. In such a case, network personnel, beginning with an initial program idea or performer around whom a show can be built, have complete creative supervision over the development of the program, which, in most cases, would be a "live" one produced at the network's facilities.

The network may also enter into a joint agreement with a "packager." Steps in the development of a program along these lines usually follow a standard pattern.<sup>3</sup> An established producer approaches the network with an idea, or conversely, the network might have an idea and then call in an independent producer. In either case, there is the initial idea, and the network-producer relationship. The network's programming personnel usually discuss the idea from these points of view.

1. Potential audience appeal, in terms of ratings.
2. Similarity to existing network programs.
3. Frequency of presentation (once a week, five times a week).
4. Ideal length.
5. Ease of production, including the creative personnel necessary for its realization. Can this program be produced through the network's facilities or the producer's, and will it entail difficult technical problems? If the show is daily or weekly, will the producer be able to adhere to the production schedule?
6. Casts--If they are selected, are they right? Should a name star be sought? Guest stars?
7. Costs--Is the producer's budget, if submitted, likely to be correct? Should more or less spending be suggested? Is this a potential moneymaker, or a prestige program? Which should it be?
8. Exploitation--How can the most be gotten out of an idea? Should it be sold in the idea stage, or should a pilot film be made? Will advance publicity hurt or help the program?
9. Will it be easy to find sponsors for? Are there any controversial aspects? (A question that ABC would ask: will sponsors who are likely to buy consider our coverage disadvantage?)

The Sales Department is then brought in for consultation. If the idea is accepted, it is sent to the business affairs and legal departments to check on rights and infringements, and to work out preliminary negotiations with the producer. These will usually stipulate that the producer develop a show concept and first script along the lines

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<sup>3</sup>"Network Programming: Step by Step from Brainwave to Airwave," Sponsor Magazine, X (February 6, 1956), pp. 28-29.

recommended by the board. Upon approval of this concept, the network would then finance, either completely or in part, the production of the pilot film. In return for financing the pilot film, the network usually receives an option for a designated amount of time from the date of completion of the pilot film, after which if it decides to drop the idea, all rights to the property revert to the producer.

When these negotiations have been worked out, the sales and publicity departments begin working on pre-release publicity and presentations. The first script is returned to the network, at which time either changes can be recommended or the script passed on to the president of the network for final approval.

Following his approval, the production money is allocated and turned over to the producer, who then makes the pilot film.

#### Acquisition of Programs from Independent Producers

When the network acquires a program from a "packager" or independent producer, it usually has little or no control over the creative development of the property. The program is already an entity. Instead, the network can either option the program for a given amount of time and attempt to sell it, or it can actually commit for a specific number of episodes in the series--usually the customary 13, 26, 39 or 52, corresponding to the four quarters of the broadcasting season. In the former case, if the network cannot sell the property it reverts to the producer, with little financial loss incurred by either of the two. If, however, the network commits for a specific number of shows, it is under



a contractual agreement to pay for them, whether or not they are purchased by an advertiser. An unsold program which must be broadcast as a sustainer usually represents a large financial loss for the network.

#### Attraction of Sponsor-Controlled Programs

Here again, the program is already in existence, with the network providing time for the show, but maintaining little or no creative control. The sponsor has previously acquired a program, either from its advertising agency or more likely from an independent producer, and brings it to the network to occupy a time period which he has purchased or which he intends to purchase.

#### Sales

The network may act as a program salesman for a property created and produced by its own Program Department; for a program jointly developed by itself and an independent producer; and for a "packaged" program series which it has either contractually committed for, or has placed under option for a designated amount of time. The program can be presented for sale in the form of an idea, in which case printed sales presentations are usually circulated; or it can be sold on the basis of a pilot film already made. In rare instances, the pilot can be an actual episode of an existing program--sold as a result of that broadcast.

### Scheduling the Shows

The network is responsible for the final scheduling of all its programs. Though the advertiser and its agency generally exert varied degrees of influence, the task technically lies within the power of the network itself.

In placing a program into the schedule, the network is usually guided by many factors, all of which play an important part in its total operations. Programs should be scheduled in as organized a manner as possible, with considerations of the competition, program adjacencies, and the audience appeal of the program in relation to its time period.

Advertiser relationships are another important consideration. Sponsor compatibility in individual and adjacent programs, as well as the advertiser's ideas regarding prospective time periods, determine the scheduling of many programs.

Technical matters cannot be overlooked. Often, the number of stations available for clearance at a given time may be a decisive factor in scheduling. Cable and lines rented from the A. T. and T. may, for economic or competitive reasons, be available at only certain hours of the day. The network must consider all of these factors, operating in varying proportions at different times, in finally deciding where each program is to be scheduled.

### Program Production

If a program is network conceived and is being presented "live,"

the network will more than likely use its own creative talent, technical staff, and facilities to produce the show. Many times, however, outside producing firms or advertising agencies maintain creative control over "live" shows--providing the writers, producer, director, and all creative talent, with the network originating the program from its own facilities, using its technical personnel, but retaining only limited creative control.

Jointly produced film programs are usually executed by the producer at his facilities and with his creative and technical personnel. The network would, however, have certain basic approvals, including the selection of the producer, director, writers, and principal casting. This creative supervision would not normally extend to actual on-the-studio-floor production.

Those filmed programs produced solely by a "packager" or agency are invariably controlled by these concerns. The network has little or no creative influence on the program, and maintains only general control on content and presentation so far as good taste and operating in the public interest.

#### Promoting Acceptance of the Show

The network must promote acceptance of the program by the public. This is usually done in conjunction with its advertising, promotion, exploitation, and publicity departments through paid-ads in newspapers and magazines, publicity releases, press parties, personal appearance tours for many of its stars, and elaborate program and personality tie-ins with manufacturers.

The network must also promote its programming among its affiliate body; it must make every station aware of its plans, promoting enthusiasm on their part, and in turn maximum clearances. It must originate affiliates' meetings, where ideas and basic questions can be discussed and problems solved. It must actively participate with the affiliate body in promoting the programming at the local level; and, most important of all, it must promote an air of optimism and satisfaction with regard to network operations.

The network must also promote acceptance of its programming among the trade; the entire industry must learn of its past accomplishments and its plans for the future. It must also publicize its prospective programs, its current roster of personalities and programming, and in general, stimulate advertiser and trade interest in all phases of its operations.

## II. THE ADVERTISER AND ADVERTISING AGENCY

The American system of commercial network television is supported by the advertiser's purchases of programs and network time. These expenditures are made so that the advertiser may present a commercial message concerning his product to the television audience. Network time may be purchased in conjunction with the presentation of a sponsored program, or as part of a network program containing participating announcements. In many instances, two or more advertisers share the sponsorship of a network program, and networks provide several kinds of sponsorship arrangements. Network advertising is the chief form of

television advertising, accounting for almost half of time sales and half of total estimated television advertising expenditures for time and programs.<sup>4</sup>

The large national advertiser places his advertising through an advertising agency, although he may employ a substantial advertising department of his own. The agency function is that of a professional counselor for its client, and it is authorized to act in behalf of the clients as provided in the client contract. The income for an agency is derived from a 15 per cent commission on all time, program, and production costs. In addition, the agency may receive additional revenues from the client for research and other special services.

Without the large national advertisers and their representative advertising agencies, commercial network television could not exist. for there would be no one to pay the high costs of both network time and programs. It is not surprising, then, that these related components in broadcasting exercise much control on network programming.

#### Development and Acquisition of Programs

The advertiser, or more likely its agency, may develop its own programs for network use. More often, if the program is to be supplied by the advertiser, the advertising agency will screen program ideas in the form of pilots or kinescopes from a great variety of sources and then make specific recommendations. It then contracts and supervises the development of the program selected.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Harris, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

### Purchase of Network Time

The advertising agency also contracts with a network for the purchase of station time, in the form of a facilities contract. Within the limits prescribed by the networks in regard to "must-buy" stations (a minimum station lineup which the advertiser must order), each individual network station which will carry the program is determined by the advertising agency, subject to the sponsor's approval.<sup>6</sup> If the program is to be supplied by the network, the agency also signs a program contract with the network. It may contract for the program and/or time on the basis of 13, 26, 39, or 52 weeks, with options for renewal in each case.

### The Scheduling of the Programs

The network advertiser, through its agency, also determines, in many cases, the scheduling of the program in question. It selects a network, and then acquires a time period which it hopes will draw an audience of the required size and composition. The choice is dictated by the advertiser's products compatibility with others which might be sharing the expenses on a multi-sponsored show, and those products of other advertisers occupying adjacent time periods; by competition on the other networks and program adjacencies on the purchased network; and by the number of stations which may be cleared on a "live" basis at different time periods in the schedule. After consideration of all of

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

these factors, the advertiser, agency, and network will arrive at a particular time period which all feel will provide maximum sales delivery in terms of audience size and composition.

#### Supervision of the Program

The agency has several functions in connection with the program itself--even if supplied by the network. These include approval of talent and scripts, attendance at rehearsals, and producing and integrating commercials. In other instances, the agency may actually produce the program and provide all the creative talent, though this is the exception rather than the rule.

#### Evaluation of the Program

Probably the most important function of both the advertiser and the agency is their role in evaluating the program once it has been on the air for a sufficient time. The program is analyzed in terms of these factors: the size of the audience, the economy of the program, based on the "cost-per-thousand homes" yardstick; the composition of the audience reached, as related to the purposes of the advertiser; and a general qualitative evaluation of the program and its effects on the advertiser's corporate image.

Having evaluated the show in terms of these criteria, the advertiser and agency may then decide to renew the options on time and/or program, change the program to a more desirable time period, replace the program, or cancel both program and time.

### III. INDEPENDENT PROGRAM PRODUCERS

There are numerous persons and organizations--varying widely in size and scope of operations--who regularly engage in the creating, producing, and distributing of programs for television. They are independent in the sense that they are not directly owned or controlled by the network companies. These independents constitute a major component of the television industry, for they produce a substantial portion of the total commercial programs broadcast by the networks. Most of the product of these independents consists of programs made on film, although some independent firms produce "live" programs for exhibition on the networks. At present, each of the three national networks includes in its weekly schedule some "live" programs produced by non-network sources. A substantial number of filmed programs included in network schedules are also produced by firms which are not owned or controlled by the networks. With an ever-increasing amount of programming coming from these sources, the independent producers influence and shape a large portion of the network program schedules.

#### Program Development

The independent producer or "packager" may develop and produce his own programs and then attempt to sell them. Still another method of program development allies him with a network, which usually finances the initial pilot film in return for an exclusive option on the property for a given amount of time.



### Program Sales

Once the program has been developed, and is usually in the form of a tangible pilot film, the independent producer attempts to find buyers. The pilot is usually screened by advertising agencies, sponsors, and networks--who have the choice of optioning the series for a specified amount of time, or contracting for a specific number of episodes. In the case of an option or sale to a network, the independent producer may assist the network in selling the program, if a sponsor has not yet been acquired. This joint sales relationship would apply to those properties developed in conjunction with the network.

Two large talent agencies--the Music Corporation of America, and the William Morris Office--are often involved in these sales, acting as the agents for the producers, and as such, liaisons between the "packager" and the network, advertiser, or agency.<sup>7</sup> Though many of the sales might be abetted by the producer, the talent agency is nevertheless called in to make the sale, because it is being paid for that service.<sup>8</sup> The talent agency may or may not have ownership or participating interest in the series, other than its commissionable fee if the show is sold. In many instances, however, it has conceived the show idea, integrated the creative elements, and prepared it for piloting.

### Program Production

Filmed programs are invariably produced by these independent

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<sup>7</sup>Variety New York, September 2, 1955, p. 23.

<sup>8</sup>Variety, October 1, 1958, p. 21.

"packagers" who maintain creative control over production elements, including the selection of producer, director, writer, members of the cast, and the subsequent filming of the show either at his facilities, with his technical personnel, or at facilities rented by him from another producer or motion picture company. A jointly produced program would wrest some degree of control from him, with the network having certain basic approvals.

The business arrangements between "live" program producers and the networks differ from company to company and from program to program. In general, it may be said that the packager provides the creative or "above the line" elements involved in the program, such as the idea, the script, the actors, the producers, and director; and the network usually supplies the technical and production facilities--the "below the line" elements.

#### Promotion of the Program

Regardless of how the show has been financed, the independent producer usually assumes some of the responsibilities involved in promoting acceptance of the program. While seeking an advertiser, he promotes the series in the trade press; distributes sales brochures to networks, advertisers, and their agencies; and generally attempts to create as much interest as possible throughout the industry.

If the program attracts an advertiser and is subsequently broadcast, he participates with network and advertiser in promoting audience acceptance--publicity and promotional material for newspapers and

magazines, personal appearance tours for program personalities, and perhaps merchandising efforts, doing his share with the advertiser and network to make the show an audience success.

#### IV. STATIONS

Although some stations identified with networks are owned by the network companies, the majority of all stations are affiliates, in no sense owned or controlled by the networks, but carrying network programs on the basis of a contractual relationship between station and network.<sup>9</sup> The stations must supplement this programming provided to them in "network option time" with other material: "live" local programming, syndicated film shows, and feature films. The station's schedule must be attractive and varied to permit it to fulfill its public interest obligation and build the audience or "circulation," access to which is the inducement for the advertiser to order its facilities. Each affiliate is a vital part of the network organization, for it is the network's and ultimately the sponsor's "access to the marketplace" in that particular community. For this reason, each station link in the entire affiliate chain directly affects the success or failure of the network's programming efforts.

##### Station Clearance

The station must make maximum efforts to clear time for network

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<sup>9</sup>Dr. Harrison Summers, "Broadcast Programs and Audiences" (Ohio State University: mimeographed material prepared for Speech 652).

programming in "network option time." This boosts the national coverage factor and in turn, makes the network a better buy for the national advertiser.

### Local Programming

The affiliate's program schedule, irrespective of the network's, may indirectly affect the network's programming. The total audience flow from one segment of the broadcast day to another, from station time to network, and from network to station, must be assured with consistently superior programming on the affiliate's part. Local "live" features reflecting the interests of the community, superior syndicated material, and quality feature films must be integrated into the station's total program structure. In this manner, the station can maintain a satisfactory public image, and attract large audiences at all hours of the day. Poor local programming can destroy much of this audience flow, and deflate the circulation of the surrounding network programs.<sup>10</sup>

### Program Promotion

Promoting audience acceptance of both network and local programs is still another function of the affiliate. The viewing public must be made aware of the programming offered by the station through publicizing and promoting the schedule. The station often shares this responsibility with the network, planning campaigns in local newspapers and television

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<sup>10</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, Director of ABC-TV Station Clearance (personal interview).

logs, billboards, carcards, and on-the-air promotion. Efforts of this type do, of course, vary from market to market and station to station, depending on the affiliate's economic stability, operational procedure, and general enthusiasm.

### Program Development

Many affiliates are encouraged to develop programs for possible network use. Programming of this type has often been used in the past, especially as summer replacements. Some stations have made an active effort to comply with the request. Others, because of budgetary or facilities restrictions, have never been able to originate programming of sufficient quality. Here again, the situation varies from station to station, and among the networks.

## V. THE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

Advertisers and broadcasters alike need three basic types of information about programs and their audiences--and this information is provided by various types of research organizations.<sup>11</sup> These major research objectives could be described as information regarding the relative popularity of single programs and their audience composition; qualitative measures of a program's basic appeal and its different elements; and general information about the characteristics and habits of television listeners--and about preferences for programs of various

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<sup>11</sup>Mimeographed material from H. Summers.

types.

### The Relative Popularity of Single Programs and Their Audience Composition

Several companies provide this type of information--most of them using ratings as an index to the popularity of a given program. A rating is a figure representing the percentage of television homes in a specified area in which, on a given date, the family TV set was tuned to a given program.<sup>12</sup> Information is also provided concerning the profile of the television audience for any given program in terms of sex, age, and city-country dwelling.

Major companies providing this type of service include<sup>13</sup>

1. American Research Bureau. Provides a "United States Television Audience" rating based on seven-day diaries kept in 2200 homes distributed throughout the United States; diaries cover the first seven days of the month.

2. A. C. Nielsen, Inc. Provides national TV "Nielsen-ratings" on a semi-monthly basis, with information secured from mechanical "audimeters" installed in over 1000 homes, recording all use of any TV set in the home. Each program rating is based on all broadcasts of the program in question during a two week period.

3. Pulse. Provides a "U. S. Pulse TV" rating, based on personal interviews in 64 markets. In each market, interviewers use a printed "roster" or schedule of TV programs broadcast during the preceding day, to secure information concerning programs tuned in during that day. National sample includes 25,000 interviews covering daytime listening, and 42,000 additional interviews covering evening listening or approximately 6,000 interviews for each evening program.

4. Trendex. Provides a "program popularity rating" for network programs broadcast during the first week of each month, based on coincidental telephone interviews in 15 major cities in Eastern and Central time zones. A minimum of 700 calls on TV homes is made during each half hour period, in the 15 cities taken collectively.

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

The first three services provide national ratings for network programs which represent the percentage of all TV-equipped homes in the nation tuned to each program rated. Consequently, the size of the station line-up carrying the program considerably influences the national rating. These ratings are an index to actual listenership--not to the attractiveness of the program. Trendex (and the Nielsen Multi-Network Area Reports), on the other hand, secures information in only the major cities where each network has fully competitive facilities. This rating is chiefly an index of relative program attractiveness--and not influenced by the number of stations in the lineup.

The information supplied by these research agencies determines, to a great degree, whether a program will be cancelled or renewed by the advertiser. This is one of the measures an advertiser has in determining whether the show is reaching a sufficient number of the right kind of people.

The detailed compositional break-downs may also assist both the network and advertiser in determining the best time period to schedule the respective program, in terms of program adjacencies and competition.

The data can also be used as a function of sales. Often, ratings and other measures provided are included in network and program sales presentations distributed to advertisers and their agencies. In such cases, as well as their inclusion in promotional pieces, only favorable material is used; advertiser success stories and cases of network sales efficiency comprise the majority of this material.

Rating figures and allied information are also influential in clearing time for the network's shows in markets where it does not have a primary affiliate.

#### Qualitative Measures of the Elements in a Program and its Basic Appeal

A network or advertiser wants its program to be as appealing as possible. If there are any elements which the audience does not like, these should be omitted and replaced with more pleasing ingredients. One commercial organization provides this sort of information through analysis of individual programs.

Schwerin Research Corporation. Schwerin brings together groups of from 300 to 400 more or less typical listeners in a converted motion picture theatre in New York. These test audiences listen to playbacks of transcriptions of radio programs, or watch kinescope recordings of television shows. As the program is played back, numbers are thrown on a screen at previously determined intervals. As each number is thrown on the screen, each member of the test group marks on a "ballot" whether he "likes," "dislikes," or "has no opinion about" the material he has just heard. From information provided in this way, Schwerin provides a "profile" for the program studied--a curve showing on a minute-by-minute basis just how much liking was expressed for each element in the program.<sup>14</sup>

Information of this type is used by the network and advertiser for the development of new programs, and the revision of existing programs.

A new service in Port Washington, New York, measures a program's popularity or enjoyment as opposed to program ratings which measure the

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.



size of the audience. In the process, factors which influence program ratings (competition, lead-in and lead-out programs, station lineups, season of the year, and the time period) are minimized.<sup>15</sup>

TV-Q provides a monthly service. It uses the same panel employed by Home Testing Institute, which is a national consumer panel of over 10,000 families. The panel is divided into 12 matched groups, each of which includes over 750 TV homes and over 2,000 individuals. By this device, a different sample of individuals rates TV shows each month. Mail ballots are sent out to be completed by each member of the family in the panel. The ballot lists all network TV programs (commercial, sustaining, and special).<sup>16</sup>

TV-Q can be used by advertisers and networks to predict rating levels of new shows; to determine the vulnerability of existing shows; and to indicate what group of people a program most appeals to. More specifically, it can be an excellent tool, if used properly, in determining the choice of programming to be used, and its scheduling in relation to program adjacencies and competition.

General Information About the Characteristics and Habits of Radio and Television Audiences--and about Preferences for Programs of Various Types

It is important for broadcasters to know as much as possible about program listeners in general--at what hours they are available, where sets are located, how much each individual listens, and so on. Studies along this line are sporadic, rather than continuing.

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<sup>15</sup>Sheldon Jacobs, "TV-Q: A New Qualitative Measure of a Program's Popularity" (New York: ABC Television Research Report, Volume IV, Number 6, May 5, 1959, Mimeographed).

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

Occasional studies of television listeners have been made by NBC and published as the "Hoffstra Studies," and a number of other studies in the New York area have been made by the American Research Bureau. Still other information is provided by occasional studies made by colleges and universities.<sup>17</sup>

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The American commercial system of broadcasting dictates the complicated and highly interrelated aspects of programming on the network level. The television network and its affiliated stations, the advertiser and his agency, the independent producer, and the research agency influence and shape the network program schedules. Each of these components is dependent on some or all of the others. It is this interplay--this interaction of one upon the other--that is the substance of commercial network programming.

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<sup>17</sup>Mimeographed material from H. Summers.

## CHAPTER III

### MID-SEASON 1952-53

Mid-season 1952-53 was, for the most part, a continuation of the fall. CBS and NBC still provided large amounts of prestige drama, mysteries, comedy, variety, and audience participation games and quizzes. The roster of talent and personalities showed no signs of declining; instead, additional names were added to the list--Red Buttons, Gale Storm, William Bendix, and Ann Sothern.

#### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

When United Paramount joined ABC in February 1953, no drastic changes in program policy were anticipated for the remainder of the season. The network planned to wait until September for the "big-time" programming--content to operate with few important changes in the interim.<sup>1</sup>

There was, however, to be an immediate increase in the scheduling of sporting events. Not only were they popular at the time and inexpensive to produce, but also quite salable at the local level.<sup>2</sup> Plans were made to originate seven hours of sports a week to be offered to the affiliates as cooperative programs. The network provided the

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<sup>1</sup>Statement expressed by Slocum Chapin, former Vice President of the ABC television Network (personal interview).

<sup>2</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, Director of ABC-TV Station Clearance (personal interview).

programs, and in turn, collected a percentage of station revenues derived from their local sale.

Another immediate decision called for the cancellation of most news programming. These sustainers had been unprofitable and unsalable for the network and its affiliates.<sup>3</sup>

## II. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

The most important addition to the department was the appointment of Robert M. Weitman as the newly created Vice President in charge of Programming and Talent for both radio and television. Mr. Weitman had formerly been Managing Director of the New York Paramount Theatre (a UPT theatre). He was transferred by United Paramount to head ABC programming, with the belief that his contacts and show business background would be indispensable in the development of talent and programs.<sup>4</sup>

Three administrators--Harold L. Morgan, Jr., Vice President of the Program Department; William Mayer, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of the Program Department; and Ward Byron, Executive Producer--were respectively replaced by Charles Underhill, Charles Holden, and Dick Hopkins. In addition, Herbert Brodtkin was appointed as an additional network executive producer.

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<sup>3</sup>Statement expressed by Fritz Littlejohn, Manager of ABC News and Public Affairs (personal interview).

<sup>4</sup>"What the ABC-Paramount Merger Means to Sponsors," Sponsor Magazine, V (June 4, 1951), pp. 32-34.

The newly organized Program Department included

Robert E. Kintner	President, ABC Broadcasting Division
Alexander Stronach	Vice President, Television Network
Robert M. Weitman	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Charles Underhill	Director of the TV Program Department
Charles Holden	Assistant Director, TV Program Department
Dick Hopkins	Executive Producer
Herbert Brodtkin	Executive Producer

### III. ABC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC Television created only a few entertainment programs at mid-season 1952-53. They were, with one notable exception, inexpensive shows designed to fill certain vacant time periods. Among the new programs developed and produced by the network were:

The ABC Album (later retitled Plymouth Showcase). This half-hour dramatic anthology series was produced by ABC's Herbert Brodtkin, in line with the network's objective of developing a variety of program types to provide a wider scope of appeal for both advertisers and the public.<sup>5</sup> The program, conceived as a thirteen week series, was an on-the-air showcase for a number of individual properties, most of which were optioned from independent producers. The ABC programmers hoped that one or more of these prospective series would attract advertiser interest for an ABC program in the fall.<sup>6</sup> Among the shows presented, on both a "live" and filmed basis, were Justice, starring Paul Douglas, based on

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<sup>5</sup>"ABC Lines Up New Business: Works on Additional Plans," Broadcasting Magazine, XLIV (March 16, 1953), 68.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

case histories from the files of the Legal Aid Department; Jamie, starring Brandon DeWilde, the story of an orphan boy living with his grandfather; Colonel Flack, starring Alan Mowbray, the exploits of an amiable "con-man" and his assistant; Mr. Glencannon Takes All, starring Robert Newton; and a two part "live" adaptation of A Tale of Two Cities.

ABC Album, produced with the finest talent and creative personnel available, received widespread acclaim. The series was significant not only because Plymouth sponsored the majority of the programs, but also because it promoted a realization on the part of advertisers, sponsors, and stations that ABC Television could provide "big-time" programming.<sup>7</sup>

Other ABC produced programs included

Gerald Johnson  
Music From Meadowbrook

All other new programs were acquired from independent producers, advertisers, and agencies. These "packages" included

A Date With Judy  
The Herman Hickman Show  
Rootie Kazootie  
U. S. Army Talent Patrol  
What's Your Bid

#### IV. THE MID-SEASON 1952-53 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The most significant changes in the program schedule were the pronounced reduction of news programming, and the addition of many hours

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<sup>7</sup>Variety, October 7, 1953, 28.

TABLE VI

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES ON ABC-TV  
AT MID-SEASON 1952-53 AS COMPARED WITH THOSE  
QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1952

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>November 1952</u>	<u>Mid-Season 1952-53</u>
Sporting Events	14	38
Situation Comedy	6	8
Children's Variety	6	8
Panel Quiz	4	2
Straight Drama	4	6
News and Commentary	17	6
Religious Programs	6	5
Talent Variety	2	4
Miscellaneous	2	4
Adventure Drama	4	4
Detective Drama	4	2
Musical Variety	1	2
Human Interest	2	2
Sports Features	2	1
Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	82	91

From the broadcast schedules for the weeks of November 2-8, 1952; March 1-7, April 1-7, and May 1-7, 1953.

of sporting events.

Another immediate effect of the merger was an increase in the extent of network service--from 82 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in November 1952 to 91 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours at mid-season.

Though the hours of network service had increased, there was a reduction in commercial programming--from 53 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in November to 46 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours at mid-season.

### Program Cancellations

The majority of mid-season cancellations were sustaining and cooperative news, public affairs, and miscellaneous programs. In most cases, these shows were preempted with stronger sports programming, or the time periods returned to the stations.<sup>8</sup> Low-interest, non-revenue producing programs in this category included--Monday: Hot Seat, 8:30--9:00 pm, All Star News, 9:30 to 10:00 pm; Wednesday: All Star News, 8:00 to 9:00 pm; Thursday: All Star News, 8:00 to 8:30 pm, On Trial, 9:00 to 9:30 pm; Friday: All Star News, 8:30 to 9:30 pm.

A few programs were discontinued because of low ratings.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 11/52 (first report)</u>
Billy Daniels	5.9
Life Begins At Eighty	Unavailable
Live Like A Millionaire	12.0

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<sup>8</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.



### Program Additions

Of the 52 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of programming installed at mid-season, 38 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (74 per cent) consisted of sporting events.

Monday	9:30 pm - 10:45 pm	Boxing from Eastern Parkway
Wednesday	10:00 pm - 12:00 pm	Wrestling from Rainbow Arena
Thursday	9:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Motor City Fights from Detroit
Saturday	2:00 pm - Conclus.	Baseball Game of the Week
Saturday	8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Texas Wrestling
Saturday	9:00 pm - 9:45 pm	Saturday Night Fights
Saturday	9:45 pm - 10:00 pm	Fight Talk

There were only 14 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (26 per cent) of new entertainment programming.

ABC Album - With Donald Cook as host, presented both "live" and filmed anthology dramas from New York and Hollywood. The program was broadcast for thirteen weeks, and consisted of a series of auditions for prospective series.

A Date With Judy - A "live" televersion of the radio show about the trials and tribulations of a teenage girl.

Gerald Johnson - A commentary of the news and current events from WAAM, Baltimore.

Herman Hickman - A discussion of sports events from New York.

Music From Meadowbrook - A "live" program featuring big-name bands with collegiate talent, presented from the Meadowbrook night club in New Jersey.

Rootie Kazootie - A children's variety program from New York, with Todd Russell as emcee and featuring hand puppets as many of the leading characters.

U. S. Army Patrol - A talent variety program broadcast from service bases throughout the nation, featuring outstanding army talent, with Steve Allen, emcee.

What's Your Bid - A program which enabled viewers at home to bid for merchandise through their local ABC affiliate, with Sid Stone as emcee.

TABLE VII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR THE NEW MID-SEASON 1952-53  
ABC PROGRAMMING

<u>Program Types</u>	<u>Total Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Sporting Events	38	74%
Drama	2	4
Situation Comedy	2	4
Musical Variety	2	4
Children's Variety	2	4
Talent Variety	2	4
Audience Participation Games	2	4
News, Commentary	1	1
Sports Features	1	1
Total new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	52	

For the months March, April and May 1953.

### III. THE AUGUST 1953 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Many programs were cancelled at the start of the summer--  
Hollywood Screen Test, Tales of Tomorrow, Rootie Kazootie, Plymouth  
Showcase, Turning Point, Texas Wrestling, This is the Life, and Seminar.

Other shows were discontinued for the summer, though their  
sponsors intended to bring them back for the fall. Included in this  
category were Mark Saber, Ozzie and Harriet, the Paul Whiteman TV Teen  
Club, Sky King, the Tootsie Hippodrome, and Walter Winchell.

#### Program Additions

At Issue - Starring Martin Agronsky, developed and produced by  
the ABC News and Public Affairs Department. A discussion  
program on current world happenings.

John Daly and the News - A fifteen minute Monday through Friday  
news program, representing a move on ABC's part to actively  
compete with NBC and CBS in the area of television news. (John  
Daly had been appointed ABC Vice President in charge of News  
and Public Affairs, and was also known at the time for his work  
on What's My Line.)

Opera Versus Jazz - A half-hour of music running the gamut from  
Chopin to Gershwin, with Nancy Kenyon as hostess. This musical  
forum originated from New York.

Orchid Award - A fifteen minute program saluting a famous show  
business personality each week.

### IV. AN EVALUATION OF THE SEASON

There were no pronounced changes in ABC programming at mid-season  
1952-53. The programmers, headed by Robert Weitman, the new Vice President  
in charge of Talent and Programming, directed most of their efforts toward

the important fall that lie ahead--with barely enough time to get the schedule in shape.<sup>9</sup>

ABC programming at mid-season consisted of inexpensively produced shows with specialized audience appeal. The only significant program addition was the ABC Album--which, though only scheduled for thirteen weeks, made advertisers and agencies aware that ABC could produce important television programming.

The greatest changes occurred in the areas of news and sporting events. News programming was drastically reduced--and displaced by several hours of sports. There were no important program types introduced during this period.

Though there was a slight increase in the extent of ABC network service, there was a corresponding reduction in commercial programming.

Overall then, mid-season 1952-53 was not an important period for the "new" ABC. It was rather a preface for the exciting chapters that lay ahead for the newly formed American Broadcasting-United Paramount organization.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE 1953-54 SEASON

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of 1953-54 was the preponderance of situation comedy series. There had been many the preceding season, most of which were highly rated and quite popular. For this reason, the networks scheduled an even larger amount in the fall. NBC and CBS added seven new half-hour series: McNulty, Topper, My Favorite Husband, Private Secretary, My Little Margie, Ethel and Albert, and Bonino. Only two situation comedies--the Aldrich Family and My Hero--were cancelled for 1953-54.

There was also an increase in the number of half-hour dramatic anthology series. The fall additions included the Phillip Morris Playhouse, Medallion Theatre, Sound Stage, and the Loretta Young Show.

With the exception of mystery drama, which was on the decline with four program cancellations, the NBC and CBS programming had not changed. There were still several hours of prestige drama, comedy and musical variety, and assorted game programs.

#### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

ABC had never been in as advantageous a position as it was in 1953. The merger with United Paramount Theatres poured \$30,000,000 into the network's coffers, part of which could be used as working capital

for improvements in programming, facilities, and personnel.<sup>1</sup> The new company hoped to make ABC a mecca for creative talent interested in developing new program forms and high level entertainment of every type--presenting to the public a balanced schedule with emphasis not only on entertainment programming, but news and public service as well.<sup>2</sup> This could not, however, be accomplished overnight. As Mr. Kintner stated, "To achieve our high goals, we must proceed slowly in order to build soundly and in a business-like manner."<sup>3</sup> In line with this thinking, a "five year" plan was initiated, during which time the television network's programming would be shaped and remolded, until by 1958 or 1959, ABC would be a fully competitive network with a complete lineup of both daytime and nighttime programs.<sup>4</sup>

The specific plans for 1953-54 and subsequent seasons were to

1. Acquire some good program personalities and properties
2. Line up some top advertiser's programs
3. Concentrate on only a few evenings a season<sup>5</sup>

#### Talent and Property Acquisition

High on the priority list at ABC was the development of its own personalities--particularly in the area of comedy. Talent was the

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<sup>1</sup>"ABC-UPT Merger--Its Meaning to Advertisers," Sponsor Magazine VII (February 9, 1953), 28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>ABC Television Press Release, February 1953 (mimeographed).

<sup>4</sup>"ABC's Kintner Cites '53 Progress," Broadcasting Magazine XLIV (January 28, 1953), 56.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

important thing. "The right personality in the right vehicle is what counts. And if you have the right combination, it will go over any night of the week."<sup>6</sup> Robert Weitman believed that television is show business, and should be treated as such. The new ABC Programming Vice President, formerly Manager of the New York Paramount Theatre, had inaugurated the stage band policy there, and discovered many stars--including Frank Sinatra, Danny Kaye, Red Skelton, Betty Hutton, Tony Martin, and Perry Como. He was so entirely convinced that talent is the all-important thing that he stated before the start of the season, "If the Danny Thomas Show isn't a success, it's our fault. The talent is there. It's the same with Ray Bolger. . .Bolger has everything. If we cannot make him one of the top men in the business, then I know less than I think I do about show business."<sup>7</sup>

The new talent was signed to "hard deals," giving the performers weekly exposure in half-hour vehicles, most likely in the situation comedy genre. Emphasis was on the stars, stories, and scripts, rather than on big choruses and outsized productions; if the talent was good, the production was secondary. "If a star has it, keep it simple--we'll pay for the talent and the writing."<sup>8</sup> The programmers believed that "between \$10,000 and \$30,000, there is an efficient, quality half-hour program."<sup>9</sup> Some of the new vehicles were presented on film to reduce

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<sup>6</sup>New York Times, November 11, 1953, Section II, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Weitman, "It's Still Show Business," Television Magazine VII (September 1953), 33.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>"The Third Wave," Newsweek, XLI (April 27, 1953), 65.

the cost to each advertiser by spreading the expenditure over subsequent runs.<sup>10</sup>

Talent hunts, under the aegis of Leonard Goldenson, President of ABC-UPT, and Mr. Weitman, were conducted on both coasts. These men negotiated with established stars and relative newcomers, including Tom Ewell, Betty Hutton, Sam Levenson, Ray Bolger, George Jessel, Danny Thomas, Danny Kaye, Joel Gray, and Sammy Davis, Jr.<sup>11</sup> While many of these talks were never fruitful, ABC was nevertheless able to acquire a small group of stars. Committed to long-term exclusive contracts were Danny Thomas, Ray Bolger, George Jessel (who was to also serve as an ABC producer, program developer, and ambassador of good-will), Paul Hartman, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Joel Gray. Only Davis and Gray were not featured in a fall 1953 program; the network developed or acquired program properties for all the others.

#### Attraction of Advertisers' Programs

ABC's newly acquired nucleus of talent and programming involved a substantial investment, yet this accounted for only a fraction of the entire program line-up. Mr. Kintner stated that the growth process should be a slow one. In spite of the 1953 merger, the network's income had to be commensurate with program investments.<sup>12</sup> ABC actively

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<sup>10</sup>Variety /New York/ March 25, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., April 1, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Statement expressed by Slocum Chapin, former Vice President of the ABC Television Network (personal interview).



developed or acquired a basic structure of programming for each season; all other properties were brought to the network by outside sources. "We've only got 'x' quantity of creative talent. The agencies and the sponsors have 'y' quantity. We think we'd be foolish to try to create everything."<sup>13</sup> The network's primary concern was to sell time, and to provide a maximum amount of program service to its affiliates. For this reason, ABC openly stated, "We aren't turning anyone away yet."<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the majority of the schedule, with the exception of the important ABC nucleus, was wide open and completely flexible. An advertiser could schedule practically any program he desired at almost any time of the day or night.<sup>15</sup> ABC believed this policy to be more economical and less burdensome than the task of creating its own sustaining programming.

#### Night by Night Concentration

ABC programmers, in line with the "five year" plan, set a policy to strengthen only a few evenings each season. They realized that they had to narrow their sights, with only a limited amount of quality programming available. Not much could be done in the daytime area, for the network felt that it needed all of its resources for nighttime development. The idea was to place the strongest properties at key

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<sup>13</sup>"ABC Fights For Survival in Bigtime TV," Business Week, Number 1297 (July 10, 1954), 54.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

positions on one or two evenings--with the adjacent time periods filling themselves with advertiser controlled programming. If, and when they succeeded in strengthening these evenings, they could then concentrate on other weaker portions of the schedule.<sup>16</sup> The key programs for the 1953-54 season were the Ray Bolger and Danny Thomas shows.

## II. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

Four people were added to the Program Department before the start of the season. Joan MacDonald, a former casting director for Robert Montgomery, joined ABC Television as the assistant to Charles Underhill, the Director of the Program Department. She was to screen and review program ideas and story material.

Hunt Stromberg, a veteran filmmaker, and Selig Seligman, a film exhibitor and attorney, were signed as a creative team for radio and television. They were to operate out of the West Coast, and develop new shows for Coast origination. The men were appointed by Earl Hudson, Vice President of the Pacific Division, with an eye to increasing the number of ABC West Coast originations.<sup>17</sup>

John Byran, former eastern story editor for Paramount Pictures, joined the network as story editor of the TV Program Department, reporting to Mr. Underhill.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Variety, October 7, 1953, p. 54.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., December 16, 1953, p. 25.

These additions to ABC's creative ranks were indicative of increased programming activities on the part of the network.

The 1953-54 program administrators included

Robert E. Kintner	President, ABC Broadcasting Division
Alexander Stronach	Vice President, Television Network
Robert M. Weitman	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Charles Underhill	Director of the TV Network Program Department
Joan MacDonald	Assistant to Mr. Underhill
Charles Holden	Assistant Director, Program Department
Herbert Brodtkin	Executive Producer
Dick Hopkins	Executive Producer
Slocum Chapin	Supervisor of the Development of Daytime Network TV
Hunt Stromberg	ABC Program Development, Western Division
Selig Seligman	ABC Program Development, Western Division

### III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC Television financed and produced a number of kinescope auditions for 1953-54--among these were the Sammy Davis, Jr. and Joel Gray shows, the Jean Carroll series Take It From Me, and a program starring Maxie Rosenbloom titled Who Am I?<sup>19</sup> In addition, ABC originated plans with the MPAA for a series of thirty-minute shows featuring sequences from the new releases of the ten major Hollywood studios; a program formatted around singer Martha Wright; a one hour mystery melodrama titled The Mask; and a vaudeville program, The Vaudeville Show.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., September 23, 1953; October 7, 1953; and statements expressed by Robert E. Lewine, former ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>20</sup>"TV-Movie Liaison Pointed Up In Joint Announcement," Broadcasting Magazine, XLIV (June 22, 1953), 9; Variety, October 21, 1953, p. 37; and December 9, 1953, p. 46.

Many of these audition "kinnies" and program ideas were never sold, and consequently not broadcast in 1953-54. Included in this group were the Joel Gray, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Maxie Rosenbloom shows, and the ABC-MPAA program, which was never realized because of the unavailability of big stars (the original plan called for the use of stars of the current theatrical releases).<sup>21</sup> A few shows were, however, broadcast during the 1953-54 season--some on a sustaining basis. Among them were Take It From Me, the Martha Wright Show, the Mask, and The Vaudeville Show.

An important development of the season was the ABC-Hal Roach long-term contract. In the first agreement of its kind in network television, ABC commissioned the Hal Roach Studios to develop and produce a number of program properties exclusively for the network's use. ABC would finance the pilot films, and if sold, co-produce the series as well. In return, the network retained first call on the programs for network use, and later for subsequent syndication through its distribution arm, ABC Films.<sup>22</sup>

Four "pilots" were produced by ABC-Hal Roach for the 1953-54 season: White Collar Girl, starring Lorraine Day; Briane Ahern in Tales of the Wayward Inn; Guns of Destiny; and It Seems Like Yesterday.<sup>23</sup> Though none of these prospective series were sold for the fall, the

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<sup>21</sup>Interview with Robert E. Lewine.

<sup>22</sup>Variety, April 29, 1953, p. 29.

<sup>23</sup>"ABC-Hal Roach Sign TV Film Contract," Broadcasting Magazine, XLIV (May 4, 1953), 70.

ABC-Hal Roach agreement was nevertheless important because it was the beginning of a policy which allied the network with some of the outstanding independent producers and motion picture studios in Hollywood. ABC financed the initial pilots and acquired interests in three of its most important fall programs--the Danny Thomas Show, Make Room for Daddy (Lou Edelman, producer); the Ray Bolger program, Where's Raymond (B and R Enterprises, producer); and Paul Hartman's Pride of the Family (Music Corporation of America, producer).<sup>24</sup>

ABC Television, in its active campaign of development and acquisition, contractually committed for two daytime program series--the Ern Westmore Show, packaged by Hallmark Productions, and Turn to a Friend. These programs were to be broadcast in the fall regardless of a sale.<sup>25</sup> The network also optioned an MCA pilot, Crackdown, starring Barry Sullivan; and Carol Irwin's Baby and Me, with Polly Bergen and Patti McCormick.<sup>26</sup> Neither property was sold, and consequently, the rights to the programs reverted to the respective producers.

#### IV. THE NOVEMBER 1953 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

Situation comedy was the largest program type in the 1953-54

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<sup>24</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>25</sup>Variety, September 16, 1953, p. 22.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., November 11, 1953, p. 28.

TABLE VIII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES FOR  
NOVEMBER 1953, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE QUARTER  
HOURS AT MID-SEASON 1952-53

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in Spring 1953</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1953</u>
Situation Comedy	8	14
Public Affairs	2	12
Sporting Events	18	12
Prestige Drama	0	8
Panel Quiz	2	8
Musical Variety	2	6
Audience Quiz	0	6
News and Commentary	7	6
Human Interest	2	5
Adventure Drama	8	4
Talent Variety	6	4
Straight Drama	2	4
Detective Drama	2	2
Comedy Variety	0	2
Sports Features	3	1
Religious Programs	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	65	95

Data gathered for the first week in November 1953, and the first weeks in March and April 1953.

schedule, with  $14\frac{1}{4}$  hours, representing a  $6\frac{1}{4}$  increase over the past spring.

Sporting events and public affairs programs followed with 12  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours each, or 13 per cent of the nighttime schedule. Both program types were still major ingredients in the schedule.

There were 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours each of prestige drama and panel games. Prestige drama had been previously unlisted. Panel games, on the other hand, had increased 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours over the mid-season 1952-53 total of 2.

New Nighttime Program Types. There were 67  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours of new nighttime programming in the fall of 1953, consisting of thirteen program types.

Public affairs and information programming was the largest category with 12 new  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours, or 18 per cent of the new nighttime programs. Most of these shows were scheduled because the network wished to expand its program service. Unable to sell many evening periods, ABC decided to place inexpensive programming in these vacancies, and at the same time, fulfill its obligation to operate in the public interest.<sup>27</sup> A few of the programs, secured at no cost to ABC, are listed below with an (\*) asterisk.

America In View (\*)  
At Issue  
The Big Picture (\*)

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<sup>27</sup>Statement expressed by Fritz Littlejohn, Manager of ABC News and Public Affairs (personal interview).

Junior Press Conference (new to nighttime)  
Of Many Things

There were 12 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of situation comedy, or 18 per cent of the new nighttime additions. These programs, extremely popular at the time, were abundant on all the networks.

The new situation comedies included

Jamie  
Make Room for Daddy  
Pride of the Family  
Take It From Me  
Where's Raymond

There were 8 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of prestige drama, or 12 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

U. S. Steel Hour/Motorola Hour  
Kraft Television Theatre

Audience quizzes, panel games, and news and commentary programs followed with 6 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 9 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

The new audience quizzes included

Back That Fact  
Dr. I. Q.  
Quick As A Flash

The new panel games included

Juke Box Jury  
Leave It To The Girls



TABLE IX

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW ABC  
NIGHTTIME PROGRAMMING IN NOVEMBER 1953

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Public Affairs	12	18%
Situation Comedy	10	15
Prestige Drama	8	12
Audience Quiz	6	9
Panel Games	6	9
News and Commentary	6	9
Sporting Events	5	7
Straight Drama	4	6
Human Interest	3	4
Adventure Drama	2	3
Comedy Variety	2	3
Musical Variety	2	3
Sports Features	1	1

Data gathered from the first week in November 1953.

The new commentary programs included

John Daly and the News  
Walter Winchell

All other program types (with the exception of sports)--straight drama, human interest, adventure drama, and comedy and musical variety--accounted for no more than 4 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each.

Straight drama (4 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours)

Cavalcade of America  
Pepsi Cola Theatre

Human Interest (3 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours)

Comeback Story  
Orchid Award

Adventure drama (2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours)

Sky King (new to nighttime)

Comedy Variety (2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours)

George Jessel

Musical Variety (2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours)

Dotty Mack Show

There were only 5 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of sporting events, or 7 per cent of the new programming. They nevertheless attained a major position in the program schedule because of sports renewals--Wednesday Night Wrestling and the Saturday Fights.

### Number of Hours of Network Service

In the fall, there was not only a change in the programming, but also an increase in the amount of it. Network service increased from 92 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours at mid-season 1952-53 to 142 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in the fall.

Moreover, there was only one unprogrammed period during evening "network option time" (7:30-10:30 pm)--8:00-9:00 pm Tuesday, due to the Milton Berle competition on NBC. ABC had returned the time period to the stations because it was practically impossible to program against Berle, and the majority of one and two-station markets were carrying the stronger NBC and CBS programming.<sup>28</sup>

Both the John Daly News "strip," scheduled at 7:15 pm, and the Name's The Same, Wrestling From Rainbow, and the Hour of Decision (10:30 pm) were scheduled in "station option time." It must be emphasized at this point that only ABC primary stations received all of this programming; its secondary affiliates, which were either basic CBS or NBC stations, carried only some of the program service--most often, on a delayed basis.<sup>29</sup>

Not all ABC nighttime programming was sponsored. Only 62 of the 95 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours were commercial. This nevertheless represented almost a 100 per cent increase in sponsored programming over mid-season 1952-53.

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<sup>28</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>29</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, Manager of ABC-TV Station Clearance (personal interview).

TABLE X

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1953, AS COMPARED WITH  
MID-SEASON 1952-53

Time Period	Total Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours		Total Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	
	Mid-Season 1952-53		November 1953	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am- 1:00 pm	9	9	8	8
1:00 pm- 6:00 pm	18	14	39	16
6:00 pm-11:00 pm	65	33	95	62
11:00 pm- 8:00 am	0	0	0	0
Total	92	56	142	86

Data gathered from the first national Nielsen report for  
November 1953, March and April 1954.

The daytime period, on the other hand, did not produce revenues commensurate with its growth. Though the program service had increased from 18 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in the spring to 39 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in November, the sponsored ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours did not substantially change. The newly initiated late afternoon programming was broadcast on a sustaining basis.

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Five programs were cancelled by their sponsors because of low ratings and insufficient audience delivery.<sup>30</sup>

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen 3/53 (first report)</u>
Beulah (*)	22.2 AA
Chance of a Lifetime	15.1
Date With Judy	21.5
Tales of Tomorrow	12.9
What's Your Bid	8.4

(\*) Beulah, one of the highest rated ABC shows, was cancelled because of casting difficulties. Louise Beavers, the lead, wanted to be released from the program; Proctor and Gamble, however, did not wish to continue the series without her. Miss Beavers obtained her release, and the show was cancelled.<sup>31</sup>

The other programs, either sustaining or cooperative, were for

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<sup>30</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

the most part installed as summer replacements--pre-empted with the new fall programming.<sup>32</sup>

All Star News	Sustaining
Comedy Circus	Sustaining
Fear and Fancy	Sustaining
Game of the Week	Cooperative
Madison Sq. Garden	Sustaining
Opera Versus Jazz	Sustaining
Tuesday Boxing	Cooperative
20th Century Tales	Sustaining

#### Program Renewals

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen 3/53 (first report)</u>
The Lone Ranger	36.4 AA
Ozzie and Harriet	29.7
Stu Erwin	28.8
Saturday Night Fights	13.9

Three of these shows received high Nielsen ratings. The fourth--Bayuk Cigar's Saturday Night Fights--aimed for a specialized male audience, which the advertiser believed he was getting.<sup>33</sup>

#### Program Additions

Answers for Americans - Moderator Devin Garrity and three regular panelists, including two educators, answered questions of vital and immediate concern to all Americans.

At Issue - Martin Agronsky conducted a discussion with noted persons to clarify important public issues.

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

Back That Fact - A showcase for Joey Adams in a quiz show format. He interviewed guest contestants on their personal backgrounds--when the backstage voice challenged the contestant, he had to back the fact he had just made.

Cavalcade of America - A dramatic anthology series based on American history.

Comeback Story - George Jessel emceed the program, which featured people and personalities who were greats until something happened such as blindness, crippling, etc. Each guest's life was recreated by means of dramatic vignettes.

Dr. I. Q. - Dr. I. Q. the quizmaster, had several aids situated in the audience with portable microphones. He quizzed studio contestants, and gave silver dollars for answering the questions correctly.

Ern Westmore - A program of beauty hints, with Mr. Westmore glamourizing a contestant a day. He was assisted by his wife and Dick Hyde, a male vocalist.

Frank Leahy - A football program with guest personalities, film clips, football scores, and predictions.

Jamie - Brandon DeWilde starred as an orphan boy who lived with his grandfather, aunt, and uncle. The program featured Ernest Truex and Kathy Nolan.

Juke Box Jury - Peter Potter, a Hollywood disk jockey, and a panel of four show business personalities, listened to new popular recordings, and determined whether "it'll be a hit or a miss!"

Kraft Television Theatre - A program of one-hour dramatizations of famous plays, books, short stories, and original material.

Leave It To The Girls - Eloise McElhone was the mistress of ceremonies in this battle of the sexes. A female panel and a male guest antagonist answered questions submitted by home viewers.

Make Room For Daddy - Danny Thomas starred as a night club comedian who was trying to find time to renew interest in his family, and who attempted to fit himself into the family's lovenest. Continuing characters in the series included his wife, his eleven year old daughter, a six year old son, and his pianist.

Motorola Television Theatre - A one hour dramatic program (alternating with the U. S. Steel Hour).

Notre Dame Football - Filmed highlights of Notre Dame football games.

Pepsi Cola Playhouse - Arlene Dahl introduced a filmed dramatic anthology series, and also presented fashion notes for the women.

Pride of the Family - Paul Hartman starred as the somewhat harassed head of a household. The program featured Natalie Wood and Bobby Hyatt.

Quick As A Flash - Bud Collier emceed this program which featured a panel of show business personalities and members of the studio audience. They had to guess the names of famous people, events, etc., which were dramatized through a series of filmed vignettes.

Take It From Me - Jean Carroll starred in a family situation comedy which was primarily a vehicle for her monologue talents.

Through The Curtain - Weekly discussions on Soviet policies and activities, based on stories in the Soviet Press. George Hamilton Combs questioned Leo Gruliov, the editor of the weekly "Current Digest of the Soviet Press."

The U. S. Steel Hour - This television version of radio's Theatre Guild on the Air preceded the formula of using adaptations of famous legitimate plays and films in favor of original dramas, adaptations of short stories, and novels--with legitimate productions limited to only special occasions.

Where's Raymond? - Ray Bolger starred as a zany well-known dancer who was continually getting himself into trouble.

Program Costs. Nine of the new fall programs cost at least \$17,500 (costs were rising throughout the industry, and affected practically every program type). These additions included Cavalcade of America, Kraft Television Theatre, Make Room For Daddy, The Motorola Playhouse, the Pepsi Cola Playhouse, Pride of the Family, Sky King, the United States Steel Hour, and Where's Raymond.

The less costly programs, however, were still in the majority. Comeback Story, George Jessel, Jamie, Leave It To The Girls, Juke Box Jury, Quick As A Flash, and Smilin' Ed, in addition to the sustaining or cooperative Junior Press Conference, At Issue, Through The Curtain,



America In View, Take It From Me, Music from Meadowbrook, and a half-dozen others were in this category.

Program Production and Control. ABC produced and controlled only a few of the new fall programs. This is indicative of the network's future policy of placing the majority of creative control in the hands of independent producers, motion picture studios, and in some cases, the advertisers and their agencies. Among the "house-created and produced" programs were

Answers For Americans  
Gerald W. Johnson  
John Daly and the News  
Motorola Television Theatre  
Music From Cedar Grove  
Take It From Me  
Through the Curtain

ABC had financial interests and varied degrees of creative control on another small group of programs.<sup>34</sup>

<u>Program</u>	<u>Producer</u>
Make Room For Daddy	Louis Edelman
Pride of the Family	Music Corporation of America (Revue)
Where's Raymond	William Morris Agency

All other new programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

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<sup>34</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Producer</u>
Back That Fact	Barry-Enright-Friendly
The Big Picture	The United States Army
Cavalcade of America	Sovereign Productions
	Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborne
Comeback Story	Louis G. Cowan
Dr. I. Q.	Lee Segall
Jamie	Talent Associates
Juke Box Jury	Peter Potter
Kraft Television Theatre	J. Walter Thompson Advertising
Leave It To The Girls	Martha Rountree
Orchid Award	Music Corporation of America
Paul Whiteman Teen Club	Paul Whiteman
Pepsi Cola Playhouse	Music Corporation of America
Quick As A Flash	Moss-Lewis, Inc.
Smilin' Ed	Ed McConnell
Tootsie Hippodrome	Sweets Co. (Advertiser)
The U. S. Steel Hour	Theatre Guild
	Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborne

### The Evolution of the Fall Schedule

The 1953-54 program schedule took shape with a number of advertiser renewals--the Lone Ranger, Thursday, 7:30-8:00 pm; Stu Erwin, Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm; and Ozzie and Harriet, Friday, 8:00-8:30 pm. These popular ABC programs provided a foundation for the new programming.

The two most important additions were Make Room For Daddy and Where's Raymond. The thinking at that time was to build two complete evenings around these programs. Danny Thomas was to be scheduled at 9:00-9:30 pm Tuesday, and Ray Bolger at 8:30-9:00 pm Thursday. The American Tobacco Company bought alternating weeks on each of the programs.

Thus far, there were three programs scheduled on Tuesday

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Cavalcade of America
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Make Room For Daddy
10:30 - 11:00 pm	The Name's The Same

TABLE XI

PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ABC PROGRAMS FOR  
NOVEMBER 1953

<u>Programs Costing \$17,000 or More</u>	<u>Cost</u>
United States Steel Hour	\$35,000
Cavalcade of America	32,000
Motorola Theatre	32,000
Where's Raymond	28,000
Make Room For Daddy	24,000
Sky King (new to nighttime)	20,000
Kraft Television Theatre	18,000
Pepsi Cola Playhouse	17,500
Pride of the Family	17,000
 <u>Programs Costing Less than \$17,000</u>	 <u>Cost</u>
George Jessel	\$15,000
Jamie	14,000
Comeback Story	10,000
Juke Box Jury	10,000
Quick As A Flash	9,000
Smilin' Ed	6,000
Leave It To The Girls	6,000

Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

There were two programs scheduled on Thursday

7:30 - 8:00 pm	The Lone Ranger
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Where's Raymond

And there were two programs scheduled on Friday

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Stu Erwin
8:00 - 8:30 pm	Ozzie and Harriet

The United States Steel Corporation had been looking for a television showcase to replace the radio version of Theatre Guild On The Air. The company had negotiated with NBC, CBS and ABC. ABC made the best offer--Tuesday, 9:30-10:30 pm. U. S. Steel's advertising agency, Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborne had existing interests in two ABC Tuesday night programs--Dupont's Cavalcade of America and American Tobacco's Make Room For Daddy. Realizing the value of the Danny Thomas lead-in and the advantage of a Tuesday evening block of its clients programs, the agency ordered the one hour time period for the proposed dramatic series, making Tuesday night on ABC a B.B.D. and O. delight, with three of its clients program scheduled. The final Tuesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Cavalcade of America
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Make Room For Daddy
9:30 - 10:30 pm	U. S. Steel Hour
10:30 - 11:00 pm	Name's The Same

The Thor Company, in the meantime, bought the alternate 8:00 pm Thursday time period and inserted Quick As A Flash. The advertiser believed that his program would benefit by the Ray Bolger adjacency.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Variety, September 16, 1953, p. 20.

In October, the Kraft Foods Company announced its plans for a second television dramatic series, to be broadcast on a different night than the NBC program. Kraft was to produce the second program not only for the added prestige, but also to study its economy in contrast to the NBC show. It bought Thursday 9:30-10:30 pm and ordered a forty station "live" pickup.<sup>36</sup> A few days later, the J. B. Watch Company purchased 9:00-9:30 pm Thursday and inserted Back That Fact.<sup>37</sup> Though the Jean Carrol sustainer, Take It From Me, had been tentatively scheduled in this time period, the prospects of an immediate sale moved the program to another evening.<sup>38</sup>

The Thursday night schedule included

7:30 - 8:00 pm	The Lone Ranger
8:00 - 8:30 pm	Quick As A Flash
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Where's Raymond
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Back That Fact
9:30 - 10:30 pm	Kraft Television Theatre

Friday evening evolved in a similar manner. Pepsi Cola purchased 8:30-9:00 pm for its new anthology series, capitalizing on the Ozzie and Harriet adjacency, and placing the drama against two situation comedies on NBC and CBS.<sup>39</sup> Bristol Meyers then ordered 9:00-9:30 pm for Pride of the Family--followed in turn by Sealy Mattress' acquisition of 9:30-10:00 pm for its Comeback Story.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., October 7, 1953, p. 27.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., October 14, 1953, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., October 7, 1953, p. 28.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., July 8, 1953, p. 44.

The Friday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Stu Erwin
8:00 - 8:30 pm	Ozzie and Harriet
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Pepsi Cola Playhouse
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Pride of the Family
9:30 - 10:00 pm	Comeback Story

ABC was not as successful on the remaining evenings. The network had previously sold the Jamie program to the Duffy-Mott Company for 7:30-8:00 pm Monday. In addition, Derby Foods moved Sky King from Saturday morning to 8:00-8:30 pm Monday. ABC had persuaded the advertiser into going nighttime, thinking that an adventure format might attract a considerable part of the audience from Burns and Allen and Name That Tune.<sup>40</sup> Since no other Monday time periods were sold, the network filled the rest of the evening with inexpensive sustaining programming.

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Jamie
8:00 - 8:30 pm	Sky King
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Of Many Things
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Junior Press Conference
9:30 - 10:00 pm	The Big Picture
10:00 - 10:30 pm	To Be Announced

The Sterling Drug Company, wanting an earlier time period, moved Mystery Theatre from Monday at 8:00 pm (prior to the Derby Foods decision) to Wednesday, 7:30-8:00 pm. Excluding the mystery program, Wednesday evening was non-commercial at the start of the season. There had been plans for a boxing show, but these were never realized because of

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., September 16, 1953, p. 20.

inferior matches. Consequently, the network inserted the unsold Jean Carrol Show and Dr. I. Q. in the Wednesday 9:00-10:00 pm time period as sustaining and cooperative programs.<sup>41</sup> Wrestling From Rainbow had been renewed by ABC for 10:00-11:00 pm. The 8:00-9:00 pm period was filled with public service programming.

7:30 - 8:00 pm	Mystery Theatre
8:00 - 8:15 pm	At Issue
8:15 - 8:30 pm	Through the Curtain
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Answers For Americans
9:00 - 9:30 pm	Take It From Me
9:30 - 10:00 pm	Dr. I. Q.
10:00 - 11:00 pm	Wrestling From Rainbow

There were two renewals on Saturday--The Paul Whiteman Teen Club and the Saturday Night Fights. Ex Lax ordered the 7:30-8:00 pm Teen Club adjacency for Leave It To The Girls. Because no other Saturday evening periods were sold, the network again installed inexpensive programming in the vacancies.

7:00 - 7:30 pm	Paul Whiteman TV Teen Club
7:30 - 8:00 pm	Leave It To The Girls
8:00 - 8:30 pm	Talent Patrol
8:30 - 9:00 pm	Music From Meadowbrook
9:00 - 9:45 pm	Saturday Evening Fights
9:45 - 10:00 pm	Music From Cedar Grove

The Sunday schedule was for the most part commercial. Two programs--You Asked For It and Hour of Decision--had been renewed for 7:00-7:30 pm and 10:30-10:45 pm. Walter Winchell's option was activated

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., October 21, 1953, p. 46.

by a new advertiser, the Carter Company, who transferred the commentator from 6:45 pm to 9:00 pm. Orchid Award, which began in the summer, remained at 9:15-9:30 pm for the Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company. One commercial program was added to the evening's schedule--Hazel Bishop bought the one-hour Juke Box Jury and brought the program to ABC for 9:30-10:30 pm. In the remaining 7:30-9:00 pm ABC scheduled two football programs. The network could not, however, sell the shows, and finally offered them as cooperative features.

ABC entered the 4:00-5:00 pm daytime period with two program "strips"--Turn To A Friend and the Ern Westmore Show. Their placement in the late afternoon was dictated primarily by economic reasons--telephone lines used for network transmission were purchased in eight hour blocks. By programming in the late afternoon, the eight hours could cover not only the daytime period, but the evening hours as well.<sup>42</sup> In addition, ABC had been making tentative plans for a strong children's program from 5:00-6:00 pm. The network wanted to keep all of its afternoon programming in a block, moving back from these late periods to the early afternoon.<sup>43</sup>

#### V. THE MARCH 1954 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Cancellations

Back That Fact - Insufficient station clearance.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Variety, November 25, 1953, p. 31.



Comeback - Low ratings.

Juke Box Jury - Low ratings.<sup>45</sup>

Orchid Award - Low ratings.

Paul Whiteman Teen Club - Low ratings.

Quick As A Flash - Low ratings.<sup>46</sup>

Take It From Me - No sponsor interest.<sup>47</sup>

### Program Additions

The most important new program addition was The Mask, an ABC created-and-produced mystery show originating in New York. The network had planned the program for the fall of 1953, but subsequently decided to push it back to the spring. Still unable to attract a sponsor, the program was nevertheless broadcast as a sustainer at a weekly cost of \$29,750.<sup>48</sup> The Sunday 8:00-9:00 pm time period was selected with the idea that counter-programming a mystery show against two varieties (Ed Sullivan and the Colgate Comedy Hour) could attract an appreciable audience, composed of people who did not particularly like the two musicals.

There were other interesting aspects to this new show. It was

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., December 30, 1953, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., December 23, 1953, p. 21.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Variety, January 27, 1954, p.32

broadcast not once, but three times a week. This multiple exposure, it was hoped, would attract larger audiences and give the program wider exposure--reducing its "cost per thousand" and making it an economical buy.<sup>49</sup> The broadcasts consisted of one "live" show (Sunday), and two kinescope repeats. The first "kinnie" (8:00-9:00 Tuesday) went to many of the same stations carrying the "live" show. The second repeat was sent to those stations not carrying the "live" broadcast--with the exception of a few UHF's which received both delayed broadcasts.

The Mask, produced and directed by Robert Stevens and Halstead Welles, starred Gary Merrill and William Prince as two young lawyers from the firm Guilfoyle and Guilfoyle. This represented a departure from the standard one-hour drama, for it was the first time two continuing central characters were used in a program of this length--making the series the grandfather of the many later one-hour mystery and adventure programs.

The Mask had a limited network run, beginning in January and broadcast until early May. The program was eventually cancelled because it was too expensive to continue as a sustainer; it was nevertheless a significant milestone in ABC history. This was the first time the network attempted to actively program the 8:00-9:00 pm Sunday period; this was ABC's first major application of counterprogramming; and the three-broadcast-a-week formula represented experimentation to arrive at an economical, participating sales plan.

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<sup>49</sup>"ABC To Show Same Program Three Times," Broadcasting Magazine, (February 22, 1954), 72.

Other nighttime program additions included

Break The Bank - Bert Parks asked studio contestants questions in a category of their own choosing. If they answered all the questions correctly, they broke the bank and won a large cash prize.

It's About Time - Bergen Evans emceed this panel program about famous events that had to be identified with recordings, scrambled headlines, and dramatic vignettes.

Jane Pickens Show - Miss Pickens and musical accompaniment in fifteen minutes of songs.

Martha Wright Show - A program of songs by Miss Wright, with accompaniment by the Bobby Hackett Trio and a male quartet.

On Your Way - This was a vehicle for Kathy Godfrey (Arthur's sister), who was brought to New York for the show. She was originally scheduled to appear for the Vitamin Corporation of America in a program titled Up For Adoption. The ABC Continuity Acceptance Department found too many legal and moral complications involved after a kinescope was made, and plans for this program were abandoned.<sup>50</sup> The advertiser then acquired the On Your Way 'package' for Miss Godfrey in lieu of the other. On Your Way featured Kathy Godfrey interviewing contestants on why they wanted to travel to a particular place. They were then asked questions which, if answered correctly, enabled them to make the trip. (This format was abandoned after two weeks, and the program changed to a talent contest.)

Open Hearing - John Daly was featured in a half hour interpretation of an important news development covered from all viewpoints.

The Vaudeville Show - Broadcast for only two weeks, this program was a straight five act vaudeville bill with "annunciators," instead of a master of ceremonies, introducing the acts.

Who Said That - Walter Kiernan emceed this show which had a panel quizzing secretaries of famous people to identify them.

ABC decided to move into the morning with Don McNeill's Breakfast Club. The programmers assumed that the Club's unequalled acceptance on radio would be duplicated with a television simulcast.<sup>51</sup> The network

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<sup>50</sup>Variety, January 13, 1954, p. 30.

<sup>51</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

was unable to initially interest the radio sponsors in a similar segmental sponsorship, nor, for that matter, could it attract any advertisers at all. Therefore, the program was broadcast for one hour a day, five days a week, as a sustainer--costing ABC an estimated \$180,000 a week for combined time and talent charges.<sup>52</sup> The network subsequently sold 5 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (of a possible 20) to a few of the radio advertisers. Three-quarters of the program, however, continued as a sustainer for the rest of its television lifetime.

The televersion of the Breakfast Club, a simulcast of the radio show, had little visual attractiveness. This factor, in addition to its "island" position in the schedule (no other adjacent ABC programs), and the very nature of the program itself, might have accounted, in some part, for its unsuccessful record. Though it was only broadcast until mid-season 1954, it nevertheless was a significant part of the ABC story--illustrating the network's willingness and first major attempt to begin daytime broadcasting.

Possibly the most lucrative of ABC's daytime activities in terms of audience and prestige was its coverage of the Army-McCarthy Hearings in mid-spring 1954.

ABC carried all 186 hours of the hearings on a network ranging from 55 to 79 stations--at an estimated cost of over \$360,000. ABC facilities and technical personnel were used to provide a pool for all four television networks. NBC and CBS, however, were forced by their

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<sup>52</sup>Variety, February 10, 1954, p. 26.

commercial daytime commitments to limit their coverage of the hearings to only a few hours. ABC and Dumont, on the other hand, had little or no daytime programming to pre-empt, and carried almost all of the proceedings on a "live" basis.<sup>53</sup>

John Daly, Vice President of ABC News and Special Events, when asked the question, "Was it worth it?" replied, "As the number three network climbing steadily in our long range campaign to equal or surpass the top two, we need the public's good will and we need the viewers."<sup>54</sup> Mr. Daly believed that the hearings brought ABC both of these "in terms of prestige, good will, attracting new viewers, and most of all, the satisfaction of fulfilling a high responsibility and fulfilling it well."<sup>55</sup>

#### Format Revisions.

Comeback - There was more emphasis on famous celebrities who had already made a comeback, rather than on people currently trying to make one.<sup>56</sup>

Leave It To The Girls - John Henry Faulk joined the program as a permanent panelist and biased moderator. Maggi McNellis, in turn, stepped down as moderator and became the captain of the girl's team. The changes were made to give the show more of a universal appeal.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1954, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Variety, December 23, 1953, p. 25.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., December 23, 1953, p. 31.

## VI. THE AUGUST 1954 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Program Cancellations

George Jessel  
 Hour of Decision  
 Jamie  
 Leave It To The Girls  
 Mystery Theatre  
 On Your Way

Many other programs, either sustaining or cooperative, were also cancelled. Most of these had been broadcast for less than six months.

Animal Time  
 At Issue  
 The Big Picture  
 Elmer Davis  
 Enterprise USA  
 Focus  
 Greatest Sports Thrills  
 It's About Time  
 The Mask (3 hour shows)  
 On Guard  
 Open Hearing  
 Tommy Henrich  
 Travel Corner

ABC had announced that by June 1954, all public affairs and news programming (with the exception of Junior Press Conference) would be discontinued. Open Hearing and Answer for Americans presented technical and manpower problems, Elmer Davis was disabled, and the majority of the other programs did not receive sufficient station clearance.<sup>58</sup>

Summer Cancellations

Several programs were cancelled for the thirteen week summer

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<sup>58</sup>Variety, June 2, 1954, p. 26.

period, but were scheduled to return in the fall.

Cavalcade of America  
 Martha Wright  
 Smilin' Ed  
 Space Patrol  
 U. S. Steel Hour  
 Walter Winchell  
 Where's Raymond

### Program Additions

Most of the new programs were summer replacements. Those shows which extended into the 1954-55 season will be marked with an (\*) asterisk.

U. S. Highway 1954	No information available.
Bob Considine	Comments on the news, and human interest items.
Boxing from Eastern Parkway (*)	
Melody Tour	No information available.
Center Stage (*)	A sustaining version of the <u>Motorola Hour</u> .
Man of Tomorrow	A filmed series about the Boy Scouts.
Patti Pickens	No information available.
Soldier Parade	An hour extension of Talent Patrol, with Arlene Francis as Mistress of Ceremonies.
This World 1954	No information available.
TV Auction	No information available.

L'Apache - A guitar strumming and seagoing denizin of the French underworld sang French songs--accompanied by another guitarist.

On The Boardwalk - This series originated from the Steel Pier in Atlantic City and featured Paul Whiteman. It was primarily an amateur night with a few professional acts added. The first segment of the show was devoted to teen age talent (age 10-19), while the second segment featured talent from the former TV Teen Club.

(\*) So You Want To Lead A Band - Four contestants led the orchestra through a series of melodies, competing for a big prize. An audience applause meter determined the winner. Interspersed in this program featuring Sammy Kaye were instrumental numbers and guest vocalists.

(\*) Twenty Questions - A panel of four guessed an object, a person, etc., in an allocated twenty questions--if they failed to do so, the homeviewer received a prize.

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE 1953-54 SEASON

A word that can best describe this first season under United Paramount's influence is the "beginning"; this was the "year one," as ABC describes it. It was a season which saw ABC expansion of nighttime program service; its entrance on a limited scale into the morning and late afternoon; and an increase in commercial programming. This was the beginning of a growth period, when the parent ABC-UPT company used some of its financial resources and acquired "star power," in the form of Danny Thomas, Ray Bolger, George Jessel, Paul Hartman, Arlene Dahl, Brandon DeWilde, Joel Gray, and Sammy Davis, Jr. This was also the beginning of ABC's active co-production arrangements with independent producers for the financing and production of prospective program properties (which was to become an important ABC policy in subsequent seasons). Overall, the 1953-54 season made the networks, advertisers, agencies, and stations aware of ABC's existence as a television network and its growth potential.

The complexion of ABC programming still left much to be desired. An increase in the number of hours of network service was accompanied by inexpensive public affairs, informational, and miscellaneous-type programs, in addition to several hours of sporting events--wrestling and boxing, for the most part, broadcast in prime evening time. The entertainment portion of the schedule, though it had been substantially



revitalized with both situation comedy and prestige drama, was still padded with several game shows, quizzes, and other unimportant programs. ABC's primary consideration had been to sell time. Though this opened the doors to many advertisers, nobody brought any great hits to ABC. In fact, one former executive believes that many of the advertiser-controlled programs would probably have been rejected by NBC and CBS; ABC, however, needed the business and gladly accepted it.<sup>59</sup> This resulted in substantial damage to the entire schedule, for the network had no control over program placement and/or program content. Flow of audience, adjacencies, and "planned" programming were as important then as they are now, though ABC could not put them to use, lacking a sufficient volume of strong program material.

The results of the new shows, especially the "strong" properties like Danny Thomas, Ray Bolger, and George Jessel, were for the most part disappointing. One critic, commenting on the majority of these new programs remarked

Maybe we better leave television to the network executives and the advertising agencies and the directors and producers born of television. They have the know-how peculiar to the demands of the medium in which they operate. That show business know-how ain't working no how.<sup>60</sup>

Only two of the new programs were favorably received, though their national ratings were far from astronomical--Make Room For Daddy and the

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<sup>59</sup>Interview with Robert E. Lewine.

<sup>60</sup>Goodman Ace, "How Now Know-How?" Saturday Review, XXXVI (November 29, 1953), 32.

United States Steel Hour were strong "seconds" in their respective time periods. The other programs-- George Jessel, Ray Bolger, Paul Hartman, and all of the advertiser-controlled properties--were disappointments which were poorly received by both the critics and public. ABC frankly admits that the Ray Bolger, Paul Hartman, and George Jessel shows "never came off as programs."<sup>61</sup> Danny Thomas, on the other hand, was always a good show, but never realized its full potential on ABC; it never had the advantage of a strong program lead-in, and it faced the disadvantage of ABC's limited facilities.<sup>62</sup> The strongest programs of the 1953-54 season were already established shows like Ozzie and Harriet, the Lone Ranger, and Stu Irwin, which attracted larger audiences than any of the new programming.

The 1953-54 broadcasting season represented ABC's first active effort, under the new United Paramount management, to become a fully competitive television force. The results of the season could not be measured by individual program successes, but served rather as a message to the industry at large that ABC was in the television network business to stay, and that "ABC intends to be a leader in radio and TV, and it intends to grow like an oak, not a mushroom."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Advertisement from Sponsor Magazine, VII (February 16, 1953), pp. 16-17.

## CHAPTER V

### THE 1954-55 SEASON

Late in 1953, the Federal Communications Commission officially adopted the color television standards recommended by the National Color Television Standards Committee--which were those used by the RCA color system--providing for the use of a complete electronic color scanning system and for full compatibility with black-and-white reception.<sup>1</sup> In so doing, the Commission had ushered in the dawn of the television "spectacular," or "special" program, as it is now referred to.

In October, NBC broadcast its first color "spectacular"--Satin and Spurs, featuring Betty Hutton. This was followed with a full schedule of rotating shows, all broadcast in color with famous personalities of the stage, screen, and television. (NBC had the most to gain in "spectacular" color broadcasting because its parent Radio Corporation of America was the largest single manufacturer of television receivers with the compatible RCA scanning system.) CBS also began color operations in 1953-54. Though the network broadcast a number of these "spectaculars," they were nevertheless subordinated to the stabilized, family-appeal line-up of regularly scheduled shows.

Aside from the innovations of color television and the glittering "spectacular," network programming remained essentially the same. CBS and NBC were still scheduling large amounts of situation comedy, variety,

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Harrison Summers, "Broadcast Programs and Audiences" (Ohio State University: mimeographed material prepared for Speech 652).

drama, and suspense programs. There were, however, relatively few panel, quiz, and game-type shows broadcast on either of the two older networks.

### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The ABC programmers, now in the second phase of their "five year plan" followed the same program philosophy as that initiated the preceding season--the acquisition of some good program personalities and properties; the attraction of advertisers' programs; and concentration on only a few evenings for the season.

#### Talent and Program Acquisition

For 1954-55, ABC negotiated with several major stars for possible network contracts. Among these personalities were Judy Garland, Eddy Cantor (whose NBC contract had expired), Glenn Ford, Edward G. Robinson, Eddie Albert, Judy Canova, and David Wayne. None of these negotiations were fruitful. In the day of the television "spectacular," the stars were asking and receiving far more money than ABC wished to spend.<sup>2</sup> The network was also cognizant of the poor record of the past season's "star-power." Danny Thomas was the only personality who had the potential to eventually become a valuable property. George Jessel had previously ended his "long-term" network contract, and Ray Bolger was to stay on the air for at least another season. Sammy Davis, Jr. and Joel Gray

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<sup>2</sup>Variety /New York/, November 25, 1953, p. 29.

had both made audition kinescopes, but neither of the programs were sold. The Davis "kinnie" in particular had little sales potential because it was made with an all-Negro cast and was poorly conceived and executed.<sup>3</sup> Taking these factors into consideration, ABC bought up both the Joel Gray and Sammy Davis contracts.<sup>4</sup> For the 1954-55 season, the network was governed by a limited budget, often having to worry about little things like office space. Talent development proved to be too expensive. Moreover, the programmers were more interested in the acquisition of program properties rather than personalities.<sup>5</sup>

ABC spent the majority of its programming budget on a number of program acquisitions. The NCAA football games and the Disneyland commitment alone involved several millions of dollars, in addition to similar arrangements for Postal Inspector, T-Men in Action, Who Said That, and Come Closer.

#### Attraction of Advertisers' Programs

The network was unable to develop or acquire a complete line-up of programs. Its income was still a fraction of what it could be, and as stated before, development could only proceed at a rate commensurate with commercial revenues. ABC was therefore highly dependent on programs brought over by advertisers. As long as there were vacancies in prime

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<sup>3</sup>Statement expressed by Robert E. Lewine, former ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>4</sup>Variety, September 29, 1954, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

evening time, ABC more than welcomed the prospects of advertiser-controlled programming.<sup>6</sup>

#### Concentration on a Few Evenings a Season

During the past season, ABC had strengthened three evenings of the week: Tuesday (Danny Thomas, U. S. Steel Hour), Thursday (Ray Bolger, Kraft) and Friday (Stu Erwin, Ozzie and Harriet). Though these programs were not dominant in their time periods, they nevertheless showed an improvement over the pre-merger ratings. The programmers decided that concerted efforts should be directed toward Wednesday evening, the weakest night in the 1953-54 schedule. The new Disneyland program was placed in a key position in hopes of strengthening ABC in the early part of the evening. The network had based its decision largely on a research survey conducted to determine the vulnerability of Arthur Godfrey's program.<sup>7</sup>

Advertest had surveyed 747 women in the New York area, who had at least one child between the ages of two and twelve in the household. The results showed that 52.4 per cent of those watching Godfrey would switch; 16.6 per cent were undecided; and 31 per cent would remain with Godfrey.

Of those not watching Godfrey, 84.6 per cent indicated that they would watch Disneyland. The survey also revealed that those who would

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<sup>6</sup>Statement expressed by Slocum Chapin, former Vice President of the ABC Television Network (personal interview).

<sup>7</sup>Variety, May 12, 1954, p. 26.

watch the Disney program would allow their children to stay up until 9:00 pm. This research report clearly indicated the vulnerability of the Godfrey hour, and the availability of both Godfrey and non-Godfrey listeners as a potential Disneyland audience.

The study was significant for two reasons—it represented the network's first major application of audience research in program placement and scheduling; and it provided information about the important young, large-family group, the post-war households with young children—an audience toward which ABC would subsequently gear large portions of its programming.

#### Concentration on Regularly Scheduled Programming

ABC Television was unenthused about the television "spectacular," favoring instead regularly scheduled weekly programming. "Spectaculars are fine for Christmas or Easter or some special occasion, but practically every week!"<sup>8</sup> Mr. Kintner's sentiments were those of the network based, in part, on a special research report compiled from NTI for the months of September 1954 through February 1955. The report indicated that regularly scheduled weekly programming was not only more efficient in terms of "Cost Per Commercial Minute per Thousand Homes," but also was able to reach a larger potential audience over a four week period.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Robert Kintner, "The Programmers," Television Magazine, XI (September 1954), 63.

<sup>9</sup>Variety, May 16, 1955, p. 29.

In addition, the "spectacular" had to be presented "live"--its length made it extremely difficult to clear for delayed broadcasts. ABC, with its serious facilities disadvantage, was unable to line up a sufficient number of "live" stations to amortize the expensive production costs--making the network impractical for this type of programming.<sup>10</sup>

## II. THE ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

In a wave of economy, several administrative changes took place for the 1954-55 season. Three pre-merger programmers--Alexander Stronach, Vice President in charge of the Television Network; Charles Underhill, Vice President of the TV Program Department; and Charles Holden, Assistant Director of the TV Program Department resigned in mid-September. It was reported that Mr. Stronach was the only one slated for replacement, which indicated to some degree the limited budget which the network was operating on at the time.<sup>11</sup>

Slocum Chapin was named the new Vice President of the Television Network, and Robert F. Lewine, former Eastern Program Director of the Program Department, became the Director of the Program Department (he was later promoted to Vice President of the Program Department).

The newly-organized Program Department included

Robert E. Kintner	President, ABC Broadcasting Division
Slocum Chapin	Vice President, Television Network

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<sup>10</sup>Variety, September 27, 1954, p. 44.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.



Robert M. Weitman	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Robert F. Lewine	Director of the TV Program Department
Richard DePew	Assistant Eastern Program Manager
Joan MacDonald	Program Development, and Casting Director
Herbert Brodtkin	Executive Producer
Hunt Stromberg	Program Development, Western Division
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division

### III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC developed few of its own programs in 1953-54. The Disneyland and NCAA commitments involved millions of dollars and were not completed until late in the spring of 1954. The programmers were not ready to go to the Board of Directors and ask for substantially more money for development.<sup>12</sup>

The network did, however, develop a few program properties--an audition kinescope for My True Story, which it attempted to sell as either an evening or daytime half hour, or a morning serial; and, in cooperation with Mark Goodson-Bill Todman, The World of Tallulah Bankhead.<sup>13</sup> In addition, ABC financed pilot films for three program properties acquired for the network by Hal Roach--Alias Mike Hercules, Code Three, and It Seems Like Yesterday.<sup>14</sup>

The network had many plans for the 1954-55 season--a Tuesday 8:30-9:00 pm adventure program scheduled against Milton Berle (counter-programming); a ninety minute Saturday night band program originating

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<sup>12</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>13</sup>Variety, February 10, 1954, p. 42; and April 14, 1954, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., March 10, 1954, p. 43.

from New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles; a third one-hour dramatic program; a televersion of Cafe Istanbul with Lisa Ferriday; a Hedda Hopper Hollywood program; a weekly motion picture industry series (which had been unsuccessfully attempted the previous season); a revival of The Mask for Sunday at 8:00 pm; a one-hour live dramatic show originating from Hollywood for 8:00-9:00 pm Thursday; a thirty-minute version of the once-famous Pulitzer Prize Playhouse to be jointly produced by Alex Segal and ABC; and the scheduling of two dramatic serials adjacent to the Breakfast Club.<sup>15</sup> None of these plans were fruitful. The network had to first concentrate on current sponsor vacancies in programs including Ray Bolger and the Motorola Hour, as well as definite commitments for Disneyland, NCAA Football, a new Monday boxing card, Come Closer, T-Men In Action, and Postal Inspector. Unless these were sold, ABC stood to lose millions of dollars in program and time charges.<sup>16</sup>

In anticipation of future creative activity, ABC signed the Theatre Guild as a program and talent consultant under a long-term exclusive contract.<sup>17</sup> The negotiations, six months in the making, gave ABC first refusal on any Theatre Guild legitimate properties which might be converted to television, either as the basis for a series or an

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1954, p. 29; July 28, 1954, p. 31; and September 8, 1954, p. 30.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1954, p. 29.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1954, p. 26.

individual "special" program. The theatrical organization was to also serve as a consultant in the development of talent and programs. Each Thursday, a program board of Theatre Guild and ABC programming executives met for a "brain-storming session."<sup>18</sup> Though no properties were originated for 1954-55, this arrangement continued through the next two seasons.

The network also signed an exclusive long-term contract with Alex Segal, the producer-director of the U. S. Steel Hour, which permitted Mr. Segal to deliver at least one of his own "packages" each season, to be financed by ABC and in turn co-owned if the series was eventually sold.<sup>19</sup> Under this arrangement, a plan was initiated to revive the old Pultizer Prize Playhouse. During the Spring, after the United States Steel Hour had been cancelled, plans were made for Mr. Segal to produce and direct an alternate week drama for the vacated Tuesday night period. When, however, the network abandoned hopes for a live dramatic program, the producer asked for a release from his contract, in hopes of taking a television sabbatical, and both the network and the producer-director parted amicably.<sup>20</sup>

ABC-Television allocated the majority of its programming budget toward the acquisition of several program properties. The most notable among these was the purchase of the new Disneyland Series.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Variety, June 1, 1955, p. 24.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

Disneyland. Walt Disney had previously produced a successful one-hour Christmas special on CBS-TV; thereafter all the networks were eager to acquire his services.<sup>21</sup> Mr. Disney had negotiated with NBC and CBS but both networks found his terms unreasonable. One provision was an arrangement whereby the network would finance not only a weekly one-hour program series, but also a part of the proposed Disneyland Park, which Mr. Disney hoped to make a reality.<sup>22</sup> ABC was also eager to acquire his services. The network realized that a Disney program would have universal appeal not only for children but for adults as well, and that such a show could attract a mammoth audience.<sup>23</sup> The ABC programmers backed their faith in Disney by obtaining his exclusive services for a weekly one-hour program series, in addition to a 35 per cent investment in the proposed Disneyland Park for an estimated \$500,000.<sup>24</sup> In turn, the network also received first-refusal rights on all Disney television products for a period of seven years.<sup>25</sup>

The terms of the contract called for eighteen hours of programming the first year, and twenty hours a year thereafter. ABC had originally intended to supplement the program on alternate weeks with

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<sup>21</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>"Goldenson Tells AB-PT Stockholders ABC Will Show Marked Improvements" Broadcasting Magazine, XLVI (May 24, 1954), 70.

<sup>25</sup>"ABC Rights to Disney Films Limited to TV," Sponsor Magazine, VIII (April 12, 1954), 33.

This Is America, with John Daly as the narrator and Paul Whiteman as conductor.<sup>26</sup> The network later changed its plans and decided to schedule Disneyland on a unique re-run pattern—twenty weeks of originals, twenty weeks of re-runs, and twelve weeks of second repeats.<sup>27</sup> ABC paid Mr. Disney \$50,000 a week for each episode, and then resold the program for \$60,000, making a \$10,000 profit on each show.<sup>28</sup>

Disneyland was jointly developed by both ABC and Mr. Disney. The network acted as a consultant in the planning stages, supervising the many steps in the development of the show.<sup>29</sup> The final concept called for four rotating segments: "Adventureland," "Fantasyland," "Tomorrowland," and "Frontierland." In addition to these forty to fifty minute episodes, Mr. Disney planned to preview, for an additional ten to twenty minutes of the program, twenty-six of his major theatrical productions for the next four years. These previews could include film clips taken from the motion pictures, or a behind-the-scenes excursion during production, as so successfully employed in the promotion of "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." Mr. Disney had entered television with an eye on the theatrical box office.

We went into television in the belief it would help our business. We didn't ask the exhibitors about it — they don't have the background for such decisions.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Variety, February 16, 1955, p. 38.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.; and Variety, April 14, 1954, p. 25.

<sup>28</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Variety, May 18, 1955, p. 32.

There was an interesting sidelight concerning Disneyland. Robert Kintner, President of ABC, and Robert Lewine, Manager of the Program Department, made over sixty calls on agencies and sponsors before they completely sold the show. Advertisers were reluctant to buy the expensive show for an ABC station line-up. The program was finally purchased by the American Dairy Association, American Motors (both were new to network television), and Derby Foods.

The Disneyland program had its effects on all future ABC programming. It was the first ABC show to make the Nielsen "top ten" listings; it brought thousands of people to ABC channels for the first time; it promoted an advertiser awareness of ABC's potential; and most important of all, it had a pronounced effect on the future activities of the other Hollywood studios. Walt Disney had been the first major producer to enter television on a large scale.

The networks had always wanted the studio services, but the "majors" refused to go into television. The astounding success of Disneyland led to other arrangements between ABC and the Hollywood studios.

The NCAA Football Games. In its attempt to acquire important programming, ABC purchased the rights to the National Collegiate Athletic Association's schedule of thirteen football games for an estimated \$2,500,000.<sup>31</sup> The network had lured the games from NBC, which

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<sup>31</sup>Variety, April 28, 1954, p. 25.

had carried them for the last three years. The acquisition represented over four million dollars in combined time, program, talent and facilities charges.<sup>32</sup>

For the rights to the games and a Thanksgiving day telecast, the network had to make additional guarantees to the Association. A complicated radio-television "package" emphasizing all aspects of college sports and campus life was an important condition in the ABC-NCAA negotiations and the final NCAA decision to transfer the games to ABC. The agreement called for ABC's telecasting of twenty-six weeks of Saturday afternoon winter and spring college sporting events (including track, field, lacrosse, soccer, and crew racing), and guarantees for at least seven radio and television programs or series.<sup>33</sup>

Summer Job - ABC Radio--a show of unrevealed length for prime evening hours which highlighted the activities of college players and team activities throughout the summer.

Football Weekend - Divided into six parts, some radio some television.

1. Rally - A Friday night pre-game festival on radio originating from one of the schools playing the next day.
2. Souveneer Program - a fifteen minute television program, offering a layout of the day's football program.
3. Campus Close-up - at half-time (television and radio).
4. Scoreboard - a fifteen minute program after the game, providing a run-down on all NCAA games throughout the country (both radio and television).
5. A two hour Saturday night radio show, featuring college "hoopla," music, and afternoon scores.

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1954, p. 26.

6. Gridiron 1954 - a simulcast officially starting the NCAA football season--broadcast in prime evening time with stage and screen stars, music, and sports celebrities.

ABC had planned to sell the entire football "package" to a national advertiser--preferably General Motors--who had purchased them the year before on NBC. The motor company, however, and several other prospective clients, were not interested. Unable to sell the games nationally, the network sought regional advertisers, also to no avail. ABC attempted another unsuccessful national sale, and then in desperation, offered them as individual games. Mr. Kintner, vacationing in Europe, flew back to the States and personally supervised the disposition of the games to a group of regional advertisers.<sup>34</sup>

Though ABC lessened part of the financial burden through these last minute sales, it nevertheless offered these advertisers huge discounts, selling the "package" at a fraction of its estimated cost. In so doing, the network lost approximately \$1,800,000 on the thirteen week series.<sup>35</sup>

ABC subsequently cancelled its plans for the twenty-six afternoons of winter and spring sporting events. An option in the NCAA contract permitted the network to do so. ABC considered them unfeasible because of difficulties in scheduling, costs, and lack of sponsor interest.

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., November 24, 1954, p. 24.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1954, p. 35.



Other Acquisitions. ABC Television committed for four television series. T-Men In Action, broadcast on NBC, was purchased from Bernard J. Proctor. The network hoped that it could not only sell the program, but also remove some formidable competition from the Ray Bolger time period.<sup>36</sup> T-Men was tentatively scheduled for mid-season 1952-53, but was later pushed back to the fall of 1954. Another Proctor production--Postal Inspector--(later retitled The Mail Story) was also acquired, with the provision that it be scheduled as the T-Men adjacency.<sup>37</sup> The other commitments--Take My Word, starring Jimmie Nelson, and the Stork Club--were also telecast in the fall.<sup>38</sup>

ABC also obtained all rights to Creative Cookery, a popular daytime program in Chicago, for an estimated \$200,000. With a weekly gross sales potential of \$10,000, it seemed to be an attractive buy.<sup>39</sup> The network planned to initially broadcast the program on a two-station network (New York and Chicago), and then offer it to other owned-and-operated stations, and any affiliates that might be interested.

There was a similar arrangement for the newly acquired Kukla, Fran, and Ollie. Burr Tillstrom, the show's creator, wanted the program broadcast on a five-day a week basis, instead of the Sunday afternoon time period which NBC had provided. When it became evident that the

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., January 20, 1954, p. 23.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., March 10, 1954, p. 28.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., March 17, 1954, p. 23; and March 31, 1954.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., June 3, 1954, p. 27.

network would not comply, Mr. Tillstrom, who was a long-time friend of Sterling Quinlan, Vice President of ABC's Chicago station, moved the show to WBKB, for transmission on the two-station New York and Chicago network.<sup>40</sup> Mr. Quinlan, realizing that the program already had a national reputation, offered the Monday through Friday "strip" to ABC stations on a fee basis for hometown selling, at a cost less than if the stations programmed the time themselves (ABC had the Omaha to New York cable under lease from 2:00 pm, eliminating any extra time costs).<sup>41</sup> The plan was set up on a volume basis, with the price decreasing to individual stations as the number of client stations increased.<sup>42</sup> The series, broadcast "live" by twenty-three stations was sponsored in the five owned-and-operated cities by the Gordon Baking Company.

#### IV. THE NOVEMBER 1954 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

The largest program type in the 1954 schedule was public affairs programming, with 10 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours or 11 per cent of all nighttime programming--accounting for a substantial portion of the evening schedule.

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., August 18, 1954, p. 25.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1954, p. 32.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

TABLE XII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR NOVEMBER 1954, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE  
QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1953

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1953</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1954</u>
Public Affairs	12	10
Sporting Events	12	9
Prestige Drama	8	8
Situation Comedy	14	8
Panel Games	8	8
Detective Drama	2	6
Audience Participation Games	0	6
Musical Variety	6	5
News and Commentary	6	5
Straight Drama	4	4
Adventure Drama	4	4
Audience Quiz	6	4
Human Interest	5	2
Talk Variety (aa)	0	2
Classical Music	0	2
Sports Features	1	1
Talent Variety	4	0
Comedy Variety	2	0
Religious Programs	1	0
Children's Variety (a)	0	9
Total Nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	95	93

(a) Kukla Fran and Ollie and Disneyland are in this category.

(aa) Talk Stork Club

Data gathered for the first weeks in November 1953 and November 1954.

Sporting events and children's variety programs were in second place, with 9 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 10 per cent of all ABC nighttime programming. Children's variety programs were a new addition to the schedule.

The third largest category included prestige drama, situation comedy, and panel games, with 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 9 per cent of the nighttime schedule. Situation comedy showed the only appreciable change, decreasing 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past year with the cancellation of the "star-power" programming.

Three program types were added to the schedule--audience participation games, classical music, and talk variety.

Three program categories--comedy-variety, talent-variety, and religious programming--were discontinued in 1954-55.

There were no significant changes within the other program types.

New Nighttime Program Types. The largest new category was children's variety programming, with 9 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 15 per cent of the new nighttime programs. The scheduling of these shows indicated ABC's growing awareness of the juvenile as program selector in the early evening. The new programs included

Disneyland  
Kukla, Fran and Ollie

There were 8 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of public affairs programming, or

TABLE XIII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW  
NIGHTTIME ABC PROGRAMMING IN NOVEMBER 1954

Program Type	New Weekly	% of Total
	( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	New ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
Children's Variety	9	15%
Public Affairs	8	13
Sporting Events	6	10
Audience Participation Games	6	10
Detective Drama	6	10
Panel Games	6	10
News	5	8
Audience Quiz	4	7
Musical Variety	4	7
Adventure Drama	2	3
Classical Music	2	3
Talk Variety		

Data gathered for the first week in November 1954.

13 per cent of the new nighttime programs. Here again, the network was using inexpensive and highly specialized programming in time periods which it was unable to sell. Among the new shows were

College Press Conference  
Compass  
Enterprise USA  
Flight Number 7

Sporting events, audience quizzes, and panel games were also high in priority, with 6 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 10 per cent of all new nighttime programs. The scheduling of the Eastern Parkway Fights represented an attempt by ABC to develop its own boxing show as NBC and CBS had done in the past.<sup>43</sup>

The audience participation games included

Come Closer  
Dollar A Second  
So You Want To Lead A Band

The panel quizzes included

Masquerade Party  
Twenty Questions  
What Goes On

There were 5 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of news programs, or 8 per cent of the new programming. John Daly and the News, the one addition, was originated by ABC to establish a program comparable with Douglas Edwards and the Camel News Caravan.

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<sup>43</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

Audience quizzes and musical variety programs accounted for 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 7 per cent of the new programs.

The quiz programs included

Break the Bank  
Stop the Music

The musical variety program was

The Dotty Mack Show

There were 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of adventure drama, classical music, and talk-variety.

Adventure Drama  
Classical Music  
Talk Variety

Rin Tin Tin  
Voice of Firestone  
Stork Club

The preponderance of inexpensive programming (public affairs, sporting events, audience participation games and quizzes, and panel shows); the absence of important comedy and musical variety programs; and a limited number of mystery, adventure, and dramatic series--built around a nucleus of situation comedy, prestige drama, and children's variety programming--characterized the 1954-55 ABC program schedule.

#### Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Network Service

ABC network service had increased 32 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in the past year--from 142 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1953 to 174 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1954. The network

had moved into the 7:00-7:30 pm "station option time" of many of its affiliates with the John Daly News and Kukla, Fran and Ollie programs-- and into the 10:30-11:00 pm periods with Eastern Parkway Boxing and Stop the Music. On two evenings--Wednesday and Friday--the 10:00-10:30 pm time periods were returned to the stations.

There was only one unprogrammed period in the middle of an evening: Tuesday 8:00-8:30 pm, opposite Milton Berle. The network had been able to schedule a panel show at 8:30-9:00 pm.

The daytime program service (8:00 am to 6:00 pm) showed a marked increase, from the 1953 total of 42 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours to 80 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in November 1956. ABC had discontinued its 20 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of late-afternoon weekday programming--replacing them with 40 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of morning service.

The number of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in the nighttime did not appreciably change over the one year period. Though the morning service had substantially increased, there was only a 3 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour rise in commercial programming. The earning power of the Breakfast Club had not been commensurate with the extended program service.

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Four commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the



season. Unless otherwise indicated, the cancellations can be attributed to poor ratings.<sup>44</sup>

<u>Program</u>	<u>National Nielsen Rating (3/54)</u> <u>(first report)</u>
Dr. I. Q.	6.9 AA
Paul Hartman	11.6
Sky King (*)	16.7

(\*) Sky King was cancelled by Derby Foods because the company transferred its television budget to the new Disneyland program.<sup>45</sup>

Other programs, sustaining or cooperative summer replacements, were also cancelled at the start of the season.

In Our Times	sustaining
Junior Press Conference	sustaining
Melody Tour	sustaining
On The Boardwalk	sustaining
Patti Pickens	sustaining
Soldier Parade	sustaining
This World 1954	sustaining
U. S. Highway 1954	sustaining
Who's the Boss	sustaining
Wrestling from Rainbow (*)	cooperative

(\*) Wrestling From Rainbow was cancelled because of a waning interest in the sport.<sup>46</sup>

#### Program Renewals

More programs were renewed for 1954-55 than in any other past season.

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>46</sup>Statement expressed by Robert Shaw, Manager of ABC-TV Station Clearance (personal interview).

TABLE XIV

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1954, AS COMPARED  
TO NOVEMBER 1953

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours 11/53		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours 11/54	
	All ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	All ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	8	8	46	11
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	39	16	34	32@
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	95	62	94	63@
11:00 pm - 1:00 pm	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	142	86	174	106

@ These figures are only general estimates of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in these time periods. The regional, participating sales plan for both the NCAA and professional football games, and unsold portions of John Daly News and Stock Club make exact calculations an impossibility. The afternoon figures appear weighted on behalf of the network.

Data gathered from the first national Nielsen reports for November 1953, 1954; and from Sponsor Magazine November 1953-54.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating (National) 3/54</u> <u>(first report)</u>
Ozzie and Harriet	26.6
Lone Ranger	24.9
You Asked For It	24.4
Make Room For Daddy	22.6
Stu Erwin	21.7
The Television Hour (*)	19.0
Smilin' Ed	16.6
Space Patrol	16.1
The Name's The Same	16.1 AA
Super Circus	16.0
Pepsi Cola Playhouse	14.9
Cavalcade of America	14.2
Walter Winchell	13.8
Where's Raymond	12.5
Saturday Night Boxing	11.7
Kraft Theatre	5.9
Faith For Today	2.0
Breakfast Club	Unav.
Martha Wright	Unav.

(\*) Motorola cancelled the Television Hour in the spring. The program was then broadcast through the summer as the sustaining Center Stage. Elgin-American purchased the alternate week series for the fall, at which time it was retitled the Elgin Hour.

#### Program Additions

College Press Conference - A panel of college journalists questioned a prominent person of the national or international scene on important issues of the day.

Come Closer - Ventriloquist Jimmy Nelson and his "friends" Danny O'Day, Humphrey Higsby, and Farfel in an audience participation game which was a satire on panel shows.

Compass - No information available.

Creative Cookery - Francois Pope, assisted by his sons Frank and Bob, assembled a variety of dishes, with emphasis on the fancier and less common recipes. The hoped to appeal to the female "creative" urges.

Disneyland - Walt Disney had divided this program into four rotating segments--"Adventureland," "Fantasyland," "Frontierland," and "Tomorrowland." Adventureland incorporated Mr. Disney's past theatrical footage, displaying the wonders of Nature. Fantasyland featured many of the famous Disney cartoon characters (Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, Goofy), with material drawn from past theatrical cartoons and full-length features (Snow White, Fantasia), as well as freshly made-for-television product. Frontierland told the story, in dramatic form, of the nation's pioneers and their attempts to conquer the Frontier. The most popular programs in the "frontier" series were the three Davy Crockett films: "Davy Crockett and the Creek War," "Davy Crockett Goes to Congress" and "Davy Crockett At the Alamo." Fess Parker was featured as the famous frontiersman. "Tomorrowland" transported the viewer into the future with educational yet entertaining stories, adventures, and cartoons--all of which were interwoven to reveal the progress of science.

Dollar A Second - Contestants from the studio audience performed various stunts, and received a "dollar-a-second" for each second they were on stage. To make the program more interesting, there was an "outside event"--such as an athlete doing sit-ups--for the duration of the show. If the "outside eventer" completed his allotted number of sit-ups etc. while the contestant was performing, the latter lost all his prizes.

Enterprise U. S. A. - No information available.

Flight Number Seven - No information available.

The Mail Story - Dramatizations from the files of the United States Post Office.

Masquerade Party - A panel of celebrities identified famous people who appeared in various disguises.

Monday Night Boxing - Bouts from Eastern Parkway Arena in New York City.

Mr. Executive - Westbrook Van Voorhis interviewed famous American industrialists.

Rin Tin Tin - The adventures of the wonder dog and his young master, who was an honorary soldier. They were stationed in the West with an army troop during the late nineteenth century and encountered Indians, outlaws, and all the violent elements of the time.

Stop The Music - Studio contestants were paid \$50 for each song they named correctly. The contestant with the highest winnings had an opportunity to try for the giant jackpot, worth several thousands of dollars in cash and merchandise. The at-home audience also played in the game: a team of operators put through calls to home viewers who had previously registered at a dealer's store handling the sponsor's merchandise. If the home viewer guessed the name of a popular tune, he won \$250, and then tried for the mystery melody for the fabulous jackpot.

Stork Club - The eight floors of the Stork Club were explored: the upstairs private dining rooms, the wine cellars, the kitchens, the main room, the Club Room, and East 53rd Street itself. This change in format transported the home audience backstage from place to place. Combined with his sightseeing were interviews with celebrities dining at the club, and the music of two bands.

Treasury Men In Action - Walter Greazia starred in stories adapted from the files of the U. S. Treasury Department.

The Vise - Inspector Mark Saber solved a weekly murder. (This was the new English version of the Mystery Theatre program in which the Inspector was recast as a one-armed detective from Scotland Yard.)

Voice of Firestone - Goward Barlow conducted the Firestone Concert Orchestra in a program of classical and semi-classical music. Prominent guest stars were featured with elaborate choreography and production.

What's Going On - Lee Bowman emceed a panel show which employed "remotes" as the basis of a guessing game. A six man panel was divided in half, with three members outside the studio, each performing some activity. Each of these "outside" escapades was flashed on a rear screen projection in back of the studio panel. The studio panelists asked their cohort what he was doing, and had to guess his activities in an allotted amount of time.

#### Format Revisions.

The Name's The Same - Denis James replaced Robert Q. Lewis as host for the series. In addition, Arnold Stang, Bess Meyerson, and Gene Rayburn became permanent panelists.

Pepsi-Cola Playhouse - Polly Bergen succeeded Arlene Dahl as the hostess for the dramatic series.

Where's Raymond - A continuing storyline had been added with singing and dancing integrated into the plot. In answer to much criticism, the recorded, dubbed-in laughter had been eliminated in favor of a "live" studio audience.

Program Costs. Six of the new commercial ABC programs cost at least \$21,000. (The average nighttime program cost 25 per cent more than it did the previous year.)<sup>47</sup> Disneyland, budgeted at \$65,000 an

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<sup>47</sup>"TV Show Costs," Sponsor Magazine, VIII (September 6, 1954), 39.

episode, was one of the most expensive regularly scheduled programs on television. The other additions in this costly category were the Elgin Television Hour, Rin Tin Tin, Treasury Men in Action, The Vise, and the Voice of Firestone.

There were seven new commercial programs budgeted at less than \$21,000--Break the Bank, Dollar A Second, Stop the Music, the Stork Club, Twenty Questions, and the "stripped" Breakfast Club and John Daly News. It can be assumed that the new sustaining programs were also inexpensively produced--these included Come Closer, Creative Cookery, The Mail Story, College Press Conference, Enterprise U. S. A., Compass, Flight Number Seven, Mr. Executive, and Monday Night Boxing.

Program and Production Control. ABC controlled and produced only a few of its new fall programs which were, for the most part, sustaining public affairs features.

Creative Cookery - ABC purchased this show through its Chicago owned-and-operated station WBKB. In doing so, all creative and program control passed from the original producer to WBKB and ABC Television.

Enterprise, U. S. A. - Produced by the ABC News and Public Affairs Department.

Voice of Firestone - Though the program was owned by the Firestone Company, it was nevertheless produced by ABC personnel.

ABC made only one joint agreement with an independent producer--Walt Disney Productions. ABC exercised the most control over Disneyland during its developmental stages. Once the show was broadcast, however, the creative and production responsibilities passed to the Disney

TABLE XV

PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ABC PROGRAMS  
FOR NOVEMBER 1954

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<u>Programs Costing at Least \$21,000</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Disneyland	\$65,000
Elgin Television Hour	40,000
The Vise	28,000
Voice of Firestone	22,500
Rin Tin Tin	21,000
T-Men In Action	21,000
<u>Programs Costing Less Than \$21,000</u>	
Break the Bank	17,500
Stop The Music	16,500
Dollar A Second	13,000
Twenty Questions	11,000
Breakfast Club	10,000 (per week)
John Daly and the News	8,200 (per week)
Stork Club	2,750

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Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

organization, though ABC did have the right of consultation.<sup>48</sup> This agreement operated satisfactorily for both parties. Walt Disney had proved himself before television, and continued to do so, as evidenced by the success of Disneyland.

Most of the new programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Producer</u>
Come Closer	Louis G. Cowan and Bob Jennings
Dollar A Second	Jantone
	Mogen David Wine Corporation
The Mail Story	Bernard J. Proctor
Masquerade Party	Herb Wolf
Rin Tin Tin	Screen Gems
	NABISCO
Stop the Music	Louis G. Cohan
Stork Club	Music Corporation of America
Treasury Men In Action	Bernard J. Proctor
The Vise	Danziger Bros.
	Sterling Drug Company
Voice of Firestone	Firestone Tire and Rubber Company
What's Going On	Mark Goodson-Bill Todman

### The Evolution of the Nighttime Schedule

The programmers decided that Wednesday evening was to be strengthened. ABC had definitely set Disneyland for 7:30-8:30 pm. In so doing, the Sterling Drug Company was forced to move The Vise, tentatively scheduled for 7:30-8:00 pm Wednesday, to another evening.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>49</sup>Variety, October 6, 1954, p. 32.



This was the first time the network pre-empted an already scheduled commercial program with stronger programming, establishing a precedent for subsequent seasons.

Chesterfield ordered 8:30-9:00 following Disneyland, and scheduled a new version of the Stu Erwin Show.<sup>50</sup> Lenthéric had previously purchased 9:00-9:30 pm for its Masquerade Party--rounding out a commercial block of programming from 7:30-9:30 pm. ABC could not, however, sell the 9:30-10:00 pm time period. The network had negotiated with many advertisers for a half-hour version of Center Stage, but there were no interested buyers. When all hopes for a sale were gone, ABC inserted a sustaining public service feature in this time period, ending a potentially strong evening with a highly specialized program.

The final Wednesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	<u>Disneyland</u>
8:30 - 9:00	<u>Stu Erwin Show</u>
9:00 - 9:30	<u>Masquerade Party</u>
9:30 -10:00	<u>Enterprise, U. S. A.</u>

There were three program renewals on Thursday--the Lone Ranger, 7:30-8:00 pm; Sammy Kaye's So You Want To Lead A Band, 9:00-9:30 pm; and the Kraft Theatre, 9:30-10:30 pm. The Ray Bolger program had been transferred to Friday evening.

The network had planned to install a sixty minute dramatic series

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., June 16, 1954, p. 25.

from 8:00-9:00 pm Thursday, and had been negotiating with the Shell Oil Company. The advertiser's agency (J. Walter Thompson) was more than interested, since it already had two clients' programs in ABC's Thursday line-up--Sammy Kaye and Kraft Theatre. An additional sixty minute dramatic series would provide J. Walter Thompson with a two and one-half hour block of programming, from 8:00-10:30 pm.<sup>51</sup> Since there was no definite decision by mid-August, the network, when it had an opportunity to sell T-Men in Action (a definite commitment for ABC) hastened to do so. The T-Men program, which had tentatively been scheduled at half-dozen different time periods, was sold to Chevrolet for 8:30-9:00 pm Thursday with the guarantee that the Mail Story would be placed at 8:00 pm to provide a suitable lead-in. ABC was unable to sell the Mail Story, but nevertheless scheduled it in the specified 8:00 pm time period, eliminating the proposed dramatic program or any other ABC dramatic program.<sup>52</sup>

The final Thursday night schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Lone Ranger
8:00 - 8:30	The Mail Story
8:30 - 9:00	T-Men in Action
9:00 - 9:30	So You Want To Lead A Band
9:30 - 10:30	Kraft Television Theatre

There was only one program renewal on Friday evening--the Adventures of Ozzi and Harriet at 8:00 pm. Ray Bolger had been rescheduled at 8:30-9:00 pm to give Friday the old radio "comedy-night"

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1954, p. 28.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

look, and place the comedian in a time period where he could expect some hold-over audience from Ozzie and Harriet. At the time the move was planned, Where's Raymond was to be favored by the Stu Erwin and Paul Hartman Shows; in the months that followed, however, one program was moved to another night and the other cancelled by its sponsor--more than illustrating the inadequate sales position of ABC and its limited control over the program schedule.<sup>53</sup>

General Mills had originally placed an order for 7:30-8:00 pm for its new June Havoc program, but later moved the show to CBS.<sup>54</sup> NABISCO, in the meantime, had ordered a Sunday afternoon CBS time period for Rin Tin Tin, but then decided, with some ABC persuasion, to switch the program to the 7:30-8:00 pm Friday time period on ABC.<sup>55</sup> This last minute program change provided ABC with its most popular new half-hour program for 1953-54. June Havoc's Willie, on the other hand, lasted for less than a season on CBS.

The rest of the evening was subsequently sold. Mogen David Wine purchased 9:00-9:30 pm for its Dollar A Second program, and Sterling Drug, moved out of Wednesday at 7:30 pm, ordered 9:30-10:00 pm for the Vise. In so doing, it interrupted the evening's comedy theme from 8:00-9:30. Here again, the network believed that commercial revenues and good client relations (Sterling Drug was one of the largest time

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., April 12, 1954, p. 28.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1954, p. 23.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

buyers in network television) were more important than program planning.<sup>56</sup>

The final Friday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Rin Tin Tin
8:00 - 8:30	Ozzie and Harriet
8:30 - 9:00	Where's Raymond
9:00 - 9:30	Dollar A Second
9:30 - 10:00	The Vise

There were four program renewals on Sunday evening--You Asked For It, 7:00-7:30 pm; Walter Winchell, 9:00-9:15 pm; Martha Wright, 9:15-9:30 pm; and Break the Bank, 10:00-10:30 pm (initiated the past summer).

ABC could not sell 8:00-9:00 pm because of the formidable competition on NBC and CBS. The network programmed two sustaining public affairs shows--Flight Number Seven and The Big Picture--in this time period, hoping that they would attract a portion of the television audience not watching the big programs, and also boost the "sets-in-use."<sup>57</sup>

Pepsi Cola had previously moved its dramatic anthology program, from its Friday period, to Sunday, 7:30-8:00 pm, hoping that the show would be favored by the popular You Asked For It adjacency. The network sanctioned the move because it felt that the drama would serve as a favorable lead-in for the Paul Whiteman Show--a program which was cancelled before the start of the season.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., October 6, 1954, p. 32.

<sup>57</sup>Interview with Slocum Chapin.

<sup>58</sup>Variety, April 12, 1954, p. 28.

The 9:30-10:00 pm time period was later purchased by Revlon for What's Going On--completing a primarily commercial Sunday schedule.

7:00 - 7:30	You Asked For It
7:30 - 8:00	Pepsi Cola Playhouse
8:00 - 8:30	Flight Number Seven
8:30 - 9:00	The Big Picture
9:00 - 9:15	Walter Winchell
9:15 - 9:30	Martha Wright
9:30 - 10:00	What's Going On
10:00 - 10:30	Break the Bank

Monday evening was completely reprogrammed. Ralston-Purina signed for the Name's The Same, and moved the program into 7:30-8:00 pm replacing the Jamie series.<sup>59</sup>

The attraction of the Voice of Firestone from the NBC Network constituted the most significant change of the evening. The Firestone Hour had been broadcast on NBC radio and television for many seasons. In a complete Monday night realignment for 1954-55, NBC replaced the Voice of Firestone with Caesar's Hour. The network offered the rubber company other time periods, as did CBS, but all of them were rejected. ABC, on the other hand, had more available time, and attracted Firestone with the 8:30-9:00 pm Monday period that it had on NBC (the network offered to originate the series from the New York Paramount Theatre, but later decided that this would be impractical). ABC, by acquiring the Firestone business, had a prestige show, and from a practical viewpoint, a show worth millions of dollars in time and talent costs.<sup>60</sup>

The network also committed for Monday Night Boxing from Eastern

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., September 29, 1954, p. 23.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., April 29, 1954, p. 24.

Parkway Arena. Though the bouts were never sold, they were nevertheless broadcast on a cooperative basis from 9:30-11:00 pm.

The 8:00-8:30 pm and 9:00-9:30 pm time periods were never sold. ABC, with a commitment for Jimmy Nelson's Come Closer, broadcast the program as a sustainer at 8:00 pm. For 9:00-9:30 pm, the network created a public service show--College Press Conference--realizing that it could not actively compete with I Love Lucy.

The final Monday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Name's The Same
8:00 - 8:30	Come Closer
8:30 - 9:00	The Voice of Firestone
9:00 - 9:30	College Press Conference
9:30 -11:00	Boxing From Eastern Parkway

There were no appreciable changes on Tuesday evening, with four program renewals--Cavalcade of America, Twenty Questions, Danny Thomas, and U. S. Steel Hour.

The only change occurred from 10:30-11:00 pm. The Exquisite form Company ordered the time period for the Arthur Murray Dance Party, but then changed its plans and substituted Stop the Music in the late evening period.<sup>61</sup>

The final Tuesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Cavalcade of America
8:30 - 9:00	Twenty Questions
9:00 - 9:30	Make Room For Daddy
9:30 -10:30	U. S. Steel Hour/Elgin Hour
10:30 -11:00	Stop the Music

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1954, p. 42.

Bayuk Boxing was the only renewal on Saturday night. No other time periods were sold for 1954-55. With a wide open Saturday schedule, the network decided that this was a good evening for the Stork Club commitment. The program was scheduled at 10:00 pm, with only a one-third sale to the Gemex Watch Company.

ABC filled the rest of the evening with inexpensive sustaining or cooperative programming.

The final Saturday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Compass
8:00 - 9:00	Dotty Mack Show
9:00 - 9:45	Saturday Night Fights
9:45 - 10:00	Fight Talk
10:00 - 10:30	Stork Club

#### V. THE MARCH 1955 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Cancellations

Breakfast Club - Quaker Oats, the last of the advertisers, cancelled at the end of January. The program was then broadcast as a sustainer at a substantial loss to the network. With the installation of the Mickey Mouse Club, ABC decided to abandon morning service and concentrate on the late afternoon.

Come Closer - No advertiser interest.

The Mail Story - No advertiser interest.

Martha Wright - Packard cancelled in order to sponsor a new ABC program, TV Reader's Digest.

Pepsi Cola Playhouse - Low ratings.

Saturday Night Fights - was cancelled by Bayuk Cigars in favor of alternate week sponsorship of Walter Winchell.

So You Want To Lead A Band - Low ratings.

Space Patrol - Low ratings.

Stu Erwin Show - Low ratings.

Twenty Questions - Low ratings.

What's Going On - Revlon cancelled after only five weeks, and settled with Goodson-Todman for the remaining eight programs. The show was replaced by Pantomime Quiz, which lasted for less than six months because of Revlon's dissatisfaction with the time period.<sup>62</sup>

Kraft Television Theatre - Kraft cancelled the Thursday drama because of poor ratings and its purchase of Space Cadet on NBC. The series, however, was replaced by another drama hour, sponsored by Pond's, also a J. Walter Thompson client. The agency continued to produce the program, saving the jobs of over forty people on its payroll who had been associated with the Kraft Theatre.<sup>63</sup>

Several other sustaining or cooperative programs were cancelled before the spring quarter--thirty minutes of Monday Night Boxing, and the Dotty Mack Show, Enterprise U. S. A., Compass, Flight Number Seven, The Big Picture, and Mr. Executive.

Ten of the program cancellations were broadcast for less than six months--Come Closer, The Mail Story, So You Want To Lead A Band, Martha Wright, What's Going On, Enterprise U. S. A., Compass, Flight Number Seven, and Mr. Executive. With this constant program turnover it became increasingly difficult for ABC to build appreciable audiences for its important programming; the valuable program adjacencies were in a continual state of change.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Variety, July 2, 1955, p. 23.

<sup>63</sup>Variety, December 15, 1954, p. 31.

<sup>64</sup>Statement expressed by Jules Barnathan, ABC-TV Vice President of Research and Station Clearance (personal interview).



### Program Additions

Horizons - (Ciba Pharmaceuticals and ABC Television developed this fifteen minute series on the progress in medicine through wonder drugs.) The program featured Dr. Louis H. Bauer, former president of the American Medical Association, in a discussion of a different medical topic each week.

Key to the Ages - A program jointly produced by ABC News and WAAM Baltimore, originating from the Walters Art Gallery in that city.

Mr. Citizen - The Cunningham and Walsh replacement for Stu Erwin, which featured people who had done outstanding deeds of heroism, community work, or other things to earn an award as "Mr. Citizen." The weekly winner was flown to New York, his exploits dramatized, and then interviewed and presented a plaque and a thousand dollars.

Ozark Jubilee - Red Foley, Jean Shephard, and the Oklahoma Wranglers were featured in sixty minutes of country music from Springfield, Missouri.

Penny To A Million - Two sets of five-member panels competed to become eligible for the jackpot, which was reserved for the winner of each team. A panel member was eliminated by one incorrect answer. The first correct answer got a penny, with each subsequent answer doubling the amount of the prize money. Bill Goodwin was the master of ceremonies.

Pantomime Quiz - Two teams, comprised of well-known stars, acted out individual charades sent in by home viewers. Mike Stokey was the master of ceremonies.

Pond's Theatre - A replacement for the Kraft Television Theatre.

Star Tonight - Young acting talent was given a national showcase in leading dramatic roles, with established stars backing them in lesser parts. J. Walter Thompson, the producer of the program, hoped to discover potential star material.

Tomorrow's Careers - A series directed at high school youngsters looking at the roster of professions and vocations, with special emphasis on the attractions of a science career. Integrated film clips and prominent guest speakers in each respective field rounded out the program which was produced in cooperation with John Hopkins University.

TV Reader's Digest - A dramatic anthology series, with material adapted from Reader's Digest Magazine. Hugh Reilly was the host.

Who Said That - A string of questions were asked about quotes made during the preceding week. John Daly was the host, and Bob Considine, the permanent panelist.

Your Better Home Show - Neil Hamilton and Helen Lewis appeared in a "how-to-do-it" program (Mr. Hamilton's favorite hobby was carpentry).

## VI. THE AUGUST 1955 SCHEDULE

Seven commercial programs were cancelled before the summer quarter.

Horizons - Cancellation by Ciba with the understanding that it would sponsor a similar half-hour program in the fall.

U. S. Steel Hour - CBS had negotiated with U. S. Steel to change networks. The NBC decision to schedule a one-hour drama for Tuesday at 9:30 pm was a major factor in the company's decision to shift the program to CBS, Wednesday 10:00-11:00 pm, in competition with the new ABC Fights and This Is Your Life--rather than another dramatic program.<sup>65</sup>

Pond's Theatre - A corporate change within the structure of the Pond's Company was a major factor in the cancellation of its ABC dramatic program.<sup>66</sup>

Smilin' Ed - Low ratings.

Walter Winchell - Low ratings, and contractual disagreements between ABC and the commentator.

Where's Raymond - Low ratings.

Who Said That - Low ratings.

Other sustaining or cooperative programs were also cancelled.

Creative Cookery  
Let's Take Side  
Monday Night Boxing

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<sup>65</sup>Variety, April 6, 1955, p. 25.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., June 8, 1955, p. 28.

Summer Cancellations. Several programs were withdrawn for thirteen weeks, but were scheduled to return in the fall.

Cavalcade of America  
Dollar A Second  
Ozzie and Harriet  
Stop the Music

#### Program Additions

Most of the new programs were summer replacements. Those which extended into the 1955-56 season are marked with an (\*) asterisk.

(\*) Chance of a Lifetime - Basically the same amateur-variety show that appeared on ABC a season or so before.

Ern Westmore - A program of beauty hints for the women, similar to his former ABC daytime program.

Greatest Sports Thrills - Filmed highlights of famous sporting events.

Henry and Rocky - An after-the-fight program featuring Henry Youngman and Rocky Graziano in a mixture of comedy and boxing analysis. Musical interludes provided by Marian Colby and a jazz combo.

(\*) Lawrence Welk Program - Dodge Motor Division of Chrysler had been seeking a national showcase for the Lawrence Welk program. Dodge negotiated with both NBC and CBS, but neither offered more than a Sunday afternoon time period. The motor company then went to ABC, who, because of its many availabilities, proposed a prime time period--Saturday, 9:00-10:00 pm.

The program, featuring Mr. Welk, his orchestra, and a number of featured vocalists, was planned as a summer replacement; due to its tremendous acceptance by the television public, it was given a regular Saturday position in the ABC schedule.

Let's See - Financed by the Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce, Let's See starred John Reed King. A group of panelists were given four minutes to discover where each contestant had visited in Atlantic City. A prepared film clip was simultaneously shown to the television audience, providing a pictorial account of the contestant's itinerary.

(\*) Life Begins At Eighty - The program featured a panel of men and women all at least eighty years old, who answered questions submitted by home-viewers as a springboard for laughs.

The Pee Wee King Show - A country and western music variety program starring Comedian Pee Wee King, and originating from WENS, Cleveland, Ohio.

Soupy Sales Show - Soupy Sales and his puppet friends - White Fang, Black Tooth, Marilyn Monwolf, Herman the Flea, and Willie the Worm--were the leading characters in this children's variety program from WXYZ, Detroit.

Step This Way - No information available.

Talent Varieties - Nine acts of amateur and professional country talent with Slim Williams as host, from Springfield, Missouri.

(\*) Wednesday Night Fights - For many seasons, the Pabst Brewing Company had sponsored Wednesday Boxing on the CBS Network. At the end of the 1953-54 season, a conflict with CBS over time periods resulted in the program's transfer to ABC in mid-summer. Pabst was disturbed by the proposed once a month pre-emption by The Best of Broadway "specials." CBS, on the other hand, wanted the fights broadcast two out of three weeks, and Pabst sponsorship of the entire hour of boxing--not just forty-five minutes.<sup>67</sup> Neither company compromised, with Pabst moving the bouts to ABC.

The acquisition of these fights put ABC in a bargaining position with the Eastern Parkway promoters (Monday Night Fights). The network broadcasting the sporting event on a cooperative basis, wanted the card of fights at a "no-program-cost" payment. ABC cancelled the Monday night card when the promoter failed to comply with its request.<sup>68</sup>

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE SEASON

The 1954-55 season was marked with both success and failure for ABC Television. While its nighttime program service did not appreciably

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., March 16, 1955, p. 26.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

change, its daytime programming surged ahead, with several additional hours of women's service features and sporting events. Revenues for this increased network service, however, were only slightly higher than in the past season--in no way proportionate to the increased program expenditures. The network lost thousands of dollars on its simulcasts of the Breakfast Club, over \$1,800,000 on the NCAA football games, which were sold at bargain rates. Revenues for nighttime programming remained about the same, with no substantial changes.

ABC Television developed few of its own program properties for 1954-55; its activities with independent producers were also quite limited. There was instead a renewed emphasis on direct program acquisitions from producers and "packagers." Here again, there were cases of both success and failure. Disneyland represented a commitment of several millions of dollars, in addition to financial interests in the proposed Disneyland Park. The program drew the largest audiences in ABC's history, and made the "top-ten" listings of all major rating services. Other commitments, however, were never sold--the Mail Story, Come Closer, and portions of the Stork Club and NCAA games had to be broadcast as sustainers, at a considerable loss to the network.

There were individual successes--Rin Tin Tin and Lawrence Welk--advertisers' programs which were the sleepers of the season; and Disneyland, which not only introduced millions of people to ABC channels, but made advertisers, agencies, and industry personnel aware of the network. The Disneyland program paved the way for the entrance into television of other major Hollywood studios and subsequent alliances between ABC and Warner Bros. and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

There were, on the other hand, the vast majority of inexpensive ABC programs. Their ratings were minute when compared to the NBC or CBS rosters. Most of the schedule consisted of public service programs, sporting events, and low-budget panel and game shows. There was no comedy or musical variety to speak of, and only a few mystery, adventure, and dramatic anthology programs.

ABC had practically no control over its schedule. Programs were placed with little regard for an entire night's structure--it was still advertiser's choice as to program placement. The network was not in a position to say "no" to anyone--not with many hours of prime evening time still unsold. There was some progress made, however. For the first time, ABC used audience research and scheduled a program ahead of sales. Disneyland had to be placed on Wednesday at 7:30--research had told the network so.

Success and failure--there were Disneyland and Rin Tin Tin, in addition to Ozzie and Harriet, The Lone Ranger, and Danny Thomas. But there were also sponsor cancellations--two of the network's truly important programs--the U. S. Steel Hour and the Pond's Theatre. As quickly as ABC had built early evening dominance with Disneyland and Rin Tin Tin, it was losing not only a "keystone" in its Tuesday evening lineup, but also the less popular but nevertheless profitable Pond's Theatre on Thursday. In a process of "give-and-take," ABC was able to acquire the Pabst Blue Ribbon Fights from CBS; it could now boast of a popular boxing program--something it had been trying to develop for the past few seasons.

By the end of the season, ABC had a strong nucleus of programs as it prepared to enter the 1955-56 network competition--in addition to other weaker programs which had been renewed for the fall. What the network lacked, however, was a consistency of good programming throughout the week. ABC was aware of this, and was making plans for Chapter Three of its proposed "five year plan"--a chapter which was to be one of the most exciting in the network's short history.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE 1955-56 SEASON

The 1955-56 season was a year of change. Situation comedy, a staple product, was declining with eleven of the past season's programs cancelled--the Halls of Ivy, Life With Father, Our Miss Brooks, My Favorite Husband, That's My Boy, Honestly Celeste, I Married Joan, My Little Margie, and Mr. Peepers. Adventure drama and the big-money quizzes, on the other hand, increased quickly with the additions of Robin Hood, Navy Log, Sgt. Preston, Gunsmoke, Champion, the Crusaders, Appointment with Adventure, Frontier, and the \$64,000 Question, Name That Tune, and the Big Surprise.

CBS revised its programming, abandoning its established formula of music and news from 7:30-8:00 pm, and installing instead western and adventure shows on three of the evenings. This was the first time that one of the older networks altered its programming to compete with ABC. Never before had the "third network" provided such competition, with early evening dominance on two nights of the week.

This season also saw the major Hollywood studios ally with television. Metro Goldwyn Mayer, Twentieth Century Fox, and Warner Bros. followed the path of the pioneer Disney organization, and began production of network television series. During 1955, these studios also released a large number of "pre-1948" feature films for television use. One report indicated that seven major Hollywood film producers disposed of 1,063



full-length features, 192 Western features, and 3,126 one or two reel cartoons or short subjects.<sup>1</sup> Some of the quality pictures were broadcast as network programs during the 1955-56 season. One major event was the NBC telecast of the "Constant Husband," starring Red Harrison and Lili Palmer.

The television "spectaculars" continued to grow. By February 1, 1956, 60 ninety-minute "specs" had been telecast. There was the "Producer's Showcase," broadcast every fourth Monday on NBC; Max Liebman Presents, every fourth Saturday on NBC; the Sunday Night "Spectaculars," every fourth Sunday on NBC; and the Ford Star Jubilee, every fourth Saturday on CBS. Produced in "living color," the programs were acclaimed to have "impact, prestige, dealer excitement, and overall interest."<sup>2</sup>

The television season also brought to an end the Dumont Network, a pioneer in the industry. Many of the Dumont programs moved to ABC. In addition the American Broadcasting Company had "one less thorn in its side" in its never-ending problem of station clearances.<sup>3</sup>

In all, the 1955-56 season promised to be an exciting one, with new program types, the emergence of Hollywood as a major television force, the release to television of thousands of hours of feature films,

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Harrison Summers, "Broadcast Programs and Audiences" (Ohio State University: mimeographed material).

<sup>2</sup>"The Spectaculars," Television Magazine, XIII (February 1956), 29.

<sup>3</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, ABC-TV Manager of Station Clearance (personal interview).

and a determined ABC network going into the third phase of its proposed "five year plan."

### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The programmers planned for 1955-56 with basically the same philosophy as in the past--the development and acquisition of a number of program properties, the attraction of advertiser-controlled programs, concentration on one or two evenings a week, a policy of regularly scheduled "week-in-week-out" programming, and an interest in obtaining control over important periods in the schedule.

#### Development and Acquisition of Program Properties

For the 1955-56 season, efforts were directed toward the development of program properties, rather than stars and personalities. The ascendancy of the television "spectacular" on NBC and CBS had increased the salaries of performers beyond reason. Moreover, the frequency of "spectacular" programming was quickly draining the pool of available talent. Leonard Goldenson, ABC-UPT president, stated

There is so much competition for material and actors that they'll be hitting the bottom of the barrel fast.<sup>4</sup>

ABC had learned that a good program possesses the inherent ability to build a star. The success of the Davy Crockett series on Disneyland, and the popularity of Fess Parker (previously an unknown)

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<sup>4</sup>Variety /New York/, July 25, 1956, p. 25.

more than illustrated the fact. The network realized that the adventure and western formats were the most suited vehicles for this potential-star exposure. Unlike comedy-variety, where the star made the show, the western and adventure could make the star.<sup>5</sup>

ABC did, however, sign one talent contract with Bishop Fulton Sheen. The network had always been eager to acquire his services, but was unable to do so until the expiration of his Dumont contract. When the pact elapsed, ABC outbid Dumont, and obtained not only Bishop Sheen, but also all program rights to his show.<sup>6</sup>

A talent agreement had also been negotiated with Columbia Pictures by ABC's Robert Weitman.

Columbia has agreed to lend us some of their embryonic starlets, whenever we find that an ABC story property fits one of their youthful personalities.<sup>7</sup>

Leonard Goldenson, a man with an extensive motion picture background and president of the largest theatre chain in the world, had always believed that the answer to many of ABC's programming problems lay in Hollywood.

My theory was to go to the pros who had been making films and persuade them to go into TV.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Statement expressed by Robert E. Lewine, former ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>6</sup>Variety, April 4, 1955, p. 25.

<sup>7</sup>New York Times, February 13, 1955, Section II, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup>"ABC Crowds Other Three Networks," Business Week, #1549 (May 9, 1959), p. 46.

The ABC-UPT president was a key figure in the Walt Disney negotiations. He had known Mr. Disney for years, and maintained a friendly relationship with him. Mr. Goldenson also knew Jack Warner, Dore Schary, and Spyros Skouras, the respective heads of Warner Bros., Metro Goldwyn Mayer, and Twentieth Century Fox. For years, Paramount Theatres had served as important distribution outlets for these major studios. Good will had always been maintained between Hollywood and the United Paramount organization.

For some time, Mr. Goldenson had attempted to persuade these entertainment monarchs to enter television production--that in so doing,

Television would benefit the studios' theatrical product by serving as the training ground for new talent.

Television could also be used for theatrical exploitation--an important consideration not only for the studios that produced and distributed the pictures, but also for an organization like United Paramount Theatres, which at that time derived the majority of its income from motion picture exhibition.

The Hollywood studios, however, resisted the temptation to enter television until 1955. They believed that a television alliance would not only antagonize the theatre owners, but also affect motion picture attendance. Walt Disney was the first of the studios to make the television transition. In so doing, he produced not only an excellent program series, but also successfully publicized his theatrical films. Week after week, he promoted his motion pictures in a fashion short of subliminal advertising. This very procedure was especially effective in

exploiting "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea."<sup>9</sup> Warner Bros. and Metro Goldwyn Mayer were impressed by the results of the Disney experiment, and finally convinced that television could not only benefit themselves, but the theatre owners and distributors as well. Therefore, they decided to enter network television production. ABC, because of the close association between United Paramount and Hollywood, was able to acquire the services of Warner Bros. and Metro Goldwyn Mayer.

ABC Television also strengthened its alliances with the independent film producers with whom it had sporadically dealt in the past. The network believed that joint development and production arrangements with men like Louis Edelman and Jack Chertok could lessen the problems of program and schedule control, and result in more consistency of good programming.

#### Attraction of Advertiser Controlled Programs

ABC was not in the position to turn away advertisers and their programs. There were still many vacant time periods, representing millions of dollars in commercial revenues. The network was primarily concerned with increasing its network billings--once this was done, it could concentrate on the programming itself. In line with this policy, Mr. Kintner, at the Broadcast Advertiser's Club in Chicago, stated

We are willing to make time available to advertisers for their own development, and we don't believe that 100% of the programming on ABC-TV should be controlled by the network.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

<sup>10</sup>"ABC Challenging NBC, CBS for Network Lead--Kintner," Broadcasting Magazine, L (May 21, 1956), 73.

Concentration On One or Two Evenings a Week

The ABC programmers hoped to concentrate on Tuesday evening. With the loss of the United States Steel Hour and an unprogrammed 8:00-9:00 pm period, Tuesday was one of the weakest nights in the schedule.

It was predetermined, ahead of sales, that the new Warner Bros. Presents would be scheduled against the Milton Berle program. The plan to place the show in the 8:00-9:00 pm period was the result of meetings between Leonard Goldenson, Robert Kintner, Ben Kalmenson, Warner Bros. Sales Vice President, and Jack L. Warner, Warner Bros. production chief.<sup>11</sup> These men later decided to move the program one-half hour ahead to 7:30 pm. The competition was more vulnerable, with Name That Tune and music and news on CBS and NBC. This time period also, as in the case of Disneyland, gave ABC a half-hour edge on the major competition at 8:00 pm.<sup>12</sup>

Another planned programming maneuver was the placement of Wyatt Earp at 8:30 pm. ABC wanted to create an action block--ninety minutes of programming with similar audience appeal from 7:30-9:00 pm.<sup>13</sup> Under no circumstances was the Wyatt Earp program to be moved from this time period. Warner Bros. Presents and Wyatt Earp had been adjacently scheduled in the early evening to reach a young, large-family audience--

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<sup>11</sup>Variety, March 16, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

<sup>13</sup>Variety, April 27, 1955, p. 24.

the same audience which Disneyland was attracting each week. By placing the programming in early time periods when the youngster influenced program selection--by programming adventure and western shows appealing to both children and adults--the network hoped to attract this choice marketing segment.<sup>14</sup>

ABC planned, to a lesser degree, the placement of Famous Film Festival at 7:30-9:00 pm Sunday. The network believed that the motion pictures might provide some noteworthy competition for the variety hours on NBC and CBS. Here again, the program was scheduled at 7:30, one half-hour before Ed Sullivan and Colgate, with hopes that interest in the features would retain the audience for the full ninety minute period. The network had always believed that there was a substantial portion of the television audience which did not watch the variety shows. ABC had attempted to program for this group with The Mask in 1954, and was trying again in 1955-56.

#### Concentration on Regularly Scheduled Programming

ABC did not change its policy regarding week-in-week-out programming. The television "spectacular" did not fit into the network's planning.

If you offer people a Cadillac on Monday, will they want a Chevrolet on Tuesday? . . . That's what television needs, good solid entertainment week after week so that the viewer knows what he can expect before he turns the set on.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Statement expressed by Fred Pierce, ABC-TV Manager of Television Research (personal interview).

<sup>15</sup>"Battle of the Titans," Sponsor Magazine, IX (June 13, 1955), 124.

ABC had to improve its clearance problem and regularly scheduled programming before turning to the "spectacular." Moreover, there was no advertiser demand for "special" programming on ABC.

Synonymous with the "spectacular" was the color television issue. Here again, the network had not changed its position.

Those who stand to profit from color set sales should pay for receiver sales promotion through pioneer color-casting.<sup>16</sup>

ABC was, however, preparing a backlog of color film for the day when it would begin colorcasting. Warner Bros. Presents, Disneyland, and the Mickey Mouse Club were produced in color, in contrast to the NBC and CBS policy of "live" "spectaculars" and kinescope recordings.<sup>17</sup>

#### Entrance Into Late Afternoon Television

ABC had formulated plans for the Mickey Mouse Club, which was to be broadcast from 5:00-6:00 pm "clock time." The network hoped to dominate the late afternoon with this program, and later build backwards from the Club to the early afternoon. In this manner, ABC could use the A. T. and T. eight hour block of afternoon and evening line service for both daytime and nighttime programming.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>"Closed Circuit," Broadcasting Magazine, XLIX (July 25, 1955), 5.

<sup>17</sup>Variety, April 13, 1955, p. 45.

<sup>18</sup>Statement expressed by Slocum Chapin, former Vice President of the ABC Television Network (personal interview).



## II. THE ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

Synonomous with ABC's new production alliances with Hollywood were the appointments of two men to the ABC Program Department. J. English Smith was made network coordinator for the Warner Bros. Presents program. He was stationed on the Warner Bros. studio lot, and reported through Mr. Lewine to the new ABC Television Vice President, John Mitchell, and Talent Vice President Robert Weitman. Sandy Cummings assumed a similar position for Disneyland, serving as ABC coordinator and reporting to key administrative personnel in New York.<sup>19</sup>

There was one other departmental change. John Mitchell, a former UPT executive, became the new Vice President of the Television Network, replacing Slocum Chapin, who was appointed ABC Vice President in charge of Network Sales.

The newly organized Program Department included

Robert E. Kintner	President, ABC Broadcasting Division
John Mitchell	Vice President, Television Network
Robert M. Weitman	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Robert F. Lewine	Director of the TV Program Department
Richard DePew	Manager of TV Program Operations
Herbert Brodtkin	Executive Producer
Hunt Stromberg	Program Development, Western Division
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division
Sandy Cummings	Network Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions
J. English Smith	Network Coordinator, Warner Bros. Studios

## III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC was relatively inactive in its own program development for

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<sup>19</sup>Variety, April 20, 1955, p. 32.

1955-56. The network produced audition kinescopes for a Dean Pike program; Cafe Istanbul, which ABC's Fred Heider and Phillip Barry, Jr. co-produced; and a group of three quarter-hour audition "kinnies" for My True Story, which had originally been produced in a half-hour format.<sup>20</sup> The Dean Pike sustainer was the only one of the three programs broadcast in the fall.

ABC had also planned The Alex Segal Drama Hour to alternate with the Elgin Hour; a live Saturday 9:00-10:00 pm dramatic showcase produced by Herbert Brodtkin; a big-name variety program to be presented every week beginning in February 1956; and a series of filmed serial dramas to be produced by ABC Television and ABC Film Syndication. None of these program ideas aroused sufficient advertiser interest.

The network made only one agreement with an independent producer, commissioning Louis Edelman to shoot a pilot film for the Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp. One other property, Code Three, previously financed by ABC and Hal Roach, was turned into syndication.

For the 1955-56 season, ABC Television spent a large amount of development money for the acquisition of program properties from the Hollywood studios. The most important arrangements were those with Warner Bros., Metro Goldwyn Mayer, and Walt Disney.

Warner Bros. The original negotiations were for the sale of fifty-two feature films to ABC. Though these talks were never fruitful, they led to an agreement for a Warner Bros. television series.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1955, p. 30; and February 16, 1955, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup>Article from Broadcasting Magazine, XLIX (November 7, 1955), 82.

The studio wanted to begin network television production. It had been impressed by Mr. Disney's use of the medium in publicizing "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," and felt that the potential inherent for theatrical film exploitation, as well as television's ability to put facilities and sound stages to work and serve as a training outlet for talent, could do only good for its organization. Both the studio and network believed that Warner Bros. was equipped to manufacture entertainment on an assembly line basis, having at its command financial resources, technical ability, an abundance of talent, and a pre-tested backlog of story materials.<sup>22</sup>

The initial terms of the agreement called for the production of a weekly one-hour television series. There were to be thirty-nine programs produced each season, with at least six minutes per episode devoted to current Warner Bros. theatrical releases. The series included three rotating storylines, based on past Warner Bros. films--Cheyenne, a western; Casablanca, an adventure; and King's Row, a romantic drama. The basic themes of each story were not changed, with only the casts and stories differing from the originals. ABC and the motion picture company believed that these properties had pre-tested appeals, as evidenced by their popularity when originally released.<sup>23</sup>

ABC committed for thirty-nine episodes without seeing a pilot

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<sup>22</sup>New York Times, April 17, 1955, Section II, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup>Variety, March 23, 1955, p. 20.

film. Warner Bros. felt, as did the other studios, that its past performance was a measure of its abilities, and that it was unnecessary to prove itself.<sup>24</sup> ABC and Warner Bros. jointly developed the program concept.<sup>25</sup> For this program and all subsequent Warner Bros. properties the network was allowed creative control in the development stages, while Warner Bros. maintained the final decision on all matters of the program itself--casting, writers, producers, directors were all under the control of the studio.<sup>26</sup> There was, however, as there is today, a good working relationship between the two companies. Both were willing to accept suggestions, with Warner Bros. being extremely cooperative.<sup>27</sup> This might, in the last analysis, partially account for the success of all ABC-WB programming up to the 1959-60 season.

Warner Bros. Presents was sold out sight unseen by mid-summer. The performance of Disneyland and the Warner Bros. trademark were reassurances to advertisers that the program would be a success.<sup>28</sup> The series nevertheless sold at a loss to ABC--an illustration of the still serious problems of station clearance and advertiser acceptance.

Warner Bros. Presents was not the immediate success that ABC had

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<sup>24</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV President of Program Development (personal interview).

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

anticipated. The program was severely criticized for the long trailers publicizing Warner Bros. pictures, and for the poor caliber of the writing and content. Two of the segments in the trilogy--King's Row and Casablanca--were poorly accepted in comparison to the Cheyenne western.

Warner Bros. did not sit idly by. New creative talent was acquired to work on the series, and the television production unit became an autonomous part of the studio organization. King's Row was cancelled at mid-season, and replaced by a dramatic anthology, which alternated with Cheyenne and Casablanca. Casablanca was the next segment to be cancelled, replaced by Conflict, an adventure-suspense anthology series. Most important of all, the motion picture trailers were eliminated. Warner Bros. made an all-out effort to upgrade the quality and performance of its initial television venture.

The studio was a newcomer to the medium, and was consequently feeling its way around. It was determined, however, to become a leader in television film production. That was four years ago. Today (in 1959) Warner Bros. has gained industry-wide attention for its successful shows including Maverick, Lawman, Sugarfoot, Bronco, and 77 Sunset Strip, and is currently preparing over eight hours of programming for ABC Television--approximately one third of the network's nighttime 1959-60 program schedule.

Metro Goldwyn Mayer. In June 1955, MGM was also preparing a fall television series. It had reached an agreement with ABC for a

half-hour program of old MGM short subjects and film clips from forthcoming theatrical films. The studio planned to use already filmed material specially edited for the series. Metro Goldwyn Mayer prepared a half-hour presentation because it was feeling its way into television before making its big bid, and there was not enough time to prepare a one-hour program for the fall.<sup>29</sup>

Leonard Goldenson considered the initial MGM television venture an important one.

MGM's decision to enter the television field represents a recognition of the present day joining together of Hollywood and television into a powerful force for entertainment and for the pre-selling to the public of the new product of the studios for theatre release.<sup>30</sup>

The MGM Parade was an unsuccessful program, to say the least. The old film footage constituting the bulk of the show had lost its audience appeal; the trailers publicizing current MGM releases were severely criticized; and the series lacked any flare of showmanship. (The television staff for the MGM Parade was not from the feature production teams, but rather on loan from the studio's trailer department.)<sup>31</sup> At that time, the MGM organization took no suggestions from the network about format revisions, leaving ABC powerless because it had no contractual control over the program.<sup>32</sup> Only when the national

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<sup>29</sup>Variety, July 20, 1955, p. 16

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., June 27, 1955, p. 40.

<sup>31</sup>"Report to Sponsors," Sponsor Magazine, IX (August 22, 1955), 1.

<sup>32</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

ratings indicated that the MGM Parade was a complete failure did the studio attempt to revise the show. These changes, however, did not alter the situation; the Parade continued to receive low ratings and was cancelled by its sponsors after twenty-six weeks.

Since that time, Metro Goldwyn Mayer has produced only one other network series--Northwest Passage on NBC. In the past few years, the studio has increased the size and scope of its television department, and has actively attempted to sell properties including Father of the Bride and the MGM Mystery Theatre, but has met with little success. Had MGM been more successful in its initial television program, it might now be in the advantageous positions of Warner Bros., United Artists, Twentieth Century Fox, and Screen Gems.

The Mickey Mouse Club. Walt Disney had always envisioned an underwater Mickey Mouse Clubhouse for his Disneyland Park, accessible only by submarine. A television Mickey Mouse Club would have been a good tie-in from a promotional point of view.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, when he began negotiations with ABC for such a program, Mr. Disney was all for the idea. The show became a reality; the underwater club, however, never got beyond the planning stage.

ABC contracted for a five-hour-a-week children's variety show, or 100 hours of Mickey Mouse for each season--equivalent to twenty weeks of originals, twenty weeks of repeats, and twelve weeks of double repeats.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Frank Orme, "TV's Most Important Show," Television Magazine, XII (June 1955), 32.

The Mickey Mouse Club was aimed at the twelve-year old, on the theory that imitative tendencies hold the interest of younger children.<sup>35</sup> The format, consisting of thirty program categories, was entirely Mr. Disney's, though ABC participated in all the planning conferences and program meetings.

Press releases from the Disney Organization described the Mickey Mouse Club as

An all out effort to achieve a top quality television show for children, combining entertainment with information. Toward this end, it will be produced with the help of leading scientists, educators, naturalists, and similar authorities throughout the world.<sup>36</sup>

The Mickey Mouse Club included

Every element that has ever held a youngster entranced, from the land of make-believe, to the lands beyond the seas, from clowns and animals and music to animated cartoon subjects.<sup>37</sup>

That the program was initially a financial and popular success cannot be disputed. Its first year represented an advertiser sell-out. In addition, the Mouse received higher ratings than all of its combined network competition--in fact, the popular Howdy Doody and Pinky Lee programs on NBC were eventually cancelled and the 5:00-6:00 pm time period returned to the stations.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>"Disney's Newest Tempts Four Sponsors," Broadcasting Magazine, XLVIII (February 28, 1955), 30.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.



In its second year, the Mickey Mouse program costs rose 80 per cent from \$10,000 to \$18,000 an hour. As a result, Walt Disney had priced himself and ABC out of the picture--the network lost 40 per cent of all sales for the program that year.<sup>39</sup>

By its third year, the program was reduced to a half hour. ABC had been losing money with the one-hour version. Even in its abbreviated form Mickey Mouse was still 60 per cent sold. By this time, the Mouse's popularity was declining. The abundance of syndicated film product which local stations were using to program against him; the intensive re-run schedule; and a loss of interest by Disney himself were all contributing factors for the show's decline.<sup>40</sup> The Mickey Mouse Club was broadcast for the fourth and final year in 1958-59.

The Club was significant because it provided ABC with the most powerful late afternoon program in network television. The addition of the Mickey Mouse Club to the program line-up made the network a better buy and a more satisfying outlet for the producers of programs.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, ABC was in a better position to program other adjacent afternoon time periods, moving back from 5:00-6:00 pm to earlier periods in the afternoon. From both a programming and sales viewpoint, the Mickey Mouse Club, in 1955-56, was one of the most important ABC properties.

The British Feature Films. In a move to counteract the top-rated

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>"TV's Most Important Show," Television Magazine, loc. cit.

Sunday evening competition, ABC Television purchased thirty-five British feature films from General Film Distributors, Inc., a Rank Group Affiliate.<sup>42</sup> Twenty of the films were used for network telecasts--the other fifteen went into syndication through ABC Films. This was the first network transaction for a complete feature film "package."

Under the terms of the agreement, ABC had five year rights for the unlimited use of the pictures, for which it paid an estimated \$1,600,000.<sup>43</sup> The network planned to present the motion pictures on Sunday, 7:30-9:00 pm, counter-programming against the two variety shows. The programmers believed they could not only attract viewers from Ed Sullivan and Colgate, but also increase the television "sets-in-use" figure.<sup>44</sup>

Included in the package of twenty films were "Red Shoes," "Stairway to Heaven," "Odd Man Out," the "Lavender Hill Mob," "The Importance of Being Earnest," and the "Madonna and the Seven Moons."

Famous Film Festival never attracted major audiences, though it was nevertheless an economical and efficient buy for a national advertiser. The majority of the pictures were considered "arty," making them a form of specialized programming. The Sunday night competition,

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<sup>42</sup>"ABC Gets in the Film Buying Act, Purchases 35 Top British Features," Broadcasting Magazine, XLIX (August 1, 1955), 64.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

the limited clearances, and the many commercial interruptions worked against the Film Festival. In addition, the pictures themselves were never right for American television, as was demonstrated by poor station and public acceptance.<sup>45</sup> The broadcasts were discontinued in 1957.

Late in December, ABC negotiated for additional British motion pictures for the daytime, hoping to capitalize on the available 5:00-6:00 pm Mickey Mouse audience. The feature films presented a way to fill time, and fill it cheaply. Motion picture successes at the local level made them the ideal solution for a large-scale daytime operation.<sup>46</sup> The Monday through Friday program was developed on a "what-can-beat-the-competition's-cost-per-thousand" basis, and was formatted on the order of the Sunday Famous Film Festival.

The agreement for the films called for five year distribution rights to 104 J. Arthur Rank features, and their unlimited use during this period. The films, all produced in the past ten years, cost ABC an estimated \$2,000,000.<sup>47</sup> None of the afternoon pictures were shown in the evening, and in turn, none of the evening films telecast in the afternoon.

The Afternoon Film Festival, launched in January 1956, was broadcast for more than a year. The program, like its evening counterpart,

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Variety, June 8, 1955, p. 29.

was disliked by both the affiliates and most of the television audience. The demand for English films was no greater in the afternoon than in the evening.

#### IV. THE NOVEMBER 1955 SCHEDULE

##### Program Types In The Nighttime Schedule

The most noteworthy changes in the November schedule were the cancellation of all prestige dramas; a pronounced decrease in public affairs programming, from 10 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1954 to 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1955; a reduction in the amount of sporting events, from the 9 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1954 to 3 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1955; and the appearance of four new program types--feature films, the "adult western," country music, and talk programming.

Children's variety was the largest program type in the 1955-56 schedule, with 9 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.

Situation comedy, straight drama, and country-music were in second place with 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each. Straight drama had risen 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past November.

Third in number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours with 6 each were adventure drama, musical variety, audience quiz, panel games, and feature films. There were no appreciable changes within these program types.

The only other significant change was the decline in audience participation games, with a 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour decrease over the past season.

TABLE XVI

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR NOVEMBER 1955, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE  
QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1954

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1954</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1955</u>
Children's Variety	9	9
Straight Drama	4	8
Situation Comedy	8	8
Country Music	0	8
Adventure Drama	4	6
Musical Variety	5	6
Audience Quiz	4	6
Panel Games	8	6
Full-length Feature Films	0	6
News and Commentary	5	5
Talent Variety	0	4
Public Affairs	10	4
Sporting Events	9	3
Adult Western	0	3
Talk	0	3
Detective Drama	6	2
Human Interest	2	2
Audience Participation Games	6	2
Classical Music	2	2
Miscellaneous @	0	2
Sports Features	1	1
Prestige Drama	8	0
Talk Variety	2	0
Total Nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	93	96

Data gathered for the first weeks in November 1954, and 1955.

@ MGM Parade is included in this category.

New nighttime program types. Country music was the largest new program type, with 8 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 15 per cent of the new nighttime programming. Not only was it inexpensive to produce, but also ideal for placement in a competitive time period, where it could provide a service for a specialized audience. This programming also proved to be quite salable.<sup>48</sup>

New shows in this category included

Grand Ole Opry  
Ozark Jubilee  
Talent Varieties

Feature films were in second place, with 6 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 12 per cent of the new nighttime programming. Here again, the desire to program inexpensively had been a key factor in program selection.

The one show in this category was

Famous Film Festival

Situation comedy, the "adult western," talent variety, musical variety, panel games, and public service programming followed with 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 8 per cent of all new nighttime programming.

The "adult westerns," in an embryonic form at this time, included

Cheyenne  
Wyatt Earp

The new situation comedies included

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<sup>48</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

TABLE XVII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW  
ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAMMING

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% Of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Country Music	8	15%
Feature Films	6	12
Situation Comedy	4	8
Adult Western @	4	8
Talent Variety	4	8
Public Service	4	8
Musical Variety	4	8
Panel Games	4	8
Sporting Events	3	6
Talk	3	6
Adventure Drama @	2	4
Straight Drama	2	4
Audience Quiz	2	4
Miscellaneous	2	4
Total new nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	52	

Data gathered for the first week in November 1955.

@ Included in these categories are two ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each from the Warner Bros. Presents program.

Ethel and Albert  
Topper

Public service programming, in the process of being displaced  
by an assortment of entertainment shows, included

Medical Horizons  
Tomorrow's Careers

The new talent-variety programs included

Chance of a Lifetime  
Original Amateur Hour

The new panel games included

Down You Go  
Life Begins At Eighty

Sporting events and talk programming accounted for 3 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ )  
hours each, or 6 per cent of the new programming.

With the acquisition of a strong boxing show and the scheduling  
of more entertainment programming, there was an accompanying reduction  
in sports broadcasts over the past season. The one program addition  
was the Wednesday Night Fights.

The new talk programs included

Bishop Sheen  
Harriet Van Horn

There were only 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each for all other program types.

Adventure	Casablanca
Audience Quiz	Step This Way
Miscellaneous	MGM Parade
Straight Drama	Crossroads



### The Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) Hours of Network Service

There was a substantial reduction in ABC network service--from 174 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1954 to 140 in November 1955.

The evening total had not changed, with approximately 94 to 96 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours scheduled. There were not, however, any unprogrammed mid-evening periods, as there had been on Tuesday of the past year. ABC Television was providing service every night of the week in the 7:00-7:30 pm "station option time." Only on Monday and Thursday was the network unprogrammed between 10:00-10:30 pm. ABC had almost entirely filled its "network option time."

Though the number of nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of network service had not substantially changed, commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours increased from 63 in 1954 to 78 in 1955--a 15 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour rise.

The morning period showed a marked change over the season. Whereas ABC provided 46 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of network service in 1954, the number decreased to only 4 in 1955--due, for the most part, to the cancellation of the Breakfast Club and Creative Cookery.

Afternoon program service increased only 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past November. The number of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours rose from 32 in 1954 to 35 in 1955. Though the figures do not show a substantial increase in number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, this afternoon period was nevertheless the most lucrative in the network's history. The Mickey Mouse Club was entirely commercial (20 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours a week) and sold at the full rate card--considerably boosting ABC daytime revenues.

TABLE XVIII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1955, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1954

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/54		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/55	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	46	11	4	0
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	34	32	40	35 @
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	94	63	96	78 @@
	174		140	

Data gathered from the first National Nielsen reports for November 1954 and 1955; and from Sponsor Magazine November 1954-55.

@ This is only a general estimate, because of the regional sponsorship of the professional football games.

@@ The nighttime figure is also an estimate of sponsored ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours; due to the participating nature of the John Daly News, and Famous Film Festival, and the once a month broadcasts of the Grand Ole Opry. Only general trends are indicated.

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

Program Cancellations

Three commercial programs were permanently cancelled after the summer quarter.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/54 (first report)</u>
Name's The Same	10.9 AA
Penny To A Million	(unavailable)
T-Men In Action	11.1

Other programs, either sustaining or cooperative, were displaced by the new fall programming.

Ern Westmore	sustaining
Greatest Sports Thrills	sustaining
Let's See	sustaining
Pee Wee King	cooperative
Soldier Parade	sustaining

Program Renewals

ABC prepared for 1955-56 with more show renewals (including those commercial programs begun in the summer) than in any other past season.

The Lone Ranger	24.2
Ozzie and Harriet	22.4
Rin Tin Tin	22.0
Make Room For Daddy	19.9
Masquerade Party	16.3
Dollar A Second	16.3
You Asked For It	16.3
Super Circus	16.0
Cavalcade Theatre	15.8
Break the Bank	14.4
TV Reader's Digest	11.5
Lawrence Welk (*)	11.5
Stop the Music	10.4
The Vise	9.8

Voice of Firestone	7.1
Life Begins At Eighty (*)	5.8
Star Tonight	5.3
Chance of a Lifetime (*)	5.0
Step This Way	(unavailable)
Kukla Fran and Ollie	(unavailable)

(\*) For programs beginning in the summer, Nielsen ratings were obtained from the first August 1955 report.

### Program Additions

Afternoon Film Festival - Allen Edwards introduced this "cross-the board" program of British motion pictures. The show opened with a brief highlight from the day's film, with opening credits superimposed. Mr. Edwards then welcomed the viewers and the film began. At the start of the second, third, and fourth segments, he provided a summary of the plot for those viewers who had just tuned in.

Crossroads - Dramatizations of the accomplishments of priests, rabbis, and men in black--in everyday life and along a number of different themes.

Down You Go - The panel attempted to guess a phrase by filling in the blank letters of the words on a blackboard. Viewers were shown the answer at the beginning of the game. Dr. Bergan Evans was the host.

Ethel and Albert - A husband and wife situation comedy starring Peg Lynch and Alan Bunce.

Famous Film Festival - Allen Edwards was featured in this evening series of English motion pictures. He introduced the picture and trailerized the next attraction.

The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp - Hugh O'Brien starred as the sheriff of Dodge City, Kansas--a lawless town in the American West.

Life Is Worth Living - Bishop Fulton Sheen delivered lectures about contemporary political, economic, and religious topics.

Medical Horizons - A technical program on medical progress, originating from the country's leading medical centers, with Quincy Howe as host.

MGM Parade - George Murphy showed trailers for up-coming MGM theatrical releases, interviewed MGM stars on the studio lot, revealed awards and citations won by MGM, interviewed famous personalities of the past, and screened assorted short subjects.

The Mickey Mouse Club - A children's variety program produced by Walt Disney and comprised of many different segments

- a. "Newsreel" - worldwide news and special events for young people, shown Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- b. "Meet \_\_\_\_\_," on Tuesday, in which various personalities and places were introduced.
- c. "Jimminy Crickett Cartoons," for the first fifteen minutes on Thursday. The Mouseketeers, twenty-four singing children, varied their quarter hour appearances.
- d. "Guest Day," on Tuesday--prominent guests were featured, including Fess Parker and Buddy Ebsen.
- e. "Anything Can Happen Day"--on Wednesday.
- f. "Circus Day"--on Thursday.
- g. "Junior Talent Roundup Day"--on Friday.

The Original Amateur Hour - A show for people who live in hopes that the entertainment industry will find a place for them. Ted Mack, as the master of ceremonies, introduced each of the amateurs. There was no longer a gong in the program; the performers were allowed to finish their acts.

Outside U. S. A. - A "live" and film news-in-depth study of world affairs, with Quincy Howe. The program, utilizing the TeleNews film service, attempted to explore significant news stories from foreign countries, and their effects on the United States--to make people aware of the developments around the world and what they meant.

Topper - A situation comedy starring Leo Carroll as a ghost who lived with two newlyweds, played by Anne Jeffreys and Robert Sterling.

Warner Bros. Presents - A trilogy of three hour-long dramas, produced by the Warner Bros. Studio.

- a. Casablanca--an adventure series set in the port of the same name.
- b. Cheyenne--Clint Walker starred as a government map-making scout who was a deputy sheriff in private life.
- c. King's Row--Jack Kelly was featured in the role of Dr. Parris Mitchell, a psychiatrist.

#### Format Revisions.

Cavalcade Theatre--The Cavalcade dramatized contemporary lives and subjects, rather than historical events--to attract a more adult audience in its new late evening time period.

Stop The Music--In keeping with the trend of the large giveaways, the jackpot had been boosted to over \$20,000 in merchandise. Bert Parks continued as master of ceremonies.

Super Circus--In its move from Chicago to New York, Super Circus was completely reformed. Jerry Colonna became the new ringmaster, with Miss Florida of 1955, Sandy Worth, taking over as the batoneer. Martin Stone was appointed producer for the new series.

Program Costs. Five of the sixteen new commercial programs cost at least \$24,000 (productions costs were still rising in the fall of 1955). Four of these--the MGM Parade, Warner Bros. Presents, Wyatt Earp, and the Mickey Mouse Club--were the network's most important programming investments for the season. The fifth--Crossroads--was advertiser controlled, but nevertheless an expensive program.

All other commercial program additions were budgeted at less than \$24,000. This group included the Amateur Hour, Chance of a Lifetime, Down You Go, Famous Film Festival, Lawrence Welk, Life Begins At Eighty, Life Is Worth Living, Medical Horizons, Ozark Jubilee, Topper, and Wednesday Night Fights. With the exception of Famous Film Festival and Ozark Jubilee, they were all advertiser-controlled--pointing up the apprehension of advertisers and their agencies to spend large amounts of programming money on ABC's limited facilities.

Program Production and Control. The ABC Network produced and controlled only four new programs, indicative of its future dependence on network-independent producer co-production, and the outright acquisition of "packaged" programs.

Afternoon Film Festival  
Famous Film Festival  
Life Is Worth Living  
Outside U. S. A.

TABLE XIX

## PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ABC PROGRAMS FOR NOVEMBER 1955

<u>Programs Costing \$24,000 or More</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Warner Bros. Presents	\$58,000
Mickey Mouse Club (per week)	54,000
MGM Parade	40,000
Wyatt Earp	26,500
Crossroads	25,000
 <u>Programs Costing Less Than \$24,000</u>	
Wednesday Night Fights	\$16,000
Life Is Worth Living	15,000
Topper	15,000
Chance of a Lifetime	10,000
Medical Horizons	10,000
Ozark Jubilee	8,000
Lawrence Welk	7,000
Life Begins At Eighty	7,000
Amateur Hour	6,500
Famous Film Festival	6,500
Down You Go	6,000

Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

ABC exercised varying degrees of program and production control on another handful of programs.

The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp  
The Mickey Mouse Club  
Warner Bros. Presents

All other new programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Producer</u>
Crossroads	Bernard L. Schubert
Down You Go	Louis G. Cohan
Ethel and Albert	Peg Lynch
Medical Horizons	J. Walter Thompson
	Ciba Pharmaceuticals
MGM Parade	Metro Goldwyn Mayer
Original Amateur Hour	Ted Mack
Ozark Jubilee	Radio Ozark
Talent Varieties	Radio Ozark
Topper	John W. Loveton

#### The Evolution of the Fall Schedule

Tuesday was the most important evening for the ABC programmers. In their attempt for nighttime strength, they scheduled, ahead of sales, Warner Bros. Presents and Wyatt Earp at 7:30-8:30 pm and 8:30-9:00 pm, respectively. Danny Thomas, originally to move to another evening and earlier time period, was renewed by American Tobacco and Dodge for Tuesday 9:00 pm.<sup>49</sup> Cavalcade of America, retitled Cavalcade Theatre, had been tentatively scheduled at 7:30-8:00 pm, but was displaced by the Warner Bros. program. Dupont and ABC decided on 9:30-10:00 pm for the Danny Thomas lead-out. The Cavalcade was reformed for its

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<sup>49</sup>Variety, March 30, 1955, p. 26.



new "adult" late-evening audience. The 10:00-10:30 pm time period was not sold and therefore programmed with an inexpensive sustainer, Talent Varieties, to fill the Tuesday "network option time."

The final Tuesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	Warner Bros. Presents
8:30 - 9:00	Wyatt Earp
9:00 - 9:30	Danny Thomas
9:30 -10:00	Cavalcade Theatre
10:00 -10:30	Talent Varieties

There were two program renewals on Wednesday--Disneyland, 7:30-8:30 pm, and Masquerade Party, 9:00-9:30 pm. ABC had also acquired the Pabst Fights which moved into the 10:00-11:00 pm time period.

Delco (who later cancelled out) and American Tobacco bought 8:30-9:00 pm, although the sponsors had not decided on the programming at the time. In August, when the MGM negotiations had been completed, ABC and the sponsors inserted the MGM Parade in the post-Disneyland adjacency.

Raleigh Cigarettes moved its 9:30-10:00 pm Penny to a Million show to CBS--leaving a vacancy which was filled in the fall by Break the Bank (previously broadcast on Sunday).<sup>50</sup>

The final Wednesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	Disneyland
8:30 - 9:00	MGM Parade
9:00 - 9:30	Masquerade Party
9:30 -10:00	Break the Bank
10:00 -11:00	Wednesday Night Fights

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., October 12, 1955, p. 48.

On Thursday, there were also two program renewals--the Lone Ranger at 7:30, and Star Tonight at 9:00 pm.

ABC had previously signed Bishop Sheen to a network contract and decided to place him in the 8:00-8:30 pm time period. Many people, including the Bishop himself, were surprised at the network's choice. Bishop Sheen remarked

The reason I changed networks was so I could finally watch Milton Berle. Now viewers will have a choice between Groucho Marx and learning about Karl Marx.<sup>51</sup>

Western Union had originally purchased a Friday time period for its Down You Go program. However, last minute reshuffling to accommodate the Ralston-Purina account transferred Down You Go to Thursday at 9:30-10:00 pm. The network had hoped for a Herbert Brodtkin dramatic series in this period, but the prospects of an immediate sale precluded any tentative plans.<sup>52</sup>

When Chevrolet's T-Men in Action shifted to Friday evening--opening the Thursday 8:30-9:00 pm time period--Exquisiteform moved its Tuesday Stop the Music program into the Bishop Sheen adjacency.<sup>53</sup>

The final Thursday night schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Lone Ranger
8:00 - 8:30	Bishop Sheen
8:30 - 9:00	Stop the Music
9:00 - 9:30	Star Tonight
9:30 -10:00	Down You Go

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., April 5, 1955, p. 25.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., June 8, 1955, p. 29.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

There were four program renewals on Friday--Rin Tin Tin, 7:30-8:00 pm; Ozzie and Harriet, 8:00-8:30 pm; Dollar A Second, 9:00-9:30 pm; and The Vise, 9:30-10:00 pm.

During the summer, Chevrolet had moved T-Men in Action to Friday at 8:30 pm. For the fall, the company retained the time period, but replaced T-Men with Crossroads, a new series.<sup>54</sup>

In 1954-55, Ralston-Purina had sponsored the Name's the Same at 10:00 pm Tuesday. Because of the \$64,000 Question, it decided to move the program in September to Friday at 10:00 pm.<sup>55</sup> In a last minute change, Ralston replaced the panel show with Ethel and Albert.<sup>56</sup>

The final Friday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Rin Tin Tin
8:00 - 8:30	Ozzie and Harriet
8:30 - 9:00	Crossroads
9:00 - 9:30	Dollar A Second
9:30 - 10:00	The Vise
10:00 - 10:30	Ethel and Albert

There were two program renewals on Saturday--On Your Way, 7:00-7:30 pm; and Lawrence Welk, 9:00-10:00 pm. ABC programmed the 7:30-9:00 pm period with the country music Ozark Jubilee, which was broadcast as a cooperative program. There was an unexpected sale of part of this time period when Ralston optioned the Grand Ole Opry for every fourth week at 8:00-9:00 pm.<sup>57</sup> The unsold 10:00-10:30 pm time period was filled

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., August 24, 1955, p. 31.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1955, p. 26.

by the network with the sustaining Tomorrow's Careers.

The final Saturday schedule included

7:00 - 7:30	On Your Way
7:30 - 9:00	Ozark Jubilee/Grand Ole Opry
9:00 -10:00	Lawrence Welk
10:00 -10:30	Tomorrow's Careers

There were three program renewals on Sunday--You Asked For It, 7:00-7:30 pm; Chance of a Lifetime, 9:00-9:30 pm; and Life Begins at Eighty, moved up one half-hour to 10:00 pm to accommodate another Pharmaceuticals' program.

The Original Amateur Hour was inserted by Pharmaceuticals at 9:30-10:00 pm, with the company holding options on 10:00-10:30 pm, in the event of an extension of the amateur program.<sup>58</sup>

ABC originated the Famous Film Festival for 7:30-9:00 pm, and then sold the participating program to a number of advertisers.

The final Sunday schedule included

7:30 - 9:00	Famous Film Festival
9:00 - 9:30	Chance of a Lifetime
9:30 -10:00	Original Amateur Hour
10:00 -10:30	Life Begins at Eighty

There were two renewals on Monday--TV Reader's Digest, 8:00-8:30 pm; and the Voice of Firestone, 8:30-9:00 pm. The 7:30-8:00 pm and 9:30-10:00 pm time periods were purchased by advertisers for Topper and Medical Horizons. The vacant 9:00-9:30 pm opposite I Love Lucy was

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

programmed by ABC with the cooperative Dotty Mack Show.

Monday, the weakest evening in the schedule, included

7:30 - 8:00	Topper
8:00 - 8:30	TV Reader's Digest
8:30 - 9:00	Voice of Firestone
9:00 - 9:30	Dotty Mack Show
9:30 - 10:00	Medical Horizons

#### V. THE MARCH 1956 SCHEDULE

##### Program Cancellations

Dollar A Second - Mogen David Wine replaced the program with Treasure Chest, also starring Jan Murray.

Life Begins At Eighty - Pharmaceuticals decided to extend the Original Amateur Hour to a full hour because of upgraded Trendexes.<sup>59</sup>

MGM Theatre - General Foods and American Tobacco were dissatisfied with the consistently low ratings. They replaced the program in late spring with the Dunninger Show.

Step This Way - Low ratings.

There were considerably fewer program cancellations at mid-season than for the comparable 1954-55 period. Whereas twenty programs were withdrawn in 1954, there were only four cancellations by advertisers or the network in 1955. As a result, only four programs were added to the schedule at mid-season.

##### Program Additions

Dunninger Show - Dunninger attempted to communicate with members of the studio audience by mental telepathy.

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., December 21, 1955, p. 19.

Music From Meadowbrook - A program of dance music from the Meadowbrook night club in New Jersey.

Ralph Flannigan Orchestra - Dance music on early Saturday evening, with Ralph Flannigan and his Orchestra.

Treasure Hunt - Contestants from the studio audience were asked a series of questions. When they reached a certain cash level, they had the choice of taking the money or surrendering it in favor of selecting the contents of twenty-five to thirty treasure chests on stage. The chests contained a variety of items from a cheap pipe or head of cabbage to \$25,000 in cash.

#### Format Revisions.

The MGM Parade - At the beginning of November, ABC and MGM realized that certain changes would have to be made in this program if it was to attract a sizable audience. A new segment was introduced titled "Hall of Fame," utilizing film clips from past MGM musical hits.<sup>60</sup> This revision did little to bolster the show's popularity.

In January, the entire format and creative staff were changed to satisfy the sponsors for better quality and higher ratings. Both the producer and host were replaced.

At a later format meeting, Robert Weitman, Howard Dietz, MGM Vice President of Publicity-Advertising-Promotion, Tom McDermott of Benton and Bowles Advertising, and Bud Barry of the William Morris Office conferred on possible program revisions. They decided to use the old "cliffhanger," by breaking past MGM releases into three of four parts; and to dramatize the lives of studio stars.<sup>61</sup>

Warner Bros. Presents - In the months following the show's premiere, the Trendex ratings consistently favored Cheyenne over the other two formats, even to the extent of his dominating the Tuesday time period completely.<sup>62</sup>

Messrs. Kintner, Weitman, and Lewine conferred with Warner executives in Hollywood. They decided to cancel King's Row, the romance, and replace it with a drama-anthology. Cheyenne was to be broadcast every other week, with Casablanca and the anthology, one out of four weeks.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., November 16, 1955, p. 37.

<sup>61</sup>Variety, January 11, 1956, p. 29.

<sup>62</sup>Variety, November 30, 1955, p. 24.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., December 14, 1955, p. 39.

This arrangement was in effect until mid-April, at which time Casablanca was cancelled--with the anthology series then broadcast every other week. In addition, the "Behind the Scenes" segment of the program was replaced by a two minute trailer on new Warner Bros. theatrical product. The star of the picture served as the program's host for that respective week.<sup>64</sup>

## VI. THE AUGUST 1956 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

In the summer of 1956, ABC established a sales-programming policy ruling out summer vacations for major network advertisers. The network did this by lifting the protection afforded time periods so that any advertiser vacationing for the summer would get no assurance of retaining the same time period in the fall. ABC had initiated the plan to encourage fifty-two week contracts--hoping that it would keep many advertisers with choice programs and adjacencies on the network during the summer.<sup>65</sup> CBS had already adopted a similar policy a few seasons before.

The ABC ruling worked very effectively. Whereas in past summers, many of the network's choice programs were withdrawn for the thirteen week period, only two took sabbaticals in 1956--Make Room For Daddy and Ozzie and Harriet. Important programming which ABC retained for the summer months included Cheyenne-Conflict, Wyatt Earp, Cavalcade Theatre, Disneyland, Wednesday Night Fights, Rin Tin Tin, Crossroads, Treasure Hunt, The Vise, Lawrence Welk, and Masquerade Party.

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<sup>64</sup>Variety, April 18, 1956, p. 41.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., February 22, 1956, p. 20.

### Program Cancellations

Eight commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the summer.

Break the Bank  
 Chance of a Lifetime  
 Down You Go  
 Ethel and Albert  
 Medical Horizons  
 Stop the Music  
 Topper  
 TV Reader's Digest

Other programs, either sustaining or cooperative, were also discontinued.

Outside U. S. A.  
 Talent Varieties  
 Tomorrow's Careers

### Program Additions

Combat Sergeant - Mike Thomas starred as a young combat sergeant during World War II. The program, originally titled Secret Mission, was broadcast as a summer replacement.

The Eddie Arnold Show - A summer replacement series from Springfield, Missouri, featuring folk, popular, and even classical selections.

Gabby Hayes Show - Edited western footage with Gabby Hayes as the host.

Going Places - A replacement for Super Circus which originated from Miami Beach, Florida, and starred Jack Gregson. Each week, it was broadcast from outdoor locations of scenic interest in and around Miami. Interspersed were songs, comedians, and underwater "escape-artists."

Hour Glass - Re-runs of the Afternoon Film Festival, used as replacement until the fall. This was an experiment by ABC to determine the effectiveness of second-run features.

It's Polka Time - Polka music and dances with Bruno Zielenski. Set in a village square, the program featured performers dressed in Bohemian and native garments.



Screen Directors Playhouse - A dramatic anthology series.

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE SEASON

ABC Television made substantial progress in the 1955-56 season. Network service had increased in the daytime, with the scheduling of the Mickey Mouse Club and Afternoon Film Festival. Total gross billings for ABC were the highest in its history; the Mickey Mouse Club, Warner Bros. Presents, and Disneyland programs alone accounted for more revenues than the entire 1953 season.

ABC was tightening its grip on key portions of its schedule. The Warner Bros. Presents and Wyatt Earp action block was planned by the network before the programs were sold in an effort to strengthen early Tuesday night. The network also scheduled the Famous Film Festival opposite the Sunday variety hours--hoping that the feature films would not only attract portions of the Ed Sullivan and Colgate audience, but also increase the television "sets-in-use." Here again, the network attempted to gain early evening strength to provide a foundation on which to build the later hours. ABC had also increased its control on the summer schedule with a newly conceived policy eliminating summer protection on time periods.

There were individual program successes for ABC in 1955-56--the Lawrence Welk Show, Wednesday Night Boxing, Wyatt Earp, and the Cheyenne segment of Warner Bros. Presents were all either dominant in their time periods or strong seconds. These new programs, in addition to past

successes including Disneyland, Rin Tin Tin, Ozzie and Harriet, the Lone Ranger, and Make Room For Daddy, had become part of the expanding nucleus of ABC's important programming.

In the daytime, there was the Mickey Mouse Club, which had become an overnight sensation. It received the highest ratings in the history of daytime television, and was instrumental in the cancellation of Howdy Doody, Pinky Lee, and many other programs broadcast between 5:00-6:00 pm. This Walt Disney property increased the network's prestige, and made ABC a more desirable buy for advertisers and program producers. In addition, the Mouse paved the way for additional daytime telecasting in the valuable adjacent afternoon periods.

The programmers had learned that the network was particularly suited for adventure and western programming. Pioneer efforts with the "adult western" had succeeded in attracting the desirable large young-family audience. ABC planned to program more Wyatt Earps and Cheyennes on the theory that "success duplicates success."

There were, however, the disappointments and failures as well as the accomplishments and achievements. The MGM Parade was telecast for less than a season before it was cancelled; the British motion pictures were poorly accepted by ABC stations and the viewers; and the idea of using television as a medium of theatrical exploitation was disproven, and for the most part abandoned.

The complexion of most ABC programming was still not up to the quality of CBS or NBC. There was a nucleus of successful programs, but these accounted for only a small percentage of the total schedule. ABC

was self admittedly weak on Monday, Thursday, Sunday, and portions of Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. Inexpensive advertiser-controlled, and in a few instances, network programs, predominated on these evenings. Programs were scheduled with little regard for adjacencies and an evening's continuity; the sale of time was the important factor, with all other considerations relegated to a secondary position. The network could only develop and acquire a limited number of properties, commensurate with advertiser interest. With a contractual commitment for a program series involving thousands, and sometimes millions of dollars, ABC could not think of reprogramming its entire schedule. The network had many plans for programs, but few advertisers wanted to take the financial risks involved.

By the end of the 1955-56 season--over three years since the United Paramount merger--ABC had acquired a sizable group of important program properties and gained early evening dominance on two nights of the week, in addition to strong positions on Friday and Saturday. There was, however, much to improve upon as ABC prepared for the fourth phase of its "five-year-plan"--the 1956-57 season.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE 1956-57 SEASON

Adventure drama appeared in every conceivable shape and form in 1956-57--ranging from the Jim Bowie and Broken Arrow westerns to the costume drama of the Buccaneers and Sir Lancelot; from the contemporary adventures in Navy Log, Wire Service, and Circus Boy to the Zane Grey Theatre, a western anthology. The success of Gunsmoke, Wyatt Earp, Rin Tin Tin, and Cheyenne had hastened the development of more programs of this type.

There was a general decline in comedy shows, with Meet Millie, Our Miss Brooks, It's Always Jan, the People's Choice, and Milton Berle cancelled. The small-money quiz programs had just about disappeared from the schedules--replaced by the "giant give-aways,"

There were more regularly scheduled "long" shows than ever before, with the new Playhouse 90, Wire Service, Top Tunes and Talent, and Omnibus--in addition to the already established Cheyenne-Conflict, Climax, and Robert Montgomery, to mention a few. The irregularly-scheduled television "spectacular" increased in frequency of presentation. For 1956-57, NBC alone scheduled 29 one-and-a-half hour "spectaculars," thirteen Saturday night "specials," six Hallmark Hall of Fame presentations, six NBC Operas, three or four holiday "specials," four Project Twenty documentaries, and two Telescope telementaries.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"NBC-TV Sets Up Season's Special Shows," Sponsor Magazine, X (September 24, 1956), 68.

Television prices continued to rise unproportionally to rating increases, forcing many advertisers to spread their television money among two or more programs to achieve maximum "circulation." The release of the Hollywood motion picture libraries and their use by independent stations in prime evening time was in part responsible for this rating deflation.<sup>2</sup>

Both NBC and CBS realigned their Tuesday and Wednesday schedules because of growing ABC competition--CBS programmed a situation comedy, The Brothers, in the Wyatt Earp time period, and a new quiz show Take a Giant Step, against the first half hour of Disneyland; NBC placed Jonathan Winters, one of its brightest new comedy stars, at Tuesday 7:30-8:00 pm to more actively compete with Cheyenne.

ABC Television, faced with the growing number of "spectaculars," and a realignment of both NBC and CBS programming, was entering the most competitive television season to date.

#### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The ABC programmers were in preparation for 1956-57 as early as October 1955. Robert Weitman explained that a policy of early planning was adopted to insure ABC that the properties selected were right from the viewpoints of casting, scripts, and overall production.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup>"TV Laid An Egg," Sponsor Magazine, X (November 17, 1956), 25.

<sup>3</sup>Variety /New York7, November 2, 1955, p. 26.

network hoped to strengthen its ties with independent producers; program new properties in relation to the existing schedule; enter the area of "special" programming; and begin telecasting in the morning hours.<sup>4</sup>

### Program Development and Acquisition

ABC realized that it lacked the volume of good programming that NBC and CBS had. Though it had strength in a few time periods, most of the schedule was poorly conceived and haphazardly arranged.

In the past, ABC had made co-production agreements with a few independent producers--among them Hal Roach, Louis Edelman, and Music Corporation of America. The network had found this arrangement quite satisfactory. There was no great financial risk involved if the program was not sold, and the network could exercise a greater degree of control than was normally the case with an acquisition, such as the MGM Parade, or an advertiser's property.

Robert Kintner concisely described these joint-agreements in an article appearing in Sponsor Magazine.

These producers, under our supervision, produce certain shows in which we have financial interests and exclusive rights. While these producers are actually the main creative force in these programs, ABC is, in effect, in the production business.<sup>5</sup>

In its advance planning of new properties, ABC advanced more than

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.; and "Network TV Lineup: Tear It Down, Build It," Sponsor Magazine, X (May 14, 1956), p. 28-9.

<sup>5</sup>"Reflections on ABC's Climb to the Top," Sponsor Magazine, X (March 5, 1956), 68.

a million dollars for the production of new pilots and scripts in arrangements with Jack Chertok, Desilu Productions, Louis Edelman, Sheldon Reynolds, Four Star Films, and John Gibbs.<sup>6</sup>

Almost all of the prospective series were to be produced on film. Network personnel believed that

1. You can get talent, creative ability, and production in a film that is not possible on a live show.
2. There is more amortization of costs by re-run.
3. The program is of lasting value, in the form of a permanent recording on film.<sup>7</sup>

#### Increased Control Over the Program Schedule

Robert Weitman stressed that in 1956-57

The network will slot the new properties in relation to existing programming. Each program acquisition and casting will be made with the thought of bolstering a particular time period and with adjacent programs in mind.<sup>8</sup>

An elaborate sales presentation, the Third Force, was distributed to advertisers and agencies in mid-March, including a projected schedule of the fall programming which was prefaced with the statement:

While this is a complete projection of our 1956-57 network program schedule, some new programs may be added and others rescheduled. Our intent, however, is to come as close as possible to the lineup of programming you see here. We believe that this represents the strongest possible sequence of programming to produce the biggest audience delivery.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Variety, November 9, 1955, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup>"Reflections on ABC's Climb to the Top," Sponsor Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Variety, November 2, 1955, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>"The Third Force" (New York: ABC Television Sales Presentation for 1956-57) Unpublished.

Although subsequent program renewals and cancellations were to make certain changes imperative, there were some programming tactics which ABC hoped to carry through.

One matter had been determined--the network planned to program at least one show which it controlled in a pivotal time period on at least six nights of the week.<sup>10</sup>

Sunday	7:30 - 9:00 pm	Famous Film Festival
Tuesday	7:30 - 9:00 pm	Warner Bros. Presents, Wyatt Earp
Wednesday	7:30 - 8:30 pm	Disneyland
Thursday	8:00 - 9:00 pm	International Theatre
Friday	8:00 - 8:30 pm	Wire Service
Saturday	7:30 - 9:00 pm	Make Room For Daddy, Tempered Blade, Joan Davis

Thursday, a weak evening in 1955-56, was to be reprogrammed with two long shows--International Theatre, 8:00-9:00 pm; and Command Performance, 9:00-10:30 pm.

In the Friday adjacency to Rin Tin Tin, 8:00-8:30, an adventure series, Wire Service was to be scheduled to retain some of the wonder dog's audience.

Early Saturday evening was to be reprogrammed with three ABC properties: Make Room For Daddy, 7:30-8:00; Jim Bowie, 8:00-8:30; and Joan Davis, 8:30-9:00.

Behind much of the early-evening planning was the importance of the youngster. Disneyland, Cheyenne, Rin Tin Tin and Wyatt Earp appealed to children as well as adults.

Between 7:30 and 8:00 pm, the show has to appeal to children and be acceptable to adults. Between 8:00 and 8:30, it has to appeal to adults and be acceptable to children.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Variety, November 23, 1955, p. 26.

<sup>11</sup>"What's Ahead in Programming?" Television Magazine, XIII (June 1956), 51.



With the approach of the fall, many of these tentative plans were changed. ABC had decided to schedule Jim Bowie after Rin Tin Tin. The network was so set on the positioning of this program that it refused to allow Proctor and Gamble, who had an option on the time period, insert its own program.<sup>12</sup>

The network also wanted an adventure or western to follow Wyatt Earp on Tuesday. When General Electric ordered the time period, ABC assisted the company in the selection of Broken Arrow to complete a ninety minute block of western-adventure programming.<sup>13</sup>

To a lesser degree, ABC played some part in the scheduling of U. S. Rubber's Navy Log after Disneyland on Wednesday. Here again, the network had originally planned for an adventure or western program. Navy Log fit within this framework.

None of the other attempts at planned programming were fruitful for 1956-57. Lack of advertiser interest, a poor sales record for program commitments calling for concerted efforts on their behalf, and the desire to sell time were all contributing factors.

#### Entrance into "Special" Programming

ABC believed that it was ready to begin "special" programming.

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<sup>12</sup>Variety, May 2, 1956, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1956, p. 18.

In 1956-57, the ABC Television Network will present twelve special shows of the highest caliber, each distinguished by originality and suitability for television. The special shows are not "spectaculars." They do not attempt to overawe or overpower. Instead they are characterized by quality, importance of theme, and talent in expert hands.

The success of ABC's special shows is triply insured by the production services of leading organizations in each of the entertainment fields involved. They will be produced in conjunction with the Theatre Guild, the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Ballet, and the ABC News and Special Events Department.<sup>14</sup>

Here again, no sponsor interest and more important programming and sales considerations interfered with the plans. Presentations were never prepared for these "specials," and the programs were not broadcast.<sup>15</sup>

#### Extension of the Daytime Service

The network was optimistic about its entrance into morning television.

Following the successful introduction of the Afternoon Film Festival and Mickey Mouse Club, ABC expects, between October 1956 and January 1957, to program from 10:00 to 12:00 am and 2:30 to 3:00 pm, in addition to the time periods already allocated. These new programs will build the total daytime programming, five days a week, to five and one-half hours.<sup>16</sup>

The programs were not presented in 1956-57.

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<sup>14</sup>"The Third Force."

<sup>15</sup>Statement expressed by Robert E. Lewine, former ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (Personal Interview).

<sup>16</sup>"The Third Force."

## II. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

In January 1956, Robert M. Weitman resigned as Vice President in charge of Talent and Programming and went to CBS Television. Mr. Weitman was replaced by Robert Lewine, former Director of Programming.<sup>17</sup>

Ted Fetter, a producer at Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborne Advertising, was appointed as the new Director of Programming to assist Mr. Lewine with his administrative duties.<sup>18</sup>

Other organizational changes (before October) included the appointments of J. English Smith as Director of National Programming, Western Division--supervising all west coast originations and activities with independent producers; Thomas M. Lufkin, as newly created Program Manager, Western Division; Frank G. Ralston, as Director of the Western Division Film Department; and Don Van Atta, Assistant Coordinator at Walt Disney Productions for ABC.

The newly organized Program Department included

Robert E. Kintner	President, ABC Broadcasting Division
John Mitchell	Vice President, Television Network
Robert Lewine	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Richard DePew	Manager of Television Program Operations
J. English Smith	Director of National Programming, Western Division
Thomas M. Lufkin	Program Manager, Western Division
Sandy Cummings	Network Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions
Don Van Atta	Assistant Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions
Frank G. Ralston	Director of the Western Division Film Department
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division
Bill Seaman	Program Service Manager, Television Network
Charles Mortimer	Manager of Program Production
Ted Grant	Assistant Director, Cooperative Programming

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<sup>17</sup>Variety, February 1, 1956, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., September 26, 1956, p. 25.

### III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

All program development activities, with the exception of a circus-variety hour, were joint arrangements between the network and independent producers.

Louis Edelman produced three pilot films.

It's A Great Country - A wholesome background of American life, featuring true stories, or fictionalized versions of real events.

Tempered Blade (later retitled Jim Bowie) - An adventure series starring Scott Forbes, and based on the true exploits of the fabulous Jim Bowie, backwoodsman, millionaire planter, army officer, Indian fighter, and friend of celebrities and statesmen, whose skill with the then new "Bowie Knife" made his name a part of our language. The time was early 1800's and the scene ranged from the backwoods of Georgia through aristocratic New Orleans to the last stand at the Alamo.<sup>19</sup>

The Long Highway - The danger and the excitement that truck drivers met on the long highways of the nation. Love interest centered around the wives and sweethearts, who, though usually courageous and loyal, sometimes rebelled against the loneliness of their lives.<sup>20</sup>

Jack Chertok produced three pilot films.

Frontier Judge - An adult western starring Leon Ames, and highlighting the circuit courts which brought justice to the lawless far-flung western territories in the middle 1800's.<sup>21</sup>

Publicity Girl - Jan Sterling starred in a half hour situation comedy about Mickey McGinnis, a press agent with pulchritude, and the entanglements in which she found herself in pursuit of additional business for a small but growing publicity firm.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>"The Third Force."

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

John Gibbs, of Meridean Productions, produced one pilot.

Command Performance - The first ninety minute weekly anthology drama series on film for television. Command Performance stories were to be based on the works of the writers of the calibre of John Dos Passos, Somerset Maugham, John O'Hara, and Booth Tarkington, with casts featuring familiar names like Edward Arnold, Broderick Crawford, Mark Stevens, Joan Caulfield, Linda Darnell, and Dorothy McGuire.<sup>23</sup>

The pilot film for the series was "Ride the High Iron," with Don Taylor, Sally Forest, and Raymond Burr.

Don Sharpe and 4-Star Films produced one pilot.

Wire Service - A weekly one hour adventure series, starring Dane Clark, Mercedes McCambridge, and George Brent. Wire Service used the setting of a world-wide press association as the peg on which to hang various dramatic action and adventure stories. Each week, one of the three rotating stars was the reporter who was the central figure in an exciting, complete-in-itself story.<sup>24</sup>

Commander Attilio Gatti produced one pilot.

African Safari - This half hour series was shot on location in the heart of Africa; it is a visual diary of the day-to-day exploits and adventures of Commander Gatti's 13th Safari, with dramatic episodes set against the authentic background of jungles, wild animals, and strange native customs.<sup>25</sup>

Joan Davis Productions produced one pilot.

The Joan Davis Show - Joan Davis starred in her real life part as television star and grandmother; the program was based on comic situations arising from the rivalry between two grandmothers over the up-bringing of their grandson. The role of Joan's daughter was played by her real-life daughter, Beverly Wells.<sup>26</sup>

Jerry Devine produced one pilot.

R. F. D. - U. S. A. - A warm, half-hour camera study of rural American communities off the beaten track. It presented interesting

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

people and their colorful traditions. R.F.D. - U.S.A. was inspired by America's rebirth of interest in its "grass roots" heritage.<sup>27</sup>

Sheldon Reynolds produced one pilot.

International Theatre - An hour-long anthology film series produced on location in Europe with name American leads and supporting casts from the leading theatres and film companies in Europe. Mr. Reynolds was to appear as host and narrator.<sup>28</sup>

ABC Television also co-produced audition kinescopes for Gore Vidal's Devil's Theatre, and Louis Cowan's This Is Your Show.<sup>29</sup>

Although close to a million dollars was spent for the production of pilot films and audition "kinnies" only two series were sold-- Tempered Blade (retitled Jim Bowie), and Wire Service. Robert Lewine believes that these properties aroused little or no interest because most of them were not well conceived or produced, and advertisers were afraid to buy them from ABC.<sup>30</sup>

The network also had plans for series and "special" programs which never got farther than the presentation stage. They were, for the most part, created with the assistance of the Theatre Guild, and included Who, Me? a program attempting to identify the viewer with the show; and Theatre Guild Gaeties, an intimate review on the order of the Guild's famous "Garrick Gaeties."

The Theatre Guild conceived six additional "special" programs, budgeted between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Interview with Robert Lewine.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

Ballet Ballads  
 By Jupiter  
 The General's Other Son  
 The Honeys  
 Playboy of the Western World  
 Take A Giant Step

ABC also planned two Metropolitan Opera "specials" including an English version of "Faust;" a Warner Bros. tribute to the late James Dean; and three public affairs documentaries--"Let's Cry Today," "Out of the Darkness," and "Divided We Fall," concerning alcoholism, education, and divorce.<sup>31</sup>

ABC continued its policy of motion picture acquisition. The network negotiated with Warner Bros. for over one thousand pre-1948 theatrical films. It later optioned fifty-two RKO pictures for Famous Film Festival, contingent on sales response. Unable to get the American films at the right price, ABC purchased an additional twenty-six first-run British pictures for the Festival.<sup>32</sup>

#### IV. THE NOVEMBER 1956 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

The most striking feature of the fall schedule was the emergence of adventure drama and the "adult western." Adventure drama increased from 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1955 to 12 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1956--the "adult western" from 3 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours to 10 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in the one year period.

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<sup>31</sup>Variety, February 29, 1956, p. 26; and May 30, 1956, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., February 11, 1956, p. 1; and Variety, March 13, 1957, p. 31.

TABLE XX

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR NOVEMBER 1956, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE  
QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1955

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1955</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1956</u>
Adventure Drama	6	12
Musical Variety	6	12
Adult Western	3	10
Children's Variety	9	9
Straight Drama	8	6
Full-length Feature Films	6	6
Miscellaneous @	2	6
News and Commentary	5	5
Situation Comedy	8	4
Talent Variety	4	4
Comedy Variety	0	4
Country Music	8	4
Sporting Events	3	3
Detective Drama	2	2
Human Interest	2	2
Audience Participation	2	2
Panel Games	6	2
Public Affairs	4	2
Classical Music	2	2
Polkas and Folk Music	0	2
Talk	2	2
Audience Quiz	6	0
Total nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	96	101

Data gathered for the first weeks in November 1955 and 1956.

@Omnibus is included in this category.



There was also a substantial rise in musical variety programming--from 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1955 to 12 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1956.

Two program types--comedy-variety and polka music--appeared for the first time. Audience quizzes, on the other hand, were no longer listed. The closely related panel games were almost extinct, with only 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours scheduled. Surprisingly enough, there were no big money quizzes.

There were also appreciable cut-backs in situation comedy and country music--each of which was reduced  $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past season.

New Nighttime Program Types. Adventure drama and musical variety were the largest new program types, with 8 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each, or 22 per cent of all new nighttime programming.

The new adventure dramas included

Bold Journey (\*)  
Navy Log  
Wire Service

(\*) Though Bold Journey was not a dramatic program, it could nevertheless be called an adventure, and is therefore included in that category.

The miscellaneous programming followed with 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 17 per cent of all new nighttime programming. Omnibus defied classification, and was therefore included in this category.

The "adult western" and comedy-variety were in third place with  $\frac{1}{4}$  new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 11 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

The new "adult westerns" included

Adventures of Jim Bowie  
Broken Arrow

TABLE XXI

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW ABC  
NIGHTTIME PROGRAMMING

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Adventure Drama	8	22%
Musical Variety	8	22
Miscellaneous @	6	17
Adult Western	4	11
Comedy Variety	4	11
Straight Drama	2	6
Public Service	2	6
Polka and Folk Music	<u>2</u>	6
New nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	36	

Data gathered for the first week in November 1955.

@ Included in this category is Omnibus.

The other new program types were straight drama, public affairs, and polka music--each with 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 6 per cent of the new programming.

Polka Music	Polka Go Round
Public Affairs	Press Conference
Straight Drama	Ford Theatre

For the 1956-57 season, there was a marked reduction in the amount of new evening programming and program types. In 1955, there were 52 new nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours including fifteen program categories, as compared to only 36 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours comprising only eight categories. This was due to the many program renewals in 1956, the longer structure of some of the programs, and the new adventure-western trend.

#### The Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) Hours of Network Service

Nighttime program service had increased 5 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past November. For the first time, the network programmed every evening until 10:30 pm. On three nights, it was in service in the 10:30-11:00 pm "station option time."

In the fall, there was no significant change in number of commercial nighttime hours. Many portions of the schedule were not sold-- 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of John Daly News, 1 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour of Wire Service, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Circus Time, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Bishop Sheen, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Ozark Jubilee, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Polka Go Round, and additional ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of the Famous Film Festival.<sup>33</sup> A few of these were offered as cooperative

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<sup>33</sup>Variety, August 29, 1956, p. 27.

TABLE XXII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1956, AS COMPARED WITH  
NOVEMBER, 1955

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/55		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/56	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	4	0	0	0
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	40	35	68	32 @
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	96	78	101	84 @@

Data gathered from the first national Nielsen reports for November 1955 and 1956; and from Sponsor Magazine, November 1955-56.

@ This is only a general estimate, though it is known that 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of the Mickey Mouse Club were unsold, in addition to a large portion of the Afternoon Film Festival.

@@ The nighttime figure is also an estimate for sponsored ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours. There were no sales for 2 John Daly programs, 1 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour of Wire Service, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Circus Time, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Bishop Sheen, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Ozark Jubilee, 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Polka Go Round, and a large portion of the Famous Film Festival.

programs. With the network failing to realize its full sales potential, the fall of 1956 was not what could be termed a successful quarter for ABC. But the daytime situation was far worse.

Though the network had extended its program service from 40 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1955 to 68 in 1956, commercial revenues were not commensurate with the growth of the schedule. Though exact figures could not be obtained, the ABC network was reported to have had a large portion of the feature films available, as well as 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of the Mickey Mouse Club (of a possible 20 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours).<sup>34</sup>

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Two commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the season.

The Amazing Dunninger	8.5 AA (Summer)
Star Tonight	8.3

Other commercial programs, scheduled as summer replacements, were also discontinued.

Screen Directors Playhouse  
Summer Originals

Still other programs, sustaining or cooperative replacements, were cancelled as soon as the new programming began.

Combat Sergeant	cooperative
Dotty Mack Show	sustaining
Eddy Arnold Show	sustaining
Film Fair	cooperative
Going Places	cooperative
The Hour Glass	cooperative

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

### Program Renewals

ABC prepared for the 1956-57 season with more program renewals than in any other past year.

Disneyland	37.4
Rin Tin Tin	26.6
Wyatt Earp	22.9
Lawrence Welk Saturday Show	22.1
Make Room For Daddy	21.4
Cheyenne/Conflict	20.8
The Lone Ranger	19.7
Wednesday Night Boxing	19.6
Ozzie and Harriet	17.8
Mickey Mouse Club	17.0
Treasure Hunt	14.6
Crossroads	14.2
You Asked For It	14.0
Masquerade Party	13.3
Cavalcade Theatre	12.2
Original Amateur Hour	12.0
Ozark Jubilee	11.2
Voice of Firestone	10.2
The Vise	9.8
Bishop Sheen	9.5
Famous Film Festival	8.9
Bold Journey (*)	6.9 AA
Afternoon Film Festival	3.6
College Press Conference	(unavailable)
Kukla Fran and Ollie	(unavailable)
It's Polka Time (*)	(unavailable)

(\*) These were the programs that began in the summer. Their Nielsen ratings were gathered from the first August 1955 report.

As in past seasons, ABC had accepted many programs which it knew would not improve its industry image or its competitive standing. The network was in no position to turn advertisers away.

### Program Additions

Adventures of Jim Bowie - An "adult" adventure drama set against a pioneer background, and starring Scott Forbes as the inventor of the "Bowie knife." Jim Bowie was a rich, off-beat character--a bit on the lazy side, addicted to cigars, and possessed of a self-effacing sense of humor.

Bold Journey - A series based on the exploits of amateur explorers who had filmed their adventures and who narrated the edited footage. Jack Douglas was the host.

Broken Arrow - The story of a mail rider and Cochise, his Indian friend, in the Southwest in 1870. John Lupton starred as the rider who had a standing agreement with the Apache chief to let the mail go through.

Circus Time - Ventriloquist Paul Winchell and his dummies starred in the variety-hour from New York. There were vaudeville and circus acts interspersed with comments and stunts by Winchell.

Dean Pike - The Dean and his wife asked questions of a noteworthy guest in the informal surroundings of his study at Cathedral House in New York.

Ford Theatre - A half-hour dramatic anthology series.

Navy Log - Dramatizations of actual incidents during war and peace drawn from the files of the United States Navy.

Omnibus - Produced by the Ford Foundation, the program featured a combination of drama, music, poetry, adventure, history, and a sampling from all the arts. There was no set format for Omnibus--one week it could present a bill of Irish one-act plays, the next the Chicago Symphony.

Press Conference - Martha Rountree and a group of noted journalists questioned a prominent person in national or international affairs. The program was broadcast from various cities in the United States and Canada.

Ray Anthony Show - A musical variety program, with Ray Anthony and his Orchestra, the Four Freshmen, the Belvederes, and Frank Leahy, who provided some weekly football information.

Wire Service - Dane Clark, George Brent, and Mercedes McCambridge starred as reporters of a world-wide press association. Each week, one of the three rotating stars was the central figure in the dramatization.

#### Format Revisions.

Cavalcade Theatre - A fictional approach was adopted instead of the real-life material of contemporary and historical subject matter previously used. In addition, name stars appeared in some of the episodes. While the emphasis was placed on fiction, the series continued to spotlight inspirational and biographical stories.

Disneyland - Because of the scarcity of children's sponsors, more episodes were filmed for the "Frontierland" and "Adventureland" segments.

The Lone Ranger - Because of the many adult viewers, the format of the Lone Ranger was changed to an "adult western" in the Wyatt Earp tradition. There was more feeling and reasoning by the characters to transcend superficial adventure drama.

Make Room For Daddy - With the resignation of Jean Hagan, Danny Thomas acted as both mother and father to his two children.

The Mickey Mouse Club - The scarcity of children's advertisers for the 1956-57 season had called for some basic changes in Mickey Mouse. Relying on the audience-flow from the Afternoon Film Festival, ABC and Walt Disney removed the animations from the first quarter and replaced them with a Mickey Mouse Newsreel. The cartoons were presented in the final quarter.

The new format included

- 1st quarter hour - Newsreel
- 2nd quarter hour - Mouseketeers
- 3rd quarter hour - Serials
- 4th quarter hour - Cartoons

The Original Amateur Hour - An international flavor was added with auditions for talent held in Dublin, London, Scotland, Madrid, and Tel Aviv. The selected contestants were flown to New York to appear on the show.

Warner Bros. Presents - The Warner Bros. Presents title was abandoned, with Cheyenne and Conflict adopted for the alternate series.

Program Costs. Seven of the thirteen new ABC commercial programs cost at least \$26,000. Five of the seven expensive shows were in the adventure-western category, which according to Sponsor Magazine, cost on the average of \$33,000 per half-hour--third only to hour-long drama and situation comedy.<sup>35</sup> The industry-wide western-adventure trend, a growing advertiser awareness of ABC sales potential, and the network's improved facilities were all factors contributing to a rise of expensive new programming. Never before could ABC boast of as many new highly-budgeted programs.

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<sup>35</sup>"Network TV Show Costs Point to \$300 Million Year," Sponsor Magazine, X (September 3, 1956), 31.



Six of the new series cost less than \$26,000. Three of the programs were one-hour musicals or variety shows--Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes and Talent, Ray Anthony, and Ozark Jubilee. The three other programs were the half-hour Bold Journey, Circus Boy, and Press Conference.

Program Production and Control. Two of the new programs were "house-created-and-produced" by ABC Television.

Circus Time  
Dean Pike

ABC jointly created and produced another two programs.

Adventures of Jim Bowie  
Wire Service

All other additions were controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

Bold Journey	Ralston-Purina Company
	Jack Douglas
Broken Arrow	TCF Productions (20th Century Fox)
Ford Theatre	Ford Motor Company
Navy Log	CBS Films
	U. S. Rubber Company
Omnibus	Robert Saudek (Ford Foundation)
Press Conference	Martha Rountree
Ray Anthony	Plymouth Division, Chrysler Corporation
Top Tunes and Talent	Dodge Division, Chrysler Corporation
Telephone Time	Bell Telephone Company

### The Evolution of the Fall Schedule

Friday was an important evening for the ABC programmers. They wanted to capitalize on the large Rin Tin Tin audience by placing a strong adventure program in the 8:00 pm adjacency. Wire Service had tentatively been scheduled, but was later replaced by Jim Bowie.

Chevrolet and Mogen David Wines renewed their respective Cross-roads and Treasure Hunt programs (8:30-9:30 pm), as did Sterling Drug

TABLE XXIII

## PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW ABC COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS FOR NOVEMBER 1956

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<u>Programs costing \$26,000 or more</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Omnibus	\$82,000
Wire Service	60,000
Conflict	58,500
Ford Theatre	40,000
Navy Log	35,000
Broken Arrow	34,000
Adventures of Jim Bowie	33,500
 <u>Programs costing less than \$26,000</u>	
Ray Anthony Show	25,000
Top Tunes and Talent	22,500
Ozark Jubilee	22,000
Circus Time	15,000
Press Conference	14,000
Bold Journey	10,000

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Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

with The Vise at 9:30-10:00 pm. Ralston had previously cancelled Ethel and Albert at 10:00 pm, and had moved to Monday with a new show.<sup>36</sup> Plymouth, in September, ordered this 10:00 pm period, and then signed Ray Anthony for a one-hour variety program.<sup>37</sup>

The Friday evening schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Rin Tin Tin
8:00 - 8:30	Jim Bowie
8:30 - 9:00	Crossroads
9:00 - 9:30	Treasure Hunt
9:30 - 10:00	The Vise
10:00 - 10:30	Ray Anthony Show

ABC initially planned to reprogram Thursday evening with two new series: International Theatre (8:00-9:00 pm), and Command Performance (9:00-10:30 pm). In May, Wire Service was purchased (alternate week) by R. J. Reynolds Tobacco for Thursday at 9:00 pm, displacing Command Performance.<sup>38</sup> ABC, the following month, abandoned its plans for International Theatre, and tentatively scheduled Frontier Judge and Joan Davis from 8:00-9:00 pm.<sup>39</sup> There was, however, no advertiser interest in the programs or the time periods (which face the Groucho Marx-Dragnet, Bob Cummings-Climax competition).<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile, American Chicle, the sponsor of Ozark Jubilee on

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<sup>36</sup>Variety, April 18, 1956, p. 41.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., September 26, 1956, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., May 9, 1956, p. 27.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1956, p. 26.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., July 18, 1956, p. 22.

another evening, put an order in to move the program to 10:30-11 pm Thursday. The network filled the entire 10:00-11:00 pm period with the country music show, hoping that another sponsor could be found for 10:00-10:30 pm.<sup>41</sup>

With the Lone Ranger renewal at 7:30-8:00 pm, only the 8:00-9:00 pm time period was unprogrammed. In September, ABC decided to insert an evening version of the former Super Circus—the network believed this was an excellent time period for a variety hour. American Metals bought a part of the series.<sup>42</sup>

With this program insertion, the Thursday evening schedule was set.

7:30 - 8:00	The Lone Ranger
8:00 - 9:00	Circus Time
9:00 - 10:00	Wire Service
10:00 - 11:00	Ozark Jubilee

Tuesday, one of ABC's strongest evenings, was less of a problem. Cheyenne/Conflict (7:30-8:30), Wyatt Earp (8:30-9:00), and Cavalcade Theatre (9:30-10:00) were all renewed.

In May, General Electric purchased the 9:00-9:30 pm Wyatt Earp adjacency.<sup>43</sup> It had originally planned to schedule the Alan Ladd Show in the time period.<sup>44</sup> Under ABC influence, however, the company purchased Broken Arrow, an adventure-western, and inserted it at 9:00 pm.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., June 13, 1956, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., September 12, 1956, p. 22

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., May 2, 1956, p. 29.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., March 28, 1956, p. 28.

ABC then had two continuous hours of adventure-western programming.<sup>45</sup>

The network filled out the remaining 10:00-10:30 pm time period with Polka Go Round, an inexpensive WBKB program, formerly broadcast on Friday evening.

The final Tuesday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	Cheyenne/Conflict
8:30 - 9:00	Wyatt Earp
9:00 - 9:30	Broken Arrow
9:30 - 10:00	Cavalcade Theatre
10:00 - 10:30	Polka-Go-Round

Wednesday was another strong evening with both Disneyland and the Wednesday Fights renewed for 7:30-8:30 pm and 10:00-11:00 pm.

Eastman Kodak, in May, ordered the 9:00-9:30 pm period, and inserted Screen Director's Playhouse until the fall, at which time it replaced the program with Ozzie and Harriet.<sup>46</sup>

At the same time, Ford brought its Ford Theatre from NBC, where the company was replacing the drama with Tennessee Ernie Ford. The Ford ABC time period was set at 9:30-10:00 pm.<sup>47</sup>

In August, Pall Mall and Pearson Pharmaceuticals bought Navy Log from CBS Films, and ordered ABC's 8:30-9:00 pm Disneyland adjacency.<sup>48</sup> This was the first time the product of one network was broadcast on another network (CBS Films is a subsidiary of the Columbia Broadcasting System).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1956, p. 18.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1956, p. 23.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., July 25, 1956, p. 25.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

The completion of the Navy Log negotiations completed ABC's Wednesday night structure.

7:30 - 8:30	Disneyland
8:30 - 9:00	Navy Log
9:00 - 9:30	Ozzie and Harriet
9:30 - 10:00	Ford Theatre
10:00 - 11:00	Wednesday Night Fights

There were many changes on Sunday evening. In the early spring, ABC had acquired the Omnibus package, and promised the Ford Foundation a choice Sunday evening time period. The ninety minute program was scheduled for 9:00-10:30 pm.<sup>50</sup>

In the fall, Pharmaceuticals' Original Amateur Hour was moved up to 7:30-8:30 pm from its 9:30-10:30 pm time period. A survey for Pharmaceuticals showing a steady rating increase for the Amateur Hour at the expense of the Alcoa-Goodyear Theatre convinced ABC that the show would stand a better chance against Ed Sullivan and Steve Allen than would the Film Festival.<sup>51</sup> Consequently, the motion pictures were transferred to Saturday and the Amateur Hour, moved into 7:30-8:30 pm Sunday.

Polka-Go-Round, a cooperative program, had been set in September for 8:30-9:00 pm--between the Amateur Hour and Omnibus. When, however, Corn Products agreed to purchase 8:30-9:00 pm for its Press Conference, ABC quickly made the sale, and rescheduled Polka Time for Tuesday 10:00 pm--hoping that the show might arouse sponsor interest in a less competitive time period.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., April 11, 1956, p. 23.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., May 23, 1956, p. 23.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., October 17, 1956, p. 27.

The final Sunday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	Amateur Hour
8:30 - 9:00	Press Conference
9:00 -10:30	Omnibus

ABC had transferred Danny Thomas to Monday night to be broadcast at 8:00 pm when there would be more children in the audience.<sup>53</sup> In addition, Ralston-Purina had moved its Bold Journey program into 7:30-8:00 pm--choosing this time period because of a new marketing approach designed to reach a family audience with stress on young children. In May, Dodge ordered 9:30-10:30 pm for a second Lawrence Welk program, Top Tunes and Talent, aimed at a younger audience than the Saturday broadcast.<sup>54</sup>

The Voice of Firestone had been renewed for the fall (8:30-9:00 pm), which left only the 9:00-9:30 pm Bishop Sheen availability opposite I Love Lucy. Though the program was not sold, it was nevertheless broadcast as a cooperative feature.

The final Monday schedule included

7:30 - 8:00	Bold Journey
8:00 - 8:30	Make Room For Daddy
8:30 - 9:00	Voice of Firestone
9:00 - 9:30	Bishop Sheen
9:30 -10:30	Top Tunes and Talent

There were few problems on Saturday night. ABC had moved Famous Film Festival to 7:30-9:00 pm. With sponsor renewals for Lawrence Welk

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<sup>53</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of Progress Department (personal interview).

<sup>54</sup>"Report to Sponsors," Sponsor Magazine, X (October 15, 1956, 2.

and Masquerade Party, the entire evening was programmed.

7:30 - 9:00	Famous Film Festival
9:00 -10:00	Lawrence Welk
10:00 -10:30	Masquerade Party

#### V. THE MARCH 1957 SCHEDULE

On October 22, 1956, Robert E. Kintner resigned as President of the ABC Broadcasting Division--citing irreconcilable differences between himself and ABC-UPT.

Leonard Goldenson, ABC-UPT President, and the parent company had objected to Mr. Kintner's one-man control over the Broadcasting Division, insisting that he build a broad organization in depth and delegate more authority.<sup>55</sup> They also believed that he was too conservative with expenditures for program development.<sup>56</sup>

Upon the resignation of Mr. Kintner, Leonard Goldenson himself assumed active control of ABC Television for at least six months. He maintained two offices--one in the Paramount building on Broadway and the other at ABC's west side studios. Mr. Goldenson intended to implement his policy of consolidation and expansion of the ABC organization by

1. A down-the-middle split between radio and television.
2. Complete autonomy for the new ABC-TV president.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Variety, October 17, 1956, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1956, p. 31.



In October, Oliver Treyz was appointed Vice President of the ABC Television Network. Mr. Treyz, formerly President of the Television Bureau of Advertising, had an extensive sales and research background.<sup>58</sup> His program philosophies will be discussed in the next chapter, for it was toward 1957-58 that his first concerted efforts were directed.

In November, Dan Melnick, a former staff producer at CBS Television, was named ABC-TV's first Manager of Program Development. The formation of this department was a symbol of the emphasis which ABC was to place on programming.<sup>59</sup> Mr. Melnick was to assist in the development of programs that would reflect ABC's needs in terms of its audience and what the advertisers would buy.<sup>60</sup> The newly created department was to also supervise all stages of program development by independent producers--providing suggestions and guiding their work from the network's point of view.<sup>61</sup>

Dan Melnick's first job was to assist Ted Fetter and Robert Lewine in the development of new daytime programs.<sup>62</sup>

In December, Mr. Lewine resigned from his post as Vice President of Programming and Talent and joined Robert Kintner at NBC. He was replaced by James Aubrey, former Program Supervisor at CBS, Hollywood.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., November 14, 1956, p. 46.

<sup>59</sup>Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV Vice President of Program Development (personal interview).

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Variety, November 28, 1956, p. 29.

<sup>63</sup>"Aubrey Named to Direct ABC-TV Programming, Talent," Broadcasting Magazine, L (December 17, 1956), 9.

Mr. Aubrey expanded his Program Department in March 1957, consolidating some formerly autonomous areas. He also hoped to add a story division and several more men to the producer-director category to build more of a "live" programming staff for 1958-59.<sup>64</sup>

Some of the changes in the departmental expansion included<sup>65</sup>

J. English Smith, brought from California as the network's administrative programming chief, was put in charge of day-to-day operations, assuming control after the programs had been selected.

Ted Fetter became the Director of Programs--heading a creative department, instrumental in program choice, and serving, in part, as an executive producer.

Sandy Cummings, once the Disneyland liaison, became the Coast counterpart of Mr. Smith, reporting through him to Mr. Aubrey.

James McNaughton was appointed Manager of Production Services (construction, trucking, stages, graphic arts). Once part of the Operations Department, it became a division of the Program Department.

Robert Adams was appointed as Hollywood's executive producer, reporting to Sandy Cummings.

Ruth Kiersted became head of traffic and operations, serving as liaison to the affiliates on program information.

The expansion of the Program Department was indicative of a new philosophy.

What we have been telling agencies and advertisers regularly is that 'It's not the track, it's the horse that counts.' More and more of them are accepting this truism, that it is the horse, the individual program, which is the critical factor. . .not the channel on which it runs--whether that channel be an ABC, CBS or NBC affiliate.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Variety, March 27, 1957, p. 26.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "1957 Mother Goose Rhymes" (a special report to ABC-TV affiliates at the Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 7, 1957).

While most of the efforts of Mr. Treyz and his administrators were directed toward 1957-58, there were nevertheless some immediate changes in programming at mid-season.

There will be a retrenchment in feature films by late March by dropping Famous Film Festival. A network should provide stations with programs they otherwise would not have.<sup>67</sup>

In November, WFIL, Philadelphia, one of the important ABC affiliates, had disputed the power of the British pictures by cancelling them in favor of its own library of U. S. product. This represented the first of many on-the-record actions showing that the stations did not like the motion pictures.<sup>68</sup>

ABC did not, however, completely abandon the films. In March, it rented twenty-six motion pictures for one showing, at a cost of \$650,000 to \$750,000. These American films--all popular box-office attractions--were shown for the first time on a network basis.<sup>69</sup> They were broadcast Sunday nights, starting April 7th at 7:30-9:00 pm. Omnibus had completed its ABC run--to accommodate the films in the early evening period, the Amateur Hour was moved to 9:00 pm.<sup>70</sup>

The programmers were concerned with more than filling time. This was an experiment with a time period in which ABC had always wished to compete. If the films were successful, the network considered using a similar approach for a projected fall series, The Gary Cooper Theatre--

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<sup>67</sup>New York Times, November 11, 1956, Section II, p. 11.

<sup>68</sup>Variety, October 17, 1956, p. 36.

<sup>69</sup>"RKO Feature Films Rented by ABC," Broadcasting Magazine LI (March 11, 1957), 56.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

scheduled in the same Sunday time period.<sup>71</sup>

ABC had planned to cancel the Afternoon Film Festival as soon as it had developed some salable daytime programs. Audition kinescopes were made for What's The Name of that Song, Win Your Way, Guest of Honor, What Makes You Tick, Lucky Lady, Parley, and Man In Your Life. These shows were for the most part "live" audience participation games and quizzes. Although \$100,000 was spent for the production of these "kimmies," only Man In Your Life and Lucky Lady were considered for broadcast--the other shows, it was decided, did not turn out well enough.<sup>72</sup> None of the properties under development were telecast at mid-season.

#### Program Cancellations

Dupont Cavalcade Theatre - Low ratings.

Famous Film Festival - Pre-empted with stronger programming.

Masquerade Party - Low ratings and corporate changes within Lenthéric.

Ray Anthony Show - Low ratings.

Omnibus - Low ratings and no advertiser interest.

#### Program Additions

Air-Time 57 - Vaughan Monroe in an Air Force Reserve musical variety program.

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

The Big Beat - Alan Freed emceed this "rock 'n roll" variety program, featuring top recording stars in performances of their hit records. (This was an attempt by ABC to develop a teen-age show for the Saturday 7:30-8:00 pm time period. The network had originally broadcast a two week sustainer the preceding May, titled the Rock 'N Roll Review, also starring Alan Freed.)<sup>73</sup>

Hollywood Film Theatre - A series of twenty-six American-made motion pictures.

Date With the Angels - Betty White and Bill Williams were featured as a young married couple. Dream sequences were often used, as well as stage asides and monologues.

Popsicle Show - A seven week children's variety series starring Paul Winchell, Senor Wences, Olsen and Johnson, Ben Blue, and Jerry Calonna.

Telephone Time - Frank Baxter served as the storyteller in this filmed anthology series. (Bell Telephone took Telephone Time to ABC because it could not get a suitable time period on NBC or CBS. The program was formerly broadcast on Sunday at 6:00 pm on the CBS Network.)<sup>74</sup>

This Is Calen Drake - Calen Drake starred in a variety program with featured vocalists Stuart Foster and Rita Ellis. There were songs, debates (i.e. a father and a teen-age daughter discussed Elvis Presley's influence on teen-agers), and a sequence devoted to biographing a guest personality.

## VI. THE AUGUST 1957 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Air Time 57 - Pre-empted with stronger programming.

Bishop Sheen - His ABC contract had expired.

Circus Time - Low ratings.

Ford Theatre - Low ratings.

Calen Drake - Low ratings.

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<sup>73</sup>Variety, May 8, 1957, p. 31.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., February 27, 1957, p. 22.

Make Room For Daddy - The original ABC-Louis Edelman pact was a two year agreement in which ABC and Mr. Edelman shared ownership in the series. Subsequent yearly extensions resulted in basic alterations of the original contract, giving Danny Thomas and Mr. Edelman the right to go elsewhere if ABC did not give them a firm production go-ahead by a certain date. ABC was uncertain that it could sell the program for 1957-58, and held back on the production go-ahead beyond the deadline. William Morris, the sales agent for the show, began negotiations with agencies and came up with the General Foods - CBS agreement, which moved the program to the CBS Network.<sup>75</sup>

The Original Amateur Hour - Low ratings.

Treasure Hunt - Low ratings.

The Vise - Low ratings.

#### Summer Cancellations

Dean Pike  
John Hopkins File 7  
Voice of Firestone

#### Program Additions

During the summer, Ted Fetter called on a young Philadelphia disk jockey to ask him to promote ABC-Paramount records on his WFIL radio and television shows. At this meeting, the disk jockey, Dick Clark, told Mr. Fetter about his popular teen-age dance program on local Philadelphia television--stating how well the show could do nationally if given the proper exposure. At the time, ABC wanted to replace the Afternoon Film Festival with a more popular form of inexpensive programming. The development of the daytime properties had been for the most part unsuccessful. With the attitude that the network had nothing to lose and everything to gain, Mr. Fetter told Clark "if you can bring

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., April 3, 1957, p. 39.

the show in for less money than the movies, we'll give it a four week trial."<sup>76</sup>

WFIL and the disk jockey made an offer for an hour-and-a-half "across-the-board" program at \$50 a week less than the cost of the films. In the days that followed, Mr. Fetter persuaded the ABC administrators to give the show the allotted four week trial period.<sup>77</sup>

The American Bandstand story is now part of daytime television history. When the program was broadcast and the Nielsens came in, ABC realized that it had a winner not only in the Bandstand, but also in Dick Clark as a potential personality. A combination of experimentation and some old fashioned luck brought success to ABC when it had least expected it. With the Bandstand, the network had a powerful hold on the late afternoon--something it had actively attempted to do since 1953.

All the new programs were summer replacements, with the exception of Mike Wallace, to keep the various time periods in operation.

ABC Presents - No information available.

Billy Graham - A summer series featuring highlights of his crusades.

Compass - No information available.

Country Music Jamboree - Red Foley starred in this revised edition of Ozark Jubilee.

Cowboy Rodeo - Live broadcasts from a New Jersey rodeo.

Flight Number Seven - No information available.

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<sup>76</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

Focus - No information available.

Football Highlights - No information available.

Industries for America - No information available.

Key Club Playhouse - No information available.

Midwestern Hayride - Country music from Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mike Wallace Interview - Mike Wallace interviewed controversial people in an attempt to investigate particular subjects "in depth."

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE 1956-57 SEASON

ABC continued its up-hill struggle in the 1956-57 season.

There were program successes like Broken Arrow, Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes and Talent, and Jim Bowie. But, on the other hand, there were other new ABC programs which were high in prestige value, but low in audience appeal--among them Omnibus and Press Conference. ABC had been successful in attracting many advertiser controlled properties--Telephone Time, Navy Log, Ford Theatre, Bold Journey--though these were for the most part poor audience builders. Only Broken Arrow and Top Tunes and Talent rewarded ABC with substantial rating returns.

The network began planning for 1956-57 a full year in advance, spending close to a million dollars for the development of program properties in association with independent producers. Each new program was developed with the idea of bolstering a certain position in the schedule. The network had also prepared concepts for "special" programs with the guidance of the Theatre Guild, Metropolitan Opera, and the ABC News and Special Events Department. Advertisers, however, were reluctant to buy these shows, afraid of the results they would get on ABC.



Consequently, only Wire Service and Jim Bowie, of all the prospective series and "specials", were sold for 1956-57.

The network was unable to make a more concerted effort to sell these shows because it had the important task of selling program commitments--Mickey Mouse, Afternoon Film Festival, Famous Film Festival, Bishop Sheen, Wire Service, Circus Time, John Daly and the News, and Omnibus. Though ABC had extended its daytime program service it suffered a severe loss in revenues with 8 available ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Mickey Mouse--as well as varying amounts of unsold evening time. This financial situation was reflected in the fourth quarter report for 1956 which disclosed that network earnings had dropped, as compared with that quarter in 1955.

By mid-season, however, ABC could point to a strengthened program schedule on Tuesday, with the addition of Broken Arrow to a ninety minute action block; and early Friday, with the new Jim Bowie series as the Rin Tin Tin lead-out. The network was now dominant on Tuesday (7:30-9:00 pm), Wednesday (7:30-8:30 pm), and Friday (7:30-8:30 pm). Moreover, Top Tunes strengthened late Monday evening, as did the Saturday Welk Show the season before.

Other portions of the schedule were less gratifying. The network had filled many time periods with weak advertisers' programming to derive additional revenues without which it could not exist. Mid-season, however, the situation showed signs of change.

Robert Kintner resigned as President of ABC--with many of his closest aids following him in a move to NBC. Leonard Goldenson assumed active control of all broadcasting activities, and subsequently appointed Oliver Treyz as the new Vice President of the autonomous television

network. Other appointments included James Aubrey as the new Talent Vice President and Dan Melnick as the newly-created Manager of Program Development. There was also a reorganized Western Program Division and a general departmental consolidation and expansion--highly indicative of the newly asserted importance of programming.

The new administrators made a few key program changes at mid-season. The English films, which had been poorly accepted by the stations and the television audience, were displaced by more popular programming; Omnibus was cancelled; and Wire Service was transferred to early Monday evening, and Danny Thomas and Bold Journey to Thursday. Through a combination of luck and experimentation, ABC had acquired the popular American Bandstand, and Dick Clark, a potential star. In addition, Bell Telephone brought its Telephone Time to ABC from the CBS Network.

This was only a beginning for a new ABC. Mr. Treyz and his staff had the basic foundation on which to build, shape, and remold the ABC program schedule. There was a nucleus of highly rated programs--Cheyenne/Conflict, Wyatt Earp, Disneyland, Broken Arrow, Ozzie and Harriet, Wednesday Night Boxing, The Lone Ranger, Rin Tin Tin, Jim Bowie, the Mickey Mouse Club, the two Lawrence Welk hours, and the American Bandstand. In addition, more money would be available for new programming to fill-in weak spots in the schedule.

With improved station clearances and increased industry stature, Messrs. Treyz, Aubrey, Fetter, Melnick, and the entire ABC Television Network hoped to write the most successful chapter in the ABC story -- the 1957-58 season.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE 1957-58 SEASON

The "adult western" became a major program type in 1957-58 with nine new series scheduled--Trackdown, Have Gun, Will Travel, Restless Gun, Wells Fargo, the Californians, Wagontrain, Tombstone Territory, Colt 45, and Maverick.

There was also a pronounced increase in the number of variety shows featuring popular recording stars of the day; Patti Page, Nat Cole, Giselle MacKensie, Guy Mitchell, Pat Boone, Frank Sinatra, and the Metropolitan Opera's Patrice Munsell were all starred in network series.

Detective drama, for the first time in many seasons, showed signs of renewed growth--with Perry Mason, McGraw, M-Squad, the Thin Man, and Scotland Yard added to the program schedules. Dramatic anthologies were, however, declining in 1957-58--with cancellations of the Alcoa-Goodyear Playhouse, Robert Montgomery Presents, Medic, Jane Wyman, Circle Theatre, and Ford Theatre.

Situation comedy was still flourishing in the 1957-58 season with the addition of Bachelor Father, Sally, Dick and the Duchess, Eve Arden, and Leave It To Beaver. The "stand-up" comedians, however, were less fortunate--programs featuring Herb Shriner, Arthur Godfrey, Sid Caesar, and Jackie Gleason were cancelled before the start of the season.

NBC and CBS continued to realign their programming in the face of mounting ABC competition. NBC reprogrammed 7:30-8:00 pm Monday through Friday, replacing the music and news shows with half-hour

versions of the Price Is Right, Nat Cole, Tic Tac Dough, Mark Saber, and the one-hour Wagontrain. Almost every time period in which ABC showed strength was bolstered in this manner.

In 1957-58, the NBC and CBS "specials" were irregularly scheduled, so that no show got pre-empted more than twice--the one out of four week program was a thing of the past. The number of "specials" nevertheless increased--with the networks scheduling more of them than ever before.

For the first time the number of filmed hours had surpassed "live," synonymous with the growth of Hollywood as a production center. Television prices continued to rise with split-buys and participations outnumbering single sponsorships.

ABC Television prepared to face more competition than ever before. Robert Kintner was now heading the opposing NBC team, using many of the tactics he had originated at ABC (including action programming). CBS had also recognized the importance of the action formula as evidenced by many of its program changes. The older networks were aware of ABC's potential strength and were determined to meet the young contender on its own grounds.

#### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Leonard Goldenson and Oliver Treyz had decided that the most important tool for building a competitive network was programming.

We've perhaps been too negative about our coverage . . . To the extent a program is of A quality, stations will react with clearances.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Variety New York, October 31, 1956, p. 46.

The ABC-UPT organization was to make substantially more program investments than in the past.

Increased expenditures were now feasible because<sup>2</sup>

1. Television advertising budgets were increasing steadily throughout the industry.
2. The size of the television audience was expanding with new "sets-in-use" and the approach of total U. S. set saturation.
3. ABC clearance problems were being solved rapidly. More new stations were authorized and a good program could clear time on CBS and NBC basic stations.

For this concerted programming effort, ABC-UPT secured a sixty million dollar loan--half of which was to be used as working capital and made available to the ABC Division.<sup>3</sup> A portion of the money was allocated toward the expansion of ABC facilities. The network hoped to gradually build toward "live" equality with CBS and NBC--with modernization of its studio plants in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, and San Francisco.<sup>4</sup>

Millions of dollars were also poured into the ABC program schedule in an all out effort to develop and acquire talent and programming.

We're not seeking to raid the other two networks. Our emphasis will be on developing new programming and new clients for television.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Treyz and his aides concentrated on only a few program types,

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 7, 1956, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., December 16, 1956, p. 21.

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

<sup>5</sup>"Now It's the Big Three," Sponsor Magazine, XI (February 23, 1957), 35.

with which the network had previously been successful; developed and acquired a small group of talent; scheduled programs in a planned and logical fashion, with an increased reliance on audience research; concentrated on one or two evenings a season; and attempted to enter the daytime on a more competitive basis.

#### Concentration on a Few Program Types

Oliver Treyz began his work at ABC with a basic philosophy-- gear the network's programming to the young, post-war, large-family audience--with action-adventure shows, complimented with bright-faced young singers and warm family-type situation comedies. These younger "get-age" families (as ABC referred to them) had more vitality and more time to watch television.<sup>6</sup> These were the people who most rapidly changed their viewing habits. In addition, they were the largest and most important segment of the population in terms of consumer buying power.<sup>7</sup>

Audience research had disclosed that the adventure-western appealed primarily to this young family group. The ratings of Cheyenne, Wyatt Earp, Disneyland, Jim Bowie, and Broken Arrow documented this, as did the compositional breakdowns of their audiences.<sup>8</sup>

The changing complexion of the television audience itself

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<sup>6</sup>Statement expressed by Leonard Goldenson, President of American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres, Inc. (personal interview).

<sup>7</sup>Statement expressed by Fred Pierce, ABC-TV Manager of the Research Department (personal interview).

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

dictated this approach. Television had changed from a metropolitan medium to a truly national one, with the rural audience growing from five to fourteen million homes.<sup>9</sup> These new viewers had to be considered, for they could directly affect a network's programming. The Milton Berles and Jackie Gleasons, who were very popular in the big cities, were not as well received by rural America. The Lawrence Welks, however, who would not have made it in the earlier days, were overnight sensations. The "head of the creek" audience favored the westerns, adventures, and mysteries--the "escape programming"--as did many of their big city neighbors.

Mr. Treyz referred to the action-adventure category as the "bread-and-butter" programs--the programs which appealed to a mass audience--the lifeblood of any network, designed to reach millions of people. Messrs. Goldenson and Treyz believed that ABC was completely justified in programming to this large audience.

A network's primary objective in selecting most of its programs, but not all, is to choose those it believes will appeal to the most viewers--always subject, of course, to the dictates of good taste and public welfare.<sup>10</sup>

When asked by Television Magazine, Is There a Programming Crisis -- in reference to the high percentage of "bread-and-butter" programming in 1957-58 -- Mr. Treyz replied that advertisers and agencies desired to "play it safe"--"it takes guts not to imitate success."<sup>11</sup> He did,

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<sup>9</sup>Statement expressed by Jules Barnathan, ABC-TV Vice President of Research and Station Clearance (personal interview).

<sup>10</sup>Article in Sponsor Magazine, XI (May 10, 1957), 116.

<sup>11</sup>"Is There A Programming Crisis?" Television Magazine XIV (February 1957), 52.

however, believe that there was a more important issue involved. "The point is that it is the quality of the specific show, not whether it conforms to any fad, that is basic."<sup>12</sup>

Situation comedy also appealed to the large family group. Ozzie and Harriet had attracted "get-age" audiences for many seasons because of its warmth, believable characters, and close knit family group, which permitted maximum viewer identification.<sup>13</sup> Programs of this nature were to be broadcast on ABC.

Such shows are expensive because they depend on top writing and performances on a star level. We're going ahead with them, but we're developing our own.<sup>14</sup>

The bright-faced young singers were all popular recording stars. Frank Sinatra, Guy Mitchell, and Pat Boone had sold millions of records, to primarily young people.<sup>15</sup> The programmers believed these handsome, youthful personalities would also appeal to the "get-age" television audience.<sup>16</sup>

The structure of future ABC television programs was to also be modified, with the anticipation of more one-hour, and hour-and-a-half series.

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>14</sup>Evelyn Konrad, "TV Programming: Fall 1957," Sponsor Magazine, XI (February 9, 1957), 34.

<sup>15</sup>Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV Vice President of Program Development (personal interview).

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.



Television is finding that the hour show often has more strength than the half hour. You can tell a full story in one hour, rather than just touching one incident or doing a character study as you do in a half hour.<sup>17</sup>

### Talent Development

For the first time in four seasons, ABC Television acquired a group of "star-power" personalities. The network had negotiated with Julius LaRosa, Art Carney, Lou Costello, Guy Mitchell, Pat Boone, Frank Sinatra, and Mike Wallace--successfully signing Frank Sinatra, Pat Boone, Guy Mitchell, and Mike Wallace.<sup>18</sup>

The three year Frank Sinatra contract, signed in November, was "the first major result of ABC-UPT's concerted drive to create new network programs with high audience and sponsor appeal for the 1957-58 broadcast season."<sup>19</sup> In an agreement made through the William Morris Agency, ABC purchased, for three million dollars, an interest in the performer's Kent Productions in exchange for an equal amount of ABC-UPT shares.<sup>20</sup> In so doing, it obtained the vocalist's exclusive services for a weekly half-hour show, two one-hour "specials" for three years, as well as exclusivity in his theatrical films once they had exhausted their box office potential.<sup>21</sup> Mr. Sinatra was guaranteed a minimum of

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<sup>17</sup>"TV Programming: Fall 1957," Sponsor Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup>Variety, January 30, 1957, p. 24; and February 7, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>19</sup>"AB-PT Secures \$60 Million Loan," Sponsor Magazine, XI (December 24, 1956), 58.

<sup>20</sup>Variety, December 5, 1956, p. 33.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

\$250,000 a year. The importance of this agreement lay not only in the acquisition of Frank Sinatra as a potential network personality, but also in ABC's willingness to outbid both NBC and CBS.<sup>22</sup>

In January, ABC Television acquired the services of Mike Wallace, a prominent personality in New York television. For an estimated \$100,000 annual guarantee, Mr. Wallace appeared in a weekly interview program, and was eventually called upon to appear on other ABC shows.<sup>23</sup> Similar arrangements were made with Guy Mitchell and Pat Boone.

Leonard Goldenson was extremely influential in these talent agreements. Using his legal background as a talent negotiator, he made many of the arrangements himself. "One of his strategies," a friend of his stated, was "to put a guy in business for himself."<sup>24</sup> This made it possible for the star to work and stay out of the high tax bracket through the formation of his own company.

#### Night By Night Planned Programming

In past seasons ABC had sold time first and then considered program scheduling. For 1957-58, however, Mr. Treyz hoped to make substantially more use of audience research in planning the schedule--employing counterprogramming and compatible "thematic" programming.

Counterprogramming was not a new innovation; it had been used for years on both radio and television and was a matter of simple logic.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1956, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup>Variety, January 16, 1957, p. 28.

<sup>24</sup>"The TV Fan Who Runs A Network," Sponsor Magazine, XI (June 15, 1957), 48.

The concept affords a flexibility of program choice so that there are not three westerns or three comedies scheduled at the same time; instead, a contrasting type of programming to the types already offered is provided in a specific time period. The new program might appeal to a different segment of the audience than the other shows, or to the same segment but in greater degree.<sup>25</sup> An illustration would be the scheduling of a western against two varieties, or a mystery program against a panel show and dramatic anthology. In both cases, the new program appeals to a different portion of the audience than those programs already offered.

ABC had first experimented with counterprogramming in 1953 with the scheduling of the Mask at Sunday, 8:00 pm opposite Ed Sullivan and the Colgate Hour. Since that time, it had successfully used this approach with Disneyland, Warner Bros. Presents, and Wyatt Earp. For 1957-58, ABC planned to actively use counterprogramming, especially in those time periods where CBS and NBC had highly rated but nevertheless vulnerable programs. Synonymous with the concept was the idea of scheduling certain new programs one half-hour earlier than their competition. A combination of the right counterprogrammed time period and a strong property could produce gratifying results, as was illustrated by Maverick in 1957-58.

The programmers also placed more emphasis on the compatibility of adjacent programs to obtain maximum audience retention from one show to another.<sup>26</sup> A regulation of the audience flow could considerably

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<sup>25</sup>Interview with Fred Pierce.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

lessen "mid-stream" dial changing if programs of similar appeal were presented one after another. Compatible programming could include similar program types adjacently scheduled or a combination of different program types appealing to the same segment of the audience. ABC had learned that situation comedy flowed well into action, and action into comedy--this was not the case, however, with drama, which was generally incompatible as an adjacency with either comedy or adventure.<sup>27</sup> In many instances, the network set the position of a new program ahead of sales to insure the proper adjacency and audience flow. The tentative plans for 1957-58 (many of which were never realized) included a Sunday block of the one-hour MGM Mystery Theatre and Amazon Trader; a Monday evening adventure block of Wire Service and Snowfire from 7:30-9:00 pm; the Californians lead-out for Jim Bowie at 8:30 pm Friday; and a ninety minute western-adventure block for Saturday evening.

There were some plans which became realities for 1957-58. ABC had definitely decided that the valuable 8:30-9:00 pm Disneyland adjacency would be programmed with a strong western. The time period had been purchased by Bristol Meyers, who planned to insert its own program. The company selected Ziv's Gunfire Pass, starring Richard Eastham. ABC, however, refused to accept the series on the basis of the pilot "in its present form."<sup>28</sup> This was the first time the network had exercised its right of refusal on a nighttime program in a time period

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<sup>27</sup>Interview with Leonard Goldenson.

<sup>28</sup>Variety, May 29, 1957, p. 26.

already owned by a willing sponsor. The Bristol Myers contract contained an express contingency that ABC had equal program approval rights.<sup>29</sup> A second pilot film was made--financed by ABC, Young and Rubicam Advertising, and Ziv Television--in which the young town marshall, originally the second lead, was upped to the lead, with the older editor, the original lead, relegated to a secondary role.<sup>30</sup> ABC accepted the reworked pilot which was more in line with what it desired.

The network had decided that the Frank Sinatra Show was to be the pivotal point for either Thursday or Friday evening in a 9:00 or 9:30 pm time period. When the program was definitely set for Friday at 9:00 pm, it pre-empted Mogen David's Treasure Hunt--resulting in a program cancellation. The programmers, however, had pre-determined that Frank Sinatra would be scheduled at this time.

When Firestone renewed its Monday music program, it also faced a network pre-emption. ABC wanted to hold the 8:30-9:00 pm time period for a stronger rating potential, and consequently moved The Voice of Firestone to 9:00 pm.

There were many programs which were scheduled because of sales. ABC was not yet in the position to reprogram its entire nighttime schedule.<sup>31</sup> In such cases, the network attempted to place the advertisers'

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., August 28, 1957, p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Ted Fetter.

programs in a reasonably logical, compatible manner. The Thursday line-up with Circus Boy, Zorro, Real McCoys, Pat Boone, OSS, and Navy Log was certainly not entirely planned ahead of sales--it rather evolved as part of the sales process and a general idea of which programs would comprise a compatible evening. All of the Thursday shows had a "get-age" appeal, with no apparent inconsistencies in the arrangement.<sup>3 2</sup> Late Wednesday also evolved in a similar manner. While the network realized that it would not be this successful on every night, it hoped for compatible programming on those evenings which it planned to strengthen.

#### Concentration on One or Two Evenings

The tentative plans for 1957-58 called for the strengthening of Monday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday--evenings for which the network would either build or buy "bread and butter" programs.

The Sunday 7:30-8:30 pm time period was to be filled with a western, adventure or mystery drama to counterprogram against Ed Sullivan and Steve Allen, and build a foundation for the late evening. The MGM Mystery Theatre was originally considered, but subsequently replaced by Maverick.

The programmers anticipated a Monday adventure block with Wire Service (7:30-8:30 pm) and another action program. Since there was no advertiser interest, the plans were cancelled in favor of immediate time sales.

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

Thursday was to be completely reprogrammed from 7:30-10:30 pm. An evolutionary sales process and ABC's determination to schedule Pat Boone, Zorro, and the Real McCoys on this evening resulted in the final schedule.<sup>33</sup>

A Warner Bros. western and an adventure companion-piece were anticipated for Saturday night. Conflict, Maverick, Dallas, and Amazon Trader were a few of the many programs scheduled in the 7:30-9:00 pm period. Because none of them were sold, the idea was abandoned for 1957-58.

#### Expansion of the Daytime Service

During the 1956-57 season, ABC had been preparing for a more extensive daytime operation. The network had installed a new "D for Daytime" rate structure--calling for one-third, rather than the customary one-half, of the nighttime rate. The new policy, applying only to exclusive ABC affiliates, prevailed until 5:00 pm. ABC was the only one of the three television networks to offer a departure from the standard one-half rate.<sup>34</sup>

The programmers were certain that ABC's entrance into the daytime would boost the existing "sets in use" total.

We expect to get the existing audiences reached by our affiliates now and then some.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Interview with Fred Pierce.

<sup>34</sup>"ABC-TV Plans Daytime Rate Cut," Broadcasting Magazine, LII (February 11, 1957), 87.

<sup>35</sup>"TV's Hottest Battleground," Sponsor Magazine, XI (April 4, 1957), 38.

The strategy was to build around video tape and counter-programming to reach younger audience groups. The daytime programming was to be on "clock time," giving ABC an advantage in the Central Time Zones where the majority of viewing occurs.<sup>36</sup> The competition would be less formidable at these times in Central and Pacific time--competing against local programming and early afternoon feeds from CBS and NBC.<sup>37</sup> There were to be no soap operas, but instead, shows appealing to younger women in an attempt to counterprogram against the NBC and CBS competition.

Six "live" shows were auditioned for the 3:00-5:00 pm period, but were never broadcast. The American Bandstand experiment in the summer of 1957 had become an overnight sensation, and was retained in the ninety minute pre-Mickey Mouse adjacency.

ABC then planned to enter the early afternoon, starting at three and moving back a half hour at a time, but these plans were not fruitful for 1957-58.<sup>38</sup>

### III. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

In January, Mr. Treyz hired Gene Accas from the Television Bureau of Advertising to act as his administrative assistant in all phases of the network's operations.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> "ABC-TV Ready to Pull Out the Stops," Broadcasting Magazine, LII (January 28, 1957), 27-28.

<sup>39</sup> Variety, January 30, 1957, p. 23.



To hasten the network's entrance into the daytime, ABC appointed for the first time, an executive producer for daytime programs -- Armand Grant, formerly General Manager of WBAL-TV, Baltimore.<sup>40</sup>

Another network executive producer was added in late-August, when Johnny Stearns, a former NBC staff producer, joined ABC.<sup>42</sup>

There was one administrative change for 1957-58. J. English Smith resigned as Administrative Manager of the Program Department, and was replaced by John Green.<sup>41</sup>

The ABC Program Department for 1957-58 included

Leonard Goldenson	President, ABC-UPT, Inc.
Oliver Treyz	Vice President, Television Network
James Aubrey, Jr.	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Ted Fetter	Director of Television Programs
Daniel Melnick	Manager of Program Development
Armand Grant	Executive Producer for Daytime Television
John Green	Administrative Manager of the Program Department
Sandy Cummings	Administrative Manager, Western Division
Richard DePew	Manager of Television Program Operations
Thomas M. Lufkin	Program Manager, Western Division
Rowe S. Gieson	ABC-Walt Disney Coordinator
Don Van Atta	Assistant Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions
Charles Mortimer	Manager of Program Production
William Seaman	Program Service Manager
James McNaughton	Director of Production Services
Bernard Paulson	Manager of Production Services
Louis F. Sarman	Production Supervisor for Live Originations
Robert Adams	Executive Producer for the Western Division
John Stears	Executive Producer
Freelon Fowler	Film Program Manager
Frank G. Ralston	Director of the Western Division Film Department
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division
Ruth Kiersted	Program Traffic and Operations

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., June 12, 1957, p. 31.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., August 28, 1957, p. 25.

## IV. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC strengthened its alliances with Hollywood's major studios and independent producers. In November 1956, the network made an agreement with Warner Bros. to base its film production at that studio. Many of the ABC independent producers were to occupy the proposed million-dollar administration building, which was to be completed by May 1957. The ABC-Warner Bros. agreement was an unusual one because it was "non-exclusive;" there was no stock purchase or exchange of options involved in the proposed plan.<sup>43</sup> The network did, however, anticipate many new Warner Bros. programs for 1957-58.

ABC financed the pilot films for Maverick and Colt 45. Presentations were also prepared for other Warner program concepts, including Amazon Trader, The Texan, Billy the Kid, the Oklahoma Kid, and a general drama.<sup>44</sup> The network was able to sell Maverick, Colt 45, and Sugarfoot (the Tuesday replacement for Conflict), increasing the Warner-ABC output to two-and-a-half hours a week.

ABC also signed a nine million dollar production pact with Walt Disney for 1957-58, calling for 110 half-hours of film for the season.<sup>45</sup> Included was Zorro, a new live-action adventure program, based on the fictional character of the same name.

Zorro was jointly developed by ABC and Walt Disney Productions --

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<sup>43</sup>Variety, November 28, 1956, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup>Variety, February 18, 1957, p. 66; and May 8, 1957, p. 25.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., January 23, 1957, p. 22.

the network and producer agreed on the initial concept and worked side by side on all stages of development. When the program was ready for broadcast, the production responsibilities and creative control passed to Mr. Disney.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to the thirty-nine half hours of Zorro, ABC contracted for sixty-five hours of a new half-hour Mickey Mouse Club and twenty-six new hours of Disneyland, bringing the weekly ABC-Disney output to four hours of film product a week.<sup>47</sup>

Metro Goldwyn Mayer and ABC Television had jointly planned a new series of one-hour mysteries, titled the MGM Mystery Theatre. The companies were to split all production costs and profits, with the network planning to spend as much as \$100,000 for the pilot film.<sup>48</sup> Under the terms of the agreement, MGM was to supply material from unproduced scripts and adaptations of past theatrical films. Unfortunately, however, the idea for the show aroused little sponsor interest, and the pilot film was never produced.<sup>49</sup>

Many prospective series were developed with Hollywood independent producers. ABC worked on two programs with Louis Edelman—the Californians, for which a pilot film was produced, and Tin Pan Sally.<sup>50</sup> When Mr. Edelman and ABC severed their relationship, the producer, in addition to moving Make Room For Daddy to CBS, took the Californians.

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<sup>46</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>47</sup>Variety, January 23, 1957, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., February 20, 1957, p. 22.

<sup>49</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>50</sup>Variety, November 28, 1956, p. 22.

pilot and the Tin Pan Sally show concept to NBC.<sup>51</sup>

The network also financed pilot films for Johnny Pilgrim, a Pine-Thomas-Shane Production, starring Monash; U. F. 61, a police adventure series produced by Norman Frank and Stanley Niss under Norss Productions; Man Against Crime, starring Darin McGavin, a Revue Production; Motive, starring Mike Wallace, and produced by Mr. Wallace; and an audition kinescope for Fame and Fortune.<sup>52</sup>

In an unusual three-way planning and production agreement, ABC, Frederick W. Ziv, and Young and Rubicam Advertising jointly financed and produced the second pilot film for Tombstone Territory.<sup>53</sup>

Several program properties were acquired by ABC, with the network playing little or no part in their development. A case in point was the commitment for twenty-six episodes of the Real McCoys. Irving and Norman Pincus had created the program and had formed, with Walter Brennan, a company called Brennan-Westgate Corporation, which produced the show with Darryl Thomas' Marterle Productions.<sup>54</sup> ABC was first to see the pilot, and committed for the twenty-six episodes.<sup>55</sup>

The network made similar program acquisitions for the Frank Cooper "package," Keep It In The Family, Ziv's West Point Story and

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<sup>51</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>52</sup>Variety, September 13, 1956, p. 98; November 28, 1956, p. 25; and February 6, 1957, p. 37.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., June 6, 1957, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., March 6, 1957, p. 25.

<sup>55</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

Don Fedderson's daytime series, Do You Trust Your Wife.<sup>56</sup> The network had considered the acquisition of Snowfire, a juvenile film series, but later decided against the show because of a disagreement with the producer over program content and storyline.<sup>57</sup>

ABC optioned many other program ideas and pilot films--including Primrose, a western; Win A Million, a big money quiz; Do You Trust Your Wife, with Edgar Bergen; Masquerade Party, a panel program on NBC; Johnny Come Lately, starring Jack Carson (a pilot film originally financed by NBC); Maggie, a situation comedy starring Margaret O'Brien, and produced by McCadden; a proposed one-hour Gary Cooper western, to be produced by Allied Artists; Delbert Mann's Escape, an action-suspense thriller; Screen Gems' Showboat and Dr. Mike series; and re-runs of the Bengal Lancers and Jungle Jim for a proposed 5:00-5:30 pm children's "strip". None of these programs were sold.<sup>58</sup>

The acquisition of "live" programming involved more complicated arrangements. The Frank Sinatra, Pat Boone, and Guy Mitchell shows were bought in the idea stage, after the network had signed contracts with each of the personalities.<sup>59</sup> The Frank Sinatra Show was a joint ABC-Kent Production, though in reality ABC had little control over the show's development.<sup>60</sup> Guy Mitchell, on the other hand, was a General

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<sup>56</sup>Variety, July 3, 1957, p. 36; July 17, 1957, p. 30; and October 2, 1957, p. 30.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., April 17, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., February 13, 1957, p. 33; February 27, 1957, p. 21; May 22, 1957, p. 27; June 5, 1957, p. 25; July 23, 1957, p. 23; and August 28, 1957, p. 40.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., April 20, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>60</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

Artists Company "package" which was brought to the network. ABC did, however, assist in the development of the program.<sup>61</sup> The Pat Boone Show was ABC's idea from the beginning, and was developed by the network and General Artists Corporation.<sup>62</sup> The Mike Wallace Interview had been acquired with Mr. Wallace's services; consequently the network had little or no control over the development of the program.<sup>63</sup>

ABC had invested more money for program development and acquisition for 1957-58 than in any past season. In August 1957, Mr. Treyz estimated that ABC spent over fifty million dollars for new programming.<sup>64</sup>

#### IV. THE NOVEMBER 1957 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

The western-adventure programs mushroomed into an important position in the November 1957 schedule. The "adult western," which had accounted for only 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1956, had increased to 18 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1957, and was, along with musical variety, the largest nighttime program type. Adventure-drama followed with 12 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours. The combined western-adventure programming comprised almost one-third of the nighttime schedule,

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid

<sup>64</sup>"Network TV's Big 1957-58 Trends," Sponsor Magazine, XI (July 29, 1957), 47.

TABLE XXIV

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES  
FOR NOVEMBER 1957, AS COMPARED WITH  
THOSE QUARTER HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1956

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1956</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1957</u>
Adult Western	8	18
Musical Variety	12	18
Adventure Drama	14	12
Situation Comedy	4	6
Sports Features	1	6
Public Affairs	2	6
Sporting Events	3	5
News and Commentary	5	5
Straight Drama	6	4
Country Music	4	4
Children's Variety	9	4
Detective Drama	2	4
Classical Music	2	2
Human Interest	2	2
Audience Participation	2	2
Talk	2	0
Polka, Folk Music	2	0
Comedy Variety	4	0
Feature Films	6	0
Talent Variety	4	0
Miscellaneous	6	0
Total nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	100	98

Data gathered for the first weeks in November 1956 and 1957.

An interesting sidelight of the season was the cancellation of six program types--talk, polka music, comedy-variety, feature films, talent variety, and miscellaneous programming (Omnibus). There were not new categories added, resulting in the reduction of program types--from 21 in 1956 to 16 in 1957.

New Nighttime Program Types. The "adult western" and musical variety were the largest new program types for 1957-58. There were 10 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in each category, representing 20 per cent of all new nighttime programming.

The "adult westerns" included

Colt 45  
Maverick  
Sugarfoot (to alternate with Cheyenne)  
Tombstone Territory

The musical variety programs included

American Bandstand (evening)  
Frank Sinatra Show  
Guy Mitchell Show  
Pat Boone Show  
Patrice Munsel Show

Adventure drama and sports features followed closely behind with 8 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 14 per cent of the new nighttime programming. The increase in sports feature was the result of time sales and the addition of a new "stripped" sports program.<sup>65</sup>

The new adventure dramas included

Circus Boy  
O. S. S.  
Walter Winchell File  
Zorro

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<sup>65</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.



TABLE XXV

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW NIGHTTIME  
ABC PROGRAMMING IN NOVEMBER 1957

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Adult Western	10	20%
Musical Variety	10	20
Adventure Drama	8	14
Sports Features	8	14
Public Affairs	6	11
Situation Comedy	4	7
Detective Drama	2	4
Straight Drama	4	7
Audience Participation Games	2	4
New nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	56	

Data gathered for the first week in November 1957. These figures include new programs which began in the summer.

The new sports features included

Bowling Stars  
Famous Fights of the Country  
Football Film Highlights  
Sports Focus

Public affairs programming was next with 6 new nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 11 per cent of the new nighttime programming. Two of the programs were originated as time "fillers."

The new additions included

Mike Wallace Interview  
Open Hearing  
Religion in American Life

There were only 4 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of situation comedy and straight drama, or 7 per cent of new nighttime programming. The surprisingly few comedy additions were an interesting sidelight, considering the 1957-58 program philosophy. Straight drama, on the other hand, was in a state of general decline.

The new situation comedies included

Date With the Angels  
The Real McCoys

The new straight dramas included

Telephone Time  
West Point Story

There were 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (each) of audience participation games and mystery programs

Audience Participation	Keep It In The Family
Detective Drama	Scotland Yard

### The Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) Hours of Network Service

There was no appreciable change in the extent of the ABC program service. The network continued to fill its "option time" from 7:30-10:30 pm, as well as the 7:00-7:30 pm "station option" periods on six nights and the 10:30-11:00 periods on two.

Although the number of commercial nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours had only slightly increased, ABC was deriving substantially more time revenues. A new March 1957 rate card had eliminated a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent discount for telefilm programs and increased the cost minimum-gross requirement by \$6,000--from \$30,000 to \$36,000.<sup>66</sup> More revealing, however, is a comparison of the gross billings of 1956 and 1957. ABC earned \$59,678,000, or 17.9 per cent of the total nighttime network billings in 1956, as compared to \$70,010,000, or 19.5 per cent of all nighttime network billings in 1957.<sup>67</sup> This represented over a ten million dollar increase.

Though the amount of afternoon program service had only slightly changed, commercial service substantially increased from 32 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1956 to approximately 60 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1957. The Kellogg adventure shows, the Bandstand, and Do You Trust Your Wife were all contributing factors.

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Four commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the

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<sup>66</sup> Variety, February 6, 1957, p. 40.

<sup>67</sup> ABC Television Research Department, "Growth, Man, Growth!" (New York: Marketing and Media Facts, May 1, 1959, #143).

TABLE XXVI

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1957, AS COMPARED  
WITH NOVEMBER 1956

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/56		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/57	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of	Commercial	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of	Commercial
	Program Service	( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Program Service	( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	0	0	0	0
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	68	32	71	60 @
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	101	84	98	84 @

@ These figures are only estimates of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, due to the extremely complicated sales patterns of alternate and participating sponsorships.

season.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/57 (first report)</u>
Conflict	(unavailable)
Crossroads	16.2
Kukla, Fran and Ollie	(unavailable)
Wire Service	14.2

Other commercial summer programming was also discontinued.

Billy Graham  
Hollywood Film Theatre  
Key Club Playhouse  
Moment of Decision  
Theatre Time

Still other sustaining or cooperative programming was pre-empted with the coming of fall.

ABC Presents	Sustaining
The Big Picture	Sustaining
Compass	Sustaining
Country Music Jamboree	Cooperative
Cowboy Rodeo	Cooperative
Flight Number Seven	Sustaining
Focus	Sustaining
Industries in America	Sustaining
It's Polka Time	Cooperative
Midwestern Hayride	Cooperative

### Program Renewals

ABC prepared for 1957-58 with fewer renewals than in past seasons.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/57 (first report)</u>
Wyatt Earp	32.4 AA
Cheyenne	31.4
Disneyland	30.8
Lawrence Welk Show	27.4
Rin Tin Tin	27.1
Broken Arrow	26.7
Jim Bowie	24.7
The Lone Ranger	21.6
Top Tunes and Talent	20.1
Ozzie and Harriet	18.2
Wednesday Night Fights	16.0

Mickey Mouse Club	15.0
Telephone Time	14.6 (Summer)
You Asked For It	13.5
Date With the Angels	12.4 (Summer)
Country Music Jubilee	10.9
Bold Journey	10.6
Voice of Firestone	7.9
Mike Wallace Interview	6.5 (Summer)

Ten of these programs received Nielsen ratings of at least 18.0; six of the ten earned Nielsens of at least 25.0. The nucleus of important programming had grown in size as well as audience popularity--providing the network's strongest foundation at the beginning of a season.

#### Program Additions

All Star Golf - Top professional golfers competed in eighteen hole head-to-head matches, with the winner getting \$2,000 and the loser, \$1,000. The winner of the match appeared on the program until he was defeated.

American Bandstand - An evening version of the afternoon Bandstand, featuring teeners dancing to popular records, and guest vocalists. Dick Clark was the host.

Bowling Stars - Joe Wilson described a complete bowling match, offering a \$10,000 bonus to the winner.

The Buccaneers - Filmed repeats of the pirate adventure series.

Circus Boy - The story of Corky, an orphan, who lived and travelled with a circus troupe.

Colt 45 - Christopher Colt, an army undercover agent, was disguised as a gun salesman, traveling throughout the west in the late 1800's, bringing many a criminal to justice.

Frank Sinatra Show - A flexible format which called for both "live" and filmed broadcasts. There were musical variety half-hours, dramatic segments starring Mr. Sinatra, and other dramas which he introduced.

Guy Mitchell Show - A musical variety show featuring the young vocalist and guest stars.

Keep It In The Family - A family of five were pitted against another family. They bid for a question, and if each member of the family answered correctly, a prize was won. When 350 points had been accumulated (from the number of bids), one family was eliminated and another came up for a try at the prizes. Hosts for the series were Bill Nimmo and Johnny Olsen.

Maverick - Bret and Bart Maverick, two handsome gamblers in the West, traveled from town to town attempting to make an easy dollar. The program combined both satirical comedy and the elements of adventure, beautiful women, and a way of life that most men dream of. The brothers were far from perfect--they often left through the back door, rather than face a town sheriff, but they were nevertheless on the side of law and order.

Pat Boone Show - Pat Boone in his own variety show, presenting a likable image of the All-American boy--a pleasant well-scrubbed look, a family man, and a college student. A guest star appeared each week to sing and talk with Pat. In addition, there was a dance group which performed between vocal selections.

Patrice Munsel - The Metropolitan Opera star sang, danced, and talked to one or two weekly guests. As in the other variety programs, there were a chorus and dancing supplementing the vocal selections.

Paul Winchell Show - An afternoon edition of the former Circus Time variety show. Paul Winchell acted as master of ceremonies, with his dummies Jerry Mahoney and Knucklehead Smiff, in a program featuring vaudeville and circus guest stars, and some interwoven comedy sketches.

Real McCoys - A West Virginia family migrated to California. Walter Brennan starred as Grandpappy Amos, "the head of the clan"--which consisted of his grandson Luke; Luke's wife, Kate; Hassie, a teener; and little Luke, the young grandson. The series revolved around their attempts to adjust to "western" living.

Scotland Yard - Edgar Lustgarten acted as the host and narrator of case histories from the files of Scotland Yard.

Sir Lancelot - Filmed repeats of an adventure drama set in the days of King Arthur.

Sugarfoot - A quiet lawyer on horseback traveled throughout the west in the late 1800's, encountering, as did the other western heroes, adventure, outlaws, Indians, and scores of pretty girls.

Superman - Filmed repeats about the wonder man who could fly, break steel girders in two, and bring any and all criminals to justice.

Tales of the Texas Rangers - Dramatizations of cases from the current files of the Texas Rangers.

Tombstone Territory - The editor of the Tombstone Epitaph and the town's young marshall fought the violence and evil in the town of Tombstone.

Walter Winchell File - The columnist narrated stories, mostly of crime and violence, which he had personally covered for the New York Daily Mirror.

West Point Story - Filmed at West Point, the series told of the life of army cadets--of their triumphs and crises, their loves and adventures.

Wild Bill Hickok - Filmed repeats of the adventures of Marshall Wild Bill Hickok, and his deputy, Jingles, starring Guy Madison and Andy Devine.

Woody Woodpecker - Walter Lantz, the producer, acted as the host. He sat in his office and used real props to enhance his narrative--weaving together some old and new cartoons.

Zorro - A swashbuckling hero in Spanish California, symbolized by a black cape and a sword, rode through the countryside and aided the forces of law and justice, though he always managed to foil the military. The series was complete with a leering villain, a comic foil, and many scenes of fencing, fighting, and adventure.

#### Format Revisions.

Guy Mitchell Show - Because of critical reaction and low ratings, ABC personnel flew out to Hollywood in mid-October to revise the format. All traces of comedy were eliminated and guest appearances restricted, to performers only.<sup>68</sup>

Mickey Mouse Club - Two filmed series (produced abroad) were added to the "Newsreel" and the "Hardy Boys."<sup>69</sup>

Program Costs. Thirteen of the commercial nighttime programs cost at least \$30,000. Never before had ABC assembled as expensive a group of new shows. The industry-wide adventure-western and musical comedy trends (costly program types), increased ABC program expenditures,

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<sup>68</sup> Variety, October 30, 1957, p. 34.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., February 20, 1957, p. 29.



TABLE XXVII

## PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ABC PROGRAMS FOR NOVEMBER 1957

<u>Programs Costing \$30,000 or More</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Frank Sinatra Show	\$75,000
Maverick	75,000
Sugarfoot	70,000
Patrice Munsel	45,000
Zorro	44,500
Real McCoys	44,000
Pat Boone	40,000
Walter Winchell File	40,000
Guy Mitchell	38,000
Colt 45	37,500
Tombstone Territory	37,500
Date With The Angels	35,000
Telephone Time	35,000
 <u>Programs Costing Less than \$30,000</u>	
Circus Boy	22,000
All Star Golf	20,500
Paul Winchell (Daytime)	14,800
Bowling Stars	11,700
Mike Wallace Interview	11,700
West Point Story	10,800
Texas Rangers (Daytime)	9,250
Scotland Yard	8,800
Woody Woodpecker (Daytime)	7,500
Superman (Daytime)	5,200
Wild Bill Hickok (Daytime)	4,700
American Bandstand (Evening)	3,000
The Buccaneers (Daytime)	2,900
Sir Lancelot (Daytime)	2,900
American Bandstand (per $\frac{1}{4}$ hour)	1,700

Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

improved clearances, and a more attractive "image" were some of the contributing factors accounting for the growth of expensive programming. For 1957-58, the network had scheduled Colt 45, Date With The Angels, the Frank Sinatra Show, the Guy Mitchell Show, Maverick, the Pat Boone Show, the Patrice Munsel Show, the Real McCoys, Sugarfoot, Telephone Time, Tombstone Territory, Walter Winchell File, and Zorro.

Six of the new programs cost less than \$30,000. These included the American Bandstand, Bowling Stars, Circus Boy, Scotland Yard, the Mike Wallace Interview, and the West Point Story.

All of the daytime additions were inexpensively produced. The lower "sets-in-use" figure for the afternoon dictated the moderate program costs. Tales of the Texas Rangers, broadcast on Sunday afternoon, was the most expensive of the programs, costing \$9,250 an episode. Prices of other shows ranged from \$7,500 for Woody Woodpecker to \$2,900 for Sir Lancelot.

Program Production and Control. ABC created and produced only one fall program--the nighttime version of the American Bandstand.

The network did, however, have varying degrees of production and creative control on a number of its new properties. For several of the programs in this category, the art of persuasion was about the only means ABC had for bringing about program revisions and strengthening weak spots in prime time. The chief issue in this case was inflexibility; the resistance by packagers and agencies could delay important changes.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1957, p. 23.

Colt 45	Warner Bros.
Frank Sinatra	Kent Productions
Guy Mitchell	General Artists Corporation
Maverick	Warner Bros.
Mike Wallace Interview	Newsmaker Productions
Pat Boone	General Artists Corporation
Sugarfoot	Warner Bros.
Tombstone Territory	Ziv Productions
Zorro	Walt Disney

The other new ABC programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

All Star Golf	DeMet Productions
Bowling Stars	Championship Productions
Bucaneers	Kellogg Foods
Circus Boy	Screen Gems
Date With The Angels	Don Federson
	Plymouth Division, Chrysler Motors
Keep It In The Family	William Morris Agency
Patrice Munsel	Buick Division, General Motors
	William Morris Agency
Real McCoys	Brennan-Westgate Productions
Scotland Yard	Anglo-American Film Distributors
Sir Lancelot	Kellogg Foods
Superman	Kellogg Foods
Tales of the Texas Rangers	General Mills
Telephone Time	Bell Telephone Company
Walter Winchell File	Desilu Productions
West Point Story	Frederick W. Ziv
Wild Bill Hickok	Kellogg Foods
Woody Woodpecker	Walter Lantz
	Kellogg Foods

#### The Evolution of the Fall Schedule

The ABC programmers decided on a complete Thursday realignment. The network committed for the Zorro program, which was tentatively scheduled for 7:30-8:00 pm. The high cost of the show, however, made it imperative to move the adventure to a later time period when there would

be more "sets-in-use."<sup>71</sup> Zorro was inserted at 8:30 pm, and then moved back to 8:00-8:30 pm. The Pat Boone Show had previously been set for 9:00 pm. Bold Journey, broadcast in mid-season 1956-57 at 9:30 pm, was transferred to Monday for 1957-58, with Telephone Time moved into the Thursday time period to provide Pat Boone with a stronger lead-out.<sup>72</sup> A change of plans, however, resulted in Mennon's purchase of 9:30-10:00 pm--the company, transferring its television budget from the cancelled Robert Montgomery Presents to ABC--inserted O. S. S. in the Boone adjacency.<sup>73</sup>

In Early May, Sylvania ordered the Real McCoys for 8:30-9:00 pm and Mars Candy brought Circus Boy from NBC for 7:30-8:00 pm, displacing the Lone Ranger (which was moved to Sunday afternoon).<sup>74</sup> The remaining 10:00-10:30 pm time period was filled with Navy Log, which had been broadcast on another evening.

The final Thursday schedule, comprised of compatible, family-type programming with "get-age" appeal, included

7:30 - 8:00	<u>Circus Boy</u>
8:00 - 8:30	<u>Zorro</u>
8:30 - 9:00	<u>Real McCoys</u>
9:00 - 9:30	<u>Pat Boone</u>
9:30 -10:00	<u>O. S. S.</u>
10:00 -10:30	<u>Navy Log</u>

Sunday was another important evening for the ABC programmers.

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<sup>71</sup>Interview with Jules Barnathan.

<sup>72</sup>Variety, February 27, 1957, p. 22.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., April 10, 1957, p. 26.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1957, p. 38.

Since 1953, the network had attempted to counterprogram against the variety hours on NBC and CBS. For 1957-58, ABC contemplated either a strong block of action-adventure programs or first-run American feature films.

The network began negotiations with Kaiser Industries for an alternate week motion picture for 7:30-9:00 pm. Original plans called for a schedule of United Artists and 20th Century Fox "post-'50" features. Kaiser purchased a two hour time block in anticipation of the films--representing an estimated five million dollars a year for time charges alone.<sup>75</sup> The two hour buy was reduced in June to ninety minutes.<sup>76</sup> When, however, it was apparent that a sufficient number of quality films were unobtainable, the negotiations fell through--Kaiser had decided to cancel the 7:30-9:00 pm order.<sup>77</sup> ABC, however, was determined to place a strong program at 7:30 pm and also retain the Kaiser sponsorship. The network screened several different shows for Young and Rubicam, the Kaiser agency.<sup>78</sup> One of these prospective series was Maverick, a one-hour western which was the strongest prospect. Oliver Treyz flew to Honolulu to personally confer with Henry Kaiser--taking with him a print of the Maverick pilot.<sup>79</sup> A few days later, in early August, an ABC-Kaiser agreement had been made. Henry Kaiser, having seen the

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1957, p. 23.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., June 5, 1957, p. 19.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., June 19, 1957, p. 28.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>"Sponsorscope," Sponsor Magazine, XI (June 29, 1957), 12.

pilot film, signed a commitment for an entire weekly hour of Maverick for Sunday at 7:30 pm at an estimated cost of seven million dollars for time and talent charges.<sup>80</sup> A new corporation was formed to produce the series, giving Warner Bros., ABC, and Kaiser Industries joint ownership in this and other television properties to be produced by Warner Bros. under Kaiser sponsorship.<sup>81</sup> The ABC determination for a strong program on early Sunday evening and Henry Kaiser's bold experimentation resulted in a strong keystone program, around which the network later built a powerful program line-up.

ABC could not sell an adventure companion-piece for 8:30-9:00 pm. The network did, however, find both a sponsor and program for the time period when it signed American Machine and Foundry's Bowling Stars.<sup>82</sup>

General Foods purchased 10:00-10:30 pm, the only other commercial time period, and inserted the Scotland Yard series. Mike Wallace, originally scheduled at this time, had been previously moved to Saturday.<sup>83</sup>

The network programmed 9:00-10:00 pm with Open Hearing, a public service feature, and Football Film Highlights, a sustaining sports program.

The final Sunday schedule, in an embryonic stage of development, included

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<sup>80</sup>Variety, July 3, 1957, p. 23.

<sup>81</sup>"ABC-TV Signs Kaiser To Sponsor Maverick," Broadcasting Magazine, LIII (July 8, 1957), 38.

<sup>82</sup>Variety, August 8, 1957, p. 25.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., September 11, 1957, p. 50.

7:00 - 7:30	You Asked For It
7:30 - 8:30	Maverick
8:30 - 9:00	Bowling Stars
9:00 - 9:30	Open Hearing
9:30 -10:00	Football Film Highlights
10:00 -10:30	Scotland Yard

The entire Friday night line-up centered around the pivotal Frank Sinatra Show, which had been set by ABC for 9:00-9:30 pm. There had also been two renewals which served as the early evening pivots-- Rin Tin Tin (7:30-8:00 pm), and Jim Bowie (8:00-8:30 pm).

In March, Plymouth ordered 9:30-10:00 pm, the post-Sinatra adjacency. It had originally planned to place a strong musical variety program in the time period but later decided on the Betty White Show which began in the summer.<sup>84</sup> Later that month, Buick bought the 8:30-9:00 pm time period, the Sinatra lead-in, and tentatively scheduled the Californians. When the company signed for Wells Fargo on NBC, it abandoned plans for the ABC adventure, because it did not want to sponsor two westerns.<sup>85</sup> After nearly two months of searching for a program, Buick finally signed Patrice Munsel for a weekly variety show budgeted at \$50,000.<sup>86</sup> ABC had hoped for a western-adventure between Jim Bowie and Frank Sinatra, but was not in a position to reject the three million dollar Buick account. The network therefore compromised, and permitted the scheduling of the variety hour.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., March 6, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1957, p. 21.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1957, p. 19.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1957, p. 23.

The 10:00-10:30 pm time period was purchased by Campbell's Soup for ABC's Colt 45. Guy Mitchell, tentatively scheduled for this period, was moved to another evening.<sup>88</sup>

The Friday line-up, less compatible than Thursday evening, included

7:30 - 8:00	Rin Tin Tin
8:00 - 8:30	Jim Bowie
8:30 - 9:00	Patrice Munsel
9:00 - 9:30	Frank Sinatra
9:30 -10:00	Date With The Angels
10:00 -10:30	Colt 45

There were few program changes on Wednesday--with Disneyland, Ozzie and Harriet, and the Wednesday Night Fights renewed--leaving only the vacant 8:30-9:00 pm and 9:30-10:00 pm time periods.

In May, Bristol Myers ordered 8:30-9:00 pm, planning to insert its own program. ABC, however, was intent on a strong western-adventure in the post-Disneyland adjacency and therefore played an important part in the selection of Tombstone Territory. The program at 8:30 pm had the difficult task of bridging Disneyland and Ozzie and Harriet; for this reason, the network was particularly set in its thinking.

Later in May, Revlon bought the Walter Winchell File for 9:30-10:00 pm; in so doing, it reduced its Guy Mitchell order to one-half, instead of full sponsorship.<sup>89</sup>

Wednesday, like Thursday, had evolved into a highly compatible line-up of programming.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., April 3, 1957, p. 32.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., May 15, 1957, p. 27.



7:30 - 8:30	Disneyland
8:30 - 9:00	Tombstone Territory
9:00 - 9:30	Ozzie and Harriet
9:30 -10:00	Walter Winchell File
10:00 -11:00	Wednesday Night Fights

There was only one program change on Tuesday. Cheyenne, Wyatt Earp, Broken Arrow, and Telephone Time had all been renewed. The American Chicle purchase of one-half of Sugarfoot for 7:30-8:30 pm eliminated all possibility of Conflict returning as the Cheyenne alternate.<sup>90</sup>

The one show added to the line-up was West Point at 10:00-10:30 pm. The Tuesday line-up from 7:30-9:30 pm was still highly compatible programming--two hours of western-adventure drama. The evening concluded with the weaker Telephone Time and West Point, two time sales.

7:30 - 8:30	Cheyenne/Sugarfoot
8:30 - 9:00	Wyatt Earp
9:00 - 9:30	Broken Arrow
9:30 -10:00	Telephone Time
10:00 -10:30	West Point

The programmers were faced with a potentially weak Monday evening line-up; the Voice of Firestone and Bold Journey, two specialized programs, had both been renewed. ABC accepted the programs because they represented millions of dollars in revenues. Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes had also been renewed by Plymouth.

The network had originally planned for a sixty to ninety minute block of action-adventure programming in the early evening. When, however, R. J. Reynolds cancelled Wire Service, leaving a 7:30-8:30 pm vacancy, the plans were abandoned.

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1957, p. 21.

In August, Max Factor placed an order for the 8:00-8:30 pm time period.<sup>91</sup> The cosmetic company considered Do You Trust Your Wife and Those Whiting Girls as possible insertions.<sup>92</sup> When, however, Revlon transferred most of its Guy Mitchell television allocations to Walter Winchell, Max Factor ordered the variety program and placed it in the Monday time period.<sup>93</sup>

With a 7:30-8:00 pm availability in late September, ABC programmed the inexpensive American Bandstand--which was produced for less than \$3,000 a week.<sup>94</sup>

The Monday line-up, the weakest in the ABC schedule, was anything but compatibly programmed. It was, however, almost completely sold-out with four commercial programs.

7:30 - 8:00	American Bandstand
8:00 - 8:30	Guy Mitchell Show
8:30 - 9:00	Bold Journey
9:00 - 9:30	Voice of Firestone
9:30 -10:30	Top Tunes and Talent

ABC hoped to install an early evening western-adventure block on Saturday, but failed to do so for 1957-58. The Lawrence Welk Show, renewed by Dodge, was the pivot for the entire evening.

The network had planned to keep Country Music Jubilee at 10:00 pm. When, however, the Mike Wallace Interview was moved to this time period, the country music show was pushed ahead to 8:00-9:00 pm. ABC was not

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., July 10, 1957, p. 29.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., July 17, 1957, p. 30.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., July 24, 1957, p. 53.

<sup>94</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

ready to enter this highly competitive time period with expensive programming, and believed that it could do a service for a specialized audience. Moreover, Country Music Jubilee had a farm machinery sponsor which had prospects of developing into a good thing.<sup>95</sup>

ABC had originally created a Dick Clark program for 7:30-8:00 pm but this was transferred to early Monday evening (the American Bandstand). At the start of the season, the network acquired the Frank Cooper "package," Keep It In The Family, and scheduled the program for the 7:30 pm time period.<sup>96</sup>

Saturday, for the most part highly specialized, included

7:30 - 8:00	Keep It In The Family
8:00 - 9:00	Country Music Jubilee
9:00 -10:00	Lawrence Welk
10:00 -10:30	Mike Wallace Interview

An important daytime change was the reduction of the Mickey Mouse Club to a half-hour daily, and the addition of new programming in the 5:00-5:30 pm weekday time period. The first half-hour of the Mickey Mouse Club was not only a poor sell-out, but also slower on ratings than the last half.<sup>97</sup> ABC had hoped to schedule a "live" juvenile-variety program at 5:00 pm, but later sought a filmed "strip." In May, both programming and an advertiser were acquired. The Kellogg Company ordered 5:00-5:30 pm "across-the-board" in all time zones for an estimated seven million dollars. This was its first network buy, having previously used "spot" television for its programs. Kellogg, detecting a positive

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<sup>95</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>96</sup>Variety, October 2, 1957, p. 30.

<sup>97</sup>Variety, December 26, 1956, p. 22.

viewing pattern in the time period, particularly when it preceded Mickey Mouse, had decided to use ABC Television. The cereal company supplied five programs--Superman, Wild Bill Hickok, Sir Lancelot, Woody Woodpecker, and the Buccaneers.<sup>98</sup>

## V. THE MARCH 1958 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Six ABC programs were cancelled at mid-season 1957-58.

American Bandstand - Transferred to Saturday.  
 Bowling Stars - Pre-empted with stronger programming.  
 Football Film Highlights - Cancelled at the end of the football season.  
 Guy Mitchell Show - Low ratings.  
 Keep It In The Family - Low ratings.  
 Telephone Time - Low ratings.

### Program Additions

The Betty White Show - Plymouth replaced Date With The Angels with this "live" variety program, starring Betty White.

Format - There was an overriding theme for each show, such as "getting along" with impossible people. Guest stars from the stage, screen, and television appeared with Miss White.

The Dick Clark Show - Developed by ABC, this program evolved from the nighttime and daytime versions. James Aubrey, Talent Vice President, liked the show and broadcast it ahead of a sale. After a week or two, it was purchased by Beech Nut.<sup>99</sup>

Format - Dick Clark emceed this teen-age variety show which featured popular recording stars pantomiming their records to a teen-age studio audience.

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<sup>98</sup>Variety, May 29, 1957, p. 27.

<sup>99</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

Harbormaster - (Retitled Adventure At Scott Island) ABC attracted the R. J. Reynolds adventure series, produced by Ziv, from CBS, where it was appearing against Zorro, and taking a rating punishment.

Format - Barry Sullivan starred as the captain of a fishing launch that operated off Scott Island, California.

Love That Jill - Max Factor cancelled Guy Mitchell and bought this situation comedy as a replacement. The cosmetic company had a fifty-two week time commitment with ABC.<sup>100</sup>

Format - Anne Jeffreys and Robert Sterling starred as competitive New York model agency operators.

Make Me Laugh - William Morris sold this Pat Weaver "package" to the American Tobacco Company for an initial thirteen weeks, with contract clauses allowing for renewal "well beyond" the fifty-two week mark.<sup>101</sup>

Format - Three or four comedians were integrated into a format using audience participants. For each second a participant kept a straight face while the comedian attempted to make him laugh, he was paid a dollar. Occasionally, there were "mystery" comedians from among the top ranks. Robert Q. Lewis was the master of ceremonies.

Sid Caesar Invites You - Helena Rubenstein purchased the program for eighteen weeks, and brought it to ABC for a January premiere.

Format - The spotlight was on Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca, with Carl Reiner and Paul Reid featured. The program consisted largely of sketches which changed in characterization each week. Retained for Mr. Caesar's singles were Professor Harnsby, the offbeat musician; the German professor; and Somerset Winterset, the "concise English host." Musical and production numbers were minimized.

#### Format Revisions.

Do You Trust Your Wife - The show gave away big prizes for identifying certain mystery husband-wife teams.

## VI. THE AUGUST 1958 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Nine commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the

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<sup>100</sup>Variety, January 1, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., February 12, 1958, p. 49.

summer quarter.

Adventure At Scott Island  
 Betty White Show  
 Frank Sinatra  
 Love That Jill  
 Make Me Laugh  
 Patrice Munsel  
 Sid Caesar Invites You  
 Walter Winchell File  
 West Point

Other programming, either sustaining or cooperative, was also discontinued.

O. S. S.

Summer Cancellations. Only four programs were cancelled for the thirteen week summer period.

Colt 45  
 Pat Boone Show  
 Top Tunes and Talent  
 Voice of Firestone

#### Program Additions

In June, the ABC Television Network asked its owned-and-operated stations and affiliates to provide it with local program ideas and formats for the summer months and possibly the fall as well.<sup>102</sup> This would be not only an inexpensive means of programming for ABC but also financially beneficial for the stations as producing agents.<sup>103</sup> As a result of this request, the owned-and-operated KABC and WBKB originated programs, as did affiliates in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Dallas.

The new summer programming included

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<sup>102</sup>Ibid., June 11, 1958, p. 41.

<sup>103</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

Andy Williams Show - The Chevrolet summer replacement for Pat Boone featured the vocalist with the Bob Hamilton Trio (dancers), Dick Van Dyke, and a well tuned chorus.

Anybody Can Play - Four contestants competed for cash and prizes by responding to questions on a point system. Contestants appeared for many weeks. Viewers participated by submitting their estimates of age, weight, and ability of contestants, with the winner getting the \$100,000 jackpot. George Fenneman emceed this program originating in Hollywood.

Baseball Corner - A baseball discussion pivoted by ex-Giant infielder Buddy Blattner, and featuring Frankie Frisch, Duke Snider, Bob Feller, and Pee Wee Reese. The program originated from WBKB, Chicago.

Confession - Produced by WFAA, Dallas, Confession was an interview show with convicted criminals. Jack Wyatt, the host, described the record of the criminal and then interviewed him. Guests usually included a psychiatrist and a clergyman in a discussion of the case.

Cowtown Rodeo - Marty Glickman described the proceedings at a New Jersey rodeo.

E. S. P. - Emcee Vincent Price had matching contestants, the "supersensitives," in isolation booths guessing at numbers on decks of playing cards. An important feature was a \$100,000 grand prize for the home audience who tried their hand at guessing a series of five cards.

After a few weeks, the format of this Cheesebrough Ponds package was revised. Two guests appeared whose experiences were dramatized, after which the "supersensitives" were interviewed. The concluding segment was devoted to an E.S.P. (extra-sensory-perception) test with the two guests. This format was retained for only a few weeks.

The series was then retitled Tales of E.S.P., with Mr. Price introducing filmed dramas. The show was discontinued after six or seven broadcasts.

Frigidaire Summer Theatre - Re-runs of filmed dramas.

Harness Racing - Yonkers Raceway.

Midwestern Hayride - Country music from Cincinnati, Ohio.

Pantomime Quiz - A panel acted out ideas submitted by the home viewers.

Polka Go Round - Polka and folk music from WBKB, Chicago.

Stars of Jazz - In a program originating from KABC, Hollywood, Bobby Troup was the host--with Shorty Rogers and the Giants, and June Christy. Visual backgrounds were prepared to supplement the music.

Traffic Court - Dramatic recreations of traffic cases presented in a realistic Los Angeles court setting, with Edgar Allen Jones, Jr. presiding as the judge. The program originated from KABC, Hollywood.

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE 1957-58 SEASON

ABC Television, under the leadership of Leonard Goldenson and Oliver Treyz, spent more money on programming and talent than ever before. The company secured a sixty million dollar bank loan--a large portion of which was used for the acquisition of Frank Sinatra, Guy Mitchell, Pat Boone, Mike Wallace, The Real McCoys, and Zorro. Additional sums of money were spent for program development with the major Hollywood studios and independent producers.

Mr. Treyz, the new Vice President of the Television Network, was guided by a basic philosophy--program toward the younger-larger post-war families--the families with more buying power who are less set in their ways--the families who are likely to change their viewing habits. There was a concentration on action-adventure-western programming--the "bread-and-butter" category, as Mr. Treyz referred to them. These were the program types capable of reaching this mass audience. Musical variety and situation comedy were also high on the priority list.

The new programmers also put more emphasis on audience research and its importance in program scheduling--guided by the principles of counterprogramming and compatible thematic programming.

The network hoped to build Monday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings, and had tentative action programs scheduled on each of them. ABC succeeded, however, on only two nights--with Maverick set as the early evening pivot for Sunday and Zorro, Real McCoys, and Pat Boone as the foundation for Thursday. The plans for Monday and Saturday were not fruitful. The network also anticipated considerable strength on Friday with the Frank Sinatra Show serving as the pivotal point.



ABC increased its strength in the daytime with the addition of the Kellogg adventure "strip" and Do You Trust Your Wife to the powerful American Bandstand and Mickey Mouse Club.

There were individual program successes--Maverick, Zorro, the Real McCoys, and Pat Boone, in addition to surprising showings from Tombstone Territory and Colt 45. There were also many disappointments--Frank Sinatra, Guy Mitchell, Sid Caesar, Walter Winchell File, Mike Wallace, and Patrice Munsel, to mention a few. With the exception of Patrice Munsel (which was considered an excellent program), these shows were critical as well as audience failures.

The 1957-58 season was therefore both gratifying and disheartening for ABC. The network's commercial revenues had increased; two evenings had been strengthened with Maverick, Zorro, Pat Boone, and the Real McCoys; and there was a substantially larger nucleus of popular programming--Top Tunes and Talent, Sugarfoot/Cheyenne, Wyatt Earp, Disneyland, Tombstone Territory, Ozzie and Harriet, Wednesday Night Fights, Zorro, Real McCoys, Pat Boone, Rin Tin Tin, Colt 45, Dick Clark, Lawrence Welk, Maverick, Mickey Mouse, and the American Bandstand.

But, there were advances here, setbacks there. The network had bolstered Sunday and Thursday, but was loosing strength on Wednesday and Friday. NBC had scheduled the powerful Wagontrain against Disneyland--and CBS, Trackdown against Jim Bowie. The ratings for the ABC programs were being reduced by the NBC and CBS additions. The network had to do some realigning itself to maintain its position on these evenings. In addition, there were Monday and Saturday, and portions of the other nights to consider. ABC, however, was already in preparation for 1958-59, hoping that additional advances in the season to follow would place the "third network" in a fully competitive position.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE 1958-59 SEASON

In many ways, 1958-59 was a continuation of the past season. The irregularly scheduled "special" had almost become a weekly feature on NBC and CBS, with programs including the Dupont and Hallmark monthly presentations. Western drama was still attracting some of the largest audiences in network television. It continued to flourish in 1958-59, with the addition of the Texan, Yancy Derringer, Wanted-Dead or Alive, Bat Masterson, Buckskin, Northwest Passage, Rifleman, Rough Riders, Lawman, and Cimarron City. The closely related detective dramas were also multiplying, with new programs including Peter Gunn, Richard Diamond, Naked City, and the one-hour 77 Sunset Strip and Ellery Queen. From all indications these action shows were stronger than ever--several of them in new one-hour form.

There were, however, some program changes from one season to the next. The big money quiz shows had all but disappeared from the schedules after the widely publicized "scandal." The \$64,000 Question, Twenty-One, Tic Tac Dough, and subsequently the \$64,000 Challenge were all discontinued. General drama also showed signs of decline, with Studio One, Climax, Turn of Fate, Suspicion, and the Schlitz Playhouse cancelled for 1958-59. There were also many variety shows which were withdrawn--Pat Boone being one of the few vocalists whose show was renewed for 1958-59.

Interest had shifted to the comedians. Jackie Gleason, Milton Berle, George Burns, and Ed Wynn were all starred in half-hour programs,

with Garry Moore featured in a new one-hour nighttime variety show. This was to be the season, the programmers believed, for a rebirth of television comedy. Only one of the comics--Garry Moore--staged a successful comeback, with all of the other programs cancelled by the end of the season.

NBC and CBS realigned their nighttime schedules to more actively compete with each other and the growing ABC. NBC scheduled a western-adventure, Northwest Passage, against the first half-hour of Maverick, hoping to attract some of the gambler's audience and provide a suitable lead-in for the Steve Allen program.

ABC's new Thursday strength in 1957-58 brought about extensive changes on NBC. The network completely reprogrammed Thursday evening (7:30-9:30 pm) with Jefferson Drum, Ed Wynn, Concentration, and Behind Closed Doors. CBS also realigned its 8:30-9:00 pm time period with Yancy Derringer, a western.

In the face of competitive program changes, a mounting number of "specials," and the most conservative buying season in years, ABC prepared to enter 1958-59--the network's most important season since its merger over five years before.

#### I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Program planning for 1958-59 followed a pattern similar to the past season. The programmers again concentrated on a few program types, continued to acquire "star-power" for ABC, scheduled programs in an orderly and logical manner, concentrated on one or two evenings, and planned to expand the daytime operation.

### Concentration on a Few Program Types

The action-adventure formula had rewarded ABC with the Maverick success on Sunday evening. The network had attracted a large audience with the show--primarily the "get-age" audience which it was aiming for.

"We're after a specific audience. The young housewife--one cut above the teenager--with two to four kids, who has to buy the clothing, the food, the soaps, the home remedies. It's this woman in the twenty to thirty year-old range that the action appeals to most. The heroes are all good looking virile types. The women like to look at them. And the husbands go along for the self-identification with the he-man type.<sup>1</sup>

The thinking at ABC was that westerns were valuable not so much as program types but rather as springboards for television's new, rugged masculine stars. The star, and not the show, was the indispensable thing.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the network planned to enter other action categories, namely mystery drama, using these as vehicles for the development of new leading men. A case in point was 77 Sunset Strip, starring Efrem Zimbalist and Roger Smith--two stars who appealed to the women as well as the men and children in the audience.

ABC also planned to develop and acquire situation comedies with family appeal.

It's the smile that comes from familiar, identifiable situations that we're after, not the guffaw over pratt-falls or snicker over the ultra-sophisticated.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, LXXXIII (June 15, 1959), 17.

<sup>2</sup>Bob Chandler, "Profile of the New TV Star," Variety, May 6, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>"How Net TV Shows Line Up for the Fall," Sponsor Magazine, XII (June 21, 1958), 35.

The programs were to revolve around believable families, in the same manner as Ozzie and Harriet and the Real McCoys. Believability and an illusion of reality--two prerequisites for audience interest and participation--were important considerations in the plotting of an ABC situation comedy.

#### Talent Development and Acquisition

In June 1957, ABC Television acquired the services of Bing Crosby with a \$2,500,000 exclusive long-term contract for at least two ninety-minute specials a year, in addition to co-production of two half-hour pilot films a season for the next five years in partnership with ABC.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Crosby's corporation was to be paid \$150,000 a "spectacular" for his personal services in either an hour or hour-and-a-half format. The singer was to also take an active part in the production of the pilot films, and be available to star in them.<sup>5</sup>

Frank Sinatra, also under an exclusive ABC contract, did not appear on ABC in 1958-59. Mr. Goldenson explained that the vocalist would concentrate on his three picture commitments, but that he would be available for 1959-60 to star in two or three "special" programs.<sup>6</sup>

Mike Wallace was under contract to the network until April 1959, although there were no immediate plans to star him in a series of his own. An audition pilot film had been produced for the Motive series, featuring Mr. Wallace as narrator-host, but the property had to be sold in order to be broadcast.

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<sup>4</sup>Variety, June 4, 1958, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup>"Crosby-ABC-TV Set \$2.5 Million Pact," Broadcasting Magazine, LIV (June 9, 1958), 87.

<sup>6</sup>Variety, September 24, 1958, p. 21.

Pat Boone was the only recently acquired ABC personality who was starred in a weekly program series; all the others were kept on reserve or featured in special programs for 1958-59 and subsequent seasons.

#### Night by Night Planned Programming

There was a concerted effort to reprogram those time periods where audiences were not up to expectations and where ABC wanted the most desirable product.<sup>7</sup> It was anticipated that most changes would fall on those nights where the network was already strong.<sup>8</sup>

ABC had definitely decided to build late Tuesday evening. The network wanted to find another western for the 9:00-9:30 pm time period, replacing Broken Arrow and providing the strongest possible lead-out for Wyatt Earp.<sup>9</sup> ABC had tentatively scheduled the mystery drama 77 Sunset Strip for 9:30-10:30 pm; this program was later moved to another night. It should be noted, however, that 77 Sunset Strip was anticipated as a late evening program--from Tuesday, it moved to late Sunday and finally to Friday at 9:30 pm.<sup>10</sup>

On Thursday, ABC had planned to follow its strong line-up of programs with an adventure or western half-hour at 9:30 pm. In April,

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<sup>7</sup>"ABC-TV Previews Expanded Bill," Broadcasting Magazine, LV (September 22, 1958), 43.

<sup>8</sup>"How Fall TV Programming Shapes Up," Sponsor Magazine, XII (April 12, 1958), pp. 34-5.

<sup>9</sup>Statement expressed by Fred Pierce, ABC-TV Manager of Television Research (personal interview).

<sup>10</sup>"How Fall TV Programming Shapes Up," Sponsor Magazine, loc. cit.

Roadblock had been considered, though the final choice was Ziv's Rough Riders.

ABC hoped to install Tales of Frankenstein on late Saturday evening as the Lawrence Welk 10:00 pm adjacency.<sup>11</sup> The early hours presented a problem with the formidable Perry Como competition. The network, however, considered the idea of scheduling a one-hour action-adventure opposite Perry Mason.<sup>12</sup>

There was definitely to be a western-adventure series placed "back-to-back" with Maverick at 8:30-9:00 pm. Adventure at Scott Island had not been strong enough to capture a large audience-flow from Maverick and discourage dial-switching at 8:30 pm. ABC also planned to build late Sunday with either an adventure-mystery, drama, or some other form of strong programming.

Underlying all program planning, however, were considerations of what various clients wanted. The programmers could only tentatively plan revisions and changes--subject to advertiser approval. Though the network might have anticipated a particular program in a time period, the prospects of a sale might have necessitated certain changes. ABC did operate, however, within a certain framework for the important evenings under consideration. For Tuesday (9:00-9:30 pm), Thursday (9:30-10:00 pm) and Sunday (8:30-9:00 pm), the programs had to be the "bread and butter" action type--and they had to be good programs, for they were to bridge the early and late evening. In other cases (with the exception of Monday), adjacent programs had to be compatible, even

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

though the line-up might include a mixture of situation comedy and action-adventure programming.

#### Concentration on One or Two Evenings

Certain programs were rescheduled to take advantage of competitive situations.<sup>13</sup> The transferring of two key programs changed the complexion of Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Oliver Treyz and his program staff had been working for weeks to move Disneyland to Friday evening. The desire to remove the program from the powerful Wagontrain competition, and in turn, set the foundation for a strong Friday night structure made such a change advisable.<sup>14</sup>

As early as April, ABC had planned to reshuffle the Friday schedule. The original idea called for the pre-emption of Jim Bowie with a stronger telefilm at 8:00 pm, and a mixture of situation comedy and mystery-adventure for the rest of the evening.<sup>15</sup> Messrs. Treyz and Moore decided to concentrate on Friday, rather than Monday, because it did not make sense to disturb Purina's Bold Journey and the Voice of Firestone just to push for big ratings.<sup>16</sup>

In the next few months, 77 Sunset Strip had been sold for 9:30-10:30 pm, and Man With A Camera for 8:00-8:30 pm. The insertion of a more adult version of the Walt Disney Show in the early evening could

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<sup>13</sup>"ABC-TV Previews Expanded Bill," Broadcasting Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>15</sup>Variety, April 9, 1958, p. 79.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.



give the network a three-hour action-adventure block of strong programming. Mr. Treyz believed that this was the solution to a powerful Friday evening -- especially since Ellery Queen, a new program, had been set for 8:00-9:00 pm on NBC.

In August, Plymouth, through the Grant Advertising Agency, asked for a new fall time period for its Top Tunes and Talent program. The company wanted 7:30-8:30 pm Monday, hoping to attract more of a teenage buying potential.<sup>17</sup> Such a change was impossible on Monday night because of the "clock time" arrangements across the country. Firestone wanted to go "live" throughout the United States, which meant competing against a taped edition of Lawrence Welk outside the eastern region.<sup>18</sup> On Wednesday, however, Plymouth was willing to forget its "clock time" demand, though the reason was not disclosed. Jack Minor, Vice President at Dodge, personally toured the advertising agencies, pushing for approval of the Disney move to Friday.<sup>19</sup> The program and time change was finally sanctioned--Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes and Talent moved to Wednesday into the Disneyland time period, and the new Walt Disney Presents was rescheduled at Friday 8:00-9:00 pm, pushing back General Electric's Man With A Camera to 9:00-9:30 pm.

The partially planned, partially evolved new programming on Wednesday and Friday provided ABC with counterprogramming against Wagontrain, as well as its most powerful Friday schedule--comprising Rin Tin Tin, Walt Disney Presents, Man With A Camera, and 77 Sunset Strip.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., August 6, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., August 20, 1958, p. 25.

### Expansion of Daytime Program Service

ABC Television anticipated an additional expansion in its daytime program service, with a minimum of two-and-a-half additional hours a week. Most probably, one program was to be scheduled at 2:30 pm and another before noon.

We know that full benefits accruing to affiliates and network alike can only come from being a full-time network. That is an axiom--full-time operation for full-time profits.<sup>20</sup>

In the months which followed, ABC underwent a marked expansion in its daytime service in one of the most unusual arrangements of its kind. The network and Young and Rubicam Advertising devised an elaborate plan for a full-time daytime operation known to the trade as "Operation Day-break." An account will follow under Program Development and Acquisition.

### Entrance Into Special Programming

Because of increased client demand and stars under contract, ABC Television planned to increase its activities in "special" programming.<sup>21</sup> The network, however, limited itself to those "specials" which were really "special."<sup>22</sup> Emphasis was placed on personality and idea programs, such as the forthcoming Bing Crosby and Art Carney-Bill Baird Shows. The "special" program played some part in ABC's future planning because of its prestige value and its ability to establish relationships with new

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<sup>20</sup> ABC Television Research Department, "1957 Mother Goose Rhymes" (a special report to ABC-TV affiliates at the Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 7, 1957).

<sup>21</sup> Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV Vice President of Program Development (personal interview).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

clients.<sup>23</sup>

Leonard Goldenson and the parent ABC-UPT also gave their approval to as many public affairs "specials" as John Daly's department saw fit to present. Mr. Daly expected to do four to six specials for 1958-59, or one about every two months, determined by "what's happening and what's tellable."<sup>24</sup>

Mr. Goldenson was considerably impressed by the critical reception given "Report Card," and the Peabody Award for "Prologue, 1958," and was consequently in favor of the expansion.<sup>25</sup>

None of these "specials" were to be broadcast in color. ABC was adhering to its past policy.

The intention of ABC is to make an investment in color when we see a trend on the part of the public to buy sets-- a trend to warrant conversion to color. But we're broadcasters. We're not selling sets.<sup>26</sup>

The network nevertheless prepared for subsequent color activities. In September 1958, Mr. Goldenson stated that ABC will have two Hollywood sound stages equipped for color in "six to nine months," and eventually eight color studios there.<sup>27</sup> In Chicago, \$750,000 of the \$1,500,000 WBKB facilities expansion was accountable to color costs -- and \$2,000,000 of the \$4,500,000 spent for new studio construction in Detroit allocated to color. The network stressed, however, that such activities would begin only when set circulation was "well above the present 250,000 figure."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Variety, May 21, 1958, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., September 24, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

## III. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

In April 1958, James Aubrey, Jr. resigned as ABC Vice President in charge of Programming and Talent and moved to CBS. His ABC replacement was Thomas Moore, formerly Vice President in charge of Television Sales. Mr. Moore, in moving into the area of talent and programming, was to be concerned primarily with the administration of the department which arranged outside program buys.<sup>29</sup> At the time of his appointment, Mr. Moore contemplated no changes in the structure of personnel make-up of the department, but stressed that Ted Fetter, Director of Programs, would play a stronger role within the framework of his present title.<sup>30</sup>

When it was evident that ABC would enter daytime television on a fully competitive basis (with the inauguration of "Operation Daybreak" in October), the network added Geraud Chester as the new Vice President of Daytime Programs. Armand Grant, who had done a heavy share of administrative and policy work in programming the new plan, became the new Director of Daytime Programming, reporting directly to Mr. Chester.<sup>31</sup> In August, Julian Bercovici, former Manager of NBC-TV's Nighttime Program Operations, joined the daytime operation as an executive producer.<sup>32</sup>

Sandy Cummings, in an expansion of the Western Division, was promoted from Western Program Manager to the Director of the Program Department.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., April 2, 1958, 31.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., August 27, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., October 8, 1958, p. 24.

Probably the most important administrative change for 1958-59 was the appointment of John Green as ABC Executive Producer. Mr. Green had previously been Manager of the Program Department, which was largely an administrative post.<sup>34</sup> The reasoning behind the promotion was to provide ABC with a Program Department man to work on a high level with advertising agencies on the production of shows. Always shorthanded, the network's Program Department had found it difficult to supervise shows which were sold and on the air. Mr. Green was to supervise the current nighttime programming from the network's point of view.<sup>35</sup>

Leonard Maskin assumed most of Mr. Green's former duties, moving from his post as Manager of Production Services to Administrative Manager of ABC Programming.<sup>36</sup>

The ABC Program Department for 1958-59 included

Leonard Goldenson	President, ABC-UPT, Inc.
Oliver Treyz	President, Television Network
Tom Moore	Vice President, Programming and Talent
Ted Fetter	Director of Television Programs
John Green	ABC Executive Producer
Daniel Melnick	Manager of Program Development
Geraud Chester	Vice President, Daytime Programs
Armand Grant	Manager of Daytime Television
Leonard Maskin	Administrative Manager of the Program Department
Sandy Cummings	Manager of the Program Department, Western Division
Richard DePew	Manager of Television Program Operations
Thomas M. Lufkin	Program Manager, Western Division
Rowe S. Gieson	ABC-Walt Disney Coordinator
Don Van Atta	Assistant Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., November 5, 1958, p. 35.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

Charles Mortimer	Manager of Program Production
William Seaman	Program Service Manager
James McNaughton	Director of Production Services
Bernard Paulson	Manager of Production Services
Louis F. Sanman	Production Supervisor of Live Originations
Robert Adams	Executive Producer for the Western Division
Freelon Fowler	Film Program Manager
Frank G. Ralston	Director of the Western Division Film Department
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division
Burt Modella	Program Development, Western Division
Ruth Kiersted	Program Traffic and Operations

#### IV. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

ABC Television strengthened its alliance with Warner Bros. in 1958-59. Pilot films were produced for Public Enemy, a one-hour crime melodrama; Room For One More, a half-hour situation comedy; and the Deputy (later retitled Lawman).<sup>37</sup> In addition, ABC developed several program concepts with the motion picture studio--among them the Forty Niners, the House of Wax, and the Las Vegas Story.<sup>38</sup> The network committed for an hour-long mystery series, 77 Sunset Strip, on the basis of a Warner Bros. feature film, "Girl On The Run," which served as the pilot for the series.<sup>39</sup> Two new Warner properties were broadcast in 1958-59: Lawman and 77 Sunset Strip--in addition to the established Maverick, Sugarfoot, Cheyenne, and Colt 45.

In anticipation of 1960-61, ABC also commissioned Warner Bros. to

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., February 19, 1958, p. 41.

<sup>38</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>39</sup>Variety, February 19, 1958, p. 41.

prepare 16 ninety-minute "spectaculars" commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Civil War, in an agreement involving millions of dollars in production costs.<sup>40</sup> Mr. Treyz explained that this was a contract in itself and had no connection with other ABC-Warner Bros. agreements.<sup>41</sup> The programs would premiere in January 1961, featuring dramatizations of major battles and events to be televised on the anniversary of their occurrences. Never before had ABC planned so far in advance for so ambitious a project. It was estimated that production costs might well exceed \$500,000 an episode.<sup>42</sup>

ABC Television also signed co-production agreements with Columbia's Screen Gems for two prospective program series: Tales of Frankenstein and the Donna Reed Show. The network financed the pilot for the Frankenstein program and anticipated joint production of the series if the show was sold. The development of the property was sparked by the success of ABC Films' Shock package of feature films. Tentatively scheduled for Saturday evening, this first ABC offering for 1958-59 was never sold.

The Donna Reed Show was jointly developed by ABC and Screen Gems. In fact, the network had an idea for a "mother knows best" type of show before Donna Reed was signed to star in the series. ABC financed the pilot film, and upon the sale of the program, became a co-producer and co-owner of the series.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., August 13, 1958, p. 35.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., P. 63.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

Still other arrangements were made with independent Hollywood producers for 1958-59. ABC financed pilot films for the Revue Productions (Music Corporation of America) of Roadblock (ABC did not have to pay for this series, but played a part in its development) and an Orson Welles series to be produced in Italy.<sup>44</sup> Neither of the two were broadcast in 1958-59. The network also financed pilot films for Barbary Coast, produced by International Television Association; Motive, starring Mike Wallace, and produced by Adrian Spies; and Genuine Custer, a comedy series.<sup>45</sup> Several other program concepts were jointly developed by ABC and independent producers, including The Man Nobody Knows, Tokyo Police, a Marie Wilson project, an air force series, and the June Allison Show.<sup>46</sup>

ABC purchased the Screen Gems telefilm the Naked City, and then resold the program to Brown and Williamson Tobacco and Quaker Oats. An interesting aspect of the acquisition was Brown and Williamson's decision on the program before it was brought to ABC. The network, however, went through the formality of buying the show and then reselling it to the interested advertiser, thus becoming the licensee from the independent producer or packager. ABC adopted this policy in order to protect itself from losing the show and any other outside package to the other networks once it had become popular and an integral part of an evening.<sup>47</sup> One or

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Statement expressed by Leonard Goldenson, President of American Broadcasting-United Paramount Theatres (personal interview).



two seasons before, the network came close to losing Rin Tin Tin and Lawrence Welk, programs controlled not by ABC but by their respective advertisers.

ABC also optioned a number of film properties for 1958-59--a package of 170 Paramount theatrical cartoons from Harvey Films for a late afternoon telecast; and the Guild Films Bible series, Light of the World, a dramatic anthology which would have been scheduled at Sunday 7:00-7:30 pm. Neither of the programs were broadcast in the fall.<sup>48</sup>

Several "live" properties were considered for 1958-59, in keeping with ABC's policy of more "live" programming. As Mr. Goldenson stated, in reference to an increased "live" output

We'll go to Canada, Europe, or Japan--anywhere that good programs are available.<sup>49</sup>

ABC negotiated for "live" programming of almost every category. The network produced, in association with Talent Associates, videotape pilots for Young Mr. Middleton, a family comedy series, and 87th Precinct, a half-hour police drama taped on the streets of New York.<sup>50</sup> Pat Weaver and ABC were partners in the production of a one-hour "live" comedy-variety hour, The Mad Show, based on satirical material from the pages of Mad Magazine.<sup>51</sup> The network also developed formats for the new Patti Page and Sammy Kaye shows.

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<sup>48</sup>Variety, March 5, 1958, p. 34; and July 23, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>49</sup>"ABC-TV Previews Expanded Bill," Broadcasting Magazine, LV (September 22, 1958), 43.

<sup>50</sup>Variety, April 23, 1958, p. 20; and July 30, 1958, p. 25.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., June 4, 1958, p. 23.

ABC optioned other series including Ed Byron's Diagnosis Murder, Goodson-Todman's It's News To Me, the Wayne King Show, Summer Rosenthal's Win A Million, and Bid 'N Buy.<sup>52</sup> For the first time in network history, ABC (an American network) had successfully negotiated with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for presentation of the General Motors Theatre, a successful Canadian program to be broadcast in the United States for twenty-six weeks. The show never aroused advertiser interest and was subsequently telecast for only four weeks.<sup>53</sup> The network had also planned a quality dramatic series for 1958-59 produced by the Writers Guild of America. Approximately 600 members of the WGAW had pledged to write scripts, and many stars had agreed to appear on the four million dollar series.<sup>54</sup> With the exception of the Canadian dramatic program, none of these plans were realized for 1958-59.

By the first of October, ABC was developing its own "special" programming. At that time, it offered for sale a one-hour property starring Art Carney, titled Peter and the Wolf. Dan Melnick had created the show's concept and brought in the Baird puppets and Mr. Carney. The network also had other ideas for "special" programs, including a circus hour to originate as a remote broadcast.<sup>55</sup> Both shows were telecast in 1958-59.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1958, p. 79; and September 3, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1958, p. 77.

<sup>54</sup>Variety, August 28, 1957, p. 23.

<sup>55</sup>Variety, October 1, 1958, p. 23.

### Operation Daybreak

In mid-summer 1958, Young and Rubicam Advertising ordered ten hours a week, or forty new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of a daytime block offered by ABC.<sup>56</sup> This agency agreement represented over thirteen million dollars in time charges alone, and accounted for four-fifths of the sixty ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours which ABC Television planned to program in the fall.<sup>57</sup>

"Operation Daybreak" had developed from a single client buy made by Young and Rubicam with ABC some six months before.<sup>58</sup> The agency believed that the "D for Daytime" rate and a possible fifty per cent discount for charter advertisers would result in an amazingly low "cost per thousand." This was the key to the Young and Rubicam agreement for forty weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours--to be divided among General Foods, Johnson and Johnson, Drackett, Bristol Myers, and Beech Nut.<sup>59</sup>

In answer to criticisms of the new daytime plan, and the thinking that "it appears that Young and Rubicam in effect will be operating as a fourth television network in the daytime," Oliver Treyz stressed that the plan was being offered to other agencies and was not solely a Young and Rubicam idea.<sup>60</sup> The agency was to have no more than the usual control over programming, with ABC maintaining a firm grasp on the entire sixty ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of the new daytime operation.<sup>61</sup> To avoid the accusations of

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<sup>56</sup>"ABC-TV Scores Daytime Coup," Broadcasting Magazine, LV (July 14, 1958), pp. 34-5.

<sup>57</sup>Variety, July 2, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>58</sup>"Why, How Y & R Bought 'Daybreak'," Broadcasting Magazine, LV (July 21, 1958), 40.

<sup>59</sup>"ABC-TV Scores Daytime Coup," Broadcasting Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Variety, July 2, 1958, p. 23.

time brokerage, Y and R expected to break up its two daily hours of programming.<sup>62</sup>

Maximum discounts for charter advertisers reduced a total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour's time and talent charges to \$6400. To earn such a rate, the advertiser had to place a minimum order for four weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for a total of twenty-six weeks.<sup>63</sup> By purchasing these four ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, the advertiser received twelve commercial minutes and was allowed to trade off two of every three (per ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour) that he bought--using the pattern he desired--providing the availability existed.<sup>64</sup> ABC believed that by approaching sales in this manner, an advertiser was enabled to increase his cumulative audience to offset any deficiencies the network had in coverage (ABC's 85 per cent, as compared to NBC's or CBS' 93 per cent).<sup>65</sup>

In essence, the charter plan provided the advertiser with a free ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour for every ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour purchased. In comparison to the other networks' \$18,000 per ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour for time and talent, the ABC total of only \$6400 represented a sizeable discount. ABC realized that any real profits from a daytime operation would come from sales beyond the initial sixty ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.<sup>66</sup>

The planning of "Operation Daybreak" at the beginning of August left ABC scarcely two months in which to prepare programming. The Young and Rubicam time commitment had been made without a program lineup.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>"ABC-TV Scores Daytime Coup," Broadcasting Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>64</sup>Variety, July 19, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

ABC and the advertising agency were interested in fast results with the new daytime properties. The agreement, providing for only a short term sponsorship of twenty-six weeks, necessitated such program thinking. Serial drama, it was decided, would take too long to build an audience.<sup>68</sup> The operation called for bright "live" daytime programming--musical variety, audience participation and game quizzes were the most likely candidates for the new daytime line-up.<sup>69</sup> In line with this policy, Peter Lind Hayes and Liberace were signed for their own series. Programs under development included the Freddie Martin Show, For Better, For Worse, Touch and Go, Man In Your Life, Jig Jag, Beat the Clock, Divorce Court, Mother's Day, and Music Bingo. In all, ABC pushed through ten complete audition kinescopes, or approximately two for each of six programs, in the weeks preceding the October deadline.<sup>70</sup> Many of the programs were pre-tested before audiences gathered in the ABC Television Center in New York. There, audience reactions were measured and formats refined in order to originate the strongest possible program line-up. One show, Chance For Romance (formerly Man In Your Life), received an on-the-air "sneak preview" on the network's New York station, WABC-TV.<sup>71</sup>

The prospective series were jointly developed by ABC and many independent producers. The network had wrested control of its daytime operation from Young and Rubicam, who was permitted to play only a

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<sup>68</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Variety, October 8, 1958, p. 44.

<sup>71</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

consultancy role, even though the agency was opposed to two of the new programs.<sup>72</sup> One of the reasons for recapturing control was the fear that other advertising agencies would resent the idea of a competitor so handily controlling shows on which they had bought or intended to buy advertising.<sup>73</sup>

By September, seventeen advertisers had purchased sixty-five ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (of a possible seventy) and the new programming was about set. Six new shows had been selected for a mid-October premiere, with a total weekly production budget of \$150,000. The series had been hand-picked and promised to be refreshing additions to daytime television.

11:00 - 11:30	Day In Court	(Court-room Drama)
11:30 - 12:30	Peter Lind Hayes	(Talk Variety)
12:30 - 1:00	Mother's Day	(Women's Quiz)
1:00 - 1:30	Liberace	(Musical Variety)
1:30 - 2:00	STATION TIME	
2:00 - 2:30	Chance for Romance	(Human Interest)
2:30 - 3:00	STATION TIME	
3:00 - 3:30	Beat the Clock	(Audience Participation)

In addition, ABC's late afternoon programming had been revised. Mr. Treyz had formerly stated that the network would program 5:00-5:30 pm when the Kellogg adventure strip was discontinued, instead of returning the time to the stations. ABC wanted to maintain a strong lead-in for the Mickey Mouse Club.<sup>74</sup> The American Bandstand, a highly rated program, was pushed back to 4:00-5:30 pm, with Johnny Carson's Who Do You Trust scheduled at 3:30-4:00 pm in the Beat the Clock adjacency.

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<sup>72</sup>Variety, October 8, 1958, p. 44.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., July 2, 1958, p. 35.

## IV. THE NOVEMBER 1958 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

The "adult western" and musical variety program types were still the largest categories in the ABC nighttime schedule, with 18 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each.

Adventure drama was also a major ingredient in the schedule, with 12 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (unchanged from November 1957).

News and commentary, with 10 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of nighttime programming, was the third largest program type. The origination of a second week-night newscast accounted for the 5 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour increase over the past November.

Two program types--children's variety and public affairs--were not listed in 1958-59. Polka music, on the other hand, reappeared with 4 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.

Sports features had all but disappeared from the 1958 schedule, with only 1 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour, as compared to the 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1957.

The only other category which showed a change over the one year period was mystery drama--increasing 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.

New nighttime program types. ABC's emphasis on "bread and butter" action programming becomes more apparent in an analysis of new nighttime programs. There were 18 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 39 per cent of all new nighttime programming, in the action (western-adventure-mystery) category--with 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in each of the three subdivisions.

The new "adult westerns" included

Lawman  
Rifleman  
Rough Riders

TABLE XXVIII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES FOR  
NOVEMBER 1958, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE QUARTER  
HOURS IN NOVEMBER 1957

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1957</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1958</u>
Adult Western	18	18
Musical Variety	18	18
Adventure Drama	12	12
News and Commentary	5	10
Situation Comedy	6	8
Detective Drama	4	6
Straight Drama	4	4
Country Music	4	4
Polka, Folk Music	0	4
Sporting Events	5	3
Classical Music	2	2
Human Interest	2	2
Audience Participation	2	2
Sports Features	6	1
Children's Variety	4	0
Public Affairs	6	0
Total nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	98	94

Data gathered for the first weeks in November 1957 and 1958.



The new adventure dramas included

Man With a Camera  
Walt Disney Presents

The new mysteries included

Naked City  
77 Sunset Strip

There were also 6 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of musical variety, or 13 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

Patti Page Show  
Sammy Kaye Show  
This Is Music

News and commentary followed with 5 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 11 per cent of the new nighttime programming. The addition of Don Goddard and the News accounted for the new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.

There were 4 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours each of situation comedy, straight drama, and polka music, or 9 per cent of the new nighttime programming. The industry-wide decline of situation comedy and straight drama, combined with their expensive costs for quality writing and performances, partially explained their limited development on ABC.

The new situation comedies included

Donna Reed Show  
Leave It To Beaver

The new dramatic show was

Encounter (broadcast for only four weeks)

The new polka music program was

Polka-Go-Round

Audience participation games and courtroom drama were in last position, each with 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 4 per cent of the new nighttime programming. The origination of courtroom drama was part of an industry-

TABLE XXIX

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW ABC NIGHTTIME  
PROGRAMMING IN NOVEMBER 1958

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Adult Western	6	13%
Adventure Drama	6	13
Detective Drama	6	13
Musical Variety	6	13
News, Commentary	5	11
Situation Comedy	4	9
Straight Drama	4	9
Polka, Folk Music	4	9
Audience Participation Games	2	4
Courtroom Drama	2	4
New nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	45	

Data gathered for the first week in November 1958. These figures include those programs which began in the summer.

wide trend. The use of videotape and the inexpensive nature of the program type made it ideal for sustaining or cooperative time filler.

The audience participation game      Anybody Can Play

The courtroom drama                      Traffic Court

### The Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) Hours of Network Service

There was no appreciable change in the amount of nighttime program service in the fall of 1958. ABC was filling 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours--all of its "option time" with the exception of Tuesday 10:00-10:30 pm. In addition, the network had successfully launched a late evening version of John Daly News at 10:30 pm ("station-option time"), as well as another news program at 7:15-7:30 pm.

There were few, if any, changes in the number of commercial nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours. Revenues, however, showed a marked increase. ABC was selling its time at smaller discounts which were more in line with straight card rates.<sup>75</sup> Gross nighttime billings had risen from \$83,071,000, or 16.1 per cent of total network billings in 1957 to \$103,017,000, or 18.2 per cent in 1958.<sup>76</sup>

The growth of network service in the daytime was more pronounced. The number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of morning (8:00 am - 1:00 pm) program service (an area which ABC had not entered since 1954) had increased to 42. There was also a substantial growth in the afternoon period, with service increasing from 71 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1957 to 94 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1958. There was an

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<sup>75</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, loc. cit.

<sup>76</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "Growth, Man, Growth!" (New York: Marketing and Media Facts, May 1, 1959, #143).

TABLE XXX

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR NOVEMBER 1958, AS COMPARED  
WITH NOVEMBER 1957

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/57		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/58	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	0	0	42	44 @
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	71	60	98	80 @
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	98	84	94	80 @

@ These figures are only estimates of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, due to the extremely complicated sales patterns of alternate and participating sponsorships.

accompanying expansion of commercial periods in the daytime--from 60 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1957 to 124 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours in 1958. Though the majority of the new time was sold at large discounts, daytime revenues mushroomed as well. In 1957, ABC earned \$13,061,000, or 11.0 per cent of the total daytime network billings, as compared to \$21,826,000 or 12 per cent in 1958.<sup>77</sup>

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Eight commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the season.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/58 (first report)</u>
Broken Arrow	23.2 AA
Circus Boy	17.9
Jim Bowie	21.1
Kellogg Adventure Strip	(unavailable)
Mike Wallace Interview	8.1
Navy Log	12.4
Scotland Yard	5.3
Tombstone Territory	16.9

Broken Arrow and Jim Bowie were pre-empted by the network with stronger programming.

Bristol Myers cancelled Tombstone Territory so it could sponsor the new Ruditsky crime series on NBC.<sup>78</sup>

Mars Candy moved Circus Boy back to NBC for Saturday morning broadcast. The Kellogg Company also withdrew its adventure "strip" from ABC, though it retained the programs and spotted them across the country.

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Variety, May 7, 1958, p. 27.

The other programs were cancelled because of poor ratings.

Other commercial programs were summer replacements which were cancelled when the fall programming began.

Andy Williams Chevy Show  
Baseball Corner  
Extra Sensory Perception  
Ford Summer Theatre  
Pantomime Quiz

### Program Renewals

ABC prepared for 1958-59 with about the same number of program renewals as in 1957-58. These were, however, the strongest programs the network had ever assembled for a specific season.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/58 (first report)</u>
Wyatt Earp	34.2 AA
Cheyenne/Sugarfoot	32.2
Real McCoys	29.4
Disneyland (Walt Disney)	28.5
Zorro	27.1
Maverick	26.6
Ozzie and Harriet	24.2
Lawrence Welk	22.2
Pat Boone	21.7
Colt 45	21.3
Rin Tin Tin	20.6
Mickey Mouse Club	19.1
Lone Ranger	17.7
Top Tunes and Talent	17.4
Dick Clark Show	13.6
Wednesday Night Fights	13.5
Tales of the Texas Rangers	12.8
Country Music Jubilee	11.0
Bold Journey	10.7
You Asked For It	9.8
American Bandstand	9.3
Paul Winchell	9.0
Voice of Firestone	6.4
All Star Golf	6.1
Who Do You Trust	6.1

Eleven of the twenty nighttime programs received March Nielsen ratings of at least 20.0; six of the eleven received at least 25.0. The nine other nighttime programs had ratings ranging from Voice of Firestone's 6.4 to 17.4 for Top Tunes and Talent. Only five or six nighttime program renewals were highly specialized or limited in their audience appeal.

In the light of competitive facilities disadvantages in key cities including Pittsburgh, Syracuse, and Rochester, ABC had made an excellent showing in the national reports. Many of the programs received substantially higher ratings and audience shares in markets where each network had equal facilities.

#### Program Additions

Donna Reed Show - Donna Reed starred as the wife of a busy small-town pediatrician, and the mother of a young son and teen-age daughter.

Lawman - Dan Troop, a professional peace officer (John Russell), and his young deputy, Johnny (Peter Brown) controlled the lawless elements in the western town of Laramie.

Leave It To Beaver - Beaver, a ten year old boy; Wally, his older brother, and their parents faced the day-to-day problems of typical childhood situations.

Man With A Camera - Charles Bronson starred as Mike Kovac, a news photographer, who found excitement and adventure in every shape and form as he covered assignments for his newspaper.

Naked City - John McIntire and James Franciscus co-starred as New York City detectives in a series filmed on the streets of New York. The program was almost a dramatic anthology, with the two characters holding the series together from week to week. Stress was on the characterization of people involved in the cases, rather than on police detection.

Patti Page Show - Miss Page was featured with guest stars, a chorus, and elaborate choreography in a musical variety program.

Rifleman - Lukas McCain, a widower, and his young son lived in the west in the 1880's. Chuck Connors starred as the man who could almost make a rifle talk, with Johnny Crawford featured as his adoring son. Emphasis was not on plot, but rather on characterization and conflict.

Rough Riders - A trio of men brought law and order to the Dakota Badlands and other ambush country during the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War.

Sammy Kaye Show - Sammy Kaye and his Orchestra were featured in a program of instrumental music, with vocal selections intermixed. Production was kept at a minimum, with the accent on the music itself.

77 Sunset Strip - Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. and Roger Smith starred as Stuart Eally and Jeff Spencer, two private detectives who were college trained and well-scrubbed gentlemen about Hollywood. With the aid of Kookie, a parking lot attendant (Edd Byrnes), they solved a weekly crime, in exploits which took them to the four corners of the earth.

#### Format Revisions.

Cheyenne - Disputes with Warner Bros. over personal appearance tours and merchandising resulted in Clint Walker's walkout from the Cheyenne series and his subsequent suspension from the studio.<sup>79</sup> Warner Bros. immediately installed Ty Hardin as Bronco Lane, though the program retained the title Cheyenne. Clint Walker did not settle his differences with Warner Bros. for 1958-59, but was to star in a series of his own in 1959-60.

Disneyland - The title of the program (in its new Friday time period) was changed to Walt Disney Presents to attract a larger adult audience. For 1958-59, only three of the freshly made twenty-six programs were devoted to cartoon product, with the majority of the episodes in the adventure category.

On the assumption that the adults gain control of the television dial at about 8:00 pm, a love interest also was introduced in the Elfego Baca segments.<sup>80</sup>

Top Tunes and Talent - In an attempt to reach a younger audience, Lawrence Welk announced plans for a teen-age band, which would double with his regular orchestra.<sup>81</sup> This corresponded with Top Tunes new early Wednesday time period.

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1958, p. 26.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., October 8, 1958, p. 33.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., August 6, 1958, p. 29.



Voice of Firestone - A new format was conceived for the Voice of Firestone to broaden the appeal of the program. The series was divided into three musical classifications: classical, semi-classical, and popular, with guest orchestras, combos, and soloists appearing each week to represent the kind of music they do most--obviating the need for a regular show orchestra.<sup>82</sup>

Zorro - Two ingredients were introduced into the Zorro format: 1) an intrigue that took several episodes to be resolved, even though a smaller adventure was completely contained in each installment and 2) Jolene Brand, a dark beauty who was the love interest throughout the current series.<sup>83</sup>

#### Daytime Program Additions

Beat the Clock - Bud Collier asked contestants to perform various stunts within an allotted amount of time.

Chance For Romance - John Cameron Swayze extended an invitation for sincere friendship to mature unmarried men and women. The men were brought on, one at a time, to talk to the girl.

Day In Court - Dramatizations of actual court cases with Edgar Allen Jones, Jr. presiding as Judge.

Liberace - A variety program featuring the pianist, and vocalists Dick Roman and Marilyn Lovell, and announcer Steve Dunne.

Mother's Day - Women on a panel answered questions about domestic matters for prizes. Dick Van Dyke emceed this program originating from New York's Latin Quarter.

Peter Lind Hayes - A variety program starring Mr. Hayes, and featuring Mary Healy, Don Cherry and Anita Bryant, the Four Voices, John Bubbles, and Roland Winters.

Uncle Al - A children's show starring Al Lewis, with his straw hat and accordion. He led the children on stage with some singing and games and was assisted by Wanda Lewis as Captain Windy, and Janet Greene as Cinderella. This Cincinnati origination also featured an assortment of hand puppets.

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., October 8, 1958, p. 33.

### Format Revisions

Mickey Mouse Club - Reruns of programs used over the past three years were used on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A collation of previous ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour serials were broadcast on Tuesday and Thursday under the title of Adventure Time.<sup>84</sup>

Program Costs. Nine of the eleven new commercial nighttime programs cost at least \$32,000. ABC, in 1958-59, could point to these expensive new shows--Donna Reed, Lawman, Leave It To Beaver, Man With A Camera, Naked City, Patti Page Show, the Rifleman, Rough Riders, and 77 Sunset Strip.

The two inexpensive additions were Anybody Can Play and Music From Manhattan with Sammy Kaye.

All daytime programming cost less than \$32,000. Although detailed breakdowns of "Operation Daybreak" programming were unavailable, it can be assumed that the programs were priced to insure the advertisers a reasonable and efficient "cost per thousand."

Program Production and Control. ABC had varied degrees of program and production control on the majority of the new series in association with their respective producers.

Donna Reed Show	Screen Gems
Lawman	Warner Bros.
Man With A Camera	ABC Films
Naked City	Screen Gems
Patti Page Show	Oldsmobile
Sammy Kaye Show	Associated Booking
77 Sunset Strip	Warner Bros.

All other new programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1958, p. 28.

TABLE XXXI

## PROGRAM COSTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ABC PROGRAMS FOR NOVEMBER 1958

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<u>Programs Costing \$32,000 or More</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Bing Crosby (special)	\$300,000
Peter and the Wolf (special)	125,000
77 Sunset Strip	75,930
Patti Page Show	45,000
Lawman	43,048
Donna Reed Show	39,750
Leave It To Beaver	37,500
Rifleman	37,000
Man With A Camera	36,676
Rough Riders	35,442
Naked City	35,000
 <u>Programs Costing Less Than \$32,000 @</u>	
Anybody Can Play	21,000
Sammy Kaye Show	10,000
Uncle Al	5,800

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Based on Television Magazine's exclusive estimates of what the advertiser paid for his program. Agency commission is included; cost of producing the commercials is not.

@ All of the "Operation Daybreak" programming was included in this category.

Leave It To Beaver	Ralston Purina
Anybody Can Play	John Guedel
Rifleman	R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company
	Proctor and Gamble
	Four Star Productions
Rough Riders	P. Lorillard
	Ziv Television Productions

Programming for "Operation Daybreak" was produced by ABC in association with various independent producers and talent agencies.

Day in Court	KABC-TV, Hollywood
Peter Lind Hayes	William Morris
Mother's Day	William Morris
Liberace	Don Fedderson
Chance For Romance	Irving Mansfield
Beat the Clock	Mark Goodson-Bill Todman

Although the network produced none of its own programming for 1958-59, the arrangements with these "packagers" and independent producers reflected ABC's needs in terms of its audience and what advertisers would buy. Supervision of the shows during the initial stages of development, and periodic spot-checks once the programs were on the air, provided the network with more control over its schedule than ever before.

#### The Evolution of the Fall Schedule

The decision of Dodge-Plymouth to move Top Tunes and Talent to an earlier time period enabled ABC to strengthen Friday evening. Lawrence Welk was transferred to Wednesday and the new Walt Disney Presents to Friday at 8:00 pm.

A few months before, General Electric had ordered 8:00-8:30 pm for Man With A Camera, displacing the Jim Bowie program.<sup>85</sup> The positioning

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1958, p. 23.

of Walt Disney in the 8:00-9:00 pm position necessitated the rescheduling of Man With A Camera at 9:00 pm.

With the insertion of 77 Sunset Strip at 9:30-10:30 pm, and the renewal of Rin Tin Tin at 7:30 pm, a three hour action-adventure block had evolved. The compatible line-up provided for a maximum audience flow for the entire evening. A combination of program planning, with 77 Sunset Strip scheduled a half hour before the Lineup, and a number of program sales, had resulted in a powerful Friday night schedule.

7:30 - 8:00	Rin Tin Tin
8:00 - 9:00	Walt Disney Presents
9:00 - 9:30	Man With A Camera
9:30 -10:30	77 Sunset Strip

The transfer of Lawrence Welk's Top Tunes and Talent to Wednesday completed an evening which had undergone considerable change. The only program renewals were Ozzie and Harriet and the Wednesday Fights.

In May, Bristol Myers had cancelled Tombstone Territory in favor of a new "roaring twenties" crime program on NBC.<sup>86</sup> Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborne purchased the vacated 8:30-9:00 pm for ABC-Screen Gems' Donna Reed Show, to precede Ozzie and Harriet at 9:00 pm.

Lennon and Newell then ordered 9:30 pm with the understanding that Ozzie and Harriet would remain at 9:00 pm.<sup>87</sup> ABC, however, moved Ozzie up to 8:30 pm on the basis of programming and sequence, in turn pushing Donna Reed back to 9:00 pm.<sup>88</sup> Lorillard, no longer following Ozzie, cancelled and went to Thursday.

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1958, p. 27.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., May 21, 1958, p. 34.

Oldsmobile, who had previously ordered 10:00 pm Tuesday evening for Patti Page, asked to have the program transferred to the comparable Wednesday time period after it learned that Garry Moore was set for late Tuesday.<sup>89</sup> Here again, a combination of sales and program planning provided ABC with an evening of compatible "get-age" programming--a "younger" version of Lawrence Welk, two situation comedies, and a variety program formatted primarily for younger people.

7:30 - 8:30	Top Tunes and Talent
8:30 - 9:00	Ozzie and Harriet
9:00 - 9:30	Donna Reed Show
9:30 -10:00	Patti Page Show
10:00 -11:00	Wednesday Night Fights

ABC already had a strong Sunday foundation with the Maverick renewal in the important 7:30-8:30 pm time period. The network planned to strengthen the later hours following Maverick, building from the 8:30 pm position. As early as the past March, ABC had anticipated a strong western-adventure program as the 8:30-9:00 pm Maverick companionpiece. It contracted with Warner Bros. for such a series, and then persuaded R. J. Reynolds, who had an option on the time period, to purchase the Lawman, and move its Anybody Can Play to Monday evening.<sup>90</sup>

The programming after 9:00 pm was not as firmly set. In April, the network planned to schedule Orson Welles and a Canadian dramatic series from 9:00-9:30 pm and 9:30-10:30 pm, respectively.<sup>91</sup> A change of plans

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<sup>89</sup>Ibid., June 4, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., August 27, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., April 30, 1958, p. 32.

moved 77 Sunset Strip to Sunday 9:00 pm. The sale of that program for Friday, however, transferred Public Enemy into the Sabbath time period.<sup>92</sup> Interplay, the Canadian property was then considered for 9:30-10:30 pm, with a "live" show scheduled as the 9:00 pm lead-in.<sup>93</sup> In September, a videotape sales presentation was prepared for Talent Associates' 87th Precinct for 9:00-9:30 pm.<sup>94</sup> In the midst of this activity, ABC had been negotiating with the Texas Company for a weekly Sunday night dramatic series to originate in New York or Hollywood; if the idea materialized, 87th Precinct was to be moved to another evening.<sup>95</sup> Encounter had already been reduced to four performances, in hopes of drawing the Texas Company into that full season contract.<sup>96</sup> None of these properties were sold; consequently, ABC had only a ninety minute (7:30-9:00 pm) block of strong Sunday programming.

Faced with the problem of filling 9:00-9:30 pm, the network experimented with re-runs of Colt 45, scheduling them as the Lawman lead-out.<sup>97</sup> This was the beginning of a Sunday action-adventure block of programs, providing the foundation for the evening's line-up in 1959-60.

7:00 - 7:30	You Asked For It
7:30 - 8:30	Maverick
8:30 - 9:00	Lawman
9:00 - 9:30	Colt 45
9:30 -10:30	Interplay

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid., July 16, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1958, p. 22.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., September 17, 1958, p. 34.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., October 22, 1958, p. 21.

There was less of a problem on Tuesday night. ABC already had a powerful action block from 7:30-9:00 pm, with Cheyenne/Sugarfoot and Wyatt Earp. The network did, however, hope to improve the later programming after 9:00 pm. Consequently, it pre-empted Broken Arrow for the new Proctor and Gamble property, the Rifleman, and scheduled the western at 9:00 pm--a time period satisfactory to both the advertiser and the network.<sup>98</sup>

ABC had originally planned to install 77 Sunset Strip at 9:30-10:30 pm, but the prospect of an immediate half sale of Naked City, also a detective series, caused some program juggling and the scheduling of the Naked City at 9:30-10:00 pm.<sup>99</sup> With the transfer of Patti Page to Wednesday, the 10:00-10:30 pm time period was unprogrammed until January.

A strong action block did, however, evolve from 7:30-10:00 pm, with the addition of the Rifleman and Naked City.

7:30 - 8:30	Cheyenne/Sugarfoot
8:30 - 9:00	Wyatt Earp
9:00 - 9:30	Rifleman
9:30 -10:00	Naked City

There were few program changes on Thursday evening with Zorro, the Real McCoys, and Pat Boone renewed in their old time periods. Mars Candy had taken Circus Boy back to NBC and Navy Log had been cancelled by its sponsor--leaving the 7:30-8:00 pm and 9:30-10:00 pm vacancies.

In March, P. Lorillard signed for the 9:30-10:00 pm time period, and inserted its Rough Riders, in keeping with the ABC idea of a western

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., April 16, 1958, p.35.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., April 30, 1958, p. 32.



lead-out for Pat Boone.<sup>100</sup>

Leave It To Beaver was originally scheduled by Ralston Purina and Miles Laboratories for Friday at 8:30 pm. With the shift of Walt Disney to that evening, the situation comedy had to be relocated and was subsequently moved to the 7:30-8:00 pm Thursday time period. Beaver and Rough Riders were both compatible with the existing programming--appealing to the "get-age" audiences of Zorro, the Real McCoys, and Pat Boone.<sup>101</sup>

Traffic Court was later added as a cooperative program in the unsold 10:00 pm time period.

7:30 - 8:00	<u>Leave It To Beaver</u>
8:00 - 8:30	<u>Zorro</u>
8:30 - 9:00	<u>Real McCoys</u>
9:00 - 9:30	<u>Pat Boone</u>
9:30 -10:00	<u>Rough Riders</u>
10:00 -10:30	<u>Traffic Court</u>

Monday was admittedly a weak evening. The strongest program in the lineup, Top Tunes and Talent, had been moved to Wednesday, leaving Voice of Firestone and Bold Journey as the only program renewals. The network had tentatively scheduled Pat Weaver's Mad Show for 7:30-8:30 pm, but there was no sponsor interest, as was the case with Broken Arrow and One Step Beyond, also inserted in this time period.

In August, R. J. Reynolds' Anybody Can Play was transferred from Sunday at 8:30 pm to the vacated 9:30 pm time period.<sup>102</sup> The unsold

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid., March 5, 1958, p. 50.

<sup>101</sup>Interview with Fred Pierce.

<sup>102</sup>Variety, September 3, 1958, p. 21.

7:30-8:30 pm and 10:00-10:30 pm were programmed with the cooperative Polka Go Round and This Is Music to keep the network in service.

7:30 - 8:30	Polk Go Round
8:30 - 9:00	Bold Journey
9:00 - 9:30	Voice of Firestone
9:30 -10:00	Anybody Can Play
10:00 -10:30	This Is Music

ABC had scheduled Holiday U.S.A. for 8:00 pm Saturday, but later decided to abandon the travel series and expand Jubilee U.S.A. to a full hour. The 8:00-8:30 pm segment was available for national sale, while 8:30-9:00 pm was offered on a cooperative basis. Dick Clark and Lawrence Welk had been renewed for 7:30-8:00 pm and 9:00-10:00 pm.

Sammy Kaye was the only addition to the evening at 10:00 pm, providing a suitable lead-out for Lawrence Welk. Saturday, while not ABC's strongest evening, nevertheless contained a solid three hours of diversified music--all of which was doing a service for specialized audiences.<sup>103</sup>

7:30 - 8:00	Dick Clark Show
8:00 - 9:00	Jubilee, U.S.A.
9:00 -10:00	Lawrence Welk
10:00 -10:30	Sammy Kaye

In February, ABC had decided to move John Daly News into late "station option time," principally to avert the children's audiences which were in control of the set during the traditional newstime prior to 8:00 pm. The network also believed the 10:30 pm time period would eliminate the early evening news competition which the program had

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<sup>103</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

previously faced. The time change, approved by a sufficient number of affiliates, went into effect in the fall.<sup>104</sup>

In June, ABC originated a second sustaining news program which the affiliates were free to reject. The 7:15-7:30 pm edition was demanded by some of the stations that had used it for consumption in combination with a local news-round-up at 7:00 pm.<sup>105</sup> Don Goddard was selected as the commentator.

#### V. THE MARCH 1959 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

At an affiliates meeting in mid-November, ABC revealed its plans to launch several new programs six months before the usual fall start. Two shows tentatively scheduled for a March or April premiere were the Alaskans, a Warner Bros. one hour adventure to follow Lawman at 9:00 pm; and Doc Holliday, a half hour Warner Bros. western adventure, as the Friday Walt Disney lead-out.<sup>106</sup> The network believed that both the Lawman and Disney were receiving high enough ratings to provide strong lead-ins for these expensive film packages.<sup>107</sup>

ABC wanted to study sponsors' reactions to the idea of buying shows and paying for them throughout the summer, when most of the programs are re-runs or vacationing. The network felt that the new programs could develop an audience edge over their weak summer competition.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>Variety, February 19, 1958, p. 20.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1958, p. 40.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1958, p. 40.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

Though the idea seemed to be a good one, it could not arouse sufficient advertiser interest. Consequently, the plans for these mid-season shows, as well as for Desilu's Grand Jury and Screen Gems' the Fat Man, were never realized.<sup>109</sup>

ABC did, however, reprogram late Sunday evening. The network believed that it owed the stations a stronger program line-up to capitalize on the large Maverick and Lawman audiences.<sup>110</sup> Through ABC Films, it purchased McGraw and Wire Service re-runs at a very reasonable price, and offered the programs as cooperative spot-careers.<sup>111</sup>

The network also disclosed its plans for three prospective "special" programs. The success of Art Carney Meets Peter and the Wolf (broadcast in November) inspired ABC to develop a second "special" along similar lines--the Sorcerer's Apprentice, also featuring Mr. Carney and the Baird Marionettes. The program, scheduled for April 5th, was sold to Minnesota Mining, the sponsor of the original Peter and the Wolf.

The other prospective "special" was a circus program for March 9th, featuring highlights from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus in Charlotte, North Carolina. Budgeted at \$270,000, the program, starring Ernie Kovacs, was sold to the Edsel Division of the Ford Motor Company.

ABC also optioned a ninety minute adaptation of Don Quixote, starring Jose Ferrar, and featuring Jose Greco, his Flamenco Dancers, and guitarist Carlos Montoya--the network was unable to sell the program.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., November 26, 1958, p. 29.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Variety, November 26, 1958, p. 29.

### Nighttime Program Cancellations

Four nighttime programs were cancelled at mid-season.

Anybody Can Play - Low ratings.

Man With A Camera - General Electric budget limitations.

This Is Music - Pre-empted with commercial programming.

Traffic Court - Pre-empted with commercial programming.

### Nighttime Program Additions

Alcoa Presents - Alcoa Aluminum purchased One Step Beyond from ABC Films, and then bought 10:00-10:30 pm Tuesday on ABC. All three networks eagerly sought the account.<sup>113</sup>

Format - Dramatizations of the occult experiences of man with John Newland as host for the series. Mr. Newland, in narrating each story, allowed the television audience to believe or disbelieve what they had just seen.

Accused - ABC inserted this KABC package as filler material in the vacated Patti Page time period and offered the program as a cooperative spot career.<sup>114</sup>

Format - Dramatizations of actual court cases, featuring Edgar Allen Jones, Jr. as the judge.

Billy Graham - ABC sold Saturday 10:00-11:00 pm to Mr. Graham for a limited number of broadcasts.

Deadline for Action - Re-runs of Wire Service.

Dr. I. Q. - Dr. I. Q., the quizmaster, had several aids situated in the audience with portable microphones. He quizzed studio contestants, and gave silver dollars for the questions answered correctly.

Shirley Temple Storybook - Breck cancelled its once-a-month NBC Shirley Temple Show and took the re-runs of the series to ABC for every third Monday, 7:30-8:30 pm, replacing the sustaining programming in that time period.<sup>115</sup>

Format - Shirley Temple narrated hour-long adaptations of famous children's fairy tales.

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid., October 22, 1958, p. 27.

<sup>114</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>115</sup>Variety, October 29, 1958, p. 21.

Tales of the Texas Rangers - Previously broadcast on Sunday afternoon, it was transferred to alternate Mondays at 7:30 pm.

Format - Dramatizations from the files of the Texas Rangers.

Tombstone Territory - ABC was able to find a sponsor for the series, and inserted it in the vacant 9:00 pm Friday time period.

Format - The editor of the Tombstone Epitaph and Clay Hollister, the town's young marshall, fought the violence and evil in the "town too tough to die."

### Daytime Program Cancellations

In sharp contrast to its nighttime success story, the ABC daytime operation (at mid-season) could only be interpreted as unsuccessful--if the national Nielsen reports were used as a gauge.

The \$15,000,000 bought and paid for program line-up, insofar as rating and share of audience, remained about where it was in mid-October, with the other networks maintaining a minimum of a three-to-one rating lead.

ABC had initially promised a 25 per cent share of audience to the new clients, but was obtaining results nowhere near that mark. Here is the Nielsen record from "Operation Daybreak's" inception through the end of December.

<u>Report</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Share</u>
Second October Report	2.0	12.4%
First November Report	2.0	11.6
Second November Report	2.1	11.4
First December Report	2.7	12.6
Second December Report	2.3	11.6

Because ABC was delivering some 900,000 fewer homes per ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour under its "Operation Daybreak" plan than those averaged by NBC or CBS in terms of "cost per thousand," the network, in January, initiated a dividend plan calling for ABC to give advertisers one-minute in

American Bandstand for every four ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours per week they purchased under the daytime plan.<sup>116</sup>

By the end of February, several charter advertisers had taken action. Unofficial count on "Operation Daybreak's" sponsor cancellations after the first twenty-six weeks was 27 spots a week gone and 38 remaining for second cycle.<sup>117</sup> In addition to cancellations of 13 of the 17 General Foods weekly spots and Bristol Myers' 4 spots a week, there had been others reported by Amana Home Freezers (4 spots a week), Minnesota Mining (3 spots), and Nestle (3 spots).<sup>118</sup>

Loss of this business caused problems in the programming area. Mother's Day and Chance For Romance had been cancelled in December and replaced by Play Your Hunch and Music Bingo. While the ratings of Chance were not much, if any, lower than those of the other new ABC daytime programs, there had been many questions asked as to whether the subject matter was "in the interests of good taste for television."<sup>119</sup> By mid-March, the network had decided to discontinue the Liberace and Peter Lind Hayes programs, and subsequently replaced them with George Hamilton IV and the Gale Storm Show.

By the first of June, the program fatality list included

Chance for Romance  
George Hamilton IV  
Liberace  
Mother's Day  
Peter Lind Hayes  
Play Your Hunch

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<sup>116</sup>Variety, January 14, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., February 25, 1959, p. 33.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>Variety, December 10, 1958, p. 23.

### Daytime Program Additions

In the months that followed the inauguration of "Operation Day-break," the ABC program planners changed their daytime philosophy. At the start of the operation, they believed that they should introduce bright new programming into morning and afternoon television in the form of Peter Lind Hayes, Liberace, and an all "live" line-up. ABC, however, had entered a totally new field with new programming, at a time of day when audiences are not gained as quickly as in the evening. The short term contracts with the advertisers in the plan called for fast results -- results which could not be obtained with newly created "live" programming.<sup>120</sup>

The monthly Nielsen reports revealed that Beat the Clock, an already established program, was doing considerably better than the new entries.<sup>121</sup> The program had already acquired an audience on CBS; consequently, the daytime problem of establishing familiarity had been overcome before its appearance on ABC. The scheduling of Music Bingo, which had been telecast the preceding summer on NBC, was also motivated by the philosophy that it is not particularly wise to replace one new daytime show with another. On the theory that new daytime programs build audiences slowly, ABC did not want to begin all over again.<sup>122</sup>

The acquisition of established "live" programs presented a problem; there were no properties with widespread appeal and popularity which were not already tied up. If ABC could have acquired a show like Truth or

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Variety, December 10, 1958, p. 19.



Consequences, it would have done so.<sup>123</sup>

For this reason, the network turned to film programming, hoping to "strip" established nighttime programs on a repeat schedule for two or three re-runs, after which time new replacements would be acquired.<sup>124</sup> CBS and NBC had successfully "stripped" I Married Joan and Our Miss Brooks--programs that had done quite well in the morning and afternoon. ABC adopted a similar policy.

In February, the network acquired the Gale Storm Show from the Independent Television Corporation for approximately five million dollars. The agreement involved from 99 to 111 re-run episodes, with ABC given multiple-run rights over a three year period.<sup>125</sup> Another important facet of the arrangement was a contractual agreement for a minimum of 26 newly produced Gale Storm episodes for broadcast in prime evening time.<sup>126</sup>

Involved in the agreement were CBS and Lever Bros., who were cancelling the Saturday night show, and Young and Rubicam and ABC-TV, who were picking it up. The advertising agency had called upon the network to deliver what it considered a strong film show for "stripping" in hopes of improving ratings. ITC recognized ABC's needs and moved quickly to fill them.<sup>127</sup>

The show began its Monday through Friday daytime run on April 13.

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<sup>123</sup>Interview with Jules Barnathan, ABC-TV Vice President of Research and Station Clearance (personal interview).

<sup>124</sup>Interview with Ted Fetter.

<sup>125</sup>Variety, February 25, 1959, p. 25.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

Daytime program additions at mid-season included

Gale Storm Show - Gale Storm starred as the social director of a luxury liner. Miss Storm, with the aid of Zazu Pitts and Roy Roberts, featured as her companion and the ship's captain, found themselves in continual trouble.

George Hamilton IV - Country music from Washington, D. C., with George Hamilton, Mary Klick, and Roy Clark. (ABC believed that Mr. Hamilton was a promising talent who might attract a sizable following. The program was cancelled after a few weeks.)

Music Bingo - A musical guessing game featuring Johnny Gilbert which used the five letters in the word "music," instead of "bingo."

Play Your Hunch - Merv Griffin emceed this game of intuition. Couples were matched and competed for prizes. A typical question asked was: "Here are three pieces of jewelry...which is the real one?"

## VI. THE AUGUST 1959 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### Program Cancellations

Five commercial programs were cancelled at the start of the summer.

Billy Graham  
Patti Page  
Sammy Kaye  
Top Tunes and Talent  
Voice of Firestone

Other programming, either sustaining or cooperative, was also discontinued.

Deadline For Action  
Dr. I. Q.

### Program Additions

ABC prepared show concepts for three Dick Clark "special" programs. The first show was to feature the Three Stooges; the second to provide a musical resume of the past decade's record hits; and the third, World of Manhattan, to feature the disk jockey on a tour of various New

York night spots. American Machine and Foundry placed an order for half of the programs, with the provision that ABC sell the other half. The network was unable to do so, but nevertheless retained AMF for full sponsorship of the Record Years, which was broadcast in mid-June.<sup>128</sup>

In contrast to past seasons, there were only a few program additions for the summer quarter.

Across the Board - A televersion of the daily crossword puzzle, featuring Ted Brown. Two contestants from the studio audience were pitted against each other in this game of crosswords. They were provided with cartoon clues to elemental English words.

Court of Last Resort - ABC Films bought 26 episodes of this series, with the provision that they would be used on the network and then put into syndication. Assured of a network broadcast, ABC Films had a portion of the costs written off before syndication.<sup>129</sup>

Music For A Summer Night - An ABC produced hour of pleasant music, with singing, dancing, elaborate production and the Glen Osser Orchestra. The series was similar to the revised Voice of Firestone, featuring classical, semi-classical, and popular music.

Oh, Boy - A British television series broadcast by ABC for the summer months, featuring English rock 'n roll groups and occasional American guest stars.

Top Pro Golf - Evening re-runs of Championship Golf, offered to the affiliates as a cooperative program.

## VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE 1958-59 SEASON

ABC Television made major advances in both the nighttime and daytime in 1958-59. The network spent \$40,000,000 for new ABC talent and

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., May 6, 1959, p. 40.

<sup>129</sup> Variety, December 10, 1958, p. 22.

programs—a staggering amount for even NBC or CBS.<sup>130</sup>

Never before could ABC boast of dominance on four nights of the week—Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday—and an abundance of top-rated programs. The scheduling of Rifleman, Lawman, 77 Sunset Strip, and Naked City, in addition to other popular new programs including Leave It To Beaver and Donna Reed, put the network in an enviable position. Only three of the new shows—Patti Page, Rough Riders, and Man With A Camera—had not done as well as anticipated.

The strategy of shifting Disneyland into the Friday competition, where it was to become the highest rated program; the scheduling of Lawman "back-to-back" with Maverick; the strengthening of Tuesday (where ABC had unquestionable supremacy) with Rifleman and later Alcoa Presents—as complimentary attractions to Cheyenne and Wyatt Earp—all played key roles in the network's program ascendancy.

Even in the area of specials, where ABC had been loathe to move, the network had met with some unusual rewards—the Bing Crosby and Art Carney shows, the circus hour and Dick Clark's Record Years all received high ratings and, for the most part, critical praise.

Nighttime gross billings had soared to new heights in 1958, increasing \$11,000,000 over the past year to more than \$100,000,000 or 18.2 per cent of the total network billings.

There was, on the other hand, still room for improvement. Monday was admittedly the weakest night of the week, as it had been for years. Wednesday and Saturday were also not realizing their full potential—lagging behind the ratings and share of audience figures for Tuesday,

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<sup>130</sup> Article in Broadcasting Magazine, LV (September 22, 1958), 43.

Thursday, Friday, and Sunday. On two of its strong evenings, the network had a weak program structure in the late hours--Thursday, from 9:30-11:00 pm, and Sunday, 9:30-11:00 pm. There were additional periods on Tuesday and Friday which could be reprogrammed with stronger and more suitable material--Tuesday, 9:30-10:00 pm; Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm, 9:00-9:30 pm; and Thursday 7:30-8:30 pm. Many of the late evening alterations would be made in 1959-60, now that ABC had a firmer hold on the earlier portions of the schedule. 77 Sunset Strip was the first and only major advance in the late hours; the network had never before been able to establish a highly rated program after 9:30 pm.

ABC's advances were not limited to the evening hours. The network, in 1958-59, provided its first full time program service with the initiation of 70 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of weekly programming. "Operation Day-break," as it was referred to, was developed by ABC in association with Young and Rubicam Advertising and represented over fifteen million dollars in time and talent commitments. The daytime operation, however, was not an immediate success. Almost all of the original shows were replaced by mid-season with already established "live" and film programs. After the initial twenty-six weeks, many of the charter advertisers withdrew from the plan, reducing the number of commercial spots from 65 in October to 38 for the second twenty-six weeks.

ABC, however, was not ready to abandon its new daytime operation.

This is only round one. Don't write us off. We're in daytime to stay and watch our speed; we're going to get more aggressive than ever.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup>Variety, February 25, 1959, p. 27.

ABC daytime programming was to be realigned, under the leadership of Oliver Treyz, Geraud Chester, Armand Grant, Ted Fetter, and Dan Melnick. The network no longer planned to originate new programming in an area where audiences are difficult to build, but rather to acquire already established properties--including repeats of nighttime telefilms. In line with this policy, ABC purchased the Gale Storm series for the daytime, as well as other film series for 1959-60. In addition, the network negotiated for several "live" properties.

By the summer, the daytime picture had considerably improved. According to the first Nielsen Report for June 1959, "Operation Daybreak's" share of audience had increased from 13.3 per cent in October 1958 to 20.6 per cent in June 1959.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, the Gale Storm Show, in the first August report, received over a 30 per cent share of audience--the first time any of the new "Daybreak" programs had passed what appeared to be an insurmountable mark.<sup>133</sup> ABC's 2:00-3:30 pm line-up was still the highest rated of all daytime programs, though the earlier portions also showed signs of improvement. With the addition of powerful new programming in the fall, ABC hoped to equal, if not surpass, the existing NBC and CBS programming.

The ABC Television Network could prepare for 1959-60 with more confidence and assurance than at any other period in its history. With a nighttime program nucleus including Cheyenne, Sugarfoot/Bronco, Wyatt Earp, Rifleman, Aloca Presents, Ozzie and Harriet, Donna Reed,

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<sup>132</sup>Ibid., July 22, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., August 19, 1959, p. 25.

Wednesday Night Fights, Leave It To Beaver, the Real McCoys, Pat Boone, Walt Disney Presents, 77 Sunset Strip, Dick Clark, Maverick, Lawman, Colt 45, and a new daytime structure including Day In Court, Gale Storm, Beat the Clock, Who Do You Trust, and the American Bandstand--with increased prestige and near-equality in station facilities, ABC believed that in 1959-60 it could equal, and perhaps surpass, both NBC and CBS and become the major force in network television.

## CHAPTER X

### THE 1959-60 SEASON

In September 1959 (the time of writing), the 1959-60 season promised to be the most exciting in television's history. More than four hundred "specials" were planned by the networks, featuring such outstanding stars as Fred Astaire, Jack Benny, Ingrid Bergman, Alec Guinness, Bob Hope, Lawrence Olivier, Frank Sinatra, Bea Lillie, and Gwenn Verdon. NBC alone scheduled two weekly "special" series--the Sunday Showcase, a one-hour drama, variety, and comedy show, and Hubbell Robinson's Startime, another ambitious dramatic and variety hour. CBS had also announced plans for several "special" programs, including fifteen ninety-minute Revlon parties prepared by Goodman Ace. ABC Television anticipated at least twelve or thirteen musical programs for 1959-60, starring Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Steve Lawrence, Eydie Gorme, and Dick Clark. Returning from the past season were the Dupont Show of the Month, the Hallmark Hall of Fame, and the Rexall "Specials."

Many of these "specials" were to be public affairs and news programs--six NBC American Heritage dramatizations for Sunday Showcase, based on outstanding events in American history; CBS Reports, twelve one-hour informational programs featuring in-depth coverage of significant issues and people in the news; and ABC "one-shots," including the Splendid American, the story of dedicated Americans who had been working to improve conditions in Laos.

Drama, by virtue of the specials, was staging a comeback. Several



segments of Sunday Showcase and Ford Startime were to feature original plays and adaptations of famous novels, motion pictures, and stage presentations. CBS scheduled one-hour Ernest Hemmingway stories, and all three networks had been commissioned to present, at designated times throughout the season, David Susskind's productions of famous motion pictures. A highlight of 1959-60 was to be the NBC telecast of Lawrence Olivier in a ninety minute adaptation of the "Moon and Sixpence." These programs, in addition to the Dupont and Hallmark shows and the new June Allison and Twilight Zone series, were to reinstate drama as an important program form.

The scheduling of these dramatic, variety, and public affairs "specials" did not displace the "bread-and-butter" action programming. For 1959-60, the westerns, adventures, and mysteries still dominated the network schedules. Ten new westerns premiered, bringing the total to twenty-nine programs. Among the new shows were Bonanza, Bronco, Tales of the Plainsmen, the Deputy, Johnny Ringo, The Rebel, Wichita Town, Man from Black Hawk, and Hotel de Paree. There were also eight new adventure series, set in locations from the earth to outer space--from the Klondike Trail, the South Seas, and the banks of the Mississippi to the Carolina Swamps and the Moon. The new programs in this category included Troubleshooters, The Man and the Challenge, Riverboat, Men Into Space, the Alaskans, Adventures in Paradise, Swamp Fox, and Mr. Lucky. Action programming also made advances in the area of mystery with eight new shows--Tightrope, Staccato, Five Fingers, Bourbon Street Beat, Phillip Marlowe, Hawaiian Eye, the Untouchables, and the Detectives. In all, there were twenty-six new "bread-and-butter" series on the three networks, comprising nineteen additional hours of action programming.

Situation comedy was still an important program form in 1959-60, with seven new series--Fibber McGee and Molly, Love and Marriage, the Dennis O'Keefe Show, Hennessey, the Many Loves of Dobey Gillis, the Betty Hutton Show, and Dennis the Menace.

NBC and CBS had realigned their programming to more effectively compete with each other and the strengthened ABC network. NBC moved Riverboat into Sunday 7:00-8:00 pm, preceding Maverick by a half-hour, hoping to attract a portion of the gambler's audience.

The network also scheduled the western, Laramie, at 7:30-8:30 pm Tuesday, followed by Wichita Town at 8:30 pm, to counteract the ABC western block. On this same evening, CBS placed its Space Adventure in the 7:30 pm time period--providing the viewers with three one-hour adventure shows from 7:30-8:30 pm.

Another case of competitive program juggling was the CBS and NBC scheduling of Desilu Playhouse and weekly specials at 9:00-10:00 pm Friday, opposite 77 Sunset Strip, the dominant ABC program on Friday evening.

In 1959-60, the three-way NBC-CBS-ABC rivalry for network supremacy was the most intense struggle in television history. NBC, under the leadership of Messrs. Sarnoff and Kintner, was attempting to perpetrate a new public image, in the greatest turnabout in program design since Pat Weaver left the network. There was the customary "bread-and-butter" programming in both half-hour and one-hour form, but there were also no less than 150 specials planned for 1959-60. Mr. Kintner had incepted a major talent-program development division to implement the idea that NBC was back in show business--with no less than three "special" showcases

a week.

At CBS, the programming pattern did not deviate from a successful past formula--variegated features ranging from situation comedy to variety; from the Small Worlds and Playhouse 90s to a Gunsmoke, the "specials," and a Perry Mason. Regardless of who was Hubbell Robinson's administrative replacement, there was to be no radical departure from the course of a "totality of program service."

In the face of balanced NBC and CBS programming, hundreds of "specials," and competitive program realignments, ABC was planning its strongest schedule for 1959-60. This seventh chapter in its corporate history would determine, for the most part, whether the "third network" could finally succeed in becoming an equal partner in network television.

## I. ABC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

### Concentration on Action Programming

Leonard Goldenson and Oliver Treyz had committed themselves to a "more of the same" formula of "bread-and-butter" programming--which they believed would spell out even larger Nielsens than in 1958-59.

People like what we've been giving them. First we build a habit factor, get them used to watching us, then we can do something about upgrading programming.<sup>1</sup>

ABC admitted that "as the up and coming network, we gotta get it in a hurry; when we got it, we can move into the broader and more all-encompassing vistas."<sup>2</sup> Since there was no apparent diminution of

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<sup>1</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, LXXXIII (June 15, 1959), 17.

<sup>2</sup>Variety New York, June 3, 1959, p. 19.

public acceptance for the action shows, the network continued to schedule them in a variety of shapes and forms.

Operating on the theory that the star and not the program is indispensable, ABC prepared Bourbon Street Beat, Hawaiian Eye, the Detectives, the Alaskans, and Adventures in Paradise.<sup>3</sup> A decisive factor in the creation of these shows was the success of 77 Sunset Strip and the emergence of Efrem Zimbalist as an important television personality. From this series came the basic formats for Bourbon Street Beat and Hawaiian Eye, and the subsequent plotting of the Alaskans and the acquisition of Adventures in Paradise.<sup>4</sup>

The Ted Bates Company, advertising agency for the sponsors of Hawaiian Eye (American Chicle, Whitehall and Carter, also the sponsors of 77 Sunset Strip), hoped to affect a unique cross-plugging arrangement in its Wednesday and Friday choices on ABC. The agency considered moving Roger Smith, a featured performer on 77 Sunset Strip into the lead of the new Wednesday program. Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., the star of Strip, was to occasionally appear in the second program to help bolster ratings and carry out the cross plugging.<sup>5</sup> Part of the cross-promotion included Mr. Zimbalist, on Friday, picking up the phone and asking for his Hawaiian counterpart.<sup>6</sup> This arrangement for the Bates Company illustrated the newly-emphasized importance of the male star.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1959, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

The exigencies of production for the one-hour series had created a built-in method for developing the younger stars. Due to the physical strain of weekly production, a young alternate was usually cast with a more mature major star. As the youngsters built appeal and gained maturity, they were cast in major roles in the series.<sup>7</sup>

Another important element in the 1959-60 ABC action programs, as well as in NBC and CBS programs, was female sex appeal--introduced by providing running parts for the girls. As one western producer said, "we'll put her in low-cut dungarees."<sup>8</sup> Warner Bros. had used this approach successfully with Maverick and 77 Sunset Strip, as well as in Cheyenne, Sugarfoot, Bronco, Lawman, and Colt 45. It continued to do so in the new 1959-60 properties.

Arlene Howell, a former Miss U.S.A., was featured in Bourbon Street Beat.

Dorothy Provine was a running co-star in the Alaskans.  
Connie Stevens was featured in Hawaiian Eye.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, Anna Lisa was a weekly feature in Liggett and Meyer's Black Saddle. Though there was no permanent female lead in Adventures in Paradise, the program co-starred top performers in guest appearances opposite Gardner McKay.<sup>10</sup>

#### Expansion of "Special" Programming

ABC did not wish to limit itself to only "bread-and-butter" shows.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., August 5, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

The network planned an active expansion of its public affairs programming and an increase in the number of entertainment "specials" for 1959-60.

In July, a newly-created task force was formed to produce historical documentaries keyed to important news events. Operating from the News and Public Affairs Department, the force was headed by Walt Peters, who, with three or four men, collected news film on important issues or themes for at least twelve evening "specials" a year.<sup>11</sup> The first program in this series, tentatively scheduled for September, was titled the Fabulous Americans, a report about dedicated Americans who had been working to improve conditions in Laos.

Fritz Littlejohn, Director of the News Department, disclosed that there were two prospective series in preparation for 1959-60--one a high budget program to be scheduled only if sold, and the other, an inexpensive program definitely set for broadcast.<sup>12</sup>

The expensive series, For Your Information, would be a monthly program, exploring science, domestic and problem areas, similar in approach to Report Card and Youth Anonymous, two past "specials." The program would require much research and would consequently be costly to produce. For this reason, the sale of the monthly series had to be a prime consideration.<sup>13</sup>

The low-budget program, costing between five and ten thousand dollars a broadcast, would be a sustainer, presented according to the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., July 15, 1959, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup>Statement expressed by Fritz Littlejohn, ABC Director of News and Special Events (personal interview).

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

requirements of the news, and attempting to report and clarify important events and developments. This prospective series was ideal from the network's point of view, because it would not require vast amounts of research and would be relatively inexpensive to produce.<sup>14</sup>

In line with an acceleration in public affairs programming was an increase in sports coverage. ABC not only hoped to strengthen its Wednesday night boxing matches, through its arrangement with Norris-Wurtz-Gibson, but also planned an ambitious Saturday evening sports schedule for the coming season.<sup>15</sup> Seven professional football games were to be broadcast (until their conclusion) at 10:00 pm Saturdays beginning August 22nd. The network also explored the possibilities of major league evening baseball, as well as "live" college football and reported that several teams in both categories were quite interested.<sup>16</sup> In addition, ABC scheduled the first network bridge program on Sunday afternoon, complimenting the past season's Championship Golf.<sup>17</sup>

"Special" programming was not confined to public affairs and sporting events; ABC intended to increase the number of musical and entertainment "specials" as well. The network's gratifying results with the "insertions," an increased advertiser interest, and the prestige accrued with their presentation, led to the scheduling of at least nine entertainment "specials" for 1959-60.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Variety, July 8, 1959, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Variety, July 15, 1958, p. 37.

Four (4) Frank Sinatra programs in October, November, February, and April (sponsored by Timex).

Two (2) Bing Crosby Oldsmobile "specials" originating from Hollywood.

The Golden Circle - Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme starring in a program keyed to the records which have obtained the one million sales mark (sponsored by Oster).

A Mutual of Omaha anniversary "special."

An Elvis Presley hour for early 1960, following his release from the army.

Another Dick Clark "special," similar to the Record Years.

A one hour Pat Boone "special."

In addition, ABC had acquired the rights to the Rivalry, a dramatization of the Lincoln Douglas debates, for a possible "one-shot" on Lincoln's Birthday--and had been selected by Talent Associates for two of its motion picture "specials"--Ninotchka and the Citadel--to be broadcast in February and April 1960.<sup>19</sup>

#### Night By Night Planned Programming

From the time of the merger, ABC Television had always been weak on Monday evening. For 1959-60, however, Oliver Treyz and his program staff decided to completely realign this remnant of the "old ABC." Original plans called for the scheduling of two hour-long adventure shows from 7:30-9:30 pm, to be followed by Phillip Morris' Trouble-shooters at 9:30 pm and the Voice of Firestone at 10:00 pm.<sup>20</sup> In late

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<sup>19</sup>Variety, August 5, 1959, p. 31.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., March 18, 1959, p. 31.



March, a master program plan was devised, calling for the placement of not two, but three one-hour programs from 7:30-10:30 pm. The proposed three-hour block of action programming necessitated the cancellation of ten million dollars in time and talent commitments for the coming season, in the form of Phillip Morris' Troubleshooters and the Voice of Firestone.<sup>21</sup>

In reference to the Firestone Program, Leonard Goldenson stated

The ratings were down to nothing, it's been killing our whole Monday night schedule, and the audience that liked it mainly older people, isn't the audience we want anyway. Now we can fill that time with a solid adventure show that'll pull a bigger and younger audience.<sup>22</sup>

The network attempted to find other time periods for both pre-empted programs, but neither advertiser accepted the alternative proposals. Consequently, the Voice of Firestone was discontinued and Troubleshooters transferred to NBC.

The ABC programmers believed that the placement of Cheyenne at 7:30-8:30 pm could only do good for Monday's schedule. The program's built-in audience appeal and large following could insure a strong foundation for the rest of the evening.<sup>23</sup> The other shows--Bourbon Street Beat and Adventures in Paradise--were scheduled at 8:30 pm and 9:30 pm, respectively, providing the network with an imposing three-hour action block.

The Monday realignment was significant not only for its anticipated strength, but also as a symbol of ABC's growth in the past years; its

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>23</sup>Statement expressed by Jules Barthathan, ABC-TV Vice President of Research and Station Clearance (personal interview).

willingness to invest over eleven million dollars for programming, ahead of sales; and its determination to strengthen the evening, gambling with over ten million dollars in already committed 1959-60 business. Never before had ABC acted as aggressively in a concerted effort to improve an evening's programming.

With the cancellation of Plymouth's Top Tunes and Talent, extensive revisions were anticipated for Wednesday night.<sup>24</sup> Ironically, this had been ABC's first strong evening, with the commencement of Disneyland in 1954. Now, however, the formidable NBC Wagontrain, scheduled at 7:30 pm, had become the dominant program in the time period. ABC had tentatively placed the Fat Man, Gale Storm, Where's Smokey, and Dick Clark's World of Talent in this early evening position; none of the programs were sold, however, because of the NBC competition.<sup>25</sup> The network acted with a firmer hand at 9:00 pm--determined to schedule an action drama against Perry Como and I've Got A Secret, two programs with older appeal. An adventure or mystery could also serve as a strong lead-in for the Wednesday Fights.<sup>26</sup> ABC and Ted Bates, the agency that was interested in the time period, screened several properties which fit into the action framework--Bourbon Street Beat, the Fat Man, and Diamond Head (later retitled Hawaiian Eye). Hawaiian Eye was finally selected for this important Wednesday period. Here again, ABC had definite plans for bolstering 9:00-10:00 pm with a mystery and acted within this

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<sup>24</sup>Variety, March 4, 1959, p. 28.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., July 1, 1959, p. 45.

<sup>26</sup>Statement expressed by Fred Pierce, ABC-TV Manager of the Television Research (personal interview).

framework. Though the network had less success in the early portions of the evening, the programming from 8:30-11:00 pm, including Ozzie and Harriet, Hawaiian Eye and the Fights, was a planned, compatible line-up appealing to the desirable "get-age" audience.

On the other evenings (with the exception of Saturday), ABC intended to strengthen certain time periods, for the most part, in the late evening. In 1958-59, the network could boast of late evening strength on only Friday, with 77 Sunset Strip. For 1959-60, however, such strength was anticipated on at least six nights of the week.

Sunday, Tuesday and Friday were to be action nights, from 7:30-10:30 pm, with program line-ups of compatible westerns, adventures and mysteries. ABC, with a powerful Sunday structure from 7:30-9:00 pm, intended to strengthen the later time periods.<sup>27</sup> The Alaskans was definitely set for 9:30 pm, as was the idea for a strong action show at 7:00 pm for the Maverick lead-in. The Rebel, the 9:00 pm insertion, was selected by ABC and Liggett and Meyers after screening all available western pilots for 1959-60--only the strongest program could serve as the bridge between the early evening block and the Alaskans at 9:30 pm.<sup>28</sup>

Tuesday was also strengthened in this manner, though there was need for only one or two revisions. ABC had a powerful 7:30-9:30 pm line-up, with Bronco/Sugarfoot, Wyatt Earp, and the Rifleman, three programs which were renewed for 1959-60.<sup>29</sup> Alcoa Presents at 10:00 pm

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<sup>27</sup> "This Fall on Net TV," Sponsor Magazine, XIII (June 20, 1959), 32.

<sup>28</sup> Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV Vice President of Program Development (personal interview).

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Jules Barnathan.

was also a strong series which was not moved. Only the Naked City, according to the plans of ABC and Brown and Williamson Tobacco, was to be pre-empted with a stronger action program. Robert Taylor's Detectives and Phillip Marlowe were considered for the time period, for which the Marlowe series was finally selected.<sup>30</sup>

There were also one or two changes on Friday to strengthen weaker portions of the evening. Rin Tin Tin was cancelled, after four seasons, with Walt Disney moved back to 7:30 pm.<sup>31</sup> ABC had persuaded Ted Bates, the advertising agency for 77 Sunset Strip, to move the show to 9:00 pm in anticipation of Robert Taylor's Detectives at 10:00 pm.<sup>32</sup> The 9:00-9:30 pm time period was to be filled with a western; Cry Fraud was selected by ABC from several western properties including Warner Bros. Doc Holliday.<sup>33</sup>

The Thursday schedule evolved into its final shape. The network had planned to cancel Zorro and replace the program with a family-comedy series with a more adult appeal. With World of Talent at 9:30 pm and Top Tunes and Talent at 10:00 pm, there was to be an evening of compatible family programming. When, however, ABC committed for the hour-long Untouchables, late Thursday underwent several changes. The network hoped to use the Desilu series for Thursday at 9:30 pm, as counterprogramming against Playhouse 90 and Ernie Ford, programs with an older appeal.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Variety, March 18, 1959, p. 31.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., April 1, 1959, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., April 22, 1959, p. 24.

<sup>34</sup>Interview with Fred Pierce.

In order to schedule the program at this time, Dick Clark's World of Talent had to be moved to late Sunday and the three-quarter sold Lawrence Welk hour (one-half--Pharmaceuticals and one-quarter--American Dairy) pre-empted. ABC thought that the musical might be moved to Tuesday at 10:00 pm, with Alcoa Presents transferred to Thursday at 9:30 pm and the Untouchables moved back to 10:00 pm, but the idea was impractical.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, Top Tunes was cancelled, along with the Pharmaceuticals and American Dairy commitments. As was the case on Monday, ABC was intent on placing a strong action program in a designated time period, even if sponsor commitments had to be sacrificed to fulfill the plans. The Gale Storm Show was subsequently sold to Warner Lambert for the 7:30 pm Donna Reed lead-in, rounding-out a "get-age" line-up of three situation comedies (Gale Storm, Donna Reed, and the Real McCoys) from 7:30-9:00 pm, a 9:00 pm Pat Boone pivotal show with both young and old appeal, and the Untouchables at 9:30 pm.

#### Talent Development and Acquisition

In May, ABC Television signed singer Elvis Presley for one "special" program a year, with options for another two or three years.<sup>36</sup> This was to be his first television appearance after his army release in the early part of 1960. Though the financial arrangements of the contract were undisclosed, it can be assumed that the singer was assured at least \$50,000 a program--his asking price for an appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Variety, May 13, 1959, p. 25.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1959, p. 23.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

ABC also pacted Lawrence Welk for another five years, with options, in a separate agreement from the one between the bandleader and Dodge.<sup>38</sup> Mike Wallace, under an exclusive ABC contract until April 1959, appeared for the network in the audition kinescope of Take A Good Look. His contract was not renewed, however--nor did he star in the panel show, which was broadcast in 1959-60.

There were also negotiations with George Burns for a quiz show, and Harry S. Truman, to serve as the narrator of a historical dramatic series. Neither of these talks were fruitful for 1959-60.<sup>39</sup>

### III. ABC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

In December 1958, Sandy Cummings was named as the Vice President of the Western Division. Mr. Cummings, with fifteen men assisting him, was to direct coastal program activities and maintain liaison with all outside telefilm producers.<sup>40</sup>

The most significant appointment for 1959-60 was Thomas Vellotta's transfer to New York to manage the Special Events Department. Reporting to Tom Moore, Mr. Vellotta was to oversee what was shaping up to be an upbeat schedule of sports and entertainment specials.<sup>41</sup>

The ABC Program Department for 1959-60 included

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., May 27, 1959.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., June 10, 1959, p. 31; and May 6, 1959.

<sup>40</sup>Variety, December 10, 1958, p. 21.

<sup>41</sup>Variety, August 12, 1959, p. 29.

Leonard Goldenson	President, ABC-UPT, Inc.
Oliver Treyz	President, Television Network
Tom Moore	Vice President, Talent and Programming
Ted Fetter	Vice President of Television Programs
John Green	ABC Executive Producer
Dan Melnick	Vice President, Program Development
Geraud Chester	Vice President, Daytime Programs
Sandy Cummings	Vice President, Western Division
Armand Grant	Director of Daytime Television
Leonard Maskin	Administrative Manager of the Program Department
Richard DePew	Manager of Television Program Operations
Thomas M. Lufkin	Program Manager, Western Division
Rowe S. Gieson	ABC-Walt Disney Coordinator
Don Van Atta	Assistant Coordinator, Walt Disney Productions
Mitchel Gamson	Coordinator, Warner Bros. Studio
Charles Mortimer	Manager of Program Production
William Seaman	Program Service Manager
James McNaughton	Director of Production Services
Bernard Paulson	Manager of Production Services
Louis F. Sanman	Production Supervisor for Live Originations
Robert Adams	Executive Producer for the Western Division
Freelon Fowler	Film Program Manager
Frank G. Ralston	Director of the Western Division Film Department
Selig Seligman	Program Development, Western Division
Ruth Kiersted	Program Traffic and Operations

#### IV. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

The handshake agreement between ABC Television and Warner Bros. had grown to over thirty million dollars in telefilm commitments for 1959-60.<sup>42</sup> The motion picture studio produced pilot films for Doc Holliday, a half-hour western, and revised versions of Public Enemy and Torrid Zone (formerly Amazon Trader). In addition, the network and studio developed show concepts for the Alaskans, Hawaiian Eye, Bourbon Street Beat, and Corral.<sup>43</sup> From these shows on the drawing boards

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1959, p. 25.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1959, p. 33.

came three new hour-long programs: Bourbon Street Beat, the Alaskans, and Hawaiian Eye. These program additions and a new weekly version of Cheyenne (thirteen new programs mixed with thirty-four re-runs), Sugarfoot/Bronco, 77 Sunset Strip, Maverick, Lawman, and Colt 45, comprised eight weekly hours of programming, or approximately one-third of the ABC nighttime schedule (7:30-11:00 pm). With a record of "all hits and no misses" prior to 1959-60, and the outstanding success of Maverick and 77 Sunset Strip, the network was more than willing to continue this lucrative relationship. Warner Bros. Television and its production chief William T. Orr were also content with the arrangement.

When you can demonstrate to the exhibitor, as Warner is doing, that you're incepting a whole new school of personalities, the chances are the exhibitor is going to thank you.<sup>44</sup>

ABC also financed pilot films for several Screen Gems' properties, including the Fat Man, Cissie, Nightstick, Astronaut, Private Eye Pacific, the Long Green, and Cry Fraud (broadcast in 1959-60 under the title Man From Black Hawk).

Other co-production arrangements for pilot films were made with Desilu for Where There's Smokey, a situation comedy starring WXYZ's Soupy Sales; Bing Crosby Enterprises, for Lincoln Jones, starring James Whitmore; Irving Pincus for the Haunted, a mystery anthology in association with New York Times reviewer Anthony Boucher; Ken Murray, for El Coyote, starring Muriel Davis, an eighteen year old Olympic gymnast; Frank Cooper, for Willie, a situation comedy created by Syd Zelinka and

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.



Walter Newman; Irving Mansfield, for Take A Good Look, a drama-panel show; and Don Fedderson, for Hobby Lobby, an interview show featuring Cliff (Charlie Weaver) Arquette.<sup>45</sup>

Though ABC's alliances with independent producers had reached an all-time high, one of the agreements showed signs of strain. The network's seven year contract with Walt Disney was attacked by the producer as being in violation of the anti-trust laws. The heart of the dispute centered on the exclusivity provisions of the contract. Both Zorro and the Mickey Mouse Club had been discontinued by ABC for 1959-60. Mr. Disney felt that he would like to take the shows elsewhere, either to another network or into syndication. He contended, however, that he was barred from doing so by the terms of the initial agreement. ABC stated that it was willing to forego the exclusivity clauses if Mr. Disney would pay claimed monies due to the network.<sup>46</sup> At the time of writing, no decision had been reached in the dispute, though the Walt Disney Presents program, the last of the Disney shows on ABC, was definitely set for 1959-60.

Dan Melnick related an interesting note regarding co-production arrangements for 1959-60--of all the unsold pilot films produced for the season, only a few were considered qualitatively poor. Many never got on the air because there were no time periods available.<sup>47</sup> This and the fact that 65 per cent of the fall schedule consisted of new shows, was indicative of the importance that ABC had placed on quality

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1959; February 18, 1959

<sup>46</sup>Variety, July 8, 1959, p. 24.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

programming.<sup>48</sup>

The majority of the new program properties were acquisitions and/or commitments by ABC, rather than the customary joint-arrangements with independent producers. In January, ABC purchased, at an estimated \$50,000 a program, thirty-two first-run episodes and seven repeats for the Four-Star-Hastings Productions' Captain of Detectives, starring Robert Taylor.<sup>49</sup> The network did not finance the pilot film for the series, but nevertheless played a part in its development. ABC had previously contemplated a program of this type for Edward G. Robinson, patterned after one of the actor's old motion pictures.<sup>50</sup> Though these plans were never realized, the network nevertheless hoped to acquire a series of this type. When the programmers screened the Robert Taylor Detectives, they purchased the property which Proctor and Gamble had previously negotiated for.<sup>51</sup>

In February, ABC bought, for its new Monday program structure, a minimum of thirteen hour-long Adventures in Paradise episodes from Twentieth Century Fox. The series was subsequently developed by both ABC and the motion picture studio. In August, ten additional segments were ordered on the basis of the program's excellent sales record, bringing the total commitment to thirty-six hours.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Variety, January 28, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>50</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>51</sup>Variety, January 28, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., July 22, 1959, p. 23.

ABC contracted for still another one-hour series in April, in one of the most unusual transactions in network television. Desilu Playhouse had presented a two-part melodrama titled the Untouchables, which documented the activities of Elliot Ness, a Federal agent, and his war against the Al Capone Chicago crime machine in the mid-twenties. The morning after the first broadcast, ABC called Desilu in Hollywood and committed for an entire series, on the strength of the Westinghouse "special." The network had formulated no plans at the time for scheduling or sale of the show, but nevertheless recognized its impact and potential as an ABC property for 1959-60. During the following weeks, ABC programmers and Desilu worked out formats, casting, and the numerous other details involved in development and production.<sup>53</sup>

Still another ABC acquisition was California National Productions--Goodson-Todman's Phillip Marlowe. California National Productions, a subsidiary of NBC, financed the pilot film and then negotiated with Brown and Williamson and Whitehall for a Naked City replacement. ABC, however, went through the formality of buying the show, and then reselling it to the prospective advertisers to insure a long ABC lifetime for the property.<sup>54</sup> The network played no part in the development of this "packaged" show, which was purchased for a firm twenty-six weeks at \$43,000 an episode.<sup>55</sup>

In line with its policy of using "stripped" telefilm re-runs to

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<sup>53</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>54</sup>Variety, April 15, 1959, p. 116.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

quickly gain daytime audiences, ABC purchased two film series--the Bob Cummings Show and Restless Gun. The network acquired three-year re-run rights to 173 episodes of the comedy show for \$2,595,000. If options were exercised for an additional two years, the total was to climb to \$4,325,000. Each episode cost \$5,000, or \$15,000 per show per-three-years, after which time, if the option was not renewed, the films reverted to Mr. Cummings.<sup>56</sup> Similar arrangements were made for 77 episodes of Restless Gun. Here again, the cost-per-episode was \$15,000 for three runs over a two year period, plus options for an additional amount of time, with the films reverting to Mr. Payne when the contract expired. Total payments (excluding options), to the actor and his partner, Music Corporation of America, were \$1,155,000.<sup>57</sup>

For its daytime operation, ABC developed a western serial in association with Frank and Doris Hursley, writers for Search For Tomorrow. The series, titled Hope Springs, was described as "a new daytime serial story of the frontier West, from the viewpoint of the women who helped to build it."<sup>58</sup> At the time of writing, the program had not been sold. The network also discussed a late-evening, post-11:00 pm "strip" for Peter Lind Hayes, dependent upon station clearance and advertiser acceptance; a historical film series, with Harry S. Truman as narrator; a Groucho Marx-type quiz program for George Burns; a daytime version of the former NBC program Truth or Consequences, either as a replacement or as an addition to its daytime service; and a globe-roaming interview show

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., June 3, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

to be produced by John Aaron and Jesse Zousner, former producers of Person to Person.<sup>59</sup> None of these prospective program series were broadcast in the fall of 1959.

The unusually early and extensive planning for 1959-60 reflected not only a growth in the program staff, but also a healthy development cash position, with much of the dealing handled by Leonard Goldenson, Oliver Treyz, and Tom Moore.<sup>60</sup> Never before had ABC placed so much importance on program development and acquisition for a specific season, with expenditures well above \$65,000,000 for the thirty seven shows in its fall line-up.<sup>61</sup>

#### IV. THE OCTOBER 1959 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

##### Program Types in the Nighttime Schedule

There were no less than 60 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of action programming, or approximately 60 per cent of the entire nighttime schedule. The "adult western" had increased 8 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours over the past season to a new total of 26 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours. Adventure drama, on the other hand, showed only a 2 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour increase from 1958 to 1959. A large program turn-over accounted for the negligible change. Mystery drama made the most substantial gains, with an additional 14 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours scheduled, bringing the 1959 total to 20 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1959; June 10, 1959, p. 31; and September 9, 1959, p. 23.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., March 4, 1959, p. 22.

<sup>61</sup>"ABC Crowds the Other 3 Networks," Business Week, #1549 (May 9, 1959), 43.

TABLE XXXII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NIGHTTIME PROGRAM TYPES FOR OCTOBER  
1959, AS COMPARED WITH THOSE QUARTER HOURS IN  
NOVEMBER 1958

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in November 1958</u>	<u>(<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours in October 1959</u>
Adult Western	18	26
Mystery Detective	6	20
Adventure Drama	12	14
Situation Comedy	8	10
Sporting Events	3	7
Musical Variety	18	6
Panel, Games	0	6
News and Commentary	10	5
Human Interest	2	2
Talent Variety	0	2
Straight Drama	4	2
Sports Features	1	1
Country Music	4	0
Classical semi-classical	2	0
Audience Participation	2	0
Polka, Folk Music	4	0
Total nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	94	101

Data gathered from Variety Magazine, July to October 1959  
and information secured from ABC Television.

Situation comedy followed with 10 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours scheduled in 1959, an increase of 1 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour over the past season.

In third place were sporting events, with 7 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours scheduled in 1959. A new Saturday sports program accounted for the  $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hour increase.

Musical variety and panel shows each had 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours listed. There had been a pronounced reduction of music programming, with the cancellation of Top Tunes and Talent, Patti Page, and Sammy Kaye. The 6 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of panel games, however, were all new, introducing a program type which had been unlisted the past season.

There were no audience participation games and country, classical, or polka music listed in 1959, though each had appeared in 1958. Two program types, however--talent variety and panel games--which had not been previously scheduled, made their appearance in the fall.

New nighttime program types. ABC's emphasis on the "bread and butter" programming is evident in an analysis of new nighttime program types for 1959-60. Of the new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, 69 per cent were in the western-adventure-mystery category. Mystery drama was the major program form, with 16 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 31 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

Bourbon Street Beat  
Hawaiian Eye  
Phillip Marlowe  
Robert Taylor's Detectives  
The Untouchables

Variations on the western and adventure themes each accounted for 10 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, or 19 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

The westerns, easterns and southern included

TABLE XXXIII

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF PROGRAM TYPES FOR NEW ABC NIGHTTIME  
PROGRAMMING IN OCTOBER 1959

<u>Program Type</u>	<u>New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>	<u>% of Total New Weekly (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) hours</u>
Detective Drama	16	31
Adult Western	10	19
Adventure Drama	10	19
Panel, Games	6	12
Sporting Events	4	8
Human Interest	2	4
Situation Comedy	2	4
Talent Variety	2	4
New nighttime ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	52	

Data gathered from Variety Magazine, July to October 1959 and  
information secured from ABC Television.



Black Saddle  
 Cheyenne  
 Man From Black Hawk  
 The Rebel

The adventure dramas, set in a variety of locales, included

Adventures in Paradise  
 The Alaskans  
 Man With a Camera

There were 6 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of panel games, or 12 per cent of the new nighttime programming. Two of the three programs were broadcast in the late evening "fringe" hours.

Hobby Lobby  
 Keep Talking  
 Take A Good Look

Sporting events followed with at least 4 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours (depending on the length of the event), or 8 per cent of the new nighttime programming.

There were only 2 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of situation comedy, talent variety, and human interest shows, or 4 per cent of the new programming.

Human Interest	John Gunther's High Road
Situation Comedy	Gale Storm Show
Talent Variety	Dick Clark's World of Talent

#### The Number of ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) Hours of Program Service

ABC Television provided more program service in 1959-60 than in any other past season. For the first time, the network filled all of its 10:30-11:00 pm "station option" periods--Monday, Man With A Camera; Tuesday, Keep Talking; Wednesday, Fights; Thursday, Take A Good Look; Friday, Black Saddle; Saturday, Sporting Events; Sunday, World of Talent. Occupancy of these late evening periods increased nighttime program service to an all-time high of 105 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours, as compared to only 94 in 1958.

In September 1959, there were no conclusive figures available for the number of commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours though it can be reasonably assumed that most of the nighttime programming had been sold, with the possible exception of Wednesday 7:30-8:00 pm (opposite Wagontrain), portions of Colt 45, and the Saturday sports schedule. Never before had so many "blue chip" advertisers (Proctor and Gamble, Liggett and Myers, R. J. Reynolds, P. Lorillard, and American Home Products) invested millions of dollars in ABC programming. Their presence reflected a new acceptance in ABC and a confidence in its audience-building potential.

The daytime situation was also an optimistic one. Though the extent of network service did not substantially change, the initially weak "Operation Daybreak" was gathering commercial strength. The "share of audience" for the daytime line-up had passed the 25.0 per cent mark in the first August Nielsen report, with an accompanying rise in the number of advertiser renewals--including General Foods' Jello, Drackett, Beech Nut, Johnson and Johnson, Toni, and Armour--for approximately 50 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours.<sup>62</sup> By the end of August, "Operation Daybreak" had been 70 per cent sold, with many prospects in sight for additional sales.<sup>63</sup> From all indications, the ABC daytime operation was duplicating the commercial success of the nighttime.

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<sup>62</sup>"A Preview of Net TV's Fall Lineup," Sponsor Magazine, XIII (August 29, 1959), 43.

<sup>63</sup>Variety, August 26, 1959, p. 23.

TABLE XXXIV

THE NUMBER OF QUARTER HOURS OF ABC NETWORK SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL  
PROGRAMMING FOR OCTOBER 1959, AS COMPARED  
WITH NOVEMBER 1958

Time Period	Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 11/58		Weekly ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours for 10/59	
	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours	Total ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours of Program Service	Commercial ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	42	44	30	Unavailable
1:00 pm - 6:00 pm	98	80	108	Unavailable
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm	94	80	105	Unavailable

## V. THE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHEDULE

Program Cancellations

Ten commercial programs were cancelled after the summer quarter.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/59 (first report)</u>
Bold Journey	13.1 AA
Deadline for Action	(Unavailable)
Jubilee, U. S. A.	12.2
McGraw	9.2
Naked City	22.1
Rin Tin Tin	19.9
Rough Riders	17.1
Tombstone Territory	14.7 (MNA)
You Asked For It	17.6
Zorro (*)	26.9

(\*) ABC wanted a family-type situation comedy at Thursday, 8:00 pm--necessitating the withdrawal of Zorro from the Thursday line-up. The adventure show was too expensive for the low "sets-in-use" at 7:30 pm or a proposed Sunday 7:00 pm time period. Consequently, the program was cancelled for 1959-60, though it was attracting a sizeable audience.<sup>64</sup>

Many of these programs were higher rated than cancellations of past seasons. Naked City, Zorro, Rough Riders, and Rin Tin Tin had all received respectable ratings, but were nevertheless displaced by stronger programming--more than illustrating the growing concern for a "powerhouse" line-up. There was no room (on the strong evenings) for just "average" programs in 1959-60.

Other shows, either sustaining or cooperative, were pre-empted in the fall with new programming.

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<sup>64</sup>Statement expressed by Leonard Goldenson, President of American Broadcasting-United Paramount Theatres (personal interview).

Across the Board  
 Court of Last Resort  
 Music For A Summer Night  
 Oh, Boy!  
 Top Pro Golf

### Program Renewals

ABC prepared for 1959-60 with about the same number of program renewals as in the past seasons. The programs were, however, stronger and more highly rated--though the number of renewals did not appreciably change, there had been a qualitative improvement, with the lesser shows replaced by the Riflemans, Lawmans, and Sunset Strips.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Nielsen Rating 3/59 (first report)</u>
Rifleman	35.7
Maverick	31.4
Real McCoys	30.1
Bronco/Sugarfoot	29.9
Wyatt Earp	28.9
Walt Disney Presents	27.0
77 Sunset Strip	25.2
Lawman	24.8
Ozzie and Harriet	22.2
Pat Boone	21.8
Lawrence Welk	21.1
Colt 45	20.9
Donna Reed	19.1
Dick Clark	15.9
Alcoa Presents	15.6
Wednesday Night Boxing	15.1
American Bandstand	7.8
Beat the Clock	4.2
Day In Court	3.0
Gale Storm	2.6 (May)
Music Bingo	2.7
Who Do You Trust	4.5

Twelve of the sixteen nighttime programs received March Nielsen ratings of 20.0 or more; 75 per cent of all the nighttime renewals were in this category, as compared to only 50 per cent in 1958-59. Seven of

the twelve programs earned at least 25.0 for this report--from Sunset Strip's 25.2 to 35.7 for the Rifleman. There had been six highly rated shows in 1958.

The four programs with lower ratings ranged from Alcoa's 15.6 to Donna Reed's 19.1. Not one nighttime renewal for 1959-60 received a rating for the first March report of less than 15.0, though there were six in 1958. Cancellations of Bold Journey, Voice of Firestone, and You Asked For It, as well as other weak programming, provided ABC with what might be termed a "clean house."

The network was armed with a smaller, more powerful program foundation for 1959-60. As a result, more new programming had been prepared--programming which ABC believed to be the strongest it had ever acquired for a single broadcast season.

#### Program Additions

Adventures In Paradise - Suggested from an idea by James Michener, this hour-long series was set in the South Pacific. The stories concerned a young skipper who sailed a small schooner through the shoals and archipelagoes. Featured in the cast were Gardner McKay, Weaver Levy, and countless native girls.

The Alaskans - Set along the Yukon and Klondike Trails back in the Nineties, the series chronicled the trials of Reno McKee (played by Jeff York) and Silky Harris (Roger Moore), as they wandered around the northland. Dorothy Provine was featured as Rocky, a saloon singer with a heart of gold.

Bourbon Street Beat - With a New Orleans setting, the series revolved around two private detectives and their adventures in the French Quarter and elsewhere. The "eyes" were played by Richard Long and Andy Duggan. Arlene Howell, a former Miss U. S. A., was featured in the role of their secretary.

Black Saddle - The story of a lawyer on horseback.

Dick Clark's World of Talent - Professional performers visited the program, performed, then asked advice from the show business panel. Dick Clark was the host, with Jack E. Leonard serving as the permanent panelist.

Gale Storm Show - (No information available.)

Hawaiian Eye - An hour long series set in Hawaii, featuring Anthony Eisely and Bob Conrad as two private detectives; Poncie Ponce, as their Hawaiian friend; and Connie Stevens, as Crickett Blake, a night club singer.

Hobby Lobby - Charlie Weaver introduced various celebrities and their unpublicized hobbies, including such pleasantries as Zsa Zsa Gabor demonstrating fencing.

John Gunther's High Road - The well-known reporter narrated a series of adventures ranging from skin diving to elephant hunting. Mr. Gunther promised that "we'll give you intimate glimpses into the lives of people all over the world."

Keep Talking - Morey Amsterdam, Danny Dayton, and four other panelists were provided with certain phrases which they had to incorporate into their monologues. The panel, divided into teams, competed for points.

Man From Black Hawk - An insurance company investigator operating out of Chicago in the late 19th century. The series starred Robert Rockwell.

Man With A Camera - (See page 299, 1958-59 Season.)

Phillip Marlowe - Phillip Carey played this Robert Chandler detective who enabled home viewers to solve the crime along with him. The television audience, shown the same clues as the detective, were free to decide who the guilty party was.

The Rebel - Johnny Yuma was an "angry young man" seeking to find himself in the chaos of the post-Civil War West. Nick Adams was featured as the Rebel.

Robert Taylor's Detectives - Robert Taylor portrayed the chief of a plainclothes squad. He was described as a brilliant investigator who solved crimes by deduction, with a minimum of gunplay and physical violence.

Take A Good Look - Ernie Kovacs introduced contestants who were relatively unknown, but who at one time in the past were central figures in front-page news stories. The show featured film clips and sound recordings of the famous events in which the contestants figured. A panel had to guess who they were.

The Untouchables - Robert Stack was starred as Elliot Ness, an arch-enemy of Al Capone. Federal agent Ness, assisted by his uncorruptable group, were out to smash the Chicago crim machine of Capone, as well as other crooks and racketeers of that era.

Program Costs. Though 1959-60 program costs were unavailable at the time of writing, it could be assumed that the new ABC action and comedy programs were highly priced, in line with the average costs of these program types. Included in this category were the hour-long Adventures in Paradise, the Alaskans, Bourbon Street Beat, Hawaiian Eye, and the Untouchables; and the half-hour Black Saddle, Gale Storm Show, Man From Black Hawk, Man With A Camera, Phillip Marlowe, the Rebel, and Robert Taylor's Detectives.

Panel programs had generally cost less to produce than the dramas and comedy shows. For this reason conjecture on the researcher's part placed Take A Good Look, Hobby Lobby, and World of Talent in the inexpensive bracket. High Road, a newly formatted version of Bold Journey, was also included in this category.

Of the eighteen new ABC programs for 1959-60, at least fourteen were highly-priced additions to the schedule, in comparison to only nine such shows in 1958-59. Never before had there been as many costly program additions--with no more than five to six inexpensive programs scheduled in the nighttime.

Program and Production Control. ABC Television had varied degrees of program and production control on the majority of its new series, in association with their respective producers.



<u>Program</u>	<u>Producer</u>
Adventures in Paradise	Twentieth Century Fox
Alaskans	Warner Bros.
Bourbon Street Beat	Warner Bros.
Cheyenne	Warner Bros.
Dick Clark's World of Talent	Irving Mansfield
	Drexel Productions
Gale Storm Show	Jack Wrather, Hal Roach
Hawaiian Eye	Warner Bros.
Hobby Lobby	Don Fedderson
Man From Black Hawk	Screen Gems
Man With A Camera	ABC Films
Robert Taylor's Detectives	Four Star Productions
	Hastings Productions
Take A Good Look	Irving Mansfield
The Untouchables	Desilu Productions

ABC Television had varied degrees of program control on thirteen of the new series, reflecting not only a growth of the Program Department and program expenditures (there were only seven such shows in 1958-59), but also the selection of programming which reflected ABC's needs in terms of its audience and what the advertisers would buy. Then the network was receiving a tailor-made program wardrobe though it was not engaged in the actual production of the shows.

Only a few ABC programs were produced and controlled by "packagers," advertisers and their agencies, and other miscellaneous organizations.

Black Saddle	Liggett and Myers
High Road	Ralston Purina
Keep Talking	Herbert Wolf
	Pharmaceuticals
Phillip Marlowe	Goodson-Todman
The Rebel	Goodson-Todman

### Evolution of the Schedule

For details of the three-hour action block on Monday evening (Cheyenne, Bourbon Street Beat, and Adventures in Paradise, see page 333).

The remaining 10:30-11:00 pm time period was purchased in June by General Electric--inserting the Mike Kovac program to complete an evening of action, mystery, and adventure.

The final Monday schedule included

7:30 - 8:30	Cheyenne
8:30 - 9:30	Bourbon Street Beat
9:30 -10:30	Adventures in Paradise
10:30 -11:00	Mike Kovac, Man With A Camera

ABC had also anticipated extensive program revisions for Wednesday evening. With only two renewals--Ozzie and Harriet (8:30-9:00 pm) and the Wednesday Fights (10:00-11:00 pm)--the 7:30-8:30 pm and 9:00-10:00 pm time periods were open. The network had originally scheduled the Fat Man for 7:30-8:30 pm, but then transferred it to another evening, thinking that it was too sophisticated for the early time period.<sup>65</sup> Other programs tentatively inserted at 7:30 pm were Gale Storm, Where There's Smokey, and Dick Clark's World of Talent. There were no sales, however, because of NBC's Wagontrain competition.

Hawaiian Eye had definitely been set for 9:00-10:00 pm (for details see page 333). In August, Mogen David purchased 8:00-8:30 pm for Masquerade Party.<sup>66</sup> The wine company later decided that the panel show was too expensive, and replaced it with Beat the Clock.<sup>67</sup> When the pilot film for Charley Weaver's Hobby Lobby had been completed in August, ABC and Mogen David withdrew Beat the Clock in favor of the new show.<sup>68</sup> At

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<sup>65</sup>Variety, April 22, 1959, p. 26.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., August 5, 1959, p. 31.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., August 12, 1959, p. 29.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., August 26, 1959, p. 24.

the time of writing, there was no program selected for 7:30-8:00 pm. ABC had, however, a partially planned, partially evolved compatible line-up of programming from 8:00-11:00 pm.

8:00 - 8:30	Hobby Lobby
8:30 - 9:00	Ozzie and Harriet
9:00 -10:00	Hawaiian Eye
10:00 -11:00	Wednesday Night Fights

There were two program renewals on Thursday evening: The Real McCoys at 8:30 pm and Pat Boone at 9:00 pm. Zorro had been cancelled by 7-Up, and was tentatively scheduled at an earlier Sunday time period. The network hoped to insert a family comedy series in the 8:00-8:30 pm time period to provide a strong lead-in for the Real McCoys. In April, Donna Reed was moved by ABC and Campbell's Soups at 8:00 pm.<sup>69</sup> Leave It To Beaver had been transferred by ABC and Ralston to Saturday, and another situation comedy, Willie tentatively scheduled at 7:30 pm to complete a planned ninety minute block of family comedies.

In April, ABC committed for the one-hour Untouchables series, and scheduled it from 9:30-10:30 pm (for details, see pages 336-337).

In August, Warner Lambert purchased the Gale Storm Show for 7:30 pm. Consolidated Cigars rounded-off the evening with its acquisition of Take A Good Look for 10:30-11:00 pm. Thursday, an evening which had undergone unanticipated changes, promised to be a "powerhouse."

7:30 - 8:00	Gale Storm Show
8:00 - 8:30	Donna Reed Show
8:30 - 9:00	Real McCoys
9:00 - 9:30	Pat Boone Show
9:30 -10:30	The Untouchables
10:30 -11:00	Take A Good Look

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., April 15, 1959, p. 108.

ABC planned Sunday as an action night. Maverick and Lawman had been renewed in their respective 7:30-8:30 pm and 8:30-9:00 pm time periods. The Alaskans had definitely been set for 9:30-10:30 pm, which left only the vacant 7:00-7:30 pm and the important 9:00-9:30 pm time periods. In April, Liggett and Myers ordered 9:00 pm and both the cigarette company and ABC screened every available western property for the valuable bridge between the early and late evening.<sup>70</sup> After much consideration, the Rebel was selected for 9:00-9:30 pm.<sup>71</sup> Zorro had tentatively been scheduled for 7:00 pm, pre-empting You Asked For It. Lack of advertiser interest in the expensive program, and a one-third sale of Colt 45 put the latter show in the pre-Maverick time period, rounding out a three-hour block of western-adventure drama. In August, Dick Clark's World of Talent had been moved to 10:30-11:00 pm from its early Wednesday position.

The final Sunday schedule included

7:00 - 7:30	Colt 45
7:30 - 8:30	Maverick
8:30 - 9:00	Lawman
9:00 - 9:30	The Rebel
9:30 -10:30	The Alaskans
10:30 -11:00	World of Talent

Friday was also conceived as an action night. The two focal points of the evening, Walt Disney Presents and 77 Sunset Strip, had been renewed, though they were to be broadcast in different time periods. Walt Disney was moved up one half-hour to replace Rin Tin Tin, who was

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<sup>70</sup>Interview with Dan Melnick.

<sup>71</sup>Variety, May 6, 1959, p. 37.

to perform on ABC daytime television. 77 Sunset Strip was also pushed a half-hour ahead to 9:00 pm to make room for Robert Taylor's Detectives at 10:00 pm. In so doing, Phillip Morris' Tombstone Territory had been pre-empted for the fall (ABC had the right to pre-empt with stronger programming).<sup>72</sup> The network planned to schedule either Doc Holliday or Cry Fraud at 8:30-9:00 pm, the important bridge between Walt Disney and the late evening programming. Cry Fraud was purchased by Miles and Reynolds for 8:30 pm, and later retitled Man From Black Hawk.<sup>73</sup> In April, Liggett and Myers ordered 10:30-11:00 pm, and inserted its Black Saddle program, which had appeared on NBC in 1958-59.<sup>74</sup>

The final Friday schedule, comprised of western-adventure-mystery programming, included

7:30 - 8:30	Walt Disney Present
8:30 - 9:00	Man From Black Hawk
9:00 -10:00	77 Sunset Strip
10:00 -10:30	Robert Taylor's Detectives
10:30 -11:00	Black Saddle

The powerful Tuesday structure underwent few changes, with Bronco/Sugarfoot, Wyatt Earp, and the Rifleman renewed from 7:30-9:30 pm, and Alcoa Presents at 10:00-10:30 pm. Only one program was discontinued--the Naked City, broadcast from 9:30-10:00 pm, was replaced with another detective series, Phillip Marlowe, which ABC purchased for the advertisers. Pharmaceuticals completed the evening's programming with an order for

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., April 1, 1959, p. 18.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1959, p. 24.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., May 29, 1959, p. 23.

10:30-11:00 pm for its Keep Talking program.

The final Tuesday schedule, consisting of three hours of action programming, included

7:30 - 8:30	Bronco/Sugarfoot
8:30 - 9:00	Wyatt Earp
9:00 - 9:30	Rifleman
9:30 -10:00	Phillip Marlowe
10:00 -10:30	Alcoa Presents
10:30 -11:00	Keep Talking

There were two program renewals on Saturday: Dick Clark and Lawrence Welk at 7:30-8:00 pm and 9:00-10:00 pm, respectively. Ralston-Purina, in April, purchased 8:00-9:00 pm for two of its programs--High Road and Leave It To Beaver. Jubilee U. S. A. was originally scheduled for 10:00-11:00 pm, with a one-half order from Massey-Ferguson. ABC, however, wanted to program sports at 10:00 pm, and pre-empted the country music with a combination football, baseball, and spring sports schedule.<sup>75</sup>

The final Saturday schedule, ABC's weakest evening for 1959-60, included

7:30 - 8:00	Dick Clark Show
8:00 - 8:30	High Road
8:30 - 9:00	Leave It To Beaver
9:00 -10:00	Lawrence Welk Show
10:00 -Conclusion	Sports

One significant change in the daytime was the Mickey Mouse Club cancellation (because it was too expensive and there was not enough advertiser interest), and its replacement by an adventure "strip."

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., June 17, 1959, p. 16.

General Mills, who had acquired the programming for the Monday through Friday 5:30-6:00 pm period, purchased  $4\frac{1}{4}$  hours a week, leaving the remaining  $6\frac{1}{4}$  hours available for other advertisers. The cereal company's share of time and talent costs amounted to approximately \$4,600,000. Because the advertiser brought the programming to the network, ABC assumed the responsibility of selling the six ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours; if there were no buyers, the network itself was to pay for the 60 per cent time and talent charges.<sup>76</sup>

The General Mills adventure "strip" included

Monday	Rin Tin Tin
Tuesday	Rin Tin Tin
Wednesday	Flicka
Thursday	Rocky and His Friends
Friday	Rin Tin Tin

#### VII. AN EVALUATION OF THE SEASON

ABC provided more program service to its affiliates in 1959-60 than in any other season. For the first time, the network programmed the 10:30-11:00 pm "station option time" on seven nights of the week. Every time period between 7:30-11:00 pm was in service for 1959-60. The daytime operation was also gratifying--with ABC providing about the same amount of service as it had at the start of "Operation Daybreak." Now, however, service before 12 noon had been discontinued with a proportionate increase in afternoon programming. Between 12 noon and 6:00 pm, there was only one half-hour period (1:30-2:00 pm) which was returned to the stations.

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., April 22, 1959, p. 23.

ABC revenues were anticipated to be higher than ever before-- with practically all evening time sold by the end of August. Moreover, the network had attracted the "bluechip" advertisers--Proctor and Gamble, P. Lorillard, Liggett and Myers, and American Home Products. Liggett and Myers alone purchased \$8,000,000 of the ABC nighttime schedule, withdrawing its business from NBC where it had sponsored a number of unsuccessful programs in 1958-59. The presence of these advertisers reflected a new acceptance of ABC as a competitive network force, and a confidence in its audience building facilities.

The rising "share of audience" for "Operation Daybreak" was accompanied by many advertiser renewals for 1959-60. By August, the daytime schedule had been 70 per cent sold, with many prospects in sight for the remaining 30 per cent. The afternoon operation, which only months before had been on the brink of failure, had been revitalized with new programming, and new audience and advertiser acceptance.

ABC Television now had its firmest grip on the nighttime schedule. The new additions, the programmers hoped, could give the network late evening strength on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. On other nights, questionable shows were pre-empted with stronger programming; the network believed that its Tuesday and Friday line-ups were now the strongest in network television. The most sweeping change for 1959-60 was an \$11,000,000 realignment of Monday night, with the scheduling of three one-hour programs, providing ABC with a potentially powerful Monday schedule for the first time in its history. In so doing, the network relinquished over \$10,000,000 in time and talent commitments from Firestone and Phillip Morris. For 1959-60, ABC believed it had powerhouse



line-ups on at least five nights of the week--action blocks on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday--and compatible family-type programming combining comedy, action drama, and sports on Wednesday and Thursday. Saturday, self admittedly the weak link in the schedule, was to be reprogrammed for 1960-61. On the other evenings, however, the programming appealed basically to the "get-age" segment--the mass segment of the audience. With block, "thematic" programming and compatible program adjacencies in every corner of its schedule, ABC expected to attract an audience and retain it.

The new program additions were illustrative of an increased network prosperity. All but three or four of the shows were costly western-adventure-mystery dramas--five of them one-hour in length. The lower budgeted panel programs were, for the most part, confined to the fringe hours. It was estimated that ABC spent \$65,000,000 for 1959-60--a staggering amount for any network. Dan Melnick revealed that of all the pilot films which ABC financed, only a few were considered poor; all the others were unscheduled because there was no room for them. The network wanted the strongest possible programming--to this end, it committed ahead of sales and pilot films, for at least three series--the Untouchables, Adventures in Paradise, and Robert Taylor's Detectives.

Important industry personnel had faith in the ABC action line-up. C. Terrance Clyne, of McCam Erickson, backed this faith with 40 per cent of his clients' television budgets. According to Mr. Clyne, the "insertions" or "special" programs did not average as large an audience as the top eight one-hour regularly schedules television programs.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., August 5, 1959, p. 52.

McCann, in a special study made for its clients, stated emphatically that the one hour regulars, mostly the action adventure vein, were "the key to network programming strength."<sup>78</sup> If this was to be the case in 1959-60, ABC, with no less than ten hour-shows scheduled, would be in an excellent position.

For 1959-60, ABC Television acquired what it considered to be the best in programming and the best of advertisers--for the best program structure in network television. Leonard Goldenson seemed confident that ABC would become the network leader.

So far, we're still lagging on billings. But it takes about two years to translate ratings into billings and profits. Now we've got the ratings, and we're going to keep them. Five years from now, we'll be number one in ratings--and billings.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, op. cit., p. 18.

## CHAPTER XI

### EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING ABC PROGRAMMING FROM 1953-59

From the time of the merger, millions of dollars had been spent by ABC to improve the quality and quantity of its program service. The Program Department had undergone a marked expansion, with personnel additions on both coasts. Most important of all, the underlying philosophies governing program planning, development, and scheduling had considerably changed through the seven year period. These factors, reviewed in the past chapters, directly affected ABC programming from one season to the next.

There were, however, other "external" influences which had both direct and indirect effects on program planning, scheduling, and audience and advertiser acceptance of the programs. These "external" factors, as they will be referred to, encompassed areas within and in some cases beyond ABC's control. Each and every one, however, played a part in the growth of the network and its program structure. Included in this "external" category were the growth of industry and advertising expenditures; the evolution of television, encompassing the important station clearance problem; the development of new sales techniques; and the promotion of audience and advertiser acceptance for the programming.

#### I. THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

An excerpt from a special report to ABC affiliates on April 7, 1957, at the Sheraton Blackstone Hotel in Chicago, clearly details the growth of American industry and advertising, and their effects on a

three-network economy.

Just like the king, Uncle Sam counts his money. Seven short years ago, Sam counted up the gross national product. It came to 285 billion dollars--a tremendous volume of goods and services. But Americans are restless and what's achieved today is surpassed tomorrow. So, by 1956 the gross national product was a record 412 billion dollars, an increase of 44 per cent in six years.

One of the contributing factors had been advertising . . . advertising that stimulated the economic boom. In 1950, our base year, American industry invested 5 and one-half billion dollars. Last year, advertising hit an all time high--up 74 per cent--to just under 10 billion dollars. Advertising has grown at a faster rate than production. Thus, advertising has taken on a bigger burden of selling. Advertisers have learned that it is more efficient to sell in mass through advertising than in less productive ways. The outlook is that the trend will continue. McCann-Erickson estimates that the 1960 advertising investment will be double that of 1950, almost 11 and one-half billions.

At this point we start talking about facts and figures a little closer to our own experience. Television has been one of the great factors in the total advertising boom. In our good old base year, 1950, all television advertising amounted to 171 million dollars. Last year the figure was--1.3 billions. That is a seven-fold increase. And looking to the future, the 1960 outlook for TV advertising investments is two and a half-billion dollars--twice as large as 1956 and fifteen times greater than 1950. The television figures include network, spot, and local billings. They reflect the total investment by advertisers--time and talent . . . Network accounts for about half of all television dollars--spot and local the other half. These two halves of television have climbed hand in hand, like Jack and Jill.<sup>1</sup>

New products and an improved standard of living created a demand for more advertising. Television, a newly-created, potentially powerful advertising tool, played a major role in the expanding economy. Network television, in particular, grew proportionally in a healthy manner, with indications that it could definitely support a three network economy.

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<sup>1</sup> ABC Television Research Department, "1957 Mother Goose Rhymes" (a special report to ABC-TV affiliates, read at the Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 7, 1957).

## II. THE CLEARANCE PROBLEM

"Live" coverage of U. S. television homes was a problem for the ABC Television Network. This was entirely a function of inadequate facilities--in numbers--in many markets of the country. The competitive disadvantage in "live" coverage restricted the advertiser's investment in ABC programming, preventing him from obtaining maximum amortization of program costs and an efficient "cost per thousand." The majority of advertisers were reluctant to spend large amounts of money on ABC's limited facilities.<sup>2</sup>

Back in the year of ABC's merger with United Paramount Theatres, the network had "first-call" in about thirty-nine markets, accounting for about 69 per cent of all U. S. television homes.<sup>3</sup> Many of these primary stations were, however, UHF channels in intermixed VHF-UHF markets--Fresno, Bloomington, Battle Creek, Flint, St. Louis, Albany, Charlotte, and Waco. ABC, as well as the entire industry, discovered that these UHF channels could not exist side by side with the VHF's. People were willing to spend the necessary amounts of money for set conversion only in complete UHF markets, or in those markets where there was one station. By 1954, nine or ten of these ABC "basic" UHF's discontinued operations.

The coverage map filled with the passage of time. By the end of 1956, ABC's "live" coverage was 71 stations--nearly 76 per cent of

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<sup>2</sup>Statement expressed by Don Shaw, ABC-TV Director of Station Clearance (personal interview).

<sup>3</sup>"1957 Mother Goose Rhymes," April 7, 1957.

all U. S. television homes. There had been substantial improvements over the past seasons, though the network was still confronted with a disadvantage in selling that stemmed from station scarcity. Among the twenty-one most important markets of the country, where sales potential and television audiences were concentrated (Nielsen classifies these as "A" markets) ABC had no assured "live" clearance in Boston, with its 1,400,000 homes. In New Orleans, with over 400,000 homes, ABC again had no primary affiliate.<sup>4</sup> In Pittsburgh, then granted its second VHF channel, the network did not cover the 1,200,000 homes with facilities comparable to NBC and CBS. Thus, in three of Nielsen's twenty-one "A" markets--markets whose clearance on a "live" basis could mean the difference in getting an order--in three markets which included 3,000,000 television homes, ABC was at a serious disadvantage. Other important markets which were not being served with a complete ABC program service were San Antonio, St. Louis, Miami, Norfolk, Omaha, and Fort Wayne.<sup>5</sup>

ABC Television was also handicapped in the Nielsen "B" market list--second only in importance to the nation's top twenty-one markets. Here again, the network had "live" clearance problems, and no foreseeable solution.

In 1957, however, all the work and planning of the Federal Communications Commission to alleviate the facilities shortage bore heavy fruit. During that year, millions of viewers across the land were given the opportunity to choose as new stations went on the air in their markets,

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

TABLE XXXV

MARKETS OFFERED "LIVE" ABC TELEVISION COVERAGE  
FROM 1953 TO FALL 1958

<u>Year</u>	<u>Markets</u>	<u>Per Cent U. S. TV Homes</u>
1953	14	52%
1954	39	69
1955	57	65
1956	66	72
1957	71	75
1958	82	83
Fall 1958	85	87
Spring 1959	97	87

January each year, unless otherwise specified.

making it possible for them to select from the programming of three networks, as opposed to the two network choice formerly available.<sup>6</sup>

Important markets--Boston, Indianapolis, Norfolk, Omaha, San Antonio, Tucson, Evansville, Dallas, El Paso, Stockton, New Haven, Austin, Durham, and Oak Hill became "live" ABC markets for the first time.

In other equally important cities--Miami, New Orleans, Sacramento, and St. Louis, ABC's "live" coverage went from "inside" or "outside" UHF to "inside the market" VHF.<sup>7</sup> These changes afforded more homes in these markets the opportunity to view ABC programs. By January 1958, the ABC Television Network was servicing 82 primary affiliates, with total U. S. live coverage of 83 per cent--an increase of 8 per cent over the past January.

For the start of the 1958-59 season, ABC could boast of additional facilities in Pittsburgh, Chattanooga, Orlando, Las Vegas, Flint, Amarillo, Cedar Rapids, and many others--increasing its "live" coverage factor to 87 per cent, with primary affiliates in 85 markets across the country. ABC could now deliver almost nine out of ten homes "live" to its national advertisers.

By September 1959, the number of ABC primary affiliates had increased to 97. The network was still, however, frozen out of between 10 to 18 per cent of the total U. S. television market, with no outlets in half a dozen key areas including Louisville, Grand Rapids, Syracuse, and Rochester.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "ABC-The Value Network" (New York: Sales Presentation for the 1958-59 Season).

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, XII (June 15, 1959), 17.



There can be little doubt that the growth in number of television stations, especially after 1957--resulting in additional three station markets and the deintermixture of UHF's in a handful of important cities--made the ABC network a more desirable buy. Advertisers could now spend more money on programming with the assurance of larger national audiences. By January 1957, the national advertiser could reach at least 80 per cent of the U. S. television audience through ABC primary stations--and other segments of the population not directly serviced by ABC, with good programming and the philosophy that "competitive strength in equal facility markets will make larger national audiences, as stations shift their allegiance to stronger ABC shows."<sup>9</sup>

Since 1957-58, the quality and quantity of time clearances in one and two-station markets had increased, as a direct result of the up-grading of ABC programming.<sup>10</sup> Common sense dictates that a strong show will get a better clearance than a weak one; this is part of the story of ABC's progress in the past few years. In many cases, the network, by virtue of the success of its programs in competitive three station markets, had been able to force its way into a limited market with research, proving to the NBC or CBS affiliate that "you're better off with a split ABC-CBS, or ABC-NBC schedule, than with an entire CBS or NBC program line-up."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>"ABC Crowds the Other 3 Networks," Business Week, #1549 (May 9, 1959), 44.

<sup>10</sup>Interview with Don Shaw.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

If there were weak nights on NBC or CBS in the past, or particular weak links in an evening, there was a better chance for clearance in one and two-station markets. In 1958-59, the 7:30-8:30 pm time period was the most vulnerable position in the NBC and CBS schedules. For 1959-60, stations had responded with excellent clearances for Cheyenne (7:30-8:30 pm Monday) and 77 Sunset Strip (9:00-10:00 pm Friday), because of the past successes of these shows and the Warner Bros. trademark.<sup>12</sup> Clearances for the Alaskans were also influenced by past Warner Bros. accomplishments.<sup>13</sup>

In the past few years, the improved clearance situation in these one and two-station markets had resulted in an increased confidence for program commitments and investments, as well as a new advertiser awareness of ABC as a major advertising force.<sup>14</sup>

#### The Improved Image of the ABC Affiliate

The stature of many ABC affiliates across the country had improved, as a direct result of an upgraded network program service. These stations were attracting larger audiences, and were generally more accepted than in past years. As ABC improved its programming, its stations directly benefited by obtaining increased amounts of local and national spot business, enabling them to purchase more syndicated and feature film material and better serve their respective communities.<sup>15</sup> Increased

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

revenues, from both the network and national spot and local sales, resulted in a corresponding improvement in the local program service. This supplementary programming, both live and film, could create a total audience-flow from one segment of the broadcast day to another.<sup>16</sup> With a strengthened local schedule, an ABC affiliate could assist in building audiences for the nighttime programs. The result of this "give and take" process was an improved daily schedule, and an accompanying audience acceptance of both the network and local originations on many an ABC affiliate across the country.

### III. NEW SALES TECHNIQUES

Oliver Treyz had brought with him, from the Television Bureau of Advertising, mass selling techniques which he had originated while president of that organization. The use of lavish hotel ballrooms, "Cell-O-Matic" widescreen projection units, and \$1.25 coffee and roll breakfasts for hundreds of advertisers and industry personnel brought showmanship-into-selling ABC for 1957-58, 1958-59, and 1959-60. The mass presentations, usually held in mid March, aroused considerable interest in the trade. There is, however, no way of determining the direct effects of these hotel presentations on subsequent sales. Suffice it to say that the Cellomatic, arrays of ABC personalities, beautiful girls, magicians, breakfasts, attendants, and the presence of key members of the network staff, may have had persuasive effects in the area of program sales.

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

Supplementary written presentations were prepared and distributed from 1956-57 through 1959-60. This material, forwarded primarily to advertisers and their agencies, documented not only ABC's past accomplishments, but also future plans, programs, and highlights of the coming season. As the network gained a stronger competitive position--as its program structure improved--these presentations became more elaborate--with more facts and figures to work with and more information to herald. The "Value Network," prepared for 1958-59, was the most elaborate of this material, printed in seven colors at a cost of ten dollars a copy. Though there is no way of tracing the direct effects of these presentations, their distribution nevertheless illustrates ABC's willingness to spend several thousands of dollars in order to pre-sell itself and note its prospective program line-up.

Back in 1956, ABC had closed-circuited an elaborate sales presentation of the Jim Bowie program to the president of Cheesebrough Ponds.<sup>17</sup> No further reports of this selling technique were recorded in the trade papers until, April 1959. At that time, there was a resurgence of the "just for you" presentations. For the 1959-60 season, the network made arrangements with William T. Orr at Warner Bros. and Martin Mamulis at 20th Century Fox, for closed-circuiting of the Alaskans and Bourbon Street Beat, and Adventures in Paradise, respectively.<sup>18</sup> Each presentation had the producer making a taped talk about the show, with integrated film from the pilot or initial episodes woven in.

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<sup>17</sup>Variety /New York, May 17, 1956, p. 90.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

The network then purchased long-line circuits from American Telephone and Telegraph in Chicago to its affiliate in the town where the potential advertiser headquartered. The affiliate arranged the local loops right into the advertiser's board room. There was an ABC sales representative on hand to introduce the closed-circuit, sponsor-tailored broadcast.<sup>19</sup>

The board then made its decision to buy the series or look elsewhere, with the ABC representative available for the contractual wrap-up in an affirmative decision. If the specific sponsor passed-up the show, the presentation could be used for another advertiser.

The network employed "just-for-you" telecasts for last stage negotiations on many major properties. Most buys required board of directors' approval, since they involved millions of dollars in expenditures. Through tape and the available phone lines, ABC had taken the decision right to the directors in a personalized approach to program sales.

#### IV. PROMOTION OF THE PROGRAMS

The first concerted ABC effort to promote a season's program line-up was in preparation for 1953-54. At that time the network spent over half a million dollars to familiarize the television audience with its new "star-power" programming. This first advertising campaign promoted individual shows and personalities: Danny Thomas in Make Room For Daddy; Ray Bolger in Where's Raymond; Paul Hartman in Pride of the Family; and George Jessel in his variety hour.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> "ABC-TV Sets \$1 Million Fall Campaign," Broadcasting Magazine, XLVII (September 13, 1954), 86.

Preparation for the 1954-55 season involved expenditures of one million dollars for advertising-promotion-publicity, to convert the "channel hopper" to a regular ABC viewer. In contrast to the past season, entire evenings and blocks of programs were publicized.<sup>21</sup>

Monday	Voice of Firestone, Jamie
Tuesday	U. S. Steel Hour, Danny Thomas
Wednesday	Disneyland, Stu Erwin, Masquerade Party
Thursday	T-Men In Action, Kraft Television Theatre
Friday	Ozzie and Harriet, Ray Bolger, Dollar A Second
Saturday	Programs following the NCAA games
Sunday	Walter Winchell, Martha Wright, Break the Bank

The campaign utilized newspapers, billboards, transit cards, and on-the-air promotion for the five owned-and-operated stations. ABC affiliates were provided with promotion kits distributed by the network.<sup>22</sup>

One particular program, Disneyland, was more widely publicized than other individual shows. Motion picture trailers were broadcast by the network and its affiliates from July 15th until well after the show's premiere.<sup>23</sup> The spot announcements incorporated cuts and film "clips" from old Disney cartoons and motion picture features. In addition, the American Dairy Association, one of the sponsors, promoted the show through a campaign of its own.

For 1955-56, the ABC Publicity-Promotion-Advertising Department was enlarged--especially in the area of exploitation. A new unit was created, geared to highlight the Warner Bros., MGM, and Walt Disney projects.<sup>24</sup> Increased promotional activities necessitated an additional

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Variety, September 27, 1954, p. 48.

<sup>24</sup>Variety, July 6, 1955, p. 23.

eleven staff members by September 1955.<sup>25</sup>

Subsequent seasons marked the network's entrance into the area of merchandising, with units created to arrange for food, clothing, and game tie-ups for many ABC programs and personalities--among them Maverick, Wyatt Earp, the Real McCoys, and the Rifleman. Similar units had been initiated by Walt Disney for the Mickey Mouse Club, Zorro, and Disneyland; and the Pat Boone production unit, Cooga Mooga, for a score of articles bearing the singer's name.

For the 1958-59 season, ABC produced a series of one-minute animated announcements, promoting the network institutionally and its programs individually. Over 1500 prints were distributed to affiliates across the country for a saturation campaign.<sup>26</sup> Both ABC and the stations used them at all opportunities, whenever a sustaining spot was available. The five animated announcements, highlighting all of the old and new shows, represented ABC's first major attempt to promote its entire evening schedule.

During the 1958 season, the network also arranged a promotional tie-up with 8,000 grocery stores in the east and mid-west to promote its waning "Operation Daybreak."<sup>27</sup> Over 90 per cent of all the paper sacks used by the super-markets carried plugs for the daytime operation which, according to Supermarket Affiliates of New York, covered over twelve

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Variety, October 8, 1958, p. 49.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., December 24, 1958, p. 22.

million family trips (one family per shopping trip).<sup>28</sup>

The most unique promotional idea was conceived by ABC Press Vice President Mike Foster, and implemented by the Western Division publicity chief, Ernie Stern.<sup>29</sup> For the 1959-60 season, the network brought to Hollywood, on an individual basis, about forty of the key columnists and television personalities from the Trendex cities, for a four-or-five day expenses-paid period. The guests were shown the Hollywood sights, brought onto the studio lots, and treated to extensive interview sessions with producers and talent in the ABC line-up.<sup>30</sup>

They received poolside rooms at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, and were never combined with more than two other reporters in keeping with the individual and "exclusive" nature of the arrangements. Similar tours were conducted for local television personalities from the ABC Trendex cities, with on-the-spot interviews recorded on videotape or sound-on-film.<sup>31</sup>

Costs for the entire plan were estimated at \$50,000, though these were considered reasonable in terms of promotion for the Trendex cities. The publicity accrued from the visits, and the anticipated lineage in the radio-television columns could mean the difference between one or two rating points--the one or two rating points which might determine renewal or cancellation of a questionable program.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., October 8, 1958, p. 40.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



For 1959-60, regional promotion conclaves were held in the north, south, east, and west, as in the season before. Promotion managers for the respective affiliates in the region met with ABC officials for a preview of the fall programming, and an exchange of ideas for publicizing the shows.<sup>32</sup> During past seasons, ABC had increased these joint activities with its affiliates, financing a percentage of the campaigns which were executed by the stations themselves. In many instances, cash prizes were offered to the affiliate(s) that did the best job of publicizing certain programs or portion of the schedule, as was the case of Maverick and "Operation Daybreak."

#### V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

ABC's increased program strength was the direct result of millions of dollars in expenditures, an expansion of the Program Department, the influx of new administrative and programming personnel, and modifications of basic philosophies underlying program planning, development, and scheduling. There were, however, certain "external" factors which also played important parts in the growth of ABC and its program structure.

The total gross national product had increased 44 per cent by 1956--showing no signs of subsiding. One of the contributing factors had been advertising, and the desire of the manufacturers to move their goods and services. Television was recognized as an important force and shared a heavy burden in the sales efforts. By 1956, television expenditures had increased seven-fold over the 1950 total, and the prediction

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<sup>32</sup>Variety, August 8, 1959, p. 52.

for 1960 was twice the amount. With network television accounting for half of all television dollars, it was evident that three networks could exist side by side in the most thriving economy in the nation's history.

The television industry itself had evolved in the seven year period from 1953. The F.C.C. had licensed additional television channels in a number of markets, giving all three networks equal facilities. The majority of the poor UHF's had discontinued operations--many of them being replaced by VHF facilities in the intermixed markets. By January 1959, this growth process had provided ABC Television with "live" coverage of 87 per cent of the United States television homes, with new facilities in key cities including Boston, Pittsburgh, San Antonio, and Chattanooga, and converted UHF to VHF channels in Miami, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Sacramento. With improved coverage, advertisers were less reluctant to spend large sums of money on ABC programming. In those markets where ABC did not have comparable facilities, the network had often secured clearances for its shows on NBC or CBS affiliates. In the past few years, such clearances have considerably improved in both quality and quantity, as a direct result of the upgrading of ABC programming and its success in the competitive markets.

Better network programming also changed the images of many ABC affiliates, making them better buys for national spot and local advertisers--resulting in more station revenues, and in turn, a superior local program service to supplement the network shows and provide a total audience flow from one segment of the broadcast day to another.

New methods had been devised to sell the programs and each season's line-up. The appointment of Oliver Treyz brought to ABC an era

of mass sales presentations in plush hotel ballrooms--with Cell-O-matic projection, beautiful girls, breakfasts and luncheons, and an aura of showmanship and excitement into a statistical array of facts and figures. In addition, elaborate written presentations and brochures were prepared for the trade to pre-sell and supplement the activities of the ABC sales force--presentations which cost as much as ten dollars a copy. Technological advances also brought into play closed-circuit sales presentations, whereby a prospective advertiser could view a program pilot film or audition tape in the comfort of his board room. While there is no accurate gauge in determining the effectiveness of these techniques, they were nevertheless part of a streamlined, new sales process--in line with a new, streamlined ABC program structure.

Promotion of the season-by-season programming changed during the seven year period to meet the network's growing needs. At first, individual programs were publicized--then entire evenings; and finally, in 1958-59, the complete ABC program schedule. Additional staff members were added in 1955 for program and talent exploitation; a merchandising unit was established in 1957; costly press tours were initiated for 1959-60. Throughout the seven year period, ABC assumed part of the task of local station advertising and promotion, often financing publicity campaigns, providing promotion kits (slides, film trailers, on-the-air copy), and conducting national and regional conclaves to preview the season's line-up, and offer suggestions and ideas for publicizing the programs. During the past few seasons, ABC has even established contests (and prizes) for the best promotional efforts of its affiliates. Through all of these efforts, ABC had shown an

increased awareness in promoting its programming among the television audience; of putting its personalities and programs in the public eye; and in the potential of advertising for building audiences and retaining them.

## CHAPTER XII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

At a 1957 affiliates meeting, an ABC programmer explained the difficult and time-consuming task of building a network program schedule.

Building takes time. You don't build a station overnight. Programs take time to build, too--and program schedules even longer.

Before you build you must plan. . . plan with a basic viewpoint, detailed cost estimates. . . calculate sales potential and formulate a practical sales approach.

It has to be right. You can't quite have an ending as in a famous cartoon--the one in which there has been a disastrous crash of an experimental plane, and two aviation engineers are turning from the scene, as one casually says: 'Well, back to the old drawing board.' In network TV, if your plan doesn't fly, there may not be a drawing board to go back to--the bank may have reclaimed it.<sup>1</sup>

In 1953, the newly formed ABC-UPT organization recognized the need for careful, organized, and cautious planning. ABC was faced with a severe facilities disadvantage from the outset--it was considered an undesirable buy and a last place to go to for those sponsors who had been turned away from the other networks, or who overlooked low audience returns in favor of economic rates.

For this reason, ABC had to limit its program and talent development activities, keeping them commensurate with relatively low earnings. Even if the network had been able to reprogram its entire schedule (and this would have been an impossibility), it would not have done so. As

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<sup>1</sup>ABC Television Research Department, "1957 Mother Goose Rhymes" (a special report to ABC-TV affiliates, read at the Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 7, 1957).

Robert Lewine explained, "You have to have sponsor interest first, before spending exorbitant sums of money."<sup>2</sup> ABC chose to develop and/or acquire some program properties each season, supplementing this nucleus with advertiser controlled programming. Lest the reader be deceived, this was not an inexpensive task--as evidenced by the millions of dollars spent on the Disney, Warner Bros., and MGM properties.

Perhaps the growth of ABC Television might have proceeded at a faster pace if all the new shows had been Disneylands or Mavericks. It would have been wonderful, but this was not the case. Television, like any other form of show business, involves risks--millions of dollars worth of risks. There is no sure formula for success. ABC hoped that all of its new program and talent properties for each season would be audience winners, and financially backed its dreams of success with large program and development expenditures--in 1953-54, there were Danny Thomas, Ray Bolger, Paul Hartman, and George Jessel, the "star-power" group; in 1954-55, Disneyland, NCAA Football, T-Men In Action, and Mail Story; 1955-56, Warner Bros. Presents, MGM Parade, Mickey Mouse Club; 1956-57, Jim Bowie, Wire Service, Bishop Sheen; 1957-58, Guy Mitchell, Frank Sinatra, Mike Wallace, Pat Boone, Zorro, Real McCoys, Maverick, and Dick Clark; and 1958-59, 77 Sunset Strip, Lawman, Colt 45, and Donna Reed. Less than half of these lived up to the network's hopes--Danny Thomas, Disneyland, Warner Bros. Presents (Cheyenne), Wyatt Earp, Mickey Mouse Club, Jim Bowie, Zorro, Real McCoys, Pat Boone, Maverick, Dick Clark, 77 Sunset Strip, Lawman, and Donna Reed. This group of network developed,

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<sup>2</sup>Statement expressed by Robert E. Lewine, former ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

co-produced, and/or acquired programming comprised only a small percentage of the network's seasonal schedules. These were the cream--the gilt-edged offerings--of ABC Television. The surrounding programs--the lifeblood of the network until the Treyz administration--were brought to ABC by advertisers, agencies, and other diverse organizations.

These outside programs were for the most part inexpensive audience participation games and dramas--many of which would probably have been rejected by NBC or CBS.<sup>3</sup> ABC, however, was primarily concerned with selling time and providing some type of program service to its affiliates. Though the network realized that these programs would do little to improve or upgrade the schedule, it could not turn the advertisers (and their programs) away. Every commercial period represented additional revenues in the ABC coffers. With sales a primary consideration, the network could not control the quality of most of the programming and its logical placement in the schedule. As Slocum Chapin explained, "The results of audience research couldn't be put into practice. The schedule was wide open and completely flexible. It was a buyers market on ABC -- they took anything they could get, to the detriment of a total, balanced schedule."

Consequently, of the scores of shows brought to ABC, there were only a few which attracted appreciable audiences--U. S. Steel Hour, Rin Tin Tin, Wednesday Night Fights, Lawrence Welk, Top Tunes and Talent, Broken Arrow, Rifleman, Naked City, and Alcoa Presents.

By 1956-57, ABC Television, under the leadership of Robert Kintner

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

and ABC-UPT President Leonard Goldenson, had built a solid foundation for Oliver Treyz and his new program staff. Though there was room for improvement in every corner of the schedule, there had nevertheless been much progress made in the three years since the merger--especially when viewed in the light of ABC's clearance problems and its "bottom of the barrel" position in 1953.

The network could now boast of early evening dominance on three nights of the week--Tuesday (7:30-9:00), Wednesday (7:30-8:30), and Friday (7:30-8:30). A solid program nucleus had evolved over the three year period, around which other portions of the schedule could be built--Broken Arrow, Cheyenne/Conflict, Disneyland, Lawrence Welk, Top Tunes and Talent, Wednesday Night Fights, Rin Tin Tin, Wyatt Earp, Jim Bowie, Ozzie and Harriet, Lone Ranger, and the Mickey Mouse Club.

Important relationships had been established with the major Hollywood studios, with ABC exclusivity for all Walt Disney and Warner Bros. television product. Similar agreements had been made with many independent producers as well.

The "adult western" had been introduced with Cheyenne and Wyatt Earp in 1955-56--the success of the Davy Crockett episodes on Disneyland had influenced the development of other ABC programs of this type. By 1956-57, the programmers (with the success of Jim Bowie) realized the potential inherent in action programming, and began experimenting with other updated forms (Wire Service, International Theatre). These efforts led to the realization that the action vehicle was capable of developing a new breed of television personality--the young, virile, rugged leading man. Unlike comedy variety, where the featured star made the program,



the adult western and adventure shows were capable of developing star material, as evidenced by the rise of Clint Walker, Hugh O'Brien, and Fess Parker. The inception of the western-adventure programming and a new type of leading man was to assume an important role in program planning for the Oliver Treyz administration.

Synonymous with the development of "bread and butter" programming was the network's recognition of the young, post-war families with small children. With Disneyland in 1954, ABC first aimed at this important consumer group--the group with the most buying power, whose viewing habits were more dynamic and more subject to change than their older counterparts. Wyatt Earp, Cheyenne, Jim Bowie, Wire Service, and many properties which were never broadcast were plotted and conceived with the "get-age" families in mind. In fact, practically all of the programs developed and/or acquired by ABC between 1954 and 1956 were geared to these families. Until 1957-58, the budgetary limitations of program development and acquisition prevented programming of this type from playing a greater part in each season's schedule.

Audience research had been used for the scheduling of certain key shows--the positioning of Disneyland and Warner Bros. Presents at 7:30 pm, a half-hour before the formidable competition, and opposite music and news on NBC and CBS; the Broken Arrow and Jim Bowie adjacencies to Wyatt Earp and Rin Tin Tin, capitalizing on an anticipated audience flow from both shows; the counterprogramming of Famous Film Festival against Ed Sullivan and Colgate Comedy Hour--were all signposts of an increased dependence on audience research.

During these initial years, ABC had also set the stage for an

extensive daytime operation, with the powerful Mickey Mouse Club in the 5:00-6:00 pm time period. After many unsuccessful attempts to enter the late afternoon, the network finally had a strong anchor, from which it could build earlier portions of the day.

Robert Kintner, under the new United Paramount management, had taken an impoverished network, and injected signs of life into it. While ABC was not a fully competitive network when Mr. Treyz assumed control, it was nevertheless recognized as an "up-and-coming" organization. Not only was there a strong program foundation and a 300 per cent increase in revenues, but most important of all, there was also a new audience awareness of a "third television network."

In October 1956, with Oliver Treyz' appointment as the new Vice President of the autonomous Television Network, the time had come for increased program expenditures. The network would have 80 per cent "live" clearance of the United States by 1957; there was a healthy national economy and signs of growing advertising budgets; and there was a solid program foundation upon which to build a strengthened schedule. Mr. Treyz and an expanded Program Department on both coasts were to elaborate upon, but nevertheless follow, many of Mr. Kintner's past policies.

With an increased program budget, ABC developed, acquired, and committed for many more program and/or talent properties than it had in the past. The network did not, however, deviate from its past co-production policy with independent producers and the Hollywood studios. For 1957-58 and the following seasons, extensive arrangements were made with Warner Bros., Twentieth Century Fox, Walt Disney Productions, Four Star Films, Goodson-Todman, Screen Gems, ITC, and almost every important studio in

America. As in the past, ABC created and produced little of its own programming, in line with the philosophy of not placing all the creative talent under one banner.

The network committed for more program properties than it had in previous seasons--many times ahead of sales--as was the case with the Real McCoys, Zorro, Lawman, and the Untouchables. Moreover, through its new Program Development Division, ABC had more of a say in program control and supervision in line with its needs and those of its advertisers. For the first time since the "star-power" of 1953-54, ABC had signed talent to exclusive contracts--Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Pat Boone, Mike Wallace, and Elvis Presley. The network realized that it had to spend substantially more on programming and talent to obtain the consistency of good programming which it had lacked in past seasons--it had to think of the programs first, and then consider the all-important sales.

Mr. Treyz and his staff decided that ABC had to have a point of view--that it should concentrate on a specific audience and gear the majority of its new programming toward that audience. The network's past success in reaching the young, "get-age" families, and the desirability of the group, in terms of number, viewing habits, and buying power, made this portion of the television audience the ABC target. From 1957-58, the network aimed for the younger-larger families with "bread and butter" action shows, complimented with situation comedies and young vocalists; from 1958-59, the emphasis was on action--with only a few variety programs scheduled. The ratings of Cheyenne, Wyatt Earp, Broken Arrow, and Jim Bowie proved to the programmers that the way to reach the mass "get-age" audience was with the "bread and butter" western-adventure

fare. In 1958-59, with the success of 77 Sunset Strip and the rise of Efrem Zimbalist as a major television personality, it was apparent that an action show, with the proper star, did not have to be confined to a western--that a mystery drama also provided an excellent vehicle for the Zimbalists, Walkers, O'Briens, and Garners.

Another important consideration was the scheduling of the programs. Now, there was a renewed emphasis on audience research, with the use of two tactics--counterprogramming and compatible "thematic" programming. The key to these concepts was the audience appeal of the various shows--determined for the most part by the findings of research. Though many instances of program scheduling had been partially determined by sales, it was the new ABC policy to permit such placement only when compatible with adjacent programming. There were instances (on weak evenings, or weak portions of evenings) where this careful planning was overlooked. On important evenings or in key time periods, however, the network attempted to assemble the most compatible, desirable line-up of programming. By 1959-60, the theory of planned programming had become a reality--with at least four evenings of action blocks from 7:30-10:30 pm, and another two evenings of compatible situation comedies and "bread and butter" programming.

The transformation of ABC to a more competitive network was not accomplished overnight, with the appointment of Mr. Treyz and a streamlined program philosophy. In 1957-58 and 1958-59, there were many drawbacks--Frank Sinatra, Guy Mitchell, Mike Wallace, Patrice Munsel, Betty White, Rough Riders, and Walter Winchell, to mention a few. There were, however, more program successes than ever before--the fruits of an

expanded development and acquisition policy in the form of Maverick, Real McCoys, Zorro, Pat Boone, 77 Sunset Strip, Lawman, Colt 45, Rifleman, Naked City, and Donna Reed. By the end of the 1958-59 season, strong blocks of programming had evolved on Tuesday (7:30-9:30), Thursday (8:00-9:30), Friday (7:30-10:30), and Sunday (7:30-9:00). In addition, the network could boast of dominance on four evenings of the week, and as many as four programs in the Nielsen "top ten" listings. In 1958-59, ABC had also begun an extensive daytime operation with a full line-up of programs (70 new ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) hours) prepared in association with Young and Rubicam. Though "Operation Daybreak" got off to a somewhat shaky start, by August 1959 its Nielsen audience share had increased from 11 per cent the past October to over 25 per cent.

In six short years, ABC had improved its programming to the extent that in August 1959, the Nielsen MNA reports placed the network in first position for the average rating of all programs from 7:30-10:30 pm. In the national listings, ABC received ratings equaling, and at times, surpassing those of all NBC nighttime programs. The network had also become a full-time operation, with a complete line-up of both nighttime and daytime programming. These improvements in the quantity and quality of program service manifested themselves in ABC billings, which had climbed from \$21,000,000 in 1953 to \$103,017,000 in 1958--a rise of over 500 per cent. Examining these figures in another light, ABC Television accounted for 9.3 per cent of total network gross billings in 1953, as compared to 18.2 per cent in 1958. ABC had almost equaled the other networks in ratings, though it still lagged behind in the important commercial billings, and its goal of a full 30 per cent of its network

potential.

The 1959-60 season was to be a crucial point in ABC's history--the network could surge ahead of the other networks in ratings, and narrow the gap in gross billings, if it could successfully strengthen certain portions of its daytime and nighttime schedule.

In past seasons, ABC had made the most gains with action programming. The public, especially the audience which ABC was aiming for favored these shows--the Nielsens and Trendexes confirmed this. Operating on the theory of giving the public what it wants, Messrs. Goldenson and Treyz decided to go all out on the "bread and butter" programs for 1959-60--in the form of westerns, southern, easterns, adventure shows, and mystery dramas. Eleven of the sixteen new programs were in the action category.

Many people in the industry voiced criticism against the network, contending that there was no program balance in the schedule, and no "totality of program service" to which NBC and CBS had subscribed--that ABC had made no attempt to uplift the standards of the public. In reply to these comments, Leonard Goldenson had this to say

People like what we're giving them. First we build a habit factor, get them used to watching us. Then we can do something about upgrading programming. We're not interested in the critics.<sup>4</sup>

Oliver Treyz added

We study public taste hard and carefully. We gear ourselves entirely to what the public wants. And the public wants cowboys. The proof: we're getting the audiences and we're getting the sponsors. The big two

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<sup>4</sup>"The abc of ABC," Forbes Magazine, XII (June 15, 1959), 30.

is now the big three--and in a lot of places we're already number two and crowding number one.<sup>5</sup>

At this point, one important question arises--is ABC fulfilling its public obligations as a television network by presenting so many of these action programs? The researcher would have to say yes, and agree with ABC programmers. This answer, however, is tempered by the present circumstances of the network and its relationship to NMC and CBS. As was stated earlier, ABC's gross billings have shown a marked increase, as compared to the base year 1953. When they are compared with present NBC or CBS earnings, however, they are still several millions of dollars behind--evidenced by the 1958 total of 18.2 per cent of all network billings--a full 11.8 per cent less than a full third. Television critics and pasteboard programmers have all the answers (on paper) though they fail to realize that network television is basically a business, with profit and loss columns, stockholders meetings, and annual reports. In 1958-59, ABC received its highest ratings, with the "bread and butter" programming which was so often criticized. Ratings, however, take a few years to translate into actual billings, so that ABC is still not in the comfortable financial position of its older brothers. It must maintain its rating position, and then some, in order to realize that 30 per cent share of billings which it has set as a goal. In the past few seasons, the action programs--the westerns, adventures and mysteries--have attracted large audiences, and have dominated the "top ten" listings. Without searching for psychological motivations, suffice

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

it to say that the mass audience--the "get-age" audience--liked these programs. They enjoy watching Cheyenne/Sugarfoot, Maverick, the Rifleman and the scores of others, and have come back week after week for more of the same. There has been a demand for this type of programming, which all of the networks have supplied in varying degrees.

There was a time not too long ago when ABC had a completely balanced schedule--with something for everyone. There were Omnibus, Press Conference, quality English films, outstanding dramas, anthologies, audience quizzes and panel games, and a number of public affairs features--all scheduled in prime evening time. Discounting the clearance problem and examining the competitive market reports for the larger, urbane, more sophisticated cities with three channels or more, there was not a single program which attracted a large audience. Perhaps the low audience returns of Omnibus and Firestone are an indictment against the American television audience--the masses may not be ready for a Patrice Munsel or a Lawrence Olivier feature film. Viewed in any light, ABC did not attract sizeable audiences with this "something for everyone" philosophy--that only when the network aimed for a specific group of viewers and attempted to satisfy their preferences and tastes did it succeed in establishing popular programs. The Mavericks, Sunset Strips, and Riflemans of 1958-59 were indications that the public wanted action in every conceivable shape and form. In early 1959, when the network was in the midst of planning for the fall, this trend became most pronounced. Therefore, ABC's entrenchment in the action form was quite explainable--it would have been sheer foolishness to attempt a totality of program service comparable to the CBS or NBC schedules; not with



blue-chip advertisers Liggett and Myers, P. Lorillard, Proctor and Gamble, American Home Products, and several others willing and eager to join the ABC ranks with purchases of the action-adventure programming. When a Liggett and Myers takes \$8,000,000 of NBC business and transfers it to the ABC coffers, it would take a Julius Caesar to convince Messrs. Goldenson and Treyz to tamper with a formula which, up to the present time, had brought success.

Looking into the future, however--to 1960-61 and the seasons beyond--the researcher believes that ABC will, by necessity, change the complexion of its programming. In October 1959, there are some signs that the western trend is waning; that audience interest in the program type has been reduced, due to overexposure and the limited number of plot situations available for the many series. Mystery drama, which has mushroomed into a prominent position in 1959-60, is faced with a similar dilemma. On the basis of the new ABC mysteries, there seems to be little or no originality or novelty ingredients to make them stand apart from their predecessors. Two programs in particular--Hawaiian Eye and Bourbon Street Beat--have been plotted like carbon copies of 77 Sunset Strip. The weekly murder, fighting, beautiful women, more fighting, and a handsome pair of private detectives (portrayed by rather incompetent thespians)--all of which add up to rather uninspired imitations of an established success. Adventures in Paradise, Man From Black Hawk, and The Alaskans could also be included among this uneventful programming--programming which lacks any spark of creativity. There are, however, some new programs which rise above the others. Robert Taylor starring in the Detectives, Phillip Marlowe, the Rebel, the Untouchables--these

have the potential for possible ABC successes and long television lifetimes, if the initial shows are any indication of what lies ahead for the rest of the season. For one thing, each of the three has a leading man with whom the audience can easily identify. They are all distinct personalities--flesh and blood characters who possess an intangible quality which makes them seem real and believable. Though this characteristic is impossible to describe, it is immediately evident upon watching Robert Taylor, Phil Carey, Nick Adams, or Robert Stack in their respective series--the viewer cares for them far more than he does the Anthony Eisleys, Richard Longs, or Gardner McKays, who seem to be stiff, pasteboard figures. Without this audience identification, the most elaborately produced television program would be a spectacular failure.

At this point, an important question arises--how long will the television audience, even the "get-age" audience, endure hour upon hour of ABC action programming, much of which is not up to the qualitative standards of a Rifleman and a Maverick--in addition to the many other repetitious offerings on the other networks? With the temptations of Ford Startime, the Revlon Party, and an array of "star-power," motion picture adaptations, and dramatic presentations the likes of which television has never before presented, the audience's preferences will have to change if they have not already. A sampling of Ingrid Bergman, Alec Guinness, Art Carney, and the many exciting variety offerings will broaden the viewer's tastes--he will begin to look for more in television entertainment than the westerns and private eyes. This will not, however, be an overnight transformation; the action shows will not be written off

that easily. Several new ABC programs should receive sizeable ratings for most of the season, though none of them (with the possible exception of the Untouchables) are likely to overrun the Nielsen "top-tens." The good shows should receive audience shares somewhere between 30 and 35 per cent; the bad ones, on the other hand, have all the signs of being the season's disasters--unless they are quickly reformed--and recast--and rewritten. By the end of the season, the mysteries, adventures, and westerns will probably have worn out their welcome mats--ushering out a program trend which had lasted for three or four years.

By 1960-61, ABC should have filled any rating gaps which might have existed between itself and NBC or CBS. Though there is no information available at the present time concerning gross billings for 1959-60, it can be assumed that ABC will have made advances in this area as well. If ABC has become a fully competitive network force by then (and it should be), many program changes will probably be made. The network is almost certain to provide more of a balance between film and "live" programming. Ted Fetter believes that ABC will do this once an audience is definitely gained.<sup>6</sup> An increased "live" output is the broad network goal set by Thomas Moore, Programming Vice President, who feels the "pendulum has just got to swing back toward 'live' because it's from 'live' television that the freshest ideas come and because 'live' is the only way to go for programming to 'counterpoint' the abundance of film."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Statement expressed by Ted Fetter, ABC-TV Vice President of the Program Department (personal interview).

<sup>7</sup>Variety /New York/, February 11, 1959, p. 27.

In anticipation of a retrenchment in film, ABC has modernized its New York and Hollywood studio plants, and has constructed new facilities in Chicago, Detroit, and San Francisco. In all but the New York studios, installations have been provided for rapid color conversion, at a cost of several millions of dollars--indicating that ABC will definitely begin color-casting when a sufficient number of receivers has been sold. The modernization of these facilities is also an indication of more "special" programming in the seasons to follow. For 1960-61, Dan Melnick predicts that there will be a comedy variety program in a "new, vitalic form," with, perhaps, a comedian like Mort Sahl emceeing, in keeping with the image of a young vitalic network.<sup>8</sup>

The researcher believes that this phrase, "a young vitalic network," is the key to the future for ABC. When the action programming declines, whether it be at the end of 1959-60, or two or three seasons from now, the network will have to find new program forms to suit the public's changing tastes and preferences. This does not necessarily mean that the ABC will change its "get-age" approach. On the contrary, ABC should continue to program for the younger-larger families that it is reaching now. Research will determine their new program tastes--whether they be a Mort Sahl hour or an off-beat situation comedy, and the network should, as it has in the past, comply with them. For future seasons, ABC should provide an up-dated youthful version of a 1953-54 NBC or CBS schedule--with a balance of all program types

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<sup>8</sup> Statement expressed by Dan Melnick, ABC-TV Vice President of Program Development (personal interview).

specially conceived and plotted for the younger-larger family groups-- a "something for everybody" schedule conceived within a "get-age" framework.

In line with this program balance, ABC could also schedule more public service programming. Up to 1958-59, the considerations of building an audience and obtaining a competitive evening position have limited public service programming in prime evening time. As Fritz Littlejohn, ABC News Director, explained, "These programs can do vast damage if they are placed in a poor position, affecting the surrounding adjacencies and the continuity of an entire evening."<sup>9</sup> With the success of the entertainment portion of the schedule and the growth of ABC audiences, Mr. Littlejohn believes that there will be a proportionate rise in public service programming.<sup>10</sup> More money will be allocated for these programs and "as we go along, public service shows will become more and more saleable."<sup>11</sup> The researcher believes, as does Mr. Littlejohn, that "you have to have a clean lobby." Drawing an analogy to the theatre business, a motion picture can be shown at the Music Hall and a 42nd Street theatre and appear to be two different movies because of the surroundings. This principle applies to network television programs-- a framework and a public image of cleanliness can be established by a balanced schedule including public service programming. Within the next two or three seasons, a broadening of the program schedule and the

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<sup>9</sup> Statement expressed by Fritz Littlejohn, ABC-TV Director of News and Public Affairs (personal interview).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

inclusion of public service shows should improve the ABC image and the cowboy stigma attached to the network by industry personnel.

Looking back over the past six-and-a-half years, it is evident that ABC has fulfilled its promises that, "New programs will be developed. New stars will be attracted. New techniques will be introduced." The network was first to reach an agreement with a major motion picture studio; first to broadcast feature films on a network basis; first to program the "adult western" in sizable numbers; first to originate a one-hour mystery program with continuing characters; first to recognize the value of the 7:30 pm time period; and first to originate a new breed of young, virile television personalities.

ABC's development process, and its intentions "to grow like an oak, not a mushroom," have also been detailed in the past pages. There is little doubt in the researcher's mind that in six-and-a-half years (instead of Mr. Kintner's proposed five years), ABC had succeeded for the most part in its long-range objectives of (1) filling seven nights a week (7:30-10:30) with strong programming; and (2) initiation of a successful daytime operation.

In the past few seasons, ABC has been forced by necessity to narrow its sights and program for the mass audience. As the up-and-coming network still lagging behind NBC and CBS in billings, it needed guaranteed audiences with "sure-fire" programming. It was not in the position to experiment with new program forms, and tamper with an audience which it had already gained. In other words, Mr. Treyz and his staff have used their present programming as a means to an end--to accomplish the gigantic task of making ABC a competitive television

network. Once they have done this--once both audiences and billings are on a par with the "big two"--the researcher believes that new programming concepts, forms, and personalities should be introduced to the schedule--more "special" entertainment and public affairs programming, more drama, more comedy, more variety. In short, for 1960-61 and the seasons which follow, ABC should provide a balanced schedule, within the "get-age" framework, to give American the most vitalic image in network television.

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