

Public Media's Origin as a Strategically Networked Archive, 1949-1953

Josh Shepperd, Ph.D.

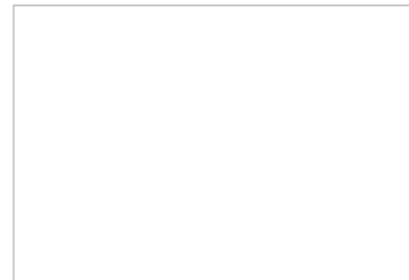
Assistant Professor, Catholic University

Director, #RPTF, Library of Congress



NPR Headquarters in Washington, DC on April 9, 2013.

President Trump's budget slashes support for funder of NPR, PBS and public radio stations





The beloved 'Sesame Street' is one of many programs that may be less accessible in poor rural areas if Trump's proposed budget cuts [+]

This morning, Donald Trump's White House released a proposed budget rife with cuts. Among them was a complete elimination of the money allocated to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, or CPB. Federal funding for CPB amounts to about \$450 million per year—or about \$1.35 per citizen, annually.

"There is no viable substitute for federal funding that ensures Americans have universal access to public media's educational and informational programming and services," said Patricia Harrison, president and CEO of CPB in a statement. "The elimination of federal funding to CPB would initially devastate and ultimately destroy public media's role in early childhood education, public safety, connecting citizens to our history, and promoting civil discussions for Americans in rural and urban communities alike."

If CPB's federal funding were to be completely eliminated, the organization would lose **\$445 million** annually. About \$298 million of this is appropriated to public television, \$99.1 million to public radio and the rest to system support and operating costs.

"Small and rural stations serving underserved populations would be the first to feel that impact and would be hit hardest," Anne Brachman, CPB's VP of government affairs, told Forbes.

Radio Preservation Task Force

White

- A federal Library of Congress project
- 200+ Research Associates, 26 directors
 - 130 colleges and universities represented
- 400+ archives and museums
- Major partners:
 - Smithsonian(s), Hoover, Wilson
 - U.S. National Archives
 - Peabodys, Newseum, Paley
 - NPR, St. Louis Media History



#RPTF

Partnerships and Collaborations



RADIO SURVIVOR

Current



in media res



Pacifica Radio Archives
A Living History



Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage



Media History Digital Library

COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934

AN ACT To provide for the regulation of interstate and foreign communication by wire or radio, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I--GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 1. [47 U.S.C. 151] PURPOSES OF ACT, CREATION OF FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

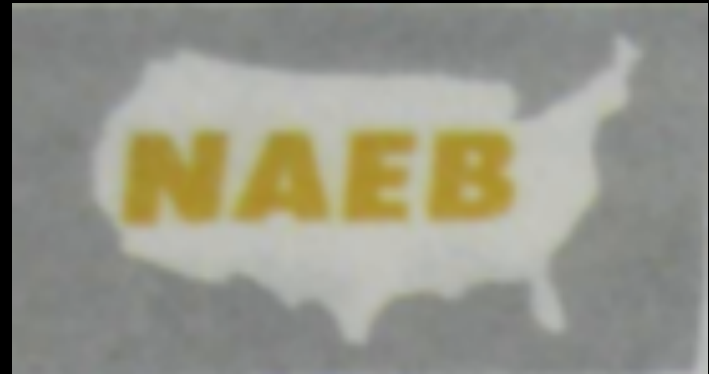
For the purpose of regulating interstate and foreign commerce in communication by wire and radio so as to make available, so far as possible, to all the people of the United States, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and radio communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges, for the purpose of the national defense, for the purpose of promoting safety of life and property through the use of wire and radio communication, and for the purpose of securing a more effective execution of this policy by centralizing authority heretofore granted by law to several agencies and by granting additional authority with respect to interstate and foreign commerce in wire and radio communication, there is hereby created a commission to be known as the "Federal Communications Commission," which shall be constituted as hereinafter provided, and which shall execute and enforce the provisions of this Act.

Effects of the Communications Act of 1934

- “Public Interest” mandate
 - Eliminated educational media allocations
- Unexpectedly mobilized multiple sectors
- Set parameters for public media organization

National Association of Educational Broadcasters

- Founded in 1925/26
- Clearing house for educational broadcasting
- Eventual Builders of public media in 1960s



John Studebaker

- Office of Education
- Expert technocrat
- Wanted federal educational broadcasting



Dr. Raymond D. Fosdick,
President, Rockefeller Foundation,
49 West 49th Street,
New York City.

My dear Dr. Fosdick:

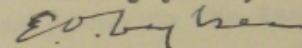
You are, of course, aware of the creation in December, 1935, of the Federal Radio Education Committee by the Federal Communications Commission. The purpose of the committee was:

1. To eliminate controversy and misunderstanding between groups of educators and between the industry and educators.
2. To promote actual cooperative arrangements between educators and broadcasters on national, regional and local bases.

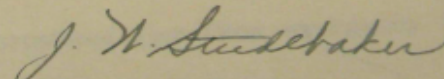
The committee, as constituted, represents all organizations having conceivable interest in the question of educational broadcasting. It is composed of forty members. The United States Commissioner of Education is the chairman of the Committee.

FCC and Office of Education
invitation to The Rockefeller
Foundation, 1935

Cordially yours,



E. O. Sykes,
Chairman, Broadcast Division,
Federal Communications Commission.



John W. Studebaker,
U. S. Commissioner of Education.

Judge E. O. Sykes, Vice Chairman, Federal Radio Commission -

"A certain amount of showmanship, if I may use that term, must be used by educators in presenting programs that will attract and hold radio audiences. The commercial broadcasters have taken great pains to learn this art of attractiveness; and the educators need their help in acquiring this attractiveness in their technique of broadcasting. I do not believe that radio audiences want undiluted education. This belief is based on my own practical experience."

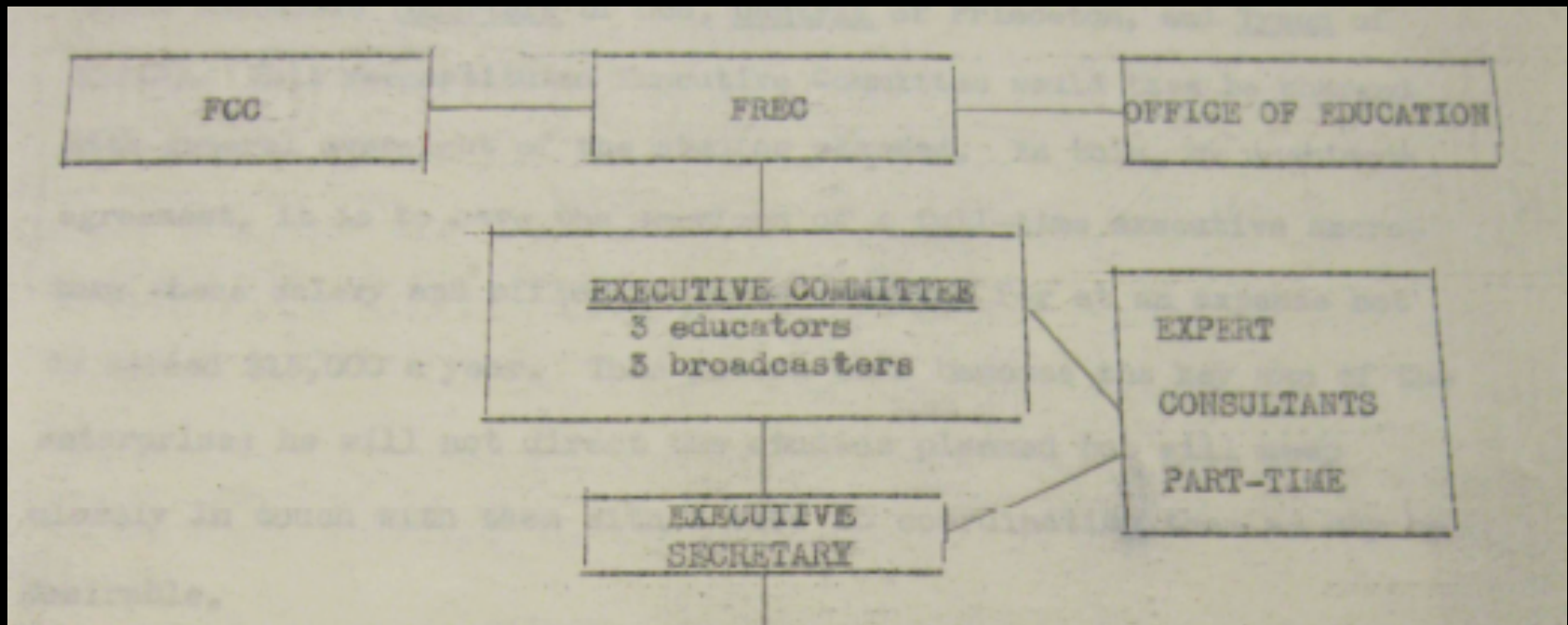
FCC Commissioner E.O. Sykes on the need for educational broadcasting, and its deficiencies

The Commission proposes to hold a national conference at an early date in Washington, at which time plans for mutual cooperation between broadcasters and non-profit organizations can be made, to the end of combining the educational experience of the educators with the program technique of the broadcasters, thereby better to serve the public interest. The Conference should also consider such specific complaints as might be made by non-profit groups against the actions of commercial broadcasters in order that remedial measures may be taken if necessary.

II

*FCC Pursuant to Section 307 (c) of the
Communications Act of 1934*

The Office of Education and the NAEB Build FREC



"Project No. 15"

Project No. 15

Study of Radio Influence Upon Children and Adults.

Problem - "To discover the effect of radio broadcasts upon the acquiring of information, the changing of attitudes and the modification of conduct of children and youth" - Report of Technical Committee, May 25, 1936.

1. Use of available information already gathered by broadcasting, advertising and educational agencies. To avoid an unnecessary duplication of effort and to coordinate existing data relevant to our problem, the material now on hand should be carefully combed and organized. At the present time, most of this information is scattered and uncoordinated.

SUB-COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE PROJECT "THE INFLUENCE OF RADIO ON CHILDREN AND ADULTS"

Gordon W. Allport, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
John A. Anderson, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.
Hadley Cantril, Chairman, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.
W. R. Crawford, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
Leonard Doob, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
Louis Ingram, College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio.
Daniel Katz, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.
Paul Lazarsfeld, University of Newark, Newark, N. J.

Hadley Cantril on the FREC

This project was sponsored by the Federal Radio Education Committee* as part of its program to solve the problems impeding the development of education through radio. It was undertaken under the auspices of the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs from September 1937 to March 1940 at which date it was placed under the auspices of Columbia University's Council for Research in the Social Sciences. It could have no claim on the cooperation or interest of either the faculty or students. Subsequent developments, such as the

Background: Although radio broadcasting was licensed "in the public interest, convenience, and necessity" the radio industry had been concerned almost exclusively with the listener as a purchaser of products advertised by radio. As a result, by 1936, industry's research had amassed a vast body of information on who listens, when, and to what, while such questions as why people listen and how this listening affects their attitudes, conduct and information, were relatively unexplored.

In addition to the studies undertaken primarily to develop a methodology, the project selected specific areas of research for emphasis on the problems involved, rather than the techniques for solving them. These areas included the following: 1) Educational radio programs; 2) Reading and listening; 3) Radio news and commentators; and 4) Music and radio.

The ASD's of Radio Audiences, by R.H. Melville, Jr., and radio. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, June 1940. This was later prepared in the area of educational radio programs, for example, the project made a study of listeners' reactions to educational broadcasts. The following are general conclusions formulated from the data collected by this study: 1) educational broadcasting is more effective when done on a regional, than on a national basis; 2) educational radio succeeds best when embedded in an institutional or psychological set-up; and 3) people will come to like good programs if they are exposed to them long enough.

4) Panel Studies, by Paul Lazarsfeld, *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, March 1940.

MR. LAZARUSFELD:

I. Selection of Research Problems.

The basic objective of the Princeton Radio Research Project is to provide general information of a psychological character for the use of educational broadcasters. The method of procedure and the selection of problems for investigation were approached from two points of view: (1) What information does the educational broadcaster need about his audience and about audience reaction? (2) What can be done to improve educational broadcasting, so that it may achieve its ends more effectively and economically?

A. Type of research stressed.

The procedure adopted involves weaving back and forth between speculative analysis and empirical research. For example, Mr. LaFiere

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Paul Lazarsfeld: "what can be done to improve educational broadcasting?"

Princeton Radio Research Project on "Service" and "General" Research

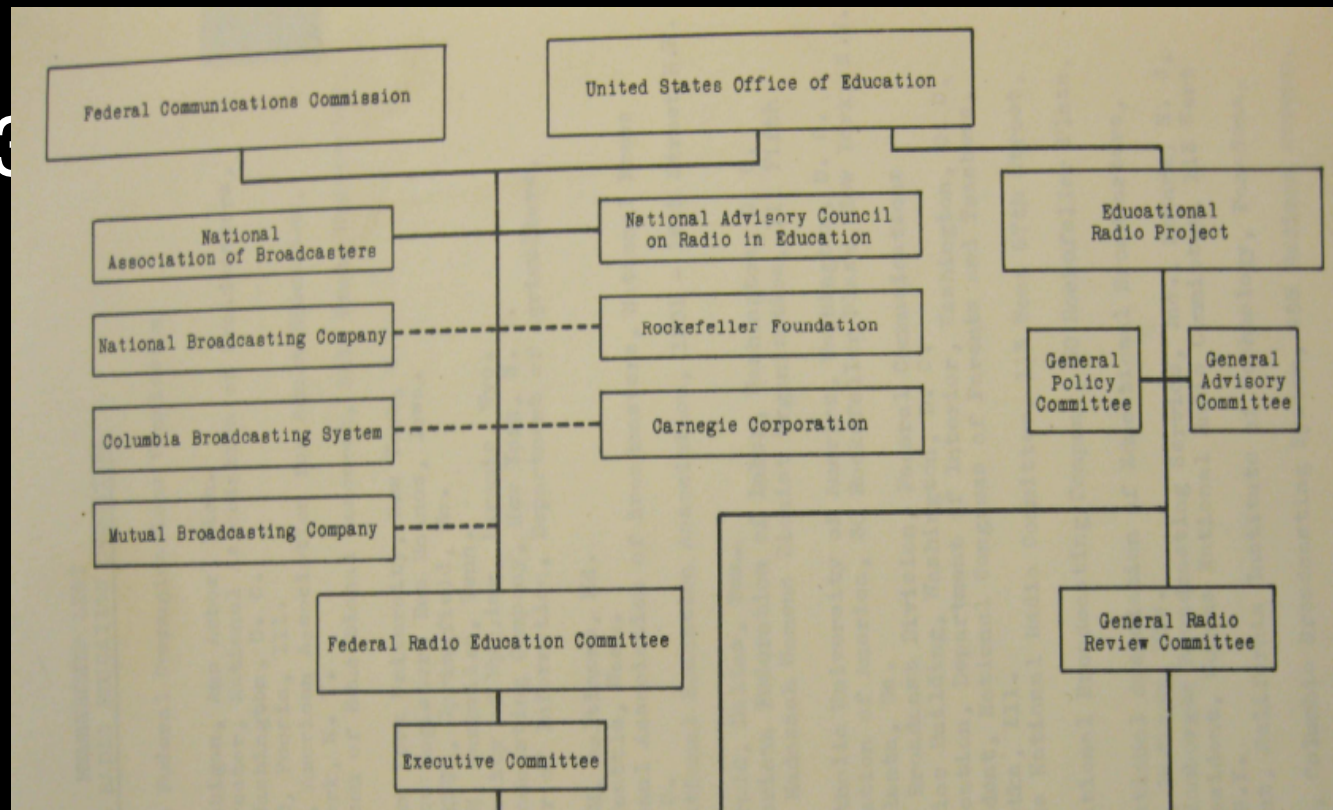
methods which the Project had developed and tested. The proposal now submitted indicates in detail what such further research involves. This research falls under two general headings.

service Research will aim primarily to help broadcasters in gaining other effects than those of advertising, particularly through the efforts of non-commercial broadcasters and through sustaining programs of the industry. This will involve

General Radio Research will include studies designed to throw light on a number of problems inherent in broadcasting as a medium of communication. One such problem is the relation of listening and reading covering such specific questions as To what extent can radio provide learning for people who are psychologically illiterate? To what extent can these people be helped by radio to enjoy reading? Other studies will continue to deal with the relation between radio news and news in print, dealing with such questions as Which groups of the population prefer one to the other? What are the effects of news from these two sources on the formation of public opinion? A third set of studies will take advantage of the presidential campaign of 1940 to extend knowledge of radio's role in the formation of opinion.

Proto-Public Media Emerges During the New Deal

- Public radio practitioners, federal, + R & D
- Philanthropic funding and clarifying legislation
- FREC, 1938



DEC 6 - 1937

INTERVIEWS: ARM

JM	NOV 20	gmv
JD		JD
LMF		LMF
WWB	DEC -3	WWB

Pres. A. G. Crane**

University of Wyoming
Laramie, Wyo.

November 20, 1937

**Chairman of the National
Committee on Education by Radio

Future guidance and coordination of regional public radio programs

President Crane has been a member of the Committee on Education by Radio for seven years, and for the past two years Chairman of the Committee. In addition, he has long served as Chairman of the Committee on Radio of the Association of State Universities and of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. The National Committee has been operating on grants from the Payne Fund, which Fund is now practically exhausted, and unless other sources of support are found the Committee will go out of existence in the immediate future.

In the early years the National Committee sought federal action to reserve 15% of the available wave lengths for educational and public purposes. Failing this, the Committee turned its attention to other means of improving the public use of radio. During the past two years it has worked especially to develop coordinated undertakings by regions in which the colleges and universities, parent-teacher organizations and various other groups at interest should pool their talent and resources in setting up programs for the region to be known as "public radio programs." These are to be self-sustaining, non-commercial, and presumably non-advertising, and to utilize the best resources of the area. At the moment the

Charles Siepmann

- BBC Director of Talks



Our second belief has to do with the relevance of research to public policy. Government which rests upon consent rests also upon knowledge of how best to secure consent. Policies which there are no real grounds to question risk defeat unless account is taken of public predisposition and of public need, unless the interpretation of purpose and probable result is wisely and effectively communicated. Research in the field of mass communication is a new and sure weapon to achieve that end.

It is unlikely that the listeners will be able to use the results of research directly, but certain civic and administrative groups representing them may find several important uses for research data. Typical of civic groups are parent-teacher associations, women's clubs and adult education groups. By administrative groups is meant the FREC, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Office of Education, and the like.

What Makes a Successful Program?

The mere facts about listening are not a sufficient guide for the administration of non-commercial broadcasting, inasmuch as they do not disclose that characteristic of a given program which catches the attention and interest of the people. The tradition of experimental psychology can be helpful here. What is there about a certain song, a certain voice or radio personality, a certain kind of presentation that makes it a success? The "variation of stimulus", the testing of programs under different conditions and with different groups of people can, we believe, contribute to more systematic techniques in program analysis. It is true that non-commercial broadcasters, with their

The Purpose of Audience Research

Corresponding to the many ways in which audience research can be defined, its purpose also permits various kinds of presentation. If the final purpose of broadcasting is to affect people, then one of the purposes of audience research is to appraise the potential effects of a broadcast. I usual

From here on audience research branches out in two directions: one is program research. We record a program, play it back to people who usually do not listen, and see how the program has to be adapted to be acceptable to those groups we want to reach. The other extension of audience research is audience-building experiments; we want to see what can be done for a program by merely disseminating the information that it exists.

Hadley Cantril describing findings from "new" quantitative methods about listener psychology, 1939, soon applied to

1) Educational broadcasters have stood pretty still while the industry has walked around them. Because of swift changes, they are now at a put-up-or-shut-up place. Specifically:

2) They must decide whether the whole approach to financing educational radio must be changed. Physically, the only unclosed roads

4) General subject to be the nature of public service radio, and implied subtitle to be the responsibilities and potentials of educational radio.

5) Procedure to be entirely discussion groups, centered around problems and consultants. Fellows to choose their own presiding officers, and within limits of available consultants to determine direction of program and best use of consulting personnel.

Wilbur Schramm to John Marshal at Rockefeller, on behalf of the Allerton House Seminar Proposal, 1949

Society requires different services from the two kinds of institutions. The educational institution and its broadcasting arm exist entirely to render public service and to make education widely available. Their success is judged, not by economic results, but by achievement in reaching this educational objective. The non-commercial broadcaster, no less than the commercial, is dependent upon proper financing, skills, techniques, knowledge of his audience, and limitations of the medium, but the similarities of his operation to commercial operation are dictated by the requirements of the medium, rather than by purposes and goals.

Group report written by Allerton House Seminar participants, 1950

WHAT THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION CAN DO

Supply the necessary director for organizing the work, assembling checking committees, and other administrative responsibilities.

Arrange for cooperation of the National Association of Broadcasters, school officials, and school groups, and Parent-Teacher Congress groups.

Mimeograph sample copies of scripts to be sent out on mailing list.

Mimeograph sets of scripts for those groups requesting the service.

Include the scripts in the permanent Radio Script Exchange service of the Office of Education.

Prepare and distribute suggestions for proper production of the scripts.

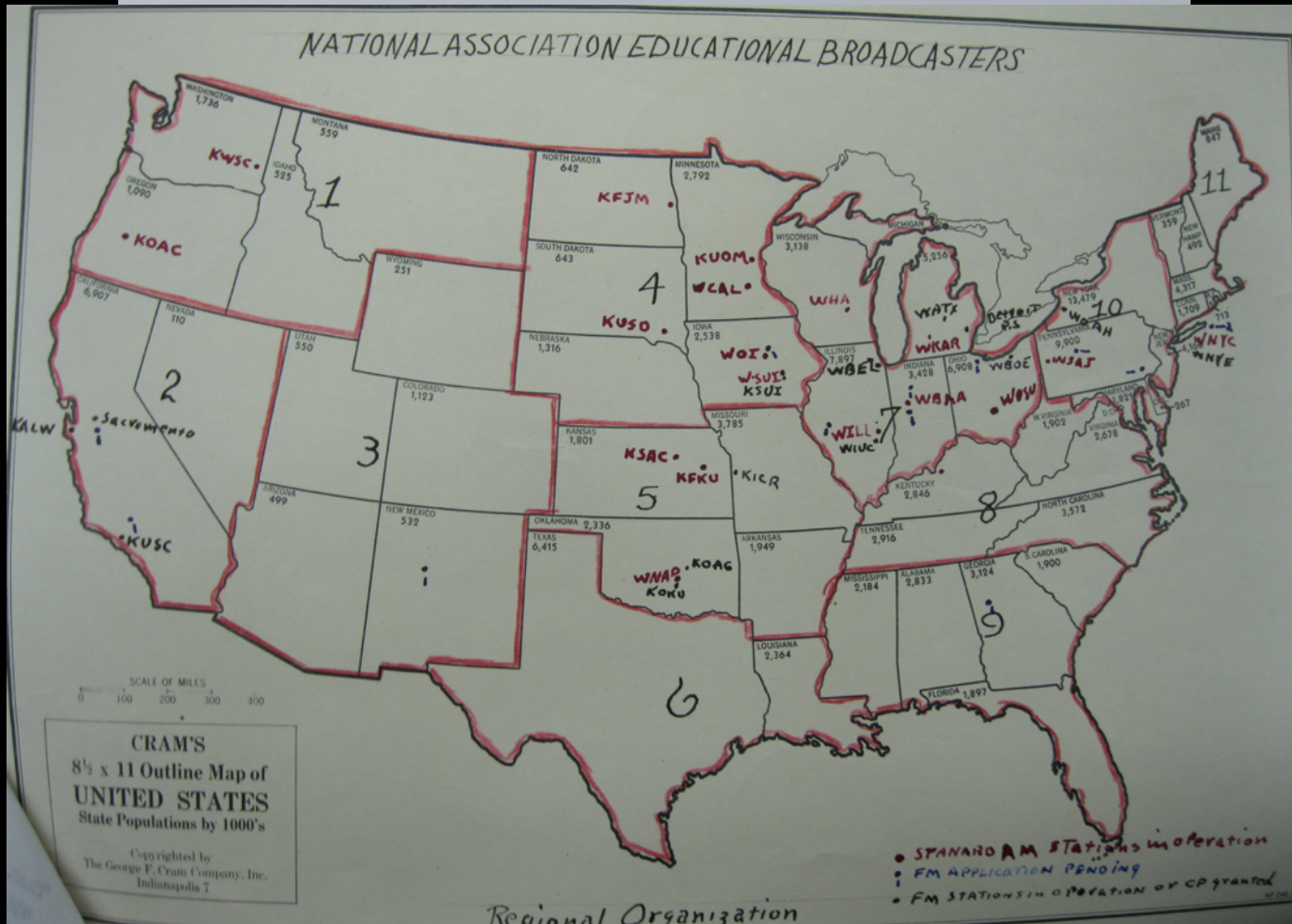
Prepare and distribute suggestions for accompanying publicity and follow-up material for listeners. This would include suggestions for class themes on the subject of the broadcast.

Try out the scripts under the supervision of production and music directors of the Educational Radio Project. Changes would be made in scripts for distribution in the light of try-out experiments.

Write and arrange necessary music; reproduce the music for orchestral or choral presentation.

Carry necessary overhead, rent telephones, telegraph, heat, light, stationery, etc.

The Office of Education's Clearing house,
the prototype for the "Bicycle Network"



The growing Bicycle Network, broken into regions

(6) Title VII, National Defense Education Act of 1958 -
Part A - entitled "Research and Experimentation"

Authorizes grants and contracts for the development of new and more effective techniques and methods for utilizing and adapting video tapes and radio or television program scripts, training teachers to utilize such media, and presenting academic subject matter through such media. A publication by the Office of Education listing research grants and contracts awarded through April 30, 1964, shows that 32 involved closed-circuit television and 41 involved broadcast television.

(7) Title VII, National Defense Education Act of 1958 -
Part B - entitled "Dissemination of Information on
New Educational Media"

Authorizes studies and surveys to determine the need for increased or improved utilization of television and radio, the preparing of materials useful in the encouragement and more effective use of television and radio, and the providing of advice, counsel, technical assistance, and demonstrations to local educational agencies or

The Defense of Education Act sets Precedent for Block Grants for Educational Technology Access

Block Grants in the Educational Television Facilities Act of 1962

The legislation authorizing support for Educational Television Broadcasting Facilities (Public Law 87-447) amended Title III of the Communications Act of 1934. This amendment provided grants for facilities and was designed to enable educational television to reach a broad range of people within each station's service area. With the assistance provided by the existing \$32 million authorization, a total of 165 to 185 stations will be in operation or completing construction when the present term of the Act expires on June 30, 1967.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TELEVISION ACT OF 1967 (H.R. 6736)

Title I. Construction Grants for Educational Television and Radio Broadcast Facilities.

1. Program extended through 1972; \$10.5 million authorized for FY 1968 and such sums as necessary for next four fiscal years.
2. \$1 million State limit replaced by State limit of 12-1/2% of total appropriated for grants in each fiscal year.
3. Grants for noncommercial educational radio stations authorized.
4. Federal grants not in excess of 75% of cost authorized. 15% limitation on grant amounts spent for interconnection facilities no longer included and additional 25% credit for previously owned equipment is dropped.

Title II. Establishment of Nonprofit Educational Broadcasting Corporation.

Title II. Establishment of Nonprofit Educational Broadcasting Corporation. Previously owned equipment is dropped.

1. Establishment of non-profit, private Corporation for Public Television authorized.
2. Corporation would have Board of Directors of 15 members appointed by President with advice and consent of the Senate.
3. Corporation would:
 - a. Have no power to engage in political activity or apply political tests in any personnel actions.
 - b. Assist in development of interconnection system and make programs available to educational stations.
 - c. Contract for production and procurement of programs, make payments to stations for program and other costs, and support interconnection facilities.
 - d. Have no authority to own or operate any stations, interconnections or production facilities.
 - e. Submit an annual report to President for transmittal to Congress.

Public Broadcasting Act of 1967:

Title I—Construction of Facilities

Title II—Establishment of Nonprofit Educational Broadcasting Corporation

Title III—Study of Educational and Instructional Broadcasting