

**RADIO LISTENING IN
AMERICA; THE PEOPLE
LOOK AT RADIO - AGAIN**

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Radio listening in America; the people look at radio - again by Various

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First survey, *The People Look at Radio*, copyrighted 1946,
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I. The Communications Behavior of the Average American	I
OVERLAPPING AUDIENCES	
THE STRUCTURE OF THE MASS AUDIENCE	
CHAPTER II. Programs and Their Listeners	18
MAJOR GROUP DIFFERENCES	
FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON RADIO	
PREFERENCES	
LEARNING FROM RADIO	
CHAPTER III. The People Look at Radio	43
OVER-ALL APPRAISAL	
ANNOYANCES AND DISSATISFACTIONS	
FAIRNESS	
CHAPTER IV. Some Observations on Advertising	59
WHAT'S WRONG WITH COMMERCIALS?	
SEVERITY OF CRITICISM	
<i>The Hucksters</i> : EXPOSURE AND ATTITUDES	
CHAPTER V. Toward an Ever Better Radio	81
WHO ARE THE CRITICS?	
WHO SHALL DO THE JOB?	
PERSONAL CONCERN AND SOCIAL CONTROL	
THE LISTENER'S TASK	
APPENDIX A. Questionnaire and Results	115
APPENDIX B. Characteristics of the Sample	128
APPENDIX C. Supplementary Tables	131
APPENDIX D. Development of the Questionnaire	147
APPENDIX E. Latent Attribute Analysis	163
APPENDIX F. Some Observations on Singing Commercials	166
INDEX	173

RADIO LISTENING IN AMERICA

CHAPTER I

THE COMMUNICATIONS BEHAVIOR OF THE AVERAGE AMERICAN

The mass media are a characteristic feature of present-day American life. From a few central agencies come the materials—the radio programs, the magazine stories, the films—which reach throughout the country. And for several hours of each day the average American finds himself a part of the audience for one or another of these mass media.

The present survey is essentially a study of the radio audience. However, it does provide an over-all picture of the general "communications behavior" of the American population. The nation-wide sample, reported on in these pages,¹ was not asked only about radio listening: There were questions on book-reading, movie attendance, the regularity of newspaper and magazine readership. These latter questions were not intended to yield detailed information. They do enable us, however, to distinguish between the "fans," "average consumers," and "abstainers" for any of the mass media, and they do make it possible for us to characterize these different groups. As a result we can relate radio listening to other types of communications behavior. We can determine whether there is any pattern of exposure, whether a "fan" of one medium is more or less likely to be a fan of other media as well. We can also study the relative importance of the various media for different subgroups in the population.

The classification of respondents into fans, average consumers, and abstainers is, of course somewhat arbitrary. This

¹ The characteristics of the sample and the reliability of results reported in this text are discussed in Appendix B.