



OLD RADIO TIMES

Official Newsletter of the Old Time Radio Research Group

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Radio Playhouse: A 1975-76 Revival of Old-Time Radio

Larry Maupin

Introduction:

Much of the background information for this article has been derived from an article by Jim Widner in the December 2009 issue of *Radio Recall* entitled "Curtain Call for Mutual's Quartette: Radio Playhouse and The Faces of Love." Widner writes that "After its offering of *The Zero Hour* in 1973 and the subsequent demise of that series due to low response, the Mutual Broadcasting System decided to try again, creating a series of four programs under an umbrella called *Radio Playhouse*."

After creating the hour-long series, Richard Cox explained that its genesis was somewhat fortuitous. At a lunch with one of his clients, Bristol Myers, the company officials were complaining about the costs of television sponsorship. Cox, a self-described radio fan, suggested radio as a medium for sponsoring a program. During the course of that lunch, the ad exec had mapped out an hour-long umbrella consisting of two soaps, the adaptation of a famous novel, and a comedy. The show was offered to stations on a barter basis in which Bristol Myers would get six minutes of commercial time and local stations would get twelve minutes to fill with their own sponsors. So the inspiration for this program came from an advertising executive!

'Radio Playhouse' Will Be Dramatic, Funny, 'Sudsy'

The two soap operas were "Faces of Love" and "To Have and To Hold." The novel was Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and the sitcom was "The Little Things in Life." Widner also provides the information that "the series premiered Monday, August 4, 1975 on WOR-New York at 3pm." Another useful source is an article in the July 12, 1975 issue of the *New York Times* entitled "Daytime Soap Operas on Radio Return to WOR, 14 Other Spots." This information was contributed by Pete Cavallo. "The daytime soap opera, which disappeared from radio about 15 years ago, will return for an hour a day August 4 on a new independent network that will include WOR-AM here. DCA Productions, which is handling the arrangements, has thus far lined up stations in 15 cities for the programs and three national advertisers. The programs will be produced here and make use of writers and actors who emerged when drama was part of radio."

Dr. Joe Webb submitted a column by Val Adams which was published in the July 13, 1975, issue of *Radio Roundup* that begins "Make way for *Radio Playhouse*, a series of syndicated dramas that will be broadcast here on WOR from 3 to 4p.m. Mondays through Fridays, beginning August 4. The series will also be carried by other stations in major markets, including Baltimore, Miami, Seattle and Houston. The column provides a helpful list of actors who

played major roles in the "four different 15-minute plays." Joan Loring, Mason Adams, and Nat Polen portrayed the principle characters in "The Faces of Love"; "The Little Things in Life" was written by Peg Lynch, and Bob Dryden joined her as co-star in that program; and "The cast of 'To Have and To Hold' includes some renowned names from the old radio days-- Joyce Gordon, William Redfield, Larry Haines, Charita Bauer and Patricia Wheel." The column concludes with "WOR, in scheduling 'Radio Playhouse,' would seem to be undergoing a gradual cutback in its traditional format of talk and interview shows. The new series even eliminates the 3p.m. news broadcast by John Scott plus the initial 45 minutes of 'The Bob and Ray Show'."

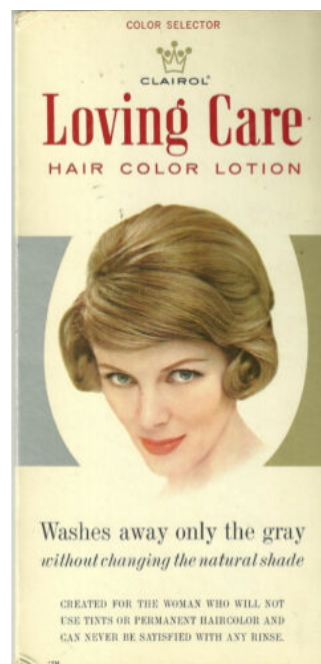
The following is a list of some of the other stations besides WOR that aired *Radio Playhouse*. They were discovered by Brian Kavanaugh and Kent Schroder:

- WPTF- Raleigh, North Carolina
- WICK- Scranton, Pennsylvania
- WOC- Des Moines, Iowa
- WWJ- Detroit, Michigan
- WHCU- Ithaca, New York
- WGAL- Lancaster, Pennsylvania
- WHO- Des Moines, Iowa

II. Commercials

Radio Playhouse was explicitly intended for an adult female audience and it attracted an impressive number of sponsors and products. Clairol seems to have been pre-eminent among them. Commercials for Miss Clairol Hair Coloring and Miss Clairol Loving Care Color Lotion are presented in probably all of the 60 episodes (15 of each of the 4 series included in *Radio Playhouse*) that I have taken notes on in preparation for writing this article. Other sponsors of note were Bristol Myers (which advertised Datril and Tylenol), Ban Roll-On Deodorant and O-Cedar Brooms.

Some of the commercials are sensitive to environmental concerns and others claim to offer products featuring breakthroughs in such areas as pain relief. Final Net is "the first sensible alternative to aerosol hair spray." Datril is "the new non-aspirin pain reliever from Bristol Myers."



III. Themes

The theme of each of the four programs that comprise *Radio Playhouse* is well articulated in a promotional piece sent to me by Jim Widner which was released by WOR prior to the premiere of *Radio Playhouse* on August 4, 1975. The caption is "Four Brand New Programs Heard Monday-Friday From 3-4 p.m.":

"The Faces of Love" (3-3:15): Suddenly a young woman is thrust, completely unprepared, into a life of complete freedom. Her traditional background conflicts with her new-found freedom to confront her with difficult decisions at every turn. "Author's Studio" (3:15-3:30): Dramatization of famous novels in serialized form, the first of which is William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. A romantic story featuring the bright and clever Becky Sharp, a liberated woman a century ahead of her time. "The Little Things in Life" (3:30-3:45): A light-hearted and high-spirited program which takes a fond and good-natured look at the trivialities which serve to frustrate us in our daily lives. You'll recognize and identify

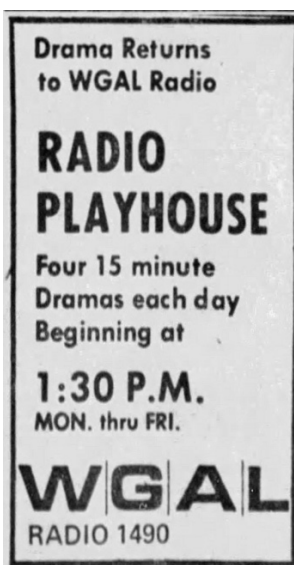


with the events in the series. "To Have and To Hold" (3:45-4:00): The stresses and demands which face two families of doctors who are daily involved with life and death decisions is the setting of this highly-charged dramatic program. You'll agonize and sympathize as the doctors mix the volatile combination of emotion and intellect in a contemporary society."

IV. Programs

The daily lives of the characters in *The Faces of Love* and *To Have and To Hold* contain issues and challenges that differ significantly from those found in daytime radio dramas prior to 1961. Chief among them is a more determined and resentful rejection by women of male domination. We also find a much more explicit treatment of extramarital sex, a pervasive use of alcohol throughout the culture, and a reflection of the increase in drug abuse.

This is not to say that female characters in daytime radio drama prior to 1961 did not resist the male dominated culture. Carol Brent in *Road of Life*, for example, openly rebelled against her husband's attempts to keep her at home where she would be exclusively a wife and mother. She insisted on having her own career, and when her employer needed her in his New York office she dropped everything at once and left as soon as possible. This led to many bitter arguments between Carol and her husband Jim and was a major factor in their eventual divorce.



Extramarital sex is not absent from earlier radio, but is usually treated as suspicion or rumor except in a few notable instances. In an episode of *Young Dr. Malone* dated September 16, 1960 and recorded from KNX-Los Angeles we find that Dr. Ted Mason, Chief of Staff at the Three Oaks Medical Clinic, is having an adulterous affair with Molly West which his wife Marcia has learned about. She finds them alone together at the Masons' cabin and insists that Ted come home with her at once and that Molly leave town by the next evening. Lisa Fenner in *Aunt Mary* becomes pregnant and has a child out of wedlock.

In *The Guiding Light* Bill Bauer's marriage and career are destroyed by what began innocently as social drinking and escalated due to the pressures of working for a ruthless boss as an advertising executive. Jim Cox writes in *The Great Radio Soap Operas* (p.66) that at about the same time Bill's sister Meta shot his boss and her husband Ted White to death, Bill's marriage to Bertha "began to unravel as a result of Bill's unfaithfulness and alcoholism."

The heroine of *Faces of Love* is Kate Wakefield, a 27-year-old widow who has never gotten over the mysterious death of her husband Tom. She tries to move on with her life by relocating from Belhaven to Chicago and taking a job with a real estate firm. She dates other men, and even has an adulterous affair with Tony Cushing which his wife finds out about, but is ultimately compelled to return to Jamaica and seek answers to how Tom's death came about. Tony repeatedly tries to control her life but she resists his every effort and ultimately tells him to leave her alone and get on with his own life.

Kate has learned that Tom was involved in smuggling drugs out of South America into the United States while working for a crime syndicate. He was last seen alive in a boat off Glory Point in Jamaica. Upon her arrival there, Kate is invited to stay at Glory Hall by Ellen Pomeroy, who has been mistress of the mansion for 28 years. Only two or three people know the truth about Tom's death. One is Ellen's son Stewart, who resents Kate's intrusion into their home and refuses even to discuss the matter with her. Ellen might know but isn't talking. But a woman named Francesca Bailey knows everything about it and has indicated that she is willing to reveal the truth. Stewart will try to keep Kate from meeting with her.

The inclusion of *Vanity Fair* is appropriate because it has, like many great novels, much in common with radio soap operas like *Faces of Love* and *To Have and To Hold* as well as containing comic elements such as those in *The Little Things in Life*. Rebecca Sharp grew up in poverty and lived in a hovel with, at times, nothing to eat except bread. Her father earned pennies by selling his paintings but spent much of his income on whiskey. He did love her, however, and she grieved his early death from alcoholism. Her mother performed at a dance hall, and sometimes took Becky with her to rehearsals.

Orphaned while still a child, Rebecca was fortunate enough to be taken in at Miss Pinkerton's Academy where she received a very good education. She learned to read and write, play the piano and sing. She left there perfectly well suited to obtain a position as a governess, and did so in the household of Sir Pitt Crawley where her ward was a little girl. Her humble background is reminiscent of *Our Gal Sunday* and her position as governess of *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Bronte admired Thackeray, and sought and received his advice and approbation.

Rebecca's experience as a governess is, however, far different from that of Jane. Someone once remarked that money is its own world. Rebecca had never known that world until she became a member of the staff in Sir Pitt's mansion. More than anything else she wants to belong to that world and determines that her best course of action is to marry into it. She first sets her sights on her best friend Amelia Sedley's brother Joseph. He is described by Thackeray as "fat, puffy, red-faced, attired in the costume of a London dandy, his person adorned with an apple-red coat having steel buttons as large as Crown Peters and a red-striped waistcoat bulging over his corpulent stomach." Also as "a moon-faced mountain." One of the episodes describes Joseph as drinking wine by the bottle (not by the glass) and as having three plates of food at every meal.

But Joseph is painfully shy around women, and breaks off his relationship with Becky after making a fool of himself with a mawkish declaration of love which embarrasses him so much that he thinks he will never live it down. Becky then turns to Rawdon Crawley, Sir Pitt's



son and the black sheep of the family. He is dashing in uniform, a member of the Horse Guards, and really loves Rebecca. Unfortunately he is addicted to gambling, and she foresees a return to her life of poverty but marries him anyway because she truly loves him. Rebecca's later life is not covered in the episodes of *Vanity Fair* presented in *Radio Playhouse*.

What if you decided to write a situation comedy and it turned out to be a satirical reflection of American middle class values and culture? Then you would have *The Little Things in Life*. The Baxters are the annoying neighbors with whom you really don't want to socialize. Peg tries to conform to social norms in every way while Bob wants to be more of an individual but always goes along with Peg's wishes while complaining loudly and constantly about it.

Their teenaged daughter Debbie is the most interesting character. In one episode she tells her parents that their neighbors the Langleys are nudists, which causes them to phone and cancel their invitation to go swimming in the Langleys' pool along with some other guests.

In another episode Bob and Peg are working on a jigsaw puzzle when Debbie comes in and asks for a \$100 advance on her allowance so she can buy ski boots, new skis and a new jacket. She plans to spend the weekend with her boyfriend Clark and six of their friends at his grandparents' resort up near the Canadian border. They refuse to let her go, probably thinking that getting pregnant at age 16 is not a good idea.

On another occasion Peg complains to Bob that Debbie is a slob and that she never helps out with the housework. She says Debbie spends half her time washing her hair. Then Bob goes upstairs and finds Debbie drying her nail polish. After she goes



At the Broadcast Studio

Charita Bauer as Ginger Foster, left, and Carin Greene as Betsy, perform a serial sequence of "To Have and To Hold," a popular part of Radio Playhouse. The series is being broadcast nationally.

downstairs and washes the dishes, she tells her parents that she resents being ordered around and that they have no respect for her as a person. Bob replies, "Respect is something that's earned." He asks her why they should respect her, and she replies "Because I'm a person in my own right. An individual." That comment distills the essence of this entire series down to one issue: individualism versus conformity. Debbie finally says there is just a Generation Gap between herself and her parents.

One other feature of this program is worth noting, and that is the detail given to food and drink. Once Peg offers leftover chicken casserole to some drop-in guests. They ask for a breakfast of prune juice, wheat germ and yogurt before departing at 4am the following morning.

In an episode dated January 20, 1946 Bob wants to go out to dinner with Peg and invites Aunt Maggie and Debbie to join them. Then they get into a tremendous squabble over where to eat. Bob suggests The Willows, but Peg says the food there is terrible since they changed the menu and proposes The Shanghai Express. Aunt Maggie doesn't like Chinese food, and Peg tells her "That's because you always order *chow mein*, which really isn't a Chinese dish at all." They rule out The Old Mill because of its "sticky cinnamon rolls," and Debbie suggests The Four Star Barbecue. They decide not to go there, then dismiss The Fish Net

as well. At last Bob makes reservations at The Old Mill while the others get dressed to go out.

Finally, in an episode dated February 18, 1976, Bob telephones his mother on a Sunday (long distance rates were cheaper on Sundays in 1976) and she spends the entire conversation complaining about how he neglects her. After that he drinks two straight Scotches, and then Peg wants one too.

To Have and To Hold focuses on three doctors and their families who live in Lakeside, a Chicago suburb, and work at Jefferson Memorial Hospital. One family is the Fosters-- Marshall, Ginger and their daughter Betsy. The second is the Carters-- Jason, Emily and their daughter Susie. The third is the Sloans-- Robert, Caroline and their daughter Lynn.

The issues facing the Fosters is that Ginger has been diagnosed with an inoperable, terminal brain tumor and that Marsh (as he is called by everyone) is having an affair with Angela Fairchild, who also works at the hospital. Angela seems to be a good person, but their relationship is sordid. In an episode dated February 22, 1976 Marsh and Angela are discussing their situation just after having once again committed adultery while Ginger lies in a hospital bed at Jefferson Memorial. He says he is going to have to tell Ginger and Betsy that he is in love with her, and she is concerned about the effect that will have on his standing at the hospital and in the community.

The story line involving the Fosters focuses primarily on their daughter Betsy, a high school student. She is 16 and resents being treated like a child while at the same time being expected to act like an adult. Her best friend is Susie Carter, and they play tennis together and enjoy being cheerleaders, listening to popular music and dancing. Betsy becomes distraught over her participation in a school play. She won the lead role over Janie Sexton, and Janie's mother tells Betsy's mother Ginger that she and Janie are both very upset about that. The drama coach is inclined to give the role to Janie after all when she learns how upset Janie's parents are. Ginger, knowing that Pat and Don Sexton are potentially large donors to the new clinic, tries to persuade Betsy to give up the role and accept a lesser one. Marsh accuses Ginger of meddling too much in the matter. Eventually Betsy leaves home one evening, telephones her Aunt Cora from a bus stop somewhere in Indiana, and tells her

that she will arrive at 8 a.m. the following morning in Burtonsville, West Virginia where her aunt lives.

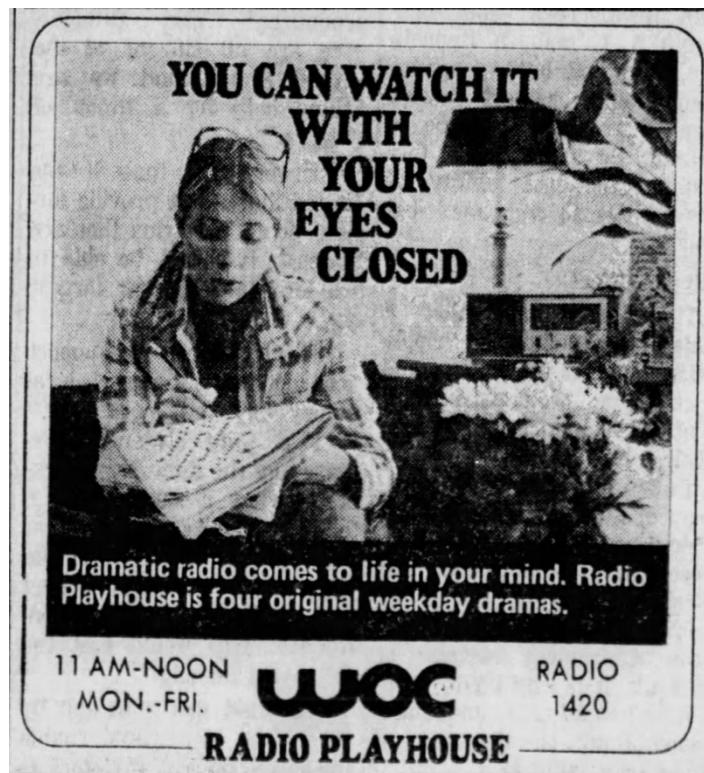
The third family consists of Dr. Robert Sloan, his wife Caroline and their daughter Lynn. While vacationing in Switzerland Lynn meets a ski instructor named Kurt and soon falls in love with him. He is a womanizer and is being supported by a much older woman named Lisa, with whom he has been living for some time. He decides to return to the United States, marry Lynn for money and be such "a beastly husband" that he will get a nice settlement when the inevitable divorce occurs.

There are a couple of really sweet touches that make the story line involving the Sloans the most enjoyable part of the serial. One is that Kurt actually falls deeply in love with Lynn and takes her to live in Aspen where he can easily find work as a ski instructor. The Sloans miss Lynn so much that they decide to lure Kurt back by offering him a position at the new medical center so they will be able to see Lynn frequently. It turns out that Kurt has a degree from Lehigh University in Business Administration and might actually be of some help in the clinic's financial operations. Who could have imagined that!

Finally a rare touch of humor. One evening, at home with the Sloans, we find Robert complaining to Caroline that "this gravy is freezing the mashed potatoes." Coffee will be served in the library and on the porch. Robert is looking "kind of gouty," says Caroline. He replies that he is not rich enough to have gout. Lynn then says that "The social barriers have fallen, and anybody can have gout now."

V. Conclusion

After the final episodes of old-time radio soap operas were broadcast in 1960, there were a number of revivals of radio drama during the next three decades. One occurred in 1965, and I have written about it in an article published in the last issue of *Old Radio Times*. Perhaps the most successful, most enduring and best known is *CBS Radio Mystery Theater*. A long article could be written just covering the episodes among the approximately 1,400 that dramatize famous short stories and novels.



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Dramatic radio comes to life in your mind. Radio Playhouse is four original weekday dramas.

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RADIO PLAYHOUSE

There is much ground for further exploration of revivals of radio drama during the period of 1960-1990 in essays and articles. Also, enterprising members of the Old-Time Radio Researchers Group who wish to curate collections to share with other members, and dealers can package collections to sell that might include soap operas, dramatic series such as *The Fat Man* and *Author's Studio*, and some of the many BBC dramatic productions that survive from those years.

Wistful Vistas

From the Editor's Desk
Ryan Ellett

It's been a slow news period, so not much to report. We've got some lengthier pieces this issue so prepare to settle in with the warm glowing dial in the background as you work your way through.

As usual, the *Old Radio Times* is always looking for new content. Book reviews, reminiscences, and historical articles are eagerly accepted. No professional writing experience necessary!

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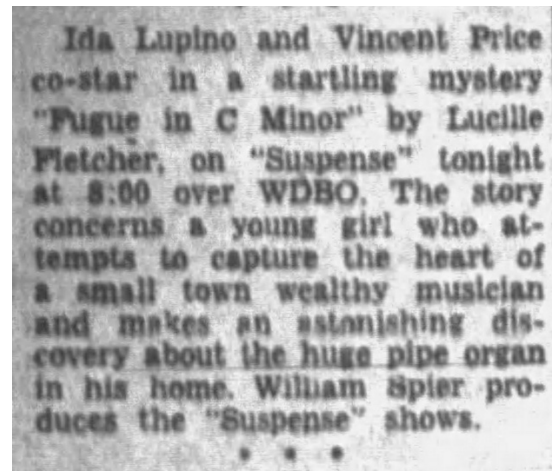
Fugue In C Minor
Reviewed by Denise Noe

Fugue in C Minor, an episode in the radio show entitled *Suspense*, must be one of the most eerie episodes of old time radio. This singularly uncanny *Suspense* episode first aired on June 1, 1944.

Before the drama begins, a narrator informs the audience, "Lucille Fletcher has written a *Suspense* play that deals with brooding anxiety and mounting suspicion played against the severe and forbidding background of the late Victorian era." Fletcher was a very well-known and deservedly respected writer. Her stories and scripts were usually set in the period contemporary to that in which they were penned. For example, she authored *Sorry, Wrong Number*, perhaps the most celebrated audio drama in radio history. It was written in the 1940s and set during that time period. In that drama, a wealthy invalid tries to make a telephone call but the wires get crossed so she overhears two hired murderers making plans to do away with a victim. While *Sorry, Wrong Number* fits clearly and cleanly into the "suspense" genre, Fletcher made a resoundingly successful venture into horror – a genre closer to *Fugue in C Minor* – with a radio drama entitled *The Hitch-Hiker*. The story of a driver who keeps repeatedly seeing the same odd-looking individual with a thumb stuck out in the classic posture of someone requesting a ride, it was later made into a famous *Twilight Zone* episode. What makes *The Hitch-Hiker* baffling is that it would, in the real world, be impossible for this hitchhiker to keep appearing and re-appearing as the driver keeps covering miles. Thus, the audience senses that either our narrator is unreliable or that we have been thrust into the world of the supernatural.

While Fletcher generally set stories in contemporary times, she made a fine choice in placing the bracing *Fugue in C Minor* toward the close of the Victorian period. *Fugue* is a dark and spicy combination of horror, ghost story, suspense, and murder mystery all wrapped carefully together.

In this audio drama, Ida Lupino plays Amanda Peabody and veteran character actress Bea



Benaderet plays her sister. In a conversation early in the episode, we learn that the year is 1900 and that the Peabody sisters are from a genteel family that has suffered extreme financial reversals. Amanda has recently arrived in Pilotsville and discusses getting a job but her sister will not hear of it. Sis insists that a pretty young woman like Amanda should not sully her hands in the paid labor market when "there are so many rich husbands around." (Many modern listeners are likely to cringe at this exchange. However, it makes no sense to expect that a show crafted in the 1940s and set in 1900 to meet contemporary standards of political correctness.) The sister eagerly suggests Amanda set her cap for local man Theodore Evans (Vincent Price) who is as "rich as Croesus."

Amanda is soon introduced to the charming and wealthy Theodore Evans. The pretty music and the light clicking and clattering sounds that the audience hears suggest a party, one that is restrained but friendly. In talking with Amanda, Theodore suggests, "Tea? A muffin?" Amanda and Theodore are drawn together by a shared interest as Theodore points out when he observes, "You seem to be as mad about music as I am."

He informs her that his mansion is filled with a huge pipe organ. Indeed, the house was essentially constructed *around* this huge pipe organ. Since Amanda very much enjoys music, she is intrigued when Theodore says, "We live like angels here in a paradise of music."

It seems to be a truism that people like the music they heard during youth and, when approaching middle age, tend to condemn contemporary musical fashion. Thus, there is something both ironic and

expected when Theodore stoutly declares, “I don’t like the idiotic tunes they play nowadays. Give me the old stern classics: they have strength and power.”



Lucille Fletcher, author of the original radio story of Paramount’s “Sorry, Wrong Number”, is shown as she recently looked over signed contracts from exhibitors with John Moore, Boston branch manager.

Along with the audience, Amanda learns that Theodore is “papa” to two children. Both youngsters are away at a boarding school as our story begins. The children are David, 8, and Daphne, 11. Theodore explains to Amanda that the children’s mother died in a tragic accident in which a brewery wagon drawn by four horses accidentally ran her down. Due to an epidemic of scarlet fever in the area of the school the kids attended, they could not be permitted out to attend her funeral. As a result, Theodore confides to Amanda, the children have gotten odd ideas. He explains, “They believe her soul is somehow imprisoned in the pipe organs.” An astonished Amanda observes, “Children can think up such strange things in their little minds, can’t they?”

Soon David and Daphne return home and Amanda is baffled and put off by the young pair. Amanda describes the children as “dressed in deep mourning” and possessing gray eyes that seem “strained in terror.” Theodore explains to the children that Amanda can play the piano. Papa urges David to get his coronet and Daphne her violin. While his children play the aforementioned

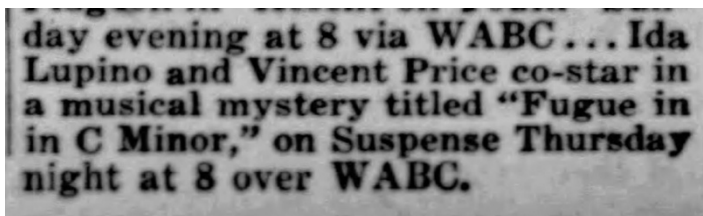
instruments, Theodore will play the pipe organs. Theodore is taken aback when the children make it clear that they will not merrily make music with their father. At one point Daphne exclaims, “Mama’s in the pipes and she can’t get out. Papa killed her!”

Are the children deluded? Or do they know something Amanda does not? Where, oh where, is the mother? What type of person – really – is wealthy Theodore Evans?

It is impossible to know what Fletcher’s conscious or unconscious thoughts were but this reviewer believes that part of what gives *Fugue in C Minor* its special power is that it bears traces of other powerful works that were also set in the Victorian era. Two children threatened by either ghosts or disturbed living adults, echoes *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James. The possibility that Amanda is being deliberately fed confusing information calls to mind the attempt at disorientation made famous in *Gaslight*.

The episode is aided in its effectiveness by its perfect casting. Bea Benaderet became known early in her career for her ability to imitate varied voices and she is perfect in this episode as a genteel late Victorian woman. Ida Lupino speaks with just the right mixture of delicacy, concern, and then increasing fright and horror. Vincent Price’s oily manner lends his character just the right amount of charm laced with a certain puzzling ambiguity. The unknown child actors are superb in their parts, by turns believably childlike and oddly somber.

Expert author Lucille Fletcher wrote a script for *Fugue in C Minor* that is nothing short of perfect in its ability to catch and hold viewer attention. The late Victorian setting helps immensely in lending a special eerie quality to the proceedings, as does the entire concept that these odd events occur in a house built around a pipe organ. The organ music itself lends chills to the drama. In conclusion, *Fugue in C Minor* is a wonderfully made audio drama that carefully builds to a surprising and satisfying conclusion.



Purchasing Groups

The Old Time Radio Researchers Purchasing Group:
Contact Jim Wood at OTRPG@Bookfixer.com
Dues: 5\$ per month.

Ted Davenport Purchasing Group:
Contact Ted at tedotr@sbcglobal.net
Dues: 35\$ per month for 18 hours of both circulating and uncirculating material from transcription disc.

Doug Hopkinson Purchasing Group:
Contact Doug at auditorium117@gmail.com
Dues: \$30 for 7.5 hours.

Support the *Old Radio Times*

Since its debut in December 2005, the *Old Radio Times* has been offered free to the old-time radio community. It is the only free group publication in the hobby and it will remain so. However, as a way to help readers show their appreciation for the zine, we've created a Patreon page where you can pledge a regular donation to the upkeep of the zine and the work of the Old Time Radio Researchers in general.

Visit [the Times' Patreon page](#) to become a subscriber, paying \$1 (or \$2) to our dusty coffers each time a new issue is published. We are currently on a bi-monthly schedule so the total annual cost could be as little as \$6.

Visit Our Blog

Another little-known resource for the Old Time Radio Researchers is our blog, found [here](#). It was dormant after the death of Jim Beshires but in recent months we have reactivated it. Please subscribe to be automatically notified of new posts.

A Reminder

The Old Time Radio Researchers online library remains one of the most valuable sources of downloadable OTR programs available freely to the wider public. Many newer members appear unfamiliar with this resource. [Visit here!](#)

Update on the Doug Hopkinson Group

Beginning in April 2021 Doug will no longer offer two distros. He's merging the music and the OTR into one distro. He's still putting out 7.5 total hours of audio and the mix will be about the same (2:1). This is not the only change happening. You need to read this next bit.

From time to time, Doug has mentioned [Stay Tuned America](#), a nostalgia formatted station that celebrates the best Big Band, Jazz, Blues and Old Time Radio. STA is now featuring quite a few well known programs, such as *When Radio Was*, *Imagination Theater*, *Sounds Of Sinatra*, *Unshackled* and more. [Stay Tuned America](#) is going to be a new partner with Doug's distro. STA is adding 10 hours of audio to the distro each month.

The programs Stay Tuned America is sharing from their vast archives are from first generation reels that came from a legendary buying group, headed by a well-known, and well-read author of an encyclopedic type book, on the subject of Old Time Radio. This legendary buying group was composed of collectors close to the industry and they had a penchant to only collect the best sounding programs. These reels have been stored for decades and are now freshly baked and ready to be served up to you each month. The files from STA will be raw only, offered in wav, flac and mp3. There will be a mix of programming that will appeal to everyone. 10 hours more than you were getting just a month ago! In return, you might try clicking on any of the active [Stay Tuned America](#) hyperlinks. You can also access STA on your smartphone, laptop or desktop with apps like Live365, Tunein, and Streema. Visit STA on Facebook too.

Aside from Doug's audio, there will be a list of the 10 hours being provided by [Stay Tuned America](#) as well, and any special notes that may apply. Each month the STA schedule will be included and one of the many syndicated programs will be singled out and described. He is charging \$30 a month through the end of 2021.



Stay Tuned America Schedule

(All times are Central Standard Time)

Monday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
16:00-17:00 - When Radio Was! ENCORE! w/
Greg Bell (Classic Episodes)
18:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell
(Current Episodes)
19:00-20:00 - Make Believe Ballroom w/Jeff
Bressler (Repeat)
21:00-23:59 - USA Classic Radio Theater w/
Wyatt Cox

Tuesday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
16:00-17:00 - When Radio Was! ENCORE! w/
Greg Bell (Classic Episodes)
18:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell
(Current Episodes)
19:00-21:00 - Same Time, Same Station - w/ John
and Larry Gassman
21:00-23:59 - USA Classic Radio Theater w/
Wyatt Cox

Wednesday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
16:00-17:00 - When Radio Was! ENCORE! w/
Greg Bell (Classic Episodes)
17:00-18:00 - Anything Goes!! w/ Lise Avery
(Repeat)
18:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell
(Current Episodes)
21:00-23:59 - USA Classic Radio Theater w/
Wyatt Cox

Thursday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
16:00-17:00 - When Radio Was! ENCORE! w/
Greg Bell (Classic Episodes)
18:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell
(Current Episodes)
19:00-21:00 - The Sounds Of Sinatra w/ Sid Mark
21:00-23:59 - USA Classic Radio Theater w/
Wyatt Cox

Friday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
12:00-13:00 - Anything Goes!! w/ Lise Avery (Repeat)
16:00-17:00 - When Radio Was! ENCORE! w/ Greg
Bell (Classic Episodes)
18:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell (Current
Episodes)
19:00-21:00 - The Great Music Club w/ Mike Shannon
21:00-23:59 - USA Classic Radio Theater w/ Wyatt
Cox

Saturday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
07:00-12:00 - Swing Thing w/ Fred Hall
12:00-14:00 - Old Time Radio Classics w/ Jerry
Haendiges
14:00-15:00 - Make Believe Ballroom w/ Jeff Bressler
15:00-17:00 - Memories In Melody w/ Matt Taylor
17:00-19:00 - Seems Like Old Times w/ Craig
Orndorff
19:00-21:00 - American Standards By The Sea w/ Dick
Robinson
21:00-23:00 - The Sounds Of Sinatra w/ Sid Mark
23:00-23:59 - WoodSongs Old Time Radio Hour

Sunday:

06:30-07:00 - Unshackled!
07:00-08:00 - The Roaring 20's
08:00-09:00 - Sound Ideas w/ Clay Ryder
09:00-10:00 - Jazz Rhythm w/ Dave Radlauer
10:00-11:00 - Juke In The Back w/ Matt The Cat
11:00-12:00 - Rhythm Sweet And Hot w/ Mike Plaskett
12:00-19:00 - When Radio Was! w/ Greg Bell (Current
& Weekend Episodes)
19:00-19:30 - Imagination Theatre
19:30-20:00 - Golden Days Of Radio w/ Frank Bresee
20:00-21:00 - Powder River (Colonial Radio Theatre)
21:00-22:00 - Anything Goes!! w/ Lise Avery
22:00-23:59 - Archives Theater w/ Wally Stall



Directing for Radio

Part 6 in a series of articles by Joseph Kessler
Adams

I want to thank the people who helped create many of our dozens of radio shows during my personal Golden Age. Particularly, Edwin Duerr, author of *Television and Radio Acting*; Lonnie Burr, original Mouseketeer who gave me valuable insights to the crafts of acting, directing, and writing from his decades in the business(es); classic radio personalities including Peggy Webber, Sam Edwards, Marvin Miller, Wes Lau, Joe Maross, Janet Waldo, and June Foray; my personal troupe of doubling actors in Los Angeles and San Francisco - Dudley Knight, Roberta Wilson, Christy Simmons, Michelle Leschi, Mary Ann Rosner, Edward Bernstein, Jennie Sophia, Jerry Johnson, Eugene Shaw, Ed Thomas, and Margaret St. Claire; David L. Krebs - who stepped nimbly between roles of producer, writer, director, actor announcer, and performed sound effects with the understanding of an actor; Thomas Boyle, one of my troupe of reliable, multi-voiced actors who worked with me on radio and on stage as actor's advocate; and my late comedy partner, Gregg A. Roebuck, who worked with me for a couple of decades on many productions and in many capacities.

Introduction for Radio Directors

Directing is very attractive to a lot of people. Bossing everybody around, putting your stamp on a creative work, and taking all the bows for "the show."

But that isn't how it is.

The director serves one real function. The director is the advocate for the audience. The director is the funnel through which the writer's script is translated by a crew of actors and sound effects, mixed with music and production techniques, into what comes out of the speaker or headphones for the audience.

The director is responsible making sure words are said correctly - both in tone and clarity, that the sound effects fit the moment, that the music helps to tell the story, and that all of the people working together don't bump into each other or the

furniture. If they are lucky, the writer or actors will say "thank you," but that doesn't happen very often.

When you do it right, it *looks* simple. But like most jobs in cooperative theatrical production, it is not.

The producer brings together the company: the studio, the services (like helping the writer prepare a useable script, finding the director to do the job we are about to describe, helping assemble a cast, then using script reproduction services, calendar management, bookkeeping, studio time, and engineering).

You, as the director, will pick up the show from there. With varying levels of cooperation with the writer and producer, you will break the script down, cast the show, rehearse, and conduct the actual performance - live or recorded. A live show is more complex because you are also directing a stage show for the audience within which a radio show will be performed. When you are finished with the actors, it will be time join with the producer to go into post-production and get a final mix ready for broadcast or distribution.

A good director is invisible - they do not put a personal stamp a show to make sure they get praise and awards. A good director is asked to direct again and who people want to work with.

Prepare yourself for making sure you understand each element of the show has to be brought together to create the actual production.

I will try to break the process down to a few questions to be answered to confirm you are the right person to stand at the helm and get your production through the storms. Questions are a big part of directing and you are about to receive more than you've ever encountered in any other of these articles.

1 – Should you do this show?

When someone is needed to direct a show, is it really you? Are you the right director for this script or this group of actors? Sometimes the answer is "no."

If the answer is "no," would you be willing to support the person who thinks they *are* the right director for the show?

If the answer is "yes," read on.

2 – Is there more you need to know before you decide if you should do this show?

If you are not sure if this is the right show, you will want to ask yourself a long series of questions for clarification.

Do you understand the writer's use of language, character, conflict, and techniques?

If not, see if you can sit down with the writer and/or the producer to ask questions and accept their answers.

You will have questions to be answered before you can even consider the niceties of casting the show. What is the background of the story, do you understand the society (if it is not the one in which you live every day) and ask if you can fairly present the show in its own terms.

Directing teaches you a key truth - One size does not fit all. Not all stories will be told with your understanding of family, honor, fairness, value, or what is expected of heroes. This means - can you take a story of a long trek in Pre-Columbian Kentucky, or a forgotten planet in the Greater Magellanic Cloud, and *not* sound like they are in a back alley in Queens?

If it is a comedy, do you have an understanding of the timing, pacing, set-up, pay-off, and sustaining the lie that is the foundation of traditional comedy? Drama is easy, comedy is hard.

If so, do you have a series of references for the actors, sound effects, and music people that they need to carry through your vision of the production? Do you have reference materials to give your cast so they can understand the style and previous comedies that run in the same vein?

If it is a classical drama, do you understand the script's language, meter, references, and structure? If so, will you be able to answer the cast's questions as your rehearsals proceed.

If it is a light melodrama, do you know how to give the story the proper pacing and build?

If it is something fresh and new, can you avoid hammering it down into the most pedestrian, old-school, boring thing that everybody has been avoiding for generations? Are you willing to grow into a new area beyond your own comfort zone?

3 – Who is your audience?

What do you dare think the members of that audience will have in the way of knowledge, context, and references to enjoy your production? How much will you have to explain? Explaining background can be very painful for an audience, but some instruction on the pre-opening backstory

will be required. It is usually safe to think almost everyone in the audience will understand the American Civil War, or waiting in a hospital lobby for results of surgery on a sick child. But will they be able to think they are on the command deck of a British 17th century warship heading to a conflict?

You may even want to explore your own education in getting fresh viewpoints to help you present the ideas behind the new ideas presented in the script.

Do not be afraid to accept input from your actors. One of them may have a particular passion for some aspect of the script and will be willing to help you keep your show accurate. Show them that *everyone* is capable of learning and doing better. Including you. If you can accept input without being threatened, they will take that as a model and learn to do better in their work for you.

So, your first audience is your crew of actors. How you relate to them will shape the show you are trying to get to the larger audience.

4 – What is done in pre-pre-production?

If you think you are the right director for the script, you will proceed to conference with the producer and possibly the writer to clarify what you want to do, ask questions, and record the answer.

You are *not* the ultimate authority on the script - both the producer and the writer are the very people who are authorized to tell you "no." How you create within the restrictions of radio or being told "no" will define your optimal production.

It is almost impossible for production to be declared "perfect" by everyone involved from the author to the member of the audience who gets to say if the show was good or not (to them). It is very possible to end with show that is satisfying and leaves you pleased the final recording as it exists.

Most directors find they are dissatisfied of how imperfect the final show sounds. Don't worry about it too much. That is normal. People who are hearing the show for the first may give you a compliment - they do not have all your experience with the production. At that point it is your job to say "thank you" and not explain to them why they are wrong. It is the imperfection that will push you to make the next one better. It is the irritation of a grain of sand that makes the oyster produce a pearl.

We will try to make the art of direction a simple process by asking a series of questions to solve each

problem that will need to be answered when directing a show.

5 – What is done in pre-production?

The job of directing your show will begin the first time you see the script.

Break down the script so you will know how many scenes you have, how many roles there are in the scene, how many actors are needed, what sound effects cues there are, what music will be required, what special effects will be needed, etc. All of these breakdowns will be simple lists of questions.

If you are doing more than one show, you will find these questions are answered more quickly and you may need to edit the lists to match your reality.

Beyond answering these questions, the job of director is not a simple process. As with any performing art, adding people to an academic overview of the show will make it a unique dance to bring your show to your audience.

6 – How do you break down a script?

First, go through the script. Do you understand the story? What are the most important point required to tell the story?

Make a list of the different scenes of the script. What will the locations sound like? How does the scene build the tension for the script? Remember, drama and comedy are both dependent on conflict and the increase of the stress on the characters until they have the resolution of stress in the closing scenes. Do you know how to build the stress to get your story through to the listener?

7 – How do I list sound effects?

Read the script and consider the sound effects the writer felt were important to advancing the story. You may be satisfied with those, but you may also find sound effects that will enhance the atmospheric feel of the story, something that advances the sense of place, or helps build tension.

If you are lucky enough to have a live sound effect technician, they may contribute something that helps just that little extra bit. We had a haunted house story and sound effects master Cliff Thorsness, from *Gunsmoke*, *Suspense*, and other classic shows, saw where a character was suddenly

frightened when a bannister began to give way. Not an easy thing to make clear in most productions. Cliff offered to give us the sound and took a piece of clothes line, wrapped it loosely around a stick and tied the other end to a flat board.

He stepped on the flat board and pulled up until the clothes line tightened and gave just the right “squeak” to give the sense of a wooden joint giving way.

Not a sound I would have thought to do.

For the classic “War of the Worlds” episode of *Mercury Radio Theater*, they needed the sound of the top unscrewing from the crashed Martian ship. They took a microphone into the bathroom, put it over the toilet, and put some sand on the rim of a large, empty mayonnaise jar. The sand added just enough grit to the sound, the toilet bowl gave some low end resonance and when they unscrewed the lid from the jar in the bathroom, people at home heard a Martian spaceship opening its hatch.

Another show had people stranded in a lifeboat and my old production crony David L. Krebs took a wide, shallow pan with about 3-inches of water when he kept his hand moving in while the actors performed. Once in a while it would give a splash, but most of the time it was barely a sound. During post-production he added a loop gentle wind and a few sea birds at a low level, which the audience heard as “distant.”

When you do your sound effects list, try to stay open to other people’s ideas to “sweeten” the sound for the audience. You will probably have a library of commercial sound effects, such as the classic multi volume set of LPs from Elektra records we used in the 1980s, and later added the complete sets of CBS and BBC sound effect libraries on CDs.

Sometimes the actors will want to do something that will make a sound to contribute to their creation of the character. We were all in favor of improvised sound, but there is one basic rule we were taught by our fight director, Thomas Boyle.

Rule: No actor touches another actor without advance warning and that actor’s consent. It’s radio. There is no reason to be touching any other actor unless it is agreed to before it happens in rehearsal (and even then it might not be allowed by the director). But once in a while it can make a show better.

Live is best, with an open mind how a needed sound could be achieved, pre-recorded is a good fallback.

8 – How do I list music?

Like sound effects, a composer/performer on site is one of the best ways to come up with exactly what you need for a new production. A composer with a background in many types of music will be able to shift gears according to the needs of your script and the performance of your cast.

Most modern composers have access to a computer with various input devices and almost infinite possibilities to manipulate the sound to mimic almost any previous musical style.

Without an on-site composer, you will be using a library of music from pre-recorded sources, including vast collections of free music through Creative Commons libraries.

You will be tempted to use songs you know and love but be warned: Modern music publishers are more likely to sue for use of a client's songs. Many publishers require advance payments on a set scale.

"Publisher" does not mean the company that makes the sheet music sold in music stores. It now means whoever owns the music, and music has stronger protections than the mere "life of the writer plus fifty years" offered to writers.

For more information on the modern music licensing scene, search for Nina Paley as she tells the horror story of getting rights to use music for her film *Nita Sings the Blues* (which is available for free download online). She did the footwork to give advice to anyone who risks getting fast and loose with someone else's music.

9 – How do I list roles?

How many roles are in the script? How many of these are feature roles (that are in every scene, or nearly every scene)? How many are supporting roles?

Supporting character advance the plot. They tell the lead characters new information, ask questions, and listen to the feature characters' explanations. This gives the audience a chance to hear the new information and the answers needed to advance or resolve the plot. For example, Dr. Watson is the one to whom everything must be explained, and makes Sherlock Holmes look smart.

10 – What is doubling?

The most complex part of the breakdown will be the cast because, when you list the number of roles, you do not need a different actor for every role thanks to the practice of "doubling".

Character actors who can fill supporting roles with a socially convenient list of prejudices to deliver a character quickly are a great asset. Prejudice is not a dirty word - it means "to judge in advance." When it is used in public, particularly to defame or insult a group of people – painting them all with one brush – it is negative. On radio it is a valuable tool. With the limited time of a radio play, we can't give full background to all of the characters, and the backgrounds usually do not figure into the plot the play. The tone, accent, word choices, tempo, and personal quirks are what matter to the audience.

With that first list of parts you will find several places where a character shows up, says a few words, and we never hear from them again.

Do your homework. Listen to episodes of shows like *Gangbusters*, *Dragnet*, *21st Precinct*, *Broadway's My Beat*, *CBS/Columbia Radio Workshop*, or the dozens of choices for detective and mystery stories. These old radio shows are a course in radio drama as a craft. You didn't get the luxury of casting every show as an individual program and weeks of rehearsal. Many of the old production teams cranked out shows like links of sausage. They needed a stable, and you built a versatile crew of doubling actors to populate whole cities with voices.

You've got a farm kid in the group, hiding behind a burned out tailor's shop, and who is scared to charge into the next battle. You can have him give his bit to build the tension of the script in ten words or less. The immigrant lady who saw a horrible hit-and-run can tell the officer what she saw and vanish back into the crowd. The lonely professor who has found an article that answers the lead character's question conveniently and quickly does not need a whole episode to explain who they are.

Social pre-conceptions allow radio to offer characters who speak too slowly or too quickly, have an accent, a catch phrase, or language quirk (like a stutter, malapropisms, or using words from slang or another language, etc.) to give the listener what they need to "see" the character. In a few seconds they establish themselves as an individual in the story thanks

to a culturally determined shorthand to establish what those clues mean.

Character parts are distinctive, but the actor can be counted on to do the job so well you try to get the writer to agree it would be great having Clarence do his wonderful Irish cab driver yet again in your series (and wouldn't it be great to give that character a name so he can be in *every* script?).

When you listen to some these great classic radio programs, you will hear shows with two dozen speaking parts but only eight people listed in the credits. The “doubling” actors included talents like Ben Wright, Peggy Webber, Joseph Kearns, Parley Baer, Howard McNear, and Georgia Ellis, who might do three to five different voices each in a single show.

I was lucky enough to work with Peggy Webber on a pilot for *Midnight Theater* and we talked about doubling. She had three voices she could do at the drop of a hat. In one episode of *Dragnet* you heard Peggy in almost every scene. She specialized in doubling. In one episode she played Joe Friday's mother (a nice, grandmotherly, vaguely Irish lady), a young Spanish girl who was arrested but did not speak English (or spoke English with a Los Angeles Spanish accent), a sexy young actress who could barely breathe (because you were sure her breasts were *too* large), and a secretary from records division who walked in to give Joe Friday a file from downstairs. Four parts in one show.

In the next episode she was a policewoman who almost became a love interest for Detective Joe Friday. She might skip an episode but the director knew he could call on Peggy to handle three or four roles in this classic, fast moving, police procedural show. After a few shows (or calls to people who have done several shows) you will quickly see that the office clerk on page 2, the hysterical witness on page 4, the nurse on page 7, and the funeral director on page 11 could all be done by the same person using different character voices.

Your need to add people to the cast is reduced with one or two good “doubling” actors, meaning fewer people wandering around in the studio, trying to not knock into the microphone stands or

tripping actors on their way back and forth to the microphone.

The producers loved doubling because they could only pay one actor for five voices.

So you are most likely not going to be bothered with the burdens of money, paying it or receiving it. You will be looking at a few people who can do many of the voices in your writer's script.

11 – What else about actors?

You will find out more about Actors in the sections on casting, rehearsal, and performance. But there are some things you need to know.

Because someone can mimic what they hear another actor do in a show from fifty or sixty years ago does not mean they are an “actor.”

People become involved in acting for dozens of reasons and combinations of reasons. This means each actor will have his or her own references and triggers, which will play into why they want to be in your production.

Each one will have his or her own combination of techniques. Some are just imitating people they saw do a similar role while some have spent years studying acting as a craft with exercises, techniques, warm-ups, and other tools to use as choices getting out a good performance.

As the director you will have to handle this combination of temperaments, training, psychological needs, vocabularies, and limits on reaching each actor, in their own terms, to come back with the performance you need.

12 – How will you direct your cast?

Fortunately, unlike commercial radio theater, you will not have the strict time restrictions of how frequently you have to break for a commercial, or even how long a play must be. That flexibility may help you do a better show - to know how to help a production build to have a satisfying show that might be a bit too long or too short for the intended time frame.

There are two secrets to being a good director:

1) *Shut up and let your actor's do their jobs;* and
2) *Trick them into thinking it was their idea.*

Number two is going to be the most difficult, because like any good mother, you have to hint, wheedle, hide, lie, and do whatever it takes to get them where you want them to be *and make them think it was*

their idea. Directing means you will point to where you want the actors to go for the scene you want - the mood, the tension, the laugh line, the pay-off that you want for the audience.

You are not supposed to lean back and say “what’s your motivation?” That is great for stage with six weeks of rehearsal, or for film with six hours of the same ten minutes over and over. But it’s not so great for radio with one or two hours (or just a day or two) before performance. Radio is a much faster production experience, which are both a challenge and a great restriction to your techniques and opportunities.

It is important that, as a director, you do not “pre-act” and demand the actor do it your way. First of all, you may not be that good as an actor (which could be why you became a director), and pre-acting denies the opportunity to do their job – acting.

Do your job. Direct.

First, you have the group reading. It could be at a table, it could be at someone’s living room. People should bring their own beverage – preferably non-alcoholic. I’ve never seen alcohol improve an actor’s performance, although they may not agree. Someone who cannot control their behavior after a few drinks is sometimes actually a big problem in a rehearsal or performance.

After a group reading, it will be easier to do the job of directing the actors where they want to go. Some have ideas, usually to make their character stand out, which can ruin the harmony of your cast. Some may not realize they are about to run off a cliff and you have to bat them back into play.

The group reading is the first time their versions of characterizations come to life, and if you have chosen the right cast, the job is 90% done at the first read-through.

But if you have to do more than just polish up the last 10% with subtlety, you will be challenging the actor’s preconceptions of their character, so your work really begins.

With an old, very experienced pro, they may simply give you three or four choices on their performance. Faster? More Irish? Fearful? More Olivier? And you tell them which one to take.

With younger actors, it’s more difficult, but much more satisfying as they improve their acting craft to come back with the performance you think

the show needs. With them, it isn’t enough to tell them “faster,” “be angrier,” “talk to him like you’re trying to get a wounded dog out from under the porch,” or something more motivational. Suggest the process that would result in the energy, mood, and level you need for that scene. Lead them to it, but don’t take away their internal discovery to bring the character to the point you want.

If an actor asks for help, great. Answer the question, but only after they have given you something to *direct*.

It could be appropriate to suggest a similar role performed by someone they might respect. Tell them the backstory that leads up to this exact moment, or a possible event in the character’s past that makes them tense or relaxed, as needed for the scene.

The best techniques I have found have been to give them a backstory to bring to the moment, or ask questions. When directing using this technique, it is best to pull the actor away from the group - step out into the hall, or to the corner of the room, or have them step over by you, close enough to allow you to whisper a few words into their ear.

“That’s not true. You are lying to them...”

“It’s sad, like your aunt used to make you feel when she would say...”

“Remember when you thought you’d never fall in love again, and then...”

“You want him to give you what you’re after without telling him...”

“This is dangerous. If you say this, you might lose everything...”

Most of my own direction has been in the form of questions to your actor and your answers to questions they may not have asked will help them find the interpretation they need within the interaction of the company.

As a director, it can only help for you to understand more about acting so you will be able to speak to your actor in terms they can understand. You will know where the problem comes from because you will know what they are trying to do. It gives you the vocabulary and the right words are the most valuable tools you can have when trying to reach members of a cast.

And your cast will come to respect you for your ability to help them act their best. And will want to work with you again.

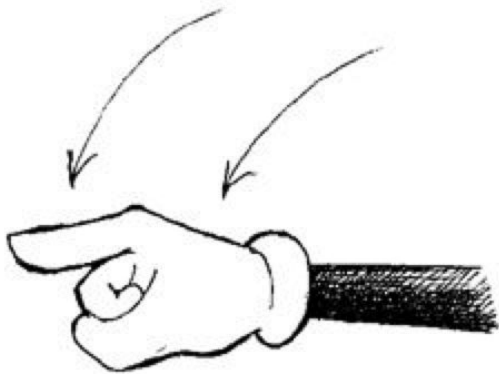
The best book on directing I can suggest is Harold Clurman’s *On Directing* and, if you can find it, the

one hour special on him from PBS from about 1990. I have not found the show, but I still remember his descriptions of dealing with actors.

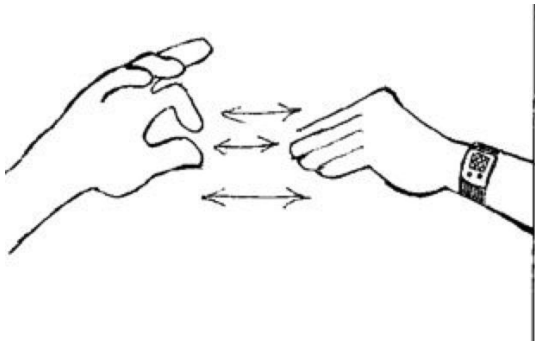
13 – What are common gestures for production?

Aside from common gestures which are inappropriate and almost everyone understands, here is a necessary silent communication in the studio which is used to tweak performances. These are gestures from the director or the production staff to the performers.

My thanks to the late Yuri Rogofsky of National Radio Theater in Chicago for sharing these illustrations to show the gestures a director will use to communicate silently with the cast in the studio.



Go! You're on.



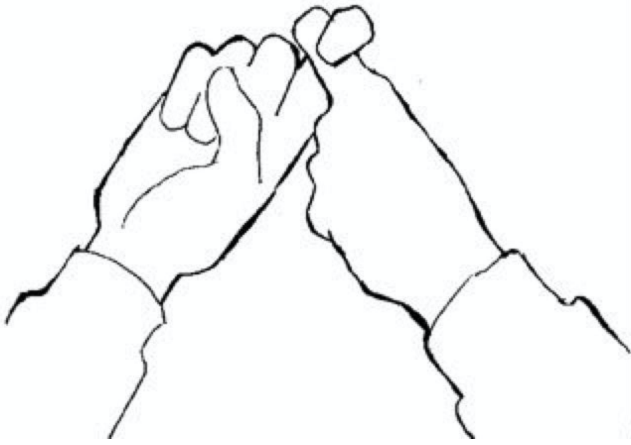
Slow down. Stretch it out.



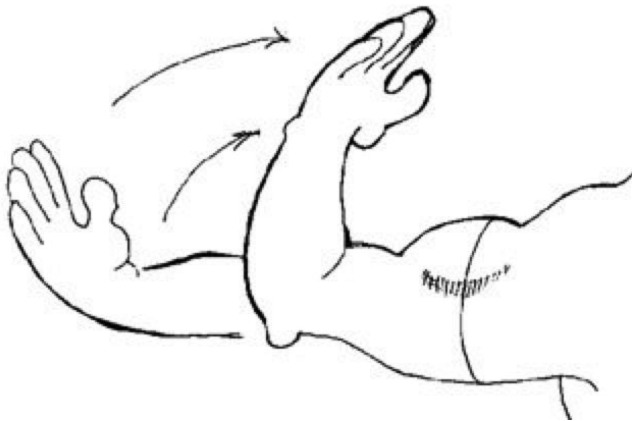
Louder. I can't hear you.



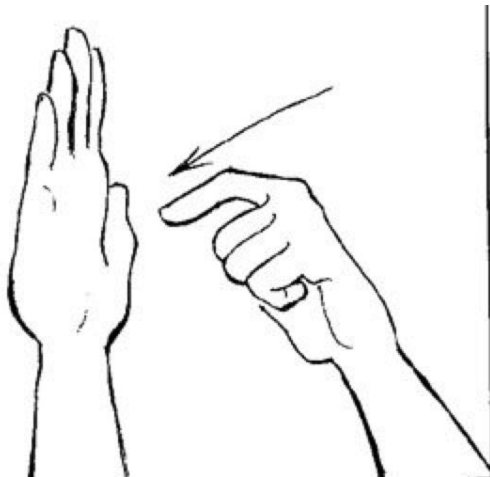
Speed up (for everyone)



Close up your transitions.
Close gaps between lines.
(for one performer)



Come up to the microphone, you are on next.



Move closer to the microphone.

There is another common gesture which we do not have illustrated. It is a palm up to the actors

and means “Hold.” Usually it is followed with the first illustrated gesture - “Go!”

We will include these gestures in the chapter on Acting - because it would be nice if both the Director and the Actors had understanding the same gesture meaning. Failing to do so could result in unauthorized, but easily understood, gestures.

But Wait, There’s More!

Your journey to be a director doesn’t end with these words of so-called wisdom. But the additional instruction will be cleverly hidden in coming installments, including:

Casting

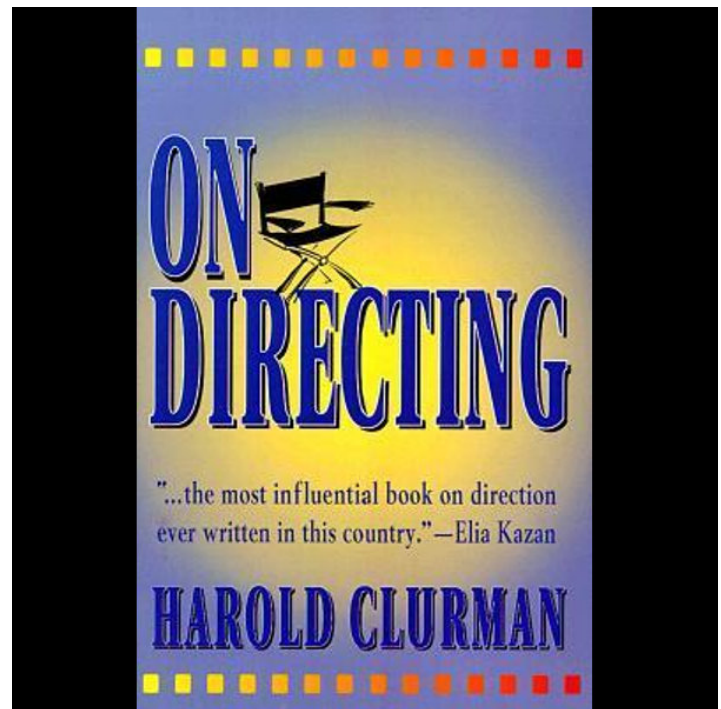
Rehearsals

Actual performance (recorded or live)

Post-Production.

You will have to learn how to take all the awards, groupies, and cash rewards for being a big-time radio drama director on your own.

Tune in next time.



Margot Lane: A Character Study Martin Grams

The dramatic serial offered numerous women a lucrative income that grew with their wide variety of dialects and voices: Elsie Hitz, Elsie Mae Gordon, Agnes Moorehead and Peggy Allenby, to name a few. The role of Margot Lane was interpreted by at least 10 actresses. Attractive, intelligent, well educated, and generally demonstrating pretty good common sense, Margot somehow, nine times out of ten, wherever she goes, encounters some kind of monster, mechanical man, or plain crackpot lurking in the vicinity. There was one occasion when she got mixed up with a mad scientist, and in no time at all, he was preparing to exchange her vocal chords for those of a cat. The Shadow saved her from that with only two minutes to spare — and those, of course, had been reserved for the sponsor's sales talk.

Armed with an independent spirit, Margot joined Lamont on numerous adventures as an invaluable assistant who rarely questioned his motives. On uncommon occasions she suffered wounds in the line of duty, such being hypnotized into suffering a series of murderous nightmares in "The Dreams of Death" (April 28, 1946) and scars from a gas explosion in "The White Witchman of Lawaiki" (May 5, 1946).

In "The Mark of the Black Widow" (October 27, 1940), a homicidal maniac was doing a very successful business with poisonous spiders encased in gelatinous pellets. He would secretly deposit one on his victim and after body heat melted the substance, the spider was free to take a bite, and that was that. In Margot's case, the clever fellow was less subtle and had just decided to dispense with the gelatin when the ubiquitous Cranston arrived to go into his "Shadow" act with the usual effect. The poor fiend lost his wits completely and died a horrible death.

In the episode "Murder Incorporated" (December 17, 1939), she was described in the newspapers as a "prominent society girl." Her means of income was never disclosed throughout the series, but a brief mention that she had "investments" was made in one episode during the



early fifties. A shopaholic, she often purchased trinkets and items that were overpriced, on occasion driving Lamont into a fit of concern though he never questioned whether she could afford it. She had a weakness for hats; one of her purchases led her and Lamont on a mystery during Easter Sunday. The January 26, 1941, issue of PM Weekly described her as "a nimble-witted, Café Society number designed on [1930s debutante] Brenda Frazier lines." George A. Mooney of the New York Times once described her as being 26 years old, but her true age was never disclosed on the radio program. What little we do know comes from close observation of the radio broadcasts.

Margot attended City College (nickname of City College of New York), as evident in "The Chill of Death" (February 1, 1953) when she reminds Lamont that she flunked chemistry. Another mention that Margot attended college was in "The Mad-Dog Murders" (August 17, 1952).

There are two different ways of spelling Margot's first name. In the radio scripts, she is spelled "Margot"

with a silent ‘t.’ In the pulp magazines, she is spelled “Margo” without the ‘t.’

Margot evidently smoked cigarettes — almost as much as Lamont. In “The Headsman of the Camerons,” (September 28, 1941), she not only excuses herself for a second to put out her cigarette, but the stub later verifies to Lamont that she was on the premises when others insist they never saw her. Her lipstick was found on the cigarette stub. Margot gave Lamont a gift in the form of a cigarette case in “Murder Deferred” (March 22, 1942), which later deflected a bullet meant to kill him. A cigarette case also saves Lamont’s life in “Assignment With Murder” (October 5, 1941). In “The Four Giants of Amsterdam” (November 25, 1945), a small town in the Midwest suffers a series of brutal murders and a dead man returning from the grave. Frightened by the events, Margot asks Lamont for a smoke to settle her nerves. She also smokes a cigarette in “The Ghost of Caleb MacKenzie” (January 26, 1941).

Her personality varied from episode to episode on the radio programs, a result of multiple writers spanning the years. The few scripts authored by the Ellery Queen team feature a Nikki Porter-style Margot. Arch Oboler made sure Margot was repulsed by whatever gruesomeness she witnessed. She asserted notions of female individuality and self-respect in many episodes, something that Lamont once confessed was what attracted him to her. In “The Three Mad Sisters of Lonely Hollow” (December 14, 1947), Margot’s independent spirit is revealed when, spending the night at the old Sheldon mansion where a dead sister has returned from her grave, Lamont orders her to stay behind and lock the door while he ventures into the attic. Alone in the room, Margot can be imagined as crossing her arms as she speaks to herself: “Sometimes I get so provoked at Lamont. He treats me like a baby. You’d think I couldn’t take care of myself.”

Lamont attempts to solve a mystery involving Rodney Serling, suffering from amnesia and bent on clearing his name for a murder he may — or may not — have committed in “The Lost Mind of Death” (June 25, 1950). At the end of this episode, Margot discovers she was sent on a wild goose chase when Lamont asked her to find a unique

water fountain on the grounds of the sanitarium. “Well, to tell the truth, Margot,” Lamont explains, “I... well, I was afraid it might be dangerous for you in the sanitarium, so I... well, I sent you on an errand just to keep you out of the way.” Angry, Margot questions her own sanity for trusting him. “This girl is going to come to her senses,” she threatens. The script originally called for Margot to remark, “I could beat your head in, you... you cheat.” But the line was scratched out and replaced with a more friendly closing comment.

When Margot insists on tagging along with Commissioner Weston on a dangerous mission in “The Shadow in Danger” (September 9, 1945), she responds appropriately:

MARGOT: I’m going in with you.

WESTON: You’re about as stubborn as a —

MARGOT: As a mule, Commissioner. That’s what my father always said.

The question of the Cranston-Lane relationship was modestly suggested by the announcer in the beginning of every broadcast — except the initial 26 episodes. It was not until the first episode of the Goodrich series, “The Hypnotized Audience,” that she was introduced as “...constant friend and aide, Margot Lane...” This same introduction continued through to the 1938-39 Blue Coal season until “The Isle of Fear” (October 30, 1938) when Margot was “. . . friend and companion, the lovely Margot Lane.” This became the standard through June 4, 1950, when the D.L.&W. Coal Co. ended its two-decade relationship with The Shadow.



Agnes Moorehead

Beginning June 11 and running till the end of the series, Margot was simply "...Cranston's friend, Margot Lane." "Friend and companion" did not go overlooked by the adults who heard something more. The second script for the series, "The Red Macaw" (October 3, 1937), scripted by Edward Hale Bierstadt, established the relationship between Margot and Lamont. Shortly after completion of the script, it was decided to move that scene to the season premiere, "The Death House Rescue" (September 26, 1937), where it remains today. All through the scene, Margot attempts to encourage Lamont to drop The Shadow identity and live a life of normalcy.

MARGOT: I'm serious, Lamont Cranston. When I foolishly let you know that — do you remember what you said? It will be exactly five years next week.

LAMONT: But there's still so much to do, Margot.

MARGOT: Well, then let somebody else do it. Don't you realize that you can't keep on like this forever? Someone is certain to identify you and when that someone does, that someone else is certain to kill you.

LAMONT: Perhaps, but until they do... Oh darling, stop frowning.

MARGOT: I don't necessarily mean for you to give up your work, Lamont. But this 'other'... let the Shadow just disappear and come out openly. You and the organized forces of law and police.

LAMONT: Don't you realize Margot, my entire usefulness to the organized forces of the law and police lies in my remaining outside those forces. Remaining always as The Shadow. Would they approve my methods? Would they believe in my science?

MARGOT: You would make them believe. You could make them approve.

LAMONT: And in doing so revealing my secrets. My knowledge. Reveal them and eventually let them fall into the hands of organized crime. No Margot, no one must ever know. No one but you.

In the third episode, "Danger in the Dark" (October 10, 1937), Margot makes a second effort

by confessing her love for Lamont and pleads for him to call off his Shadowy escapades.

MARGOT: Oh Lamont, why do you take these chances? Won't you ever give it up — this masquerade as The Shadow?

LAMONT: And then what?

MARGOT: Then perhaps — you could settle down — and be like other people. We might even — oh, I don't know.

LAMONT: You mean — get married?

MARGOT: Yes.

LAMONT: My dear, that is something that has been close to my heart for a long time. You know that. But until the Shadow finishes his work — I cannot allow myself to think of anything else! Just be patient, dearest. Some day — (CHANGE OF BRISK MANNER) Well — I'm afraid I've got to run off now —

Throughout the remainder of the series, their relationship is not given significant exposure, leaving the scripts to focus on Cranston's deduction and investigative skills to thwart criminals. To diminish any hint of a sexual relationship, Lamont and Margot never slept together in the same room no matter what the situation. In "The Giant of Madras" (May 16, 1948), Lamont and Margot are passengers on a deluxe transcontinental train, and they slept in separate berths, Lower 10 and Lower 11. In "The Loom of Death" (July 1, 1951), Lamont attempts to solve the case of a horrible burning and hissing emanating from a tapestry depicting the frightful curses of Satan. On a train bound for the origin of the radioactivity that causes the phenomena, Lamont and Margot sleep in separate compartments — Compartments 10 and 12. In "Ghost Town" (October 6, 1940), Lamont checks into a hotel and asks Mr. Evans to have their rooms (plural, not singular) on the same floor of the hotel. Back home, listeners who paid careful attention knew that both Lamont and Margot resided in separate apartments.

Scriptwriters never failed to take advantage and throw teases into the scripts. Two such examples include the closing scene of "Death is a Colored Dream" (September 26, 1948) where Margot is trying to solve a crossword puzzle and asks Lamont for a four letter word that fits. He suggests closing the episode with "love." And in "The Case of the Curious Easter" (April 9, 1950), Lamont proposes to Margot

that they go “for a spin around the park.”

When D.L.&W. dropped sponsorship, producer and director John Cole made room for Harry Ingram, who supervised the productions with a change of direction in Lamont and Margot’s “modest” relationship. When Lamont introduces Margot to the shady Manuelo in “Corpse in a Straw Hat” (June 18, 1950), he struggles while searching for the right description to refer to Margot as more than his lady friend, and Manuelo interrupts before Lamont finds a word.

In “The Mark of the Shark” (July 9, 1950), Lamont directly refers to Margot as his “girlfriend,” while Margot’s love for Lamont and her disgust for his failure to propose after all the years they have been together becomes a custom on the series. In a scene between Margot and Ruth, the woman struck down by polio questions why Lamont would help her husband Joe:

RUTH: But – we’re not important.

MARGOT: Every human being is important, Mrs. Adams. Lamont Cranston knows that.

RUTH: He must – love people very much.

MARGOT: He does – love people. (ACID) In the plural.

The same episode closes with Lamont purposely avoiding the subject of matrimony — a complete change of character from the Orson Welles version.

LAMONT: They’re a nice couple.

MARGOT: Ruth and Joe? Wonderful.

LAMONT: They’ll have a good life. I envy Joe.

SOUND: (CUT STEPS)

MARGOT: (QUICKLY) You do?

LAMONT: Uh-huh.

MARGOT: (HER BIG CHANCE) You mean – because of his wife, and his home?

LAMONT: Yes.

MARGOT: But Lamont – you can have them. (SO SOFT) If you want.

LAMONT: (TRAPPED) Well, I – I – (THEN SUDDENLY) No. I can’t. I can’t have Joe Adams’ wife and home.

MARGOT: Why not?

LAMONT: Because, Margot – (LAUGHS TEASINGLY) They’re his.

MUSIC: (CURTAIN)

During the summer and autumn of 1950, the Shadow broadcasts often closed with a discussion leading to Margot making a brief suggestion regarding matrimony or a romantic gesture. Lamont was now depicted as avoiding commitment, and whether he was unable to understand her suggestions or too preoccupied with other thoughts to concern himself with romance, his smart remark would conclude with Margot’s sarcasm and crossed arms. Their relationship, however, was more obvious. At the end of “The Factory of Death” (October 7, 1951), Margot comments in the recap that Lamont had kissed her just an hour ago. At the conclusion of “The Curious Corpse” (July 16, 1950), Margot learns from Lamont that he suspected the killer of being a foreigner because in Europe, unlike America, women wear their wedding rings on the right hand, and the corpse had the ring on the right hand instead of the left. Margot asks, “You never thought much about wedding rings before this case came up, did you?” Lamont asks her what she meant by that remark and disgusted, Margot tells him, “never mind. Just skip it.”

On two occasions, however, Margot did receive a favorable response at the conclusion of their adventures — both holiday offerings. In “Out by Christmas” (December 24, 1950), after helping clear young Jimmy and Patty Ryan’s father from a murder charge so he can return home to his children in time for Christmas, Lamont and Margot celebrate in the Ryan home.

MARGOT: (HUSKILY) You did it. Out by Christmas.

LAMONT: Yes.

MARGOT: A good job of earning your four dollars and eighty three cents.

LAMONT: Do I get a bonus?

MARGOT: What do you mean?

LAMONT: From you. After all, it’s Christmas.

MARGOT: Oh. (PAUSE. THEY KISS.)

JIMMY: (COMING IN) Say, there’s some ice skates under the tree. Isn’t Christmas swell? Gee, I wish it’d come every day in the year, don’t you?

MARGOT: I certainly do, Jimmy – I certainly do.

In "Murder by Midnight" (December 31, 1950), Lamont attempts to start the new year with a bang when he organizes papers that will convict Lefty Benay, head of a dope ring. Margot forces Lamont to attend a masquerade party, unaware that Benay arranged for an actor who looks and sounds like Lamont Cranston to remain masked during the ball so the crooks can kidnap the real Lamont. Forcing the handcuffed Lamont, Lefty applies whatever tactics he can to make the detective reveal who in his organization leaked the information Lamont has gathered. Lamont becomes invisible, but Lefty isn't fooled into thinking he has run away, realizing he now knows the identity of The Shadow. Giving chase on a winding road, the crooks attempt to run Lamont over. The car goes out of control and over a cliff, and they are killed instantly. Meanwhile, Margot discovers the ruse when the fake Lamont gets romantic and actually kisses her. She waits for the real Lamont to arrive and take her home, and the episode closes with her standard disgust for his lack of romance.

MARGOT: I knew that man couldn't have been you. He paid me compliments, he got me out in the moonlight — he even started to propose.

CRANSTON: He did? Good Lord! That's terrible.

MARGOT: Terrible? (SHE STARTS TO LAUGH)

CRANSTON: What's so funny?

MARGOT: Brand new year — same old Lamont.

After saving another innocent from an unwarranted charge by exposing a numbers racket in "The Doll With Yellow Hair" (December 23, 1951), Lamont and Margot gift wrap a doll with yellow hair for the man's daughter and arrange for him to get a new job starting the day after Christmas. Alone in her apartment, Margot attempts to take advantage of the holiday fever pretending to be the same little girl to whom they'll deliver the doll.

MARGOT: (SOFT) Hey, Mr. Cranston — you know something, Mr. Cranston?

LAMONT: What's that?

MARGOT: You're a pretty nice kind of a type fella.

LAMONT: So's Santa Claus. The old

Martin Grams blog

Martin Grams blog

**IT WILL
CHILL
YOUR BLOOD**



**THE
SHADOW**

TODAY

5 pm station WOL

*presented by your
neighborhood 'blue-coal' dealer*

Martin Grams blog

gentleman gave me the steer I needed in this case.

MARGOT: That's just peachy and I'm real grateful to him, but the old gentleman doesn't happen to be here right now.

LAMONT: Huh?

MARGOT: He's not here, but I am.

LAMONT: Oh — I see what you mean. (SOFT) You're a very forward girl, Miss Lane.

MARGOT: You're a very backward lad, Mr. Cranston.

LAMONT: (GRRR) Oh, yeah?

BIZ: (KISS)

LAMONT: (COMING OUT OF IT. WEAKLY) Merry Christmas, darling.

MARGOT: (THREE FEET OFF THE GROUND) Oh, Merry, Merry Christmas!

Consistency was not established in any form of guidelines for the scriptwriters. The producers and directors of *The Shadow* oversaw the content and made revisions when necessary, but with the changing of the guard over the years, continuity was sure to be off-centered. In “Death Prowls at Night” (March 23, 1941), Margot is kidnapped by a hypnotist from Central Europe who turns out to be a werewolf. Lamont, questioning the locals on Margot’s whereabouts, describes her as five-feet, five-inches tall, weighing 118 pounds and having brown hair. In “The Three Queens of Death” (November 13, 1949), a painter determined to complete a masterpiece murders his models so they can pose properly for the canvas. After murdering a redhead and a brunette, he sets his sights on Margot, described as “a golden, blue-eyed, blonde.” In the episode “The Wig Makers of Doom Street” (November 28, 1948), wig makers selling their product to a dealer in illicit merchandise stop kidnapping and killing blondes for their hair and center their attention on a brunette. Margot would have been their final victim if it weren’t for the interference of *The Shadow*. In the episode “House of Fun” (October 22, 1939), Lamont remarks that Margot is a spitting image of Dorothy Andrews, described as blonde, medium height and slender. In “The Death Ride” (February 27, 1944), a friend named Cora asks Margot if she wants any sugar in her hot chocolate. Margot thanks her but rejects the sweets. “How I envy you slender people,” Cora remarks. In “The Girl and the Doomed Tiara” (January 29, 1950), two criminal geniuses named Claude and Mary, involved in a theft and murder, find a young lady suffering from a temporary amnesia and convince her that she is an escaped killer. Margot Lane is twice referred to as a blonde by Mary in this episode.

Lamont Cranston admitted he was an animal lover, but never had a pet of his own. Margot, however, received a puppy as a Christmas present from Lamont in “The Stockings Were Hung” (December 24, 1939). She had a pet cat in “The Man Who Dreamed Too Much” (November 19, 1944) and a Cocker Spaniel named Brownie in “The Curse of the Cat” (January 20, 1946). In “The Case of the Red-Headed Corpse” (July 5, 1953), Margot’s dog, Caesar, had recently been

returned from dog college. Margot’s family members were featured on rare occasion. The first was “Murder By The Dead” (October 17, 1937) when murderer Peter Swift apparently returns from the gallows to seek vengeance on the men he felt were responsible for his conviction. Margot’s father, Ross Lane, was the jury foreman on the case and is targeted by Swift, making the matter more personal for Lamont and Margot. Her mother never makes an appearance in the series, but in “Halloween in Vermont” (October 29, 1944), her mother’s name is revealed: Helen Lane. Helen apparently had sisters.

Margot had a number of aunts, and on occasion paid them a visit — they all lived north of New York City. In “Halloween in Vermont,” Margot’s Aunt Emma resided on a small farm on Baldtop Mountain. In “The Witch Drums of Salem” (summer of 1938) Lamont and Margot venture through New England to meet Margot’s Aunt Henrietta in Maine. In “Dragon’s Tongue Murders” (October 12, 1941), Oriental mysticism pervades a country weekend when three potential murderers gather in an effort to appropriate a fabulous emerald. During their investigation, Margot tells Lamont that her Aunt Augusta attended Vassar.



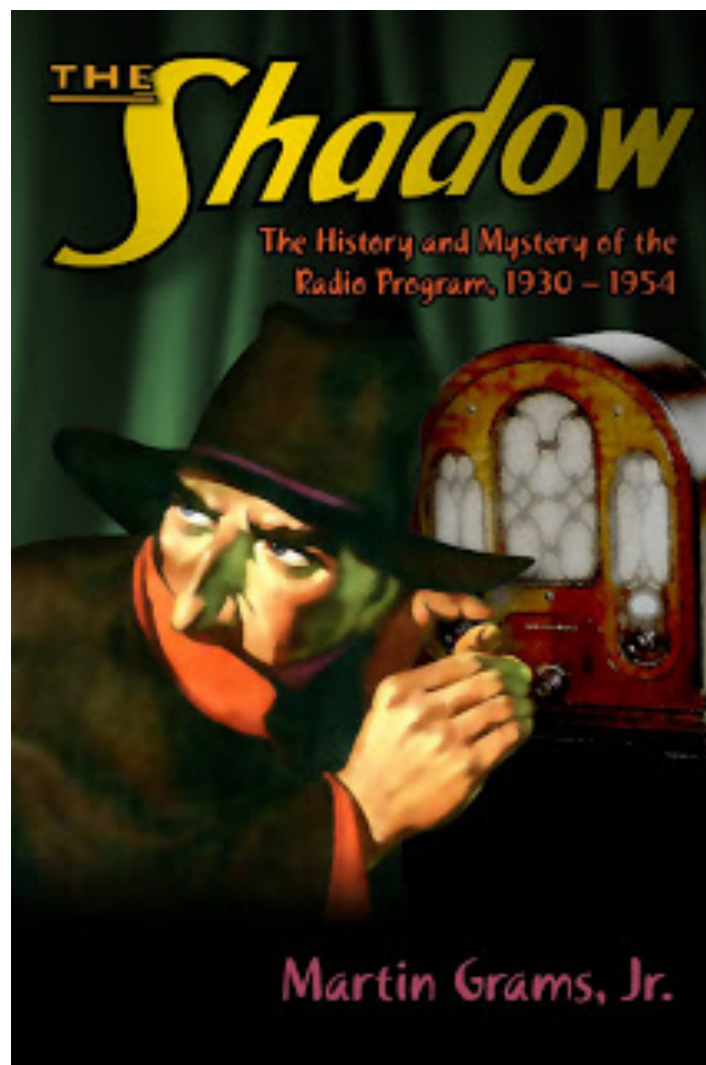
Agnes Moorehead, the first Margot Lane

Venturing near the island of St. Jude, rumored to be dominated by zombies in “The Isle of the Living Dead” (October 13, 1940), the announcer opened the episode commenting that Margot’s aunt was on board the boat. Not only did she not have a speaking role, but no further mention of her was given during the broadcast, suggesting the woman played a role in an earlier draft of the script, but was written out in the final version (and it was overlooked by all concerned up to broadcast time). Lamont and Margot are Christmas shopping in the bustling Bronford Department Store, not for each other but for their families, in “The Case of the Santa Claus Killer” (December 21, 1952). As the announcer explains, “Christmas comes but once a year and Margot and Lamont, each with young nephews and nieces to shop for....” Two of the nieces are mentioned by name — Susie and Debbie.

Margot had a number of maids, presumably not all at the same time. In “The Firebug” (summer 1938), the name of her maid was Ellen. In “The Secret of Valhalla Lodge” (October 31, 1943), the name of her maid is Amanda.

In “The Hiss of Death” (February 24, 1946), Margot’s new maid, Angie Patrini, plays an important role. Angie is a member of a snake-worshipping cult and though it was thought harmless at first, Lamont uses Angie as a means of uncovering the truth — the leader of the cult killed members who were also faithless wives as his twisted way of revenge. Mary Granger was described as Margot’s former secretary in “The Lost Dead” (December 19, 1948) and “Death and the Twin Cadavers” (October 18, 1953). The second production was a repeat performance of the 1948 script, simply re-titled.

This article features excerpt from the book, *The Shadow: The History and Mystery of the Radio Program, 1930-1954*, by Martin Grams Jr. Reprinted with permission. For more information, visit the author’s website at www.MartinGrams.com



2020 Maintained Releases (v. Year Month)

[Counterspy](#) v. 2001
[The Clyde Beatty Show](#) v. 2001
[Rocky Fortune](#) v. 2001
[The Weird Circle](#) v. 2004
[Broadway’s My Beat](#) v. 2004
[The Adventures of Philip Marlowe](#) v. 2005
[The Danny Kaye Show](#) v. 2006
[My Friend Irma](#) v. 2006
[Firefighters](#) v. 2007
[Jeff Regan, Investigator](#) v. 2007
[Life with Luigi](#) v. 2008
[Tales of the Texas Rangers](#) v. 2009
[Mr. District Attorney](#) v. 2010
 Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons v. 2010
 Hopalong Cassidy v. 2011
 Family Doctor v. 2012
[Father Knows Best](#) v. 2012

Radio 100 Years Ago

Enjoy a look back at what was going on in the world of broadcasting 100 years ago.

RADIO MUSIC FROM THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO WAKES UP RESIDENTS OF LOS ALTOS.

GREAT excitement prevailed on a recent Sunday evening among residents living within several miles of Emile Portal's receiving station at Los Altos, about thirty-five miles south of San Francisco. Portal was enjoying the radio telephone music sent out by the Presidio of San Francisco (6XW), when he conceived the generous idea of letting his neighbors enjoy it, too. Suiting the action to the inspiration he hooked up six-stages of amplification between his short-wave receiver and his Magnavox and opened the windows. His home is in a country district where the neighbors are well scattered, but it was only a few minutes before they began telephoning to ask Portal if that music they were hearing was coming from his house. Whenever any unusual sounds occur around Los Altos, the natives always know where to look to find their source. As the concert progressed more distant neighbors telephoned that they were enjoying the music from their porches and hoped that it would continue.

Astonished by the distances from which some of the reports were coming, Portal drove a mile down the road to hear the results for himself and found that every word of Sergeant Tavers' announcements were easily understood.

Residents of Los Altos haven't entirely recovered their equilibrium yet, but are now asking for regular Sunday evening concerts to be enjoyed from their front porches.

Pacific Radio News April 1921

NO TICKETS NECESSARY FOR THIS SHOW BY RADIO

One of the most novel and interesting stunts that has ever been heard of is a contemplated theatrical performance by radio. Mr. R. F. Gowan of the DeForest company is arranging to give a show to the amateurs via the radio telephone at station 2XX, New York. He plans to have the well-known Duncan Sisters, who have made such a hit with their singing in Fred Stone's musical play, Tip Top, now playing in New York, give a song review, and hopes to have a number of comedians and a jazz orchestra complete the performance.

Get this now, fellows. The date is not altogether definite, but it is hoped to hold the show on the night of Sunday, March 13th, 9 o'clock, Eastern time, 10 o'clock Central time. It will be given by Mr. Gowan from station 2XX, radiophone on 400 meters. You are requested to stand by and listen for the performance and report by mail if you hear it. 9ZN, Chicago, may possibly automatically retransmit the affair with his phone set. It's a great stunt, fellows, a real show by radio, and you should not miss it. At 11:30 p. m. each night 9ZN will send out the latest plans on this and give you the definite date if the above should be changed. Stations 2XX, 2ZM and NSF will also broadcast this information.

Radio Topics March 1921

HEAR SERMON ON WIRELESS PHONE

**I. H. Kattell Listens Here to
Preacher and Choir in
Pittsburgh**

A sermon and prayer from the pulpit of the Calvary church of Pittsburgh and a number of hymns played by the church organ there were heard plainly in this city last Sunday night over the wireless telephone of Mr. and Mrs. I. H. Kattell as they sat in the specially prepared wireless room in their home at 79 Sherwood avenue. Several other Binghamtonians, with wireless phones in their homes, are also believed to have heard the music and sermon.

Mr. Kattell heard the greater part of the

sermon which started at 7:45 and the closing hymns over a single wire antenna but 100 feet in length and suspended in a tree in the back yard to the house, a distance of 20 feet in height.

The playing of the pipe organ and the singing of the choir could be heard as distinctly as if the person at the wireless were in the midst of the church members, he says, and the prayer which followed would make one believe he were attending the services. The source of the music and sermon was at first unknown to the Kattells as there was no mention made of the city or names of any persons during the course of the sermon, which ended at exactly 8:55. Despite the atmospheric conditions due to the occasional showers the "listeners" were able to hear word for word the context of the lecture and the different verses of the hymns.

While Mr. Kattell was at first unaware of the exact source of the music he surmised that it was in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, as messages were reported to have been received recently from that locality. The wireless in the Calvary church in Pittsburgh was installed several weeks ago in the rear of the pulpit and operators here expect to attend their church services

in the steel town through the wireless in this city from this date on.

A month or more ago Mr. Kattell heard a victrola playing on the Catalina Islands, off the coast from Los Angeles, Calif., approximately 3,600 miles from this city. He was able to identify the different songs and to keep in time with the music by whistling.

Press and Sun-Bulletin (Binghamton, NY) March 23, 1921

BROOKLYN MAN GIVES "WIRELESS" CONCERT

Some 10,000 amateur wireless operators within a radius of 250 miles of Brooklyn last night listened to a concert given at the home of Dr. De Witt Parker at 178 State st., without leaving the receivers attached to their own wireless outfits.

Dr. Parker has one of the most complete amateur wireless instruments in the Second District. For some time he had been discussing with other amateurs the feasibility of giving a concert with its aid. Last night he was able to give it. He gathered at his home six musical performers, who sang and played on two instruments. These were Miss Helen Graves, soprano; Raoul Dufail, tenor; Florence Story, contralto; Oscar Adler, violinist, and Minachel Hunt and Harvey Meyers, pianists. The singers stood in front of a large megaphone, into which their voices and the sound of the accompanying instrumental music were directed and from which they were concentrated into the wireless telephone transmitter.

The first number was sung by Miss Graves and Mr. Dufail, and brought a roar of protest of the Q. R. S. signal, "clear the wire," from the Navy Yard wireless station. For a time this drowned out the singers. Later the Navy Yard desisted, and the concert continued from then on without interruption. Not only did the numerous amateur operators within reach of Dr. Parker's outfit hear the concert, but ships at sea sent back word that they too had listened in at the singing going on in a room of the house in Brooklyn.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle March 25, 1921

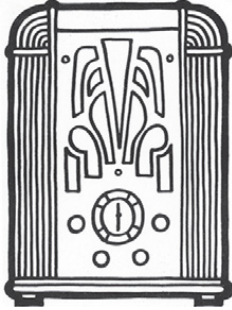
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Created in 1984, the Metro Washington Old-Time Radio Club is the second largest old-time radio club in the United States. Club members enjoy monthly club meetings, an annual luncheon, and a bi-monthly newsletter. You do not have to live in or near Washington, D.C., to become a member. The newsletter, RADIO RECALL, is mailed to members from all over the country and loaded with fascinating articles, news of what is happening in the hobby, recently-discovered “lost” programs and more. Why not join the hundreds who enjoy the newsletter, which can be sent via email in PDF format, or be mailed to you through the post office?



You can sign up to become a member on the club website.

www.mwotrc.com

Old-Time Radio Researchers Acquisitions:
New Episodes and Upgraded Sound Encodes

Please note that our distributions are available to OTRR
Purchasing Group members first, and then made
available to the public after about six months.

No new acquisitions to report at this time.

