

Articles

WOMEN IN CBC RADIO TALKS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

by Jean Bruce

Cette communication dépeint l'oeuvre des femmes au sein du département de la CBC connu originellement sous le nom de Talks, et qui depuis fut identifié consécutivement par Talks and Public Affairs, puis Public Affairs, et enfin, Current Affairs.

L'avènement du deuxième conflit mondial vit une large part du personnel masculin de production de la CBC se joindre aux forces armées, cédant ainsi leurs places aux femmes. Celles-ci eurent comme tâche de produire une variété d'émissions spéciales ou d'intérêt général. Comme le retour des hommes devait en principe mettre fin à cet arrangement, les femmes reçurent des salaires inférieurs et ne purent avoir droit aux pleins bénéfices de pension. Toutefois, le développement de la radiodiffusion d'après-guerre permit à plusieurs femmes de prolonger leur status temporaire indéfiniment. Les années 50s et celles qui suivirent furent fertiles en programmes réalisés par Public Affairs. Les femmes productrices de ce département sont à l'origine de plusieurs lauréats qui ont contribué à mousser la réputation de la radio de la CBC partout au Canada et à travers le monde.

The radio programme archives of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation are a rich source of Canadian oral history, but the value of this material increases considerably when it can be set in context - not only of the times in general, but of the people who conceived and produced the programmes, and commissioned and trained the broadcasters whose voices became so familiar to thousands of Canadian listeners.

Little research has been done on the people who worked in the department which began as Talks, became Talks and Public Affairs, and is now known as Current Affairs. A few (Marjorie McEnaney, Mattie Rotenberg, Florence Bird, Neil Morrison) have deposited papers with the Manuscript Division of the PAC, but many others kept no written records. Since the spoken word is the currency of radio broadcasting, it seemed appropriate to begin research with a series of recorded interviews.

Preliminary enquiries showed that many of the key figures in the Talks Department in the 1940's and 1950's were women, - I decided to concentrate on this particular group, the majority of whom are still living and happy to co-operate. The purpose of this paper is to trace their contribution to Talks and Public Affairs radio programmes from 1938 to 1971, when major changes were made in the radio programme schedule.

The basic material for this paper comes from a series of interviews recorded between September 1980 and March 1981 with 14 women who worked for the department as producers, programme organizers and broadcasters: Florence Bird (Ann Francis), Helen Carscallen, Dorothea Cox, Margaret Fielder, Elizabeth Gray, Margaret Howes, Helen James, Margaret Lyons, Dolores Macfarlane, Joan Marshall, Marjorie McEnaney, Mattie Rotenberg, Marjory Whitelaw, and Betty Zimmerman. The supervisor of the department from 1943-1953, Neil Morrison, was also interviewed.

Additional information was supplied by Bernard Trotter, a long-time member of the department and its supervisor in the early 1960's, and by producer Lynn Higgins and broadcaster Betty Tomlinson.

Each interview was conducted in the same manner. I asked each woman about her personal background, her education and early work experience. During the time she worked for the CBC, I asked who hired her, what her responsibilities were, what she was paid, and what led her to leave the Corporation. I also asked each woman if being female had affected her career in a significant way.

This project was commissioned by the federal Status of Women office, and supported by the Sound Archives section of the Public Archives of Canada. The recorded interviews have been deposited at the Sound Archives and are available to researchers.

THE TALKS DEPARTMENT IN WARTIME

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, many of the CBC male production staff joined the armed forces, and women were hired, on a temporary basis, to replace them. Women worked as editors in the news department, as announcers, and in the network and regional offices of the Talks department.

Elsbeth Chisholm, a librarian and early broadcaster, was hired by Hugh Whitney Morrison, first Supervisor of Talks, as a producer in 1943, the same year that he hired Marjorie McEnaney, an assistant manager with Elizabeth Arden company in Toronto, and a former journalist. McEnaney replaced Andrew Cowan, producer in the network office.

The departure of men for war service led to the hiring of Talks producers in various regions. Dorothea Cox, a former New Brunswick high school teacher, became a producer for the Maritime region, working out of the Halifax office. Norah Gregory was hired in Vancouver and Helen McGill in Winnipeg. Margaret Howes was taken on staff in 1946 to replace an earlier temporary woman employee. (There may have been others, but these are the names recalled by the people interviewed).

NEIL MORRISON

Neil Morrison was Supervisor of Talks (later known as Talks and Public Affairs) from 1943 to 1953, and his approach to his staff was one reason why women hired during the War stayed on afterwards. He hired other women after the War, including Catherine McIver, who became a producer in Winnipeg before moving to Toronto, and Helen James, who joined the staff in Toronto in 1946, the same year Margaret Howes began working in Montreal. Morrison says he liked working with women, and this is borne out by interviews with women who were producers and programme organizers at the time.

Morrison was born in Saskatchewan and educated at United College, Winnipeg and McGill University. He came from what he describes as a "strong Presbyterian background", and at one time considered the possibility of becoming a minister. Instead, he went to work for the Canadian Association for Adult Education in Montreal in the early war years, before joining the CBC at the invitation of General Manager Jamie Thompson, a Scottish Presbyterian clergyman.

Before he joined the CBC, Morrison helped develop 'Farm Forum', the first of the CBC radio 'forums'. Others followed. There was 'Labour Forum', 'Servicemen's Forum' and, eventually, 'Citizen's Forum'. These programmes all involved listening groups, discussion materials, feedback to production staff, and close liaison between the CBC and citizens' groups like the Canadian Association for Adult Education, the Workers' Educational Association, the National Farm Forum and the Canadian Institute for Public Affairs. Morrison's approach to programming shaped the Talks department in its formative stage, and continued to influence its development after he left and was replaced, first by Frank Peers and then by Bernard Trotter, as Supervisor. Both Trotter and Peers added new women employees to the department.

MARJORIE McENANEY

Marjorie McEnaney was hired in 1943 by Hugh Whitney Morrison before Neil Morrison took over the Talks department. McEnaney had been born in England in 1908, and emigrated as a child with her family to Alberta. She was sent east to St. Hilda's College at the University of Toronto to get an arts degree, and on her graduation in 1930 she went to work for the Canadian Chatauqa organization, becoming their business manager. After a brief period as a journalist with the Toronto Globe and Mail, McEnaney became assistant business manager for the Elizabeth Arden company. When she joined the CBC to replace Andrew Cowan as producer of 'Labour Forum' in 1943 she was a married woman.

McEnaney soon became a programme organizer, and, in the fifteen years she was with the Talks and Public Affairs department, she was associated with almost every important programme which the department produced. These included 'Dominion Magazine', 'Weekend Review', 'In Search of Ourselves', 'Points of View', 'In Search of Citizens', 'Press Conference', 'International Commentary', 'Capital Report', 'Post News Talks', 'Our Special Speaker', 'Cross Section' and 'This Week'.

Controversial Programmes

Some of McEnaney's productions involved the CBC in public controversy. In 1945 a talk about shocking conditions in a New Brunswick mental hospital failed to get on the air initially, because War Services Minister, General LaFleche, ordered its cancellation. (It was aired, eventually, and CBC technical staff were instructed not to take orders from any authorities outside the Corporation). Another McEnaney production, the 1951 series of talks entitled 'Man's Last Enemy: Himself' provoked protests in the Catholic press and later in Parliament, after Dr. Brock Chisholm, Director-General of the World Health Organization, discussed the need for birth control in a world whose population was increasing by geometric progression. When political intervention in CBC programming seemed imminent, the Association for Civil Liberties mounted a successful write-in campaign to Prime Minister St. Laurent, and to the Parliamentary radio committee.

Problems as a Married Woman at CBC

Programmes produced or organized by McEnaney won nine Ohio Awards, as well as Canadian recognition, and she was one of the most successful members of the Talks and Public Affairs department in the 1940's and 1950's. But, for most of her fifteen years on staff, she was a temporary employee, without pension rights. Originally hired as a "casual" worker in 1943, McEnaney's problems began with her pregnancy, in 1944. Although she informed the personnel department of her intention to return to work three months after the birth of her child, she was told this was impossible, and a man was hired to replace her. In November 1944, however, McEnaney returned to her desk as she had announced she would do, with her Supervisor, Neil Morrison's agreement. After three months in "limbo", she was reinstated as an employee, but only as a temporary worker. For the next fourteen years she fought, unsuccessfully, to establish her pension rights.

In 1947 McEnaney and other married women, including Margaret Howes in Montreal, survived a short-lived attempt by the CBC to fire all its married female employees by April 1, to make way for more "deserving" single job applicants in a tight labour market. Some women were indeed let go, but the first to be given notice were also the first to be missed: secretaries to producers, and switchboard operators. The production staff protested at the inconvenience, and Marjorie McEnaney, together with Alice Frick from the drama department, drew up a "Charter of women's rights" which was presented to CBC management.

The firing of married women ceased, for reasons which are unclear at the present time. But married women continued to be "temporary" employees, and as such they suffered disadvantages. "Temporary" employees were denied access to the CBC management manual which contained, among other things, the guidelines under which producers were supposed to operate. "I got a copy through my secretary", McEnaney remembers. To women with less self-assurance than McEnaney, the situation would have been humiliating, but this particular woman refused to be humiliated. She discovered that humour can be a powerful defensive weapon, and her programme organizing skills were recognized within her own department. Her problems, like those of Margaret Howes in Montreal, were with the administrative services of the Corporation, not with the Talks and Public Affairs department.

In 1958 Marjorie McEnaney left the department to become a highly successful freelance broadcaster, and her story is continued later in this paper.

MARGARET HOWES

Margaret Howes was hired by Neil Morrison in 1946 to "fill in" as the Montreal Talks producer until the regular (male) incumbent returned from service in the armed forces. (Howes was actually hired to replace an earlier, temporary female staffer). But the man in question did not return to his former job, and Howes stayed on for 20 years, becoming senior producer and, eventually, Regional Supervisor with responsibility for English language Public Affairs radio and television programmes originating from Montreal and Quebec City.

Howes qualifications were impressive. Thirty-six years old when she was hired, she had been born and educated in Edmonton, and she held a degree from the University of Alberta. While a student, she was a part-time worker on campus for the Student Christian Movement, and on graduation she became national secretary to that organization. Based in Toronto from 1932 - 1941, she travelled across Canada, organizing conferences on various campuses.

In 1941 Howes became national industrial secretary to the Young Women's Christian Association, working with women employed in war industries in Canada. After her marriage in 1943 she worked on a volunteer basis for the Canadian Association for Adult Education helping to organize study groups which met to discuss CBC broadcasts in the 'Of Things To Come' series, which later turned into 'Citizen's Forum'. She also took part in some of these broadcasts.

Postwar Years

Howes has described the atmosphere of the early postwar years and the general sense of a "new world" to be created after the Depression and the war. CBC broadcast to "meet the public's expectations" she says, in discussing the "adult education" approach of programming. This sense of providing an educational or informational service was reinforced by the training Howes got from Elizabeth Long, the CBC Director of Women's Talks. To Long, broadcasting was a "public service", involving great responsibility to the audience, and programmes had to be carefully crafted to make the best possible use of available time slots, in a period when CBC radio was still commercially-oriented. "Think of the cost of all those miles of line", Long would say, and Howes tailored her productions accordingly.

Over the years the number of Talks and Public Affairs producers grew, and by the mid-1950's Margaret Howes became senior producer, with a staff of two other producers and a production assistant. After CBC television came to Montreal, Howes assumed supervisory responsibilities for English-language Public Affairs television programming originating from there.

Quebec and the "Quiet Revolution"

Howes felt that her production team had a special responsibility to provide information about developments in French Canada to English network listeners, but she had great difficulty convincing network programmers based in Toronto. She had even greater difficulty persuading them of the value of putting prominent French-speaking Quebecers on the English service. However well coached and rehearsed by Howes, they had "accents" which Toronto complained about. (Listeners complained, too). She recalls several battles over André Laurendeau, then editor and publisher of *Le Devoir*, whom she encouraged to contribute to 'Weekend Review' and other programmes.

Howes made limited progress in general, but in Laurendeau's case she was successful. She recalls with pride the English network's decision in the late 1950's to send Laurendeau across Canada, all expenses paid, to write broadcast scripts and articles for his newspaper. (He had not been west of Cornwall, Ontario since the 1930's). Laurendeau was appointed Co-Chairman of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism by the Pearson government in 1963.

Difficult as it was to get key Quebeckers on the English radio network, it was impossible for some of them to be heard at all in their own language in Quebec. During the last years of the Duplessis regime, Gérard Pelletier and Pierre Elliott Trudeau were 'persona non grata' on the French network. Pelletier and Trudeau, as well as René Levesque, Pierre Laporte and Jeanne Sauvé all wrote scripts which Margaret Howes commissioned - and painstakingly rehearsed - for broadcast to English Canada.

Broadcaster Elizabeth Gray recalls being trained by Margaret Howes as a temporary producer in 1965. She was taken to the CBC's Dorchester St. studios where Howes was producing a talk on "growing up in the small town of Victoriaville" for the 'Speaking Personally' talks series which followed the 10 o'clock news. While Gray watched, Howes worked with the speaker on his script for half an hour, rehearsed the final version and then recorded it. The speaker was Gérard Pelletier, editor of La Presse, and he submitted to Howes' requirements with equanimity.

Problems as a Married Woman at CBC

For the 20 years that she worked for the CBC, from 1946 to 1966, in various capacities, Margaret Howes remained a temporary employee because she had been a married woman when she joined the Corporation. Married women could not become permanent employees in 1946. They were hired as temporary workers, and as such had no pension rights. Howes made many attempts to change her status, without success. It took a personal appeal to Judy LaMarsh, Secretary of State and Minister responsible for the CBC in 1966, to establish Howes' retroactive pension rights on the eve of her retirement as Supervisor of Public Affairs for the Montreal region.

THE QUESTION OF PAY

Were women, single or married, paid less than men? Women who worked for the CBC Talks department in the 1940's and 1950's did not regard their salaries in the same way as contemporary women, mindful of the "equal pay for equal work" principle. A non-material outlook comes across in interviews with these women, who did not necessarily think they were well paid, but who enjoyed their work so much that their income level was not a major factor of their employment. CBC radio was a "public service", and they regarded themselves as "public servants", to some degree.

Pay scales of the period have not been made available, but Neil Morrison, Supervisor of Talks and Public Affairs from 1943-1953, says that he made a wage analysis in the mid 1940's, and he developed a salary scale for each employment category, regardless of sex. But, says Morrison, it was sometimes management practice to hire women at a lower point on the scale than their male equivalents. This certainly happened to the present writer at CBC Ottawa in 1961, when the practice caused considerable resentment.

Fees paid to freelance broadcasters, however, were less flexible, and it was generally agreed by the people interviewed that women and men were paid the same rates.

ANN FRANCIS

Ann Francis began her career as a network broadcaster at the time that Margaret Howes was hired as a producer, in 1946. At the end of the war, Elizabeth Long commissioned Francis to do a series of broadcasts on the United Nations, and its various new agencies established in the postwar period. By 1946, Francis was well-known as a broadcaster in western Canada, based in Winnipeg.

Ann Francis was the pseudonym used by Florence Bird, who adopted an old family name partly because it was more euphonious, but largely because she did not want her broadcasts to be connected in any way with her husband John Bird, editor-in-chief of the Winnipeg Tribune when she began broadcasting over station CKY in 1940.

Born in Philadelphia and educated at Bryn Mawr College, Florence Bird was an enormously energetic woman with great style and a forceful personality. With no children of her own, she took in two evacuated British children as "war guests", she wrote a weekly column for the Winnipeg Tribune entitled "holding the Home Front" and she was heavily involved in community work. She was a member of the Junior League, she was on the executive of the Central Volunteer Service in Winnipeg, and she chaired the women's section of the Canadian Institute for International Affairs in that city.

The War Years

International affairs were Florence Bird's special field of interest, and the one which got her involved in broadcasting. In 1940 Bird saw the report of a survey showing that a large percentage of Manitoba's immigrant community relied upon radio rather than newspapers for their news, and it appeared that many former Europeans were tuning into short-wave radio broadcasts from Germany for information about the war. Bird thought that specially-written educational broadcasts were one possible counter-measure, and she took her idea to the Premier of Manitoba. ("It's always a good idea to start at the top".) The Premier turned her over to the Minister of Education, who sent her to station CKY, the government-owned radio station.

CKY's manager was a skeptical man, who said "You're just a society woman. You won't last five minutes". He did, however, allow her to try out, and she was shortly afterwards commissioned to do three five-minute broadcasts a week, for which she received \$20 weekly. With no experience, and no professional guidance, she timed her early scripts by kitchen clock.

Bird's broadcast over CKY continued for some months, but in 1941 she decided to approach James Finlay, the CBC's representative in the prairie region, about starting her own CBC programme. With H.G. Walker as regional programme director and Helen McGill (spelling?) as her first producer, Florence Bird planned a series of fifteen-minute broadcasts called 'Behind the Headlines', to be heard three times weekly in the prairie region.

'Behind the Headlines' almost did not get on the air, because word came from the Programme Director's office in Toronto that it was impossible for a woman to do "background-to-the news" broadcasts in wartime, because women lack authority and, therefore, credibility. It seems that H.G. Walker went east to argue his case, and won. Bird's 'Behind the Headlines' broadcasts under her Ann Francis pseudonym, were heard until 1946.

Postwar

When the Birds moved to Ottawa in 1946, Ann Francis became one of a group of women news commentators selected by Elizabeth Long, and known in the Talks department as "Bessie's Stable". (Constance Garneau from Montreal and Ethel Wilson from Toronto were other news commentators). For 26-week periods, Ann Francis gave three short talks a week, and these regular commentaries were eventually incorporated into "Trans-Canada Matinee", an afternoon magazine show for women which went on the air in 1952. From that time until the mid-1960's, Ann Francis recorded dozens of items on all kinds of subjects for 'Matinee'. One of her 1950's series consisted of 13, ten-minute talks about women in the labour force and it dealt, among other things, with the issue of equal pay for equal work.

As Ann Francis developed her knowledge of national and international affairs, she was much in demand throughout the late 1940's and the 1950's for such programmes as 'Midweek Review', 'Press Conference' and 'Capital Report', programmes which were organized by Margorie McEnaney in Toronto in the early 1950's.

For a long time Ann Francis was the only woman contributing to 'Press Conference', where she sat on a panel of journalists interviewing politicians on current issues, and to 'Capital Report', which carried commentary on political developments in Ottawa and other capital cities.

In the 1950's Ann Francis made the transition to television. She appeared on the televised edition of 'Press Conference', she participated in 'Fighting Words', and she was a programme host for the first televised election in 1953, along with journalists Blair Fraser and Gordon Sinclair.

Ann Francis was not just unusual: she was unique. Betty Zimmerman, now Director of Radio-Canada International, was a Public Affairs radio producer in the late 1950's. She reflects that Ann Francis was so unusual that she could be "treated outside the norm".

Every year from 1955 to 1966 Ann Francis went to Europe during the summer to record material for documentary programmes. Her chosen subjects included France during the Algerian crisis, Germany at the time the Berlin Wall was built, housing for the aged in Denmark, education in Belgium and Switzerland, and Hungary ten years after the 1956 Revolution. Her trips abroad were arranged, and conducted, with style. On various occasions a producer was assigned to accompany her, to carry - and operate - the tape recorder. Tall, white-haired, elegantly dressed, with a fondness for elaborate hats, she strode off to interview cabinet ministers and generals, refugees and journalists, students and professors with great zest.

In 1967 Florence Bird was appointed Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. She was later appointed to the Senate of Canada.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE RADIO FREELANCER

Radio freelancers flourished in the mid-fifties and the 1960's for two main reasons. One was that a great deal more time was available in the radio schedule after CBC television went on the air. The other reason was technical: the development of magnetic tape, and of the portable tape

recorder. These were the days when broadcasters were sent to do interviews on the spot, in all corners of Canada, and around the world. Documentary programmes came into vogue, and among the better-known series were 'Project', 'Soundings', 'CBC Tuesday Night', 'Assignment', and 'Trans-Canada Matinee'.

Looking back on this heyday period of radio, an irony is apparent. Programming flowered at a time when audiences were beginning to turn to the new medium of television. The timing was unfortunate.

Marjorie McEnaney

For many years a CBC Public Affairs programme organizer, McEnaney left her job to "go freelance" because of the opportunities available. She set up her own editing studio at home, and between 1958 and 1968 she produced a succession of notable documentary programmes, including political portraits of provincial premiers William Aberhart and Mitchell Hepburn, as well as features on human rights and on alcoholism. She did a programme series on "what goes on in our schools" for 'Trans-Canada Matinee', and she wrote a series of talks for radio after a visit to China in 1958.

In recent years, McEnaney has worked on an information retrieval, project, Canadian Women of Note on Computer, devised by the Institute for Behavioural Research at York University.

Elsbeth Chisholm

Another successful radio freelancer was Elspeth Chisholm, who, like Marjorie McEnaney, had joined the Talks department in 1943. Chisholm moved to the CBC International Service in 1945, working out of Montreal. Between 1955 - 1958 she was the International Service representative in Toronto, then worked for a year in her original job as a programme organizer in Talks and Public Affairs. Afterwards, like her contemporary McEnaney, she became a radio freelancer.

It would be more correct to say that Chisholm resumed her freelance career, because she was one of the Talks department's earlier broadcasters. In 1939 she began recording talks for producer Reed Forsey on various subjects, including regular book reviews entitled "Books for the Tired Housewife". (Chisholm was a librarian at Trinity College, University of Toronto). Later, she broadcast a fitness series called "Sociable Sports and How to Enjoy Them".

In the days before the ribbon microphone, women's voices sounded "tinny" in many cases on the air, but Chisholm's deep voice was well suited to the equipment of the day, and she continued to use it on air as a producer, in 1943. (John Fisher was the other "voice" of the Talks department).

In the late 1950's and throughout the 1960's, Elspeth Chisholm recorded a number of major documentary programmes for radio, including profiles of Henri Bourassa, Ernest Lapointe, André Laurendeau, Emily Carr, John Grierson and Alan Jarvis.

Marjory Whitelaw

Born in the Maritimes to immigrant Scottish parents, Whitelaw was one of the most successful freelancers of the time. Immediately after the War, she worked for the International Labour Office in Montreal and then Geneva, returning to Montreal in 1949 to work on the Montreal Standard, where she became fiction editor. She began to do freelance radio broadcasts under the direction of Margaret Howes, the Montreal public affairs producer.

In 1955 Marjory Whitelaw went to England and made London her base from 1955 to 1959, and from 1962 to 1973. During those years she recorded programmes in different parts of Britain, and in Europe, the middle east and various parts of Africa. In 1959 she spend six montsh in Africa recording material about the coming of independence to Uganda, and also about Khartoum and Zanzibar. In later years she went to Greece, to Geneva, to Petra, Jerusalem, and West Africa, on various radio assignments.

Back in Canada to edit her east African material, Whitelaw had a newly-developed interest in race relations. She recorded two programmes on the Iroquois in Ontario and Quebec, and one on the black community of Africville in Nova Scotia. She won Ohio Awards for one of her Iroquois programmes and another for her feature on slum clearance in Halifax.

As a woman freelance broadcaster, Marjory Whitelaw says she never felt discriminated against by CBC programmers. Many programme organizers of the day were female - they included Catherine McIver, Helen Carscallen and Dorothea Cox - but the people who commissioned programmes, Harry Boyle and Robert Weaver among them, "treated all freelancers the same, whether pink, blue or purple, male or female." The only time Whitelaw says she experienced discrimination was when the RCAF refused to transport her to the Mekong Delta, after she has been commissioned by Harry Boyle to record a programme there.

Marjory Whitelaw was one among several broadcasters who used London as their base during the 1950's and the 1960's. The other women included Barbara Green and, from 1960-1965, the young Elizabeth Gray who got her first radio experience there, recording material for a variety of CBC programmes.

Whitelaw continues to be heard as a broadcaster on CBC Radio, and has embarked on a career as a writer, in recent years.

END OF AN ERA

By the late 1960's the old order in CBC Public Affairs radio was coming to an end, as audiences for various programmes steadily declined. There were many contributing factors, and television was one of the most important. CBC television started operations in 1952, CTV went on the air in 1960 and American programming was available to Canadians with television antennae in cities near the United States border. Television was where the action was, in 1960's parlance. It drained off young writers and producers and in absorbed the attention of programme supervisors. Television was new, exciting and enormously demanding of time and money.

If the 1960's were a time for youth and change and innovation, CBC Public Affairs radio was generally out of step until the middle of the

decade. Programme formats had not changed significantly since the early 1950's and several people in the department had been there for longer than that. Carefully scripted talks, painstakingly edited documentaries and close ties to citizens' organizations seemed unnecessarily confining to a younger generation of producers who were aware that radio audiences were dwindling to such a low point that management talked seriously about ending the service.

Changes began with the appointment of a new Supervisor of Public Affairs in 1964. Reeves Haggan had none of the adult education - community involvement background long associated with the department. A lawyer by training, and a barrister by profession, he was an immigrant from Britain who had joined the CBC in the late 1950's after a few years in the world of business. He was closely involved in the development of 'This Hour Has Seven Days', which became the most successful and controversial CBC television show of its day, and he had little time to devote to the problems of radio programs and their audiences. This unsatisfactory situation was made worse by the feeling which was shared by several key CBC women, that they could not relate to Haggan as they had done to his predecessors.

In the two years that he was Supervisor, Haggan began the process of separating radio and television at the programme organizer (or executive producer) level, and this left various CBC career women on the radio (or the "wrong") side of the fence. Until the mid-1960's programme organizers had television as well as radio responsibilities, but the two did not combine easily, because different skills were involved. Radio production involved basically a producer, a broadcaster and a technician. Television required the management of a (male) crew in the control room and on the studio floor, and a technical knowledge which most programme organizers did not have.

"I was too old at 50 to learn the technical side of television" says Helen Carscallen, who had moved from 'Trans-Canada Matinee' to work on the 'Open House' television programme, later renamed 'Take Thirty'. "I felt frustrated. There were no offers of administrative positions. I felt the lid was on the advancement of women".

Their sense of a barrier against the promotion of women into CBC administration led many key women to resign in the mid-1960's. Helen James, Supervisor of daytime programming and assistant Supervisor of the department, left to begin a new career in social work. Helen Carscallen left to do a postgraduate degree in sociology. Christina Macdougall, organizer of 'Citizen's Forum', went to the United Nations, in New York. Dorothea Cox, talks organizer, took an early retirement, and so did Margaret Howes, the Regional Supervisor in Montreal. (She was replaced by Catherine McIver, a programme organizer from Toronto).

The frustrations felt by these long-time CBC women employees involved more than career development. They deplored the trend towards "looser" and more flexible programme formats, and - more important - the weakening of the CBC's traditional ties with citizens' organizations which began in the Haggan period. These connections had been nurtured by James, Howes and the others not only for their input into programming, but also for the support citizens' organizations offered to the CBC and its programming generally.

Reeves Haggan left the CBC in 1966, but there was no attempt to put the clock back after his departure. The CBC programme schedule was revamped at the end of the decade, and most of the old programmes disappeared, including 'Trans-Canada Matinee', the 'Morning Commentators', 'Soundings', 'Project', 'Capital Report' and 'Citizen's Forum'. As the programmes went, so did the CBC's close ties with the Canadian Association for Adult Education, the Canadian Institute for Public Affairs, the National Council of Women, the Women's Institutes, and many others. The support these traditional organizations had provided for the CBC would be missed in future. But these organizations were themselves feeling the pressures of social change, and in many cases their influence was waning.

CBC radio in the late 1960's had reached a crisis point in terms of audience, and change was imperative. The nature of the changes in programme schedules caused much controversy in the early 1970's, but one fact is indisputable: the new style of radio has attracted the listeners necessary to CBC radio's survival.

Conclusion

This paper has traced the involvement of women in the CBC department originally known as Talks, which later came to be known as Talks and Public Affairs, then Public Affairs and, presently, Current Affairs.

During the Second World War women were hired as producers and programme organizers, with responsibility for a variety of special and general interest programmes. Several of these women stayed on after the war, and, as the department and its programming area expanded, more women were hired to work for it, both in the network and regional offices. In the heyday of Public Affairs radio in the 1950's, as well as in the years that followed, women freelance broadcasters recorded outstanding programmes in Canada and around the world.

The declining audiences for traditional radio programmes, both daytime and general interest, led to major changes in programmers as well as programmes, and brought an unfortunate end to the careers of various key CBC women who found no administrative openings available to them in the mid-1960's. But some women, notably Margaret Lyons and Elizabeth Gray, who began their broadcast careers at the end of the old Public Affairs era have achieved considerable success in the "new style" CBC radio. The story of the women who worked in Current Affairs after 1970 deserves to be written.