

SPONTANEITY PROCEDURES IN TELEVISION
BROADCASTING WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS
ON INTERPERSONAL RELATION SYSTEMS

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PREFACE

During the last two decades, a basic change in methodological orientation has been taking place which centers on two points: the interpersonal relationship systems and the concept of the moment. In order to integrate the interpersonal relationships into the larger frame of reference of the social sciences, new tools of social measurement,¹ novel ways of presenting and evaluating findings² and new forms of statistical procedure had to be devised.³ In order to bring social and cultural phenomena into the present tense, ingenious experiments and tests had to be devised, such as spontaneity and psychodramatic procedures, bringing the conceptual framework of interpersonal relationships into union with the conceptual framework of the philosophy of the moment.⁴

¹The sociometric test, for instance. See Moreno, J. L., "Who Shall Survive? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations," Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., Washington, D. C., 1934.

²The sociogram, and the interrelation matrix as adapted to sociometric aims. See "Who Shall Survive?" and Moreno, J. L., Jennings, H. H., and Sargent, J., "Time as a Quantitative Index of Inter-Personal Relations," Sociometry, Vol. III, No. 1, January, 1940.

³Statistics of social configurations, such as isolates, pairs, triangles, chains and networks of individuals, etc. See Moreno, J. L. and Jennings, Helen H., "Statistics of Social Configurations," Sociometry, Vol. I, part 2, 1938.

⁴See Moreno, J. L., "Der Augenblick" (The Moment), Berlin, 1922; "Das Stegreiftheater" (The Spontaneity Theatre), Berlin, 1923, in part translated in "The Philosophy of the Moment and the Spontaneity Theatre," Sociometry, Vol. IV, No. 2, May, 1941; and Mead, George H., "The Philosophy of the Present," London and Chicago, 1932. It appears, from the literature of the last twenty years,

It is interesting to make use of two points of reference--that is, the interpersonal relationship system and the concept of the moment--in evaluating the fine shades of variation in the sociometric movement, and the degree in which they consciously and systematically embrace these two points of reference. Among the protagonists of the older types of social measurement in which interpersonal measurement is not an integral part⁵--protagonists like Chapin and his associates--there is now a growing interest in approaching and satisfying one or the other of these two points of reference. Obviously, their tools must either be modified or replaced in order to satisfy the new methodological requirements. Among the leaders in sociology and social psychology, Jennings,⁶ Cottrell,⁷ Gallagher,⁷ and Lundberg⁸ appear to be closest to an appreciation of both the theoretical and the practical aspects of the new trend. Among the leaders in psychology, it is, for instance, Lazarsfeld's recent effort to combine public opinion with interpersonal studies⁹ which may bring about a great change in the methodology of public opinion polls. Among the leaders in psychoanalytic psychiatry, Sullivan,¹⁰ for instance, is fully conscious of the importance of interpersonal relationship systems, but he does not sufficiently stress the social and psychiatric implications of the concept of the moment and of spontaneity theory. Even within the domain of interpersonal relationship systems, an interest on his part in the sociometric aspect of them seems to be missing. Similarly, there is hardly any sociologist, social

(footnote cont'd.)

that only in Moreno's work are both points of reference--the theory of the moment and the theory of interpersonal relations--consistently integrated within one system--sociometry.

⁵Such as the socio-economic scale, etc. See Chapin, F. Stuart, "The Social Status Scale of 1933," Minneapolis, 1933.

⁶See Jennings, Helen H., "Sociometry and Social Theory," American Sociological Review, Vol. VI, No. 4, August, 1941.

⁷See Cottrell, L. S., Jr., and Gallagher, R., "Developments in Social Psychology, 1930-1940," Sociometry Monograph, No. 1, 1941.

⁸See Lundberg, G. A., "Social Attraction-Patterns in a Rural Village: A Preliminary Report," Sociometry, Vol. I, part I, 1937.

⁹See Lazarsfeld, Paul F., "The Relationship of Public Opinion Measures to Sociometric Procedures," read before the section on sociometry of the meeting of the American Sociological Society, New York, December, 1941.

¹⁰See Sullivan, Harry Stack, "Concepts of Modern Psychiatry," Psychiatry, Vol. III, No. 1, 1940.

psychologist, anthropologist or psychiatrist who could not be classified in the most characteristic fashion, merely by reflecting on every shade of his relationship to these two points of reference.

In the course of liberating interpersonal events from their pseudo-momentary character and transforming them into interactions truly in the moment, the greatest barriers found were technological devices, particularly in the form of the cultural conserve. It became clear to us that neither a methodological nor a practical advance can be made unless we face the conflict between interpersonal relationships and the cultural conserve in all its consequences. This problem forms the true core of this paper, and is illustrated through its application to researches aimed at correlating spontaneity methods to the technological medium of television.

The frame of reference for this study is the relationship and contrast between two fundamental concepts. We have chosen to call one of these concepts "spontaneity" and the other the "cultural conserve." In the article which follows, these two terms are used in a rather special sense. The root of the word "spontaneous" and its derivatives is the Latin *sponte*, meaning of free will. Webster goes on to define this term as "proceeding from natural temperament. . . or acting by internal impulse, energy, or natural law, without external force; self-acting."¹¹ According to Moreno, "spontaneity has the inherent tendency to be experienced by a subject as his own state, autonomous and free--free, that is, from any external influence, and free from any internal influence which he cannot control. It has, for the subject, at least, all the markings of a freely produced experience."¹² "Spontaneity is also the ability of a subject to meet each new situation with adequacy."¹³ "It (spontaneity) is not only the process within the person, but also the flow of feeling in the direction of the spontaneity state of another person. From the contact between two spontaneity states centering, naturally, in two different persons, there results an interpersonal situation."¹²

¹¹From Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, G. & C. Merriam, New York, 1941.

¹²See Moreno, J. L., "The Philosophy of the Moment and the Spontaneity Theatre," *Sociometry*, Vol. IV, No. 2, May, 1941.

¹³See Moreno, J. L., "Who Shall Survive?"

"Conserve," says Webster, "means to keep in a safe or sound state; to preserve it." It is derived from the Latin con + servare, meaning to guard.¹¹ We have used the word "conserve" as a noun preceded by the adjective "cultural." Thus, a "cultural conserve" is the matrix, technological or otherwise, into which a creative idea is placed for preservation and repetition. Two forms of the cultural conserve are referred to in this paper: the technological conserve, as noted above, and the "human" conserve, the conserve which uses the human organism for its vehicle. The creative idea itself, however, is "spontaneous." and the quality which pertains to the conception and materialization of such an idea is called "spontaneity." Spontaneity must always occur as the preliminary step toward the formation of a cultural conserve.

Spontaneity and the cultural conserve are tangible and observable phenomena in human experience. They are inter-related concepts; one is a function of the other. Neither absolute spontaneity nor absolute conserve can be achieved, but they have been found to be useful heuristic principles.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important aspects in the study of interpersonal relationships is the interactive performance of a group of persons in a medium which is continuously changing, and in which the attention of the participants is shifting from one task to another without warning. Under these conditions, split-second judgment and responsive spontaneity will be most rigorously challenged. Television is a medium in which interpersonal action of the moment is the final desideratum.

A new opportunity for testing interpersonal productivity is given in television broadcasting, since it can combine in a unique fashion spontaneity of human interaction with the flexibility of a technical instrument well attuned to such an intent. The human organism, singly and collectively, has in the past been so over-conditioned and made so responsive to cultural conserve stimuli that new methods and procedures must be investigated in order to develop new reaction-patterns.

In a technological era like ours, the fate and future of the spontaneity principle as a major pattern of culture and living may depend on good fortune in tying it up with technological

devices. It is reasonable to assume that, should the spontaneity principle remain outside the powerful technological advances of our time, it would continue to be a subjectivistic expression of a small group of romantically inclined intellectuals and unable to reach and educate the public at large.

Among the technological devices capable of expression, one can differentiate between two types: the one which is designed specially to transmit cultural conserves and includes such items as the book, the gramophone and the motion picture; and the other type which includes the "neutral" devices of radio and television, which do not enforce the production of conserves, as do those of the first type. By "neutral" we mean that they are sufficiently flexible to transmit both conserves and spontaneous forms of expression. They are not at least to start with, mechanical barriers to the presentation of spontaneity.

It is now more than twenty years since radio as a means of cultural transmission had its start. At that time it was suggested by Moreno that here was given a medium which could be used for the presentation of spontaneous material; that it should be made the vehicle for instantaneous, extemporaneous influence, instead of for conserves. As we know today, the strategic moment which was offered to the radio was lost to the modern idea of spontaneous culture: it fell prey to old, established, habit-ridden conserves in man, himself. Surveying the last twenty years of radio work, we can see the whole field being practically controlled by the conserve. The psychological reasons for this decision are many. First of all, it could copy cultural models already established by other enterprises: the book, the theatre, the opera, etc. It could be bought and sold only after it had been carefully evaluated according to its commercial merits. The contents of the broadcast program could easily be controlled by any agency which wished to influence the minds of the people in accord with a given program of culture.

It is obvious that the history of the cultural conserve within man's own mental apparatus--a history dating back thousands of years--is the greatest single barrier to the infiltration of the spontaneity principle into the total pattern of present-day civilization. Today, another technological device is coming to practical fruition--television. It might easily fall prey to the conserve, as did the radio.

Let us for a moment consider the radio broadcasting situation of today, with a special effort to understand why the radio conserve succeeded where radio spontaneity failed. The

setting-up of acoustic productions in the sending station is comparatively inexpensive. What matters is the acoustic illusion produced at the receiving end. In television, however, the situation is entirely changed: the main appeal is here to the optic sense, and the acoustic is integrated into the optic--and both are again integrated into action-patterns. The dilemma with television is therefore either that it will try to compete with the perfectionism of the motion picture film--radio broadcasting has no such competition--or that it will have to search for other standards of presentation which are of a different character from the motion picture film and the radio conserve. The perfectionism in motion picture production pays because a motion picture film is repeatable and can be shown in many places at the same time or at different times. But television production is not repeatable. It is instantaneous and extemporaneous--transitory--and that is its full meaning. As soon as one tries to make it repeatable it becomes like a film and loses its central characteristic. But if it is to be momentary, the production end must keep pace with it and must reach a high degree of spontaneous flexibility. Obviously, the daily production schedule of a television station has to run such a large number of situations and acts that the motion picture film system cannot be automatically transplanted into it. A new system must be organized and introduced which partakes of some of the phases of the old, conserved techniques but is integrated with and vitalized by spontaneity methods. In the course of experimentation, it may be found that there are features to which conserved techniques can be applied, but the highest meaning of television and--perhaps--its destiny will be attained if the relationship between production and technical apparatus is similar to the split-second coördination of the air-pilot with his plane.

Carefully organized spontaneity experiments should show the bodies of people who control the dissemination of news, entertainment, etc., that television can indeed function without the use of conserves--indeed that the medium can thus become more vivid and rich in content than it otherwise would be. In view of this aim, a series of studies have been set up by us showing the applicability of spontaneity methods to the technological medium of television.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE OF A TELEVISION BROADCAST

Television comprises the broadcasting of light waves as registered by a television camera, just as radio comprises

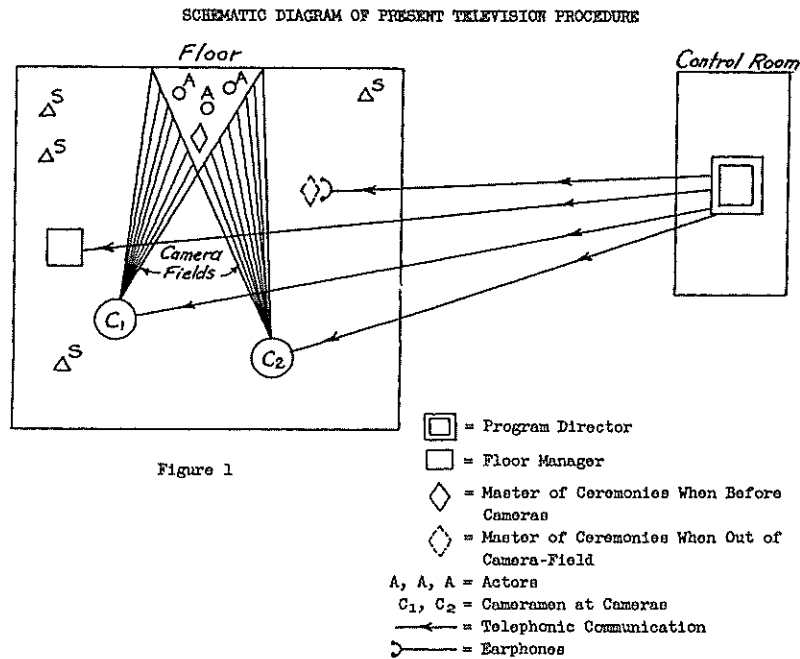
the broadcasting of sound waves as registered by a microphone. Light waves are converted into electrical impulses by means of a cathode ray tube, known as an iconoscope, which is located inside the camera. These electrical impulses are then transmitted through the ether and received by a similar cathode ray tube located in the home receiving set, which converts them back into light. Thus, the spectator sees in his receiving set the identical image which is registered by the television camera at the studio.

In all the television procedures which we observed,¹⁴ two cameras are used. One camera is supported on a comparatively simple tripod mechanism which may be wheeled around to any position on the studio floor, while the other camera is supported by a highly complicated mechanism, known as a panorama dolly, which permits the use of a wide range of camera angles. The dolly may also be wheeled around at will. These cameras are known as numbers "one" and "two," respectively. The studio proper, that is the place where the productions take place and are photographed, is known as the "floor." The productions are controlled, however, by the program director and his technical assistants who sit behind a glass partition in what is known as the "control room," which is raised on a level above the floor so that the occupants are afforded an unobstructed view of the entire production. The program director is in constant telephonic communication with the "floor crew," which consists of the cameramen, the electricians, the scene-shifters, etc., who are necessary to the mechanical functioning of the production. The crew, as well as the actors, are under the supervision of an individual known as the "floor manager," who is responsible for the smooth performance of the production as a whole, and who also relays to the production personnel orders given by the director in the control room. Figure 1 presents a schematic diagram of the means by which communication is maintained from the program director to the other members of the television staff.

The primary concern of the program director is the direction of the cameramen in the moving and changing of their cameras so that the eye of the spectator is met by a pleasing and varied continuum of camera angles. To facilitate this

¹⁴The authors are extremely grateful to Mr. Adrian Murphy, Executive Director of Television of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., for the permission and the opportunity to be present at a number of television broadcasts in the studios of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

procedure, there are placed before him two cathode ray tubes of the type used in a television receiving set. Each of these tubes is electrically connected to one of the cameras on the floor, thus enabling him to see exactly what each camera sees.



Since only one image is broadcast at a time, that is, only one camera is "on the air," the director is able to pre-select the subsequent image to be shown by the camera not in use by directing changes from one camera to the other. This is actually effected by a series of electrical controls operated by a technician seated directly to the director's right. The director indicates to him which camera is to be put on the air by simply saying, "Take' One," or "Take' Two," referring to camera "One" or camera "Two" on the floor.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE OF A
SPONTANEITY PERFORMANCE

The premise upon which a spontaneity performance is based is that a group of persons under the leadership of a director can produce a drama or dramatize an event or experience without previous preparation for it and without any knowledge of the topical theme which is to be embodied. Thousands of experiments presented in the course of more than twenty years before large and small audiences have demonstrated that such an art of the moment is possible.

A spontaneous production is divorced from the concept of a script which is previously prepared by an individual or group of individuals (playwrights). It is a production in which every performer is an actor and playwright at the same time, evolving a drama which he and his fellow-actors make up as they go along.

The performers are trained in the spontaneous production of ideas as well as in spontaneous interaction. It is easy to appreciate a spontaneous performance in operation, but extremely difficult to put it down on paper. Usually there is the "carrier" of an idea. This may be the director, one of the performers, or a total outsider. The carrier transfers his idea to the director who, in turn, works it out with the performers. The rôles are assigned and the action begins. This idea may be only a seed. It is often more of an incentive to spontaneous thinking and action than a completely formed and postulated course of action. One scene conditions the next and, after a series of unexpected turns, an ending is reached which is at once dramatic and logical. The function of the director is to stimulate the dramatic process through strategies determined by the contingencies of the moment. He has a total view of the action at all times and is thus able to decide at what point a dragging scene should be stopped or when a weak scene should be stimulated.

The director has a number of "rescue players" in reserve whom he can send in when where they are most needed, and he can recall from the scene of action players who hinder the smoothness of production, or who have done their part and are no longer needed. The player who is acting in a scene may be perfectly able to develop it to the proper climax, but he is often unable to visualize a fitting dénouement. The director--as a participant observer, since he himself is not acting--is able to anticipate critical moments of this kind. A rescue player is instructed by him as to what character and rôle to

assume, and what action to take in order to give the drama the necessary stimulus towards either a new climax or a logical ending. The director may deem it wise, however, to dispense with rescue players if the necessary changes and climaxes come forth from the players already operating on the stage.

A large number of additional methods and procedures have been developed in the course of years of research. There is a growing literature on spontaneity techniques whose applications range from the drama, the living-newspaper and pure entertainment to the treatment of social, matrimonial and mental problems.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADAPTING SPONTANEITY METHODS TO TELEVISION

The mechanics of televising a spontaneous performance have not so far been touched upon. We have outlined reasons why we think that spontaneity methods are distinctly applicable to television uses and the reader by this time must be wondering just how, from the operational point of view, we propose to adapt these methods to the field of television in a workable form.

In our thinking on this subject, the problem seems to us to resolve itself on one pivotal point, namely the function of the director. He is the agent through whom the various elements of the television production must flow and be correlated, and he is also the one who has the authority and responsibility of seeing that the performance achieves the desired effect. It has already been pointed out that a television broadcast resolves itself around two foci: the floor and the control room. Perhaps, therefore, it would be more accurate to say that the problem concerns the optimum delegation and apportionment of authoritative responsibility to cover these two centers of activity.

Four methods of doing this have suggested themselves to us:

Method 1. The program director would have full authority over both the "video"¹⁵ and "floor" aspects of the

¹⁵This term is often used to designate that portion of the broadcast operation which is concerned with the selection of photographic images to be televised. In contradistinction, the term "floor" refers to all production activity which is operationally concerned with the management of events taking place before the cameras.

broadcast. The director would be seated in the control room and communicate with his staff of players and the camera crews via telephone, directing both groups at the same time. This would mean that each player, as well as the cameramen, would have to be supplied with a set of ear-phones so as to be able to receive orders from the director. Each player would have to remove his ear-phones each time he was called upon to go before the cameras (see Figure 2), and there would be no way

SCHMATIC REPRESENTATION OF SUGGESTED METHOD NO. 1

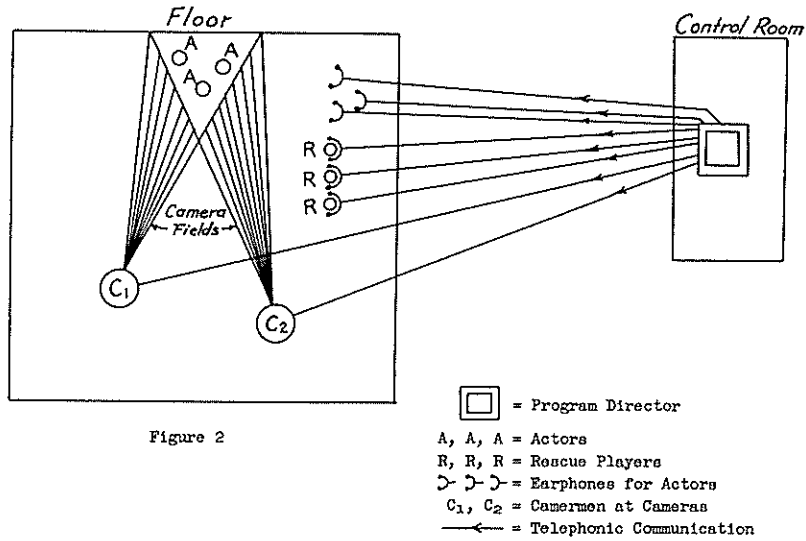


Figure 2

in which he could receive further instructions once he was on the scene of action. The director would be over-crowded with things to watch and would have a difficult time to pay sufficient attention to all aspects of the production at any one time.

Method 2. Here, the program director would continue to be the final authority over the entire production, but would give orders, telephonically, to his acting staff via an assistant director who would be located on the floor. (See Figure 3.) The assistant director would, in turn, relay these orders to the staff by means of a set of pre-arranged visual signals. The director would still be in direct telephonic communication with his camera crews, however.

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF SUGGESTED METHOD NO. 2

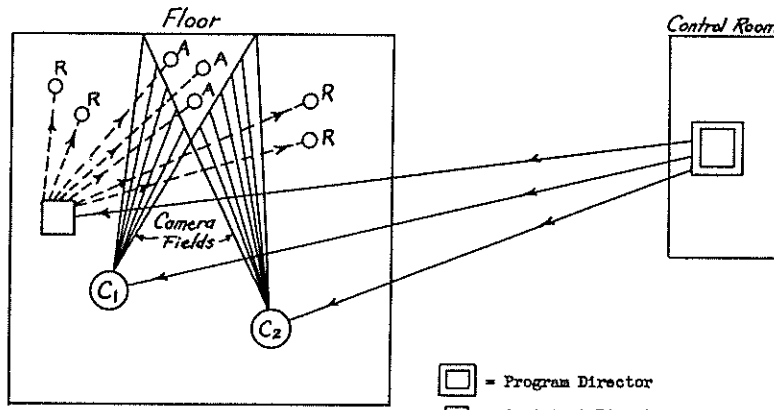


Figure 3

- = Program Director
- = Assistant Director
- A, A, A = Actors
- R, R, R = Rescue Players
- C₁, C₂ = Cameramen at Cameras
- = Telephonic Communication
- - -> = Visual Communication

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF SUGGESTED METHOD NO. 3

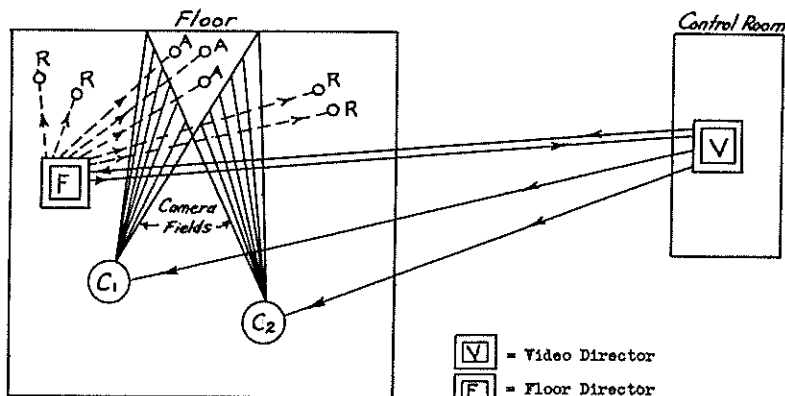


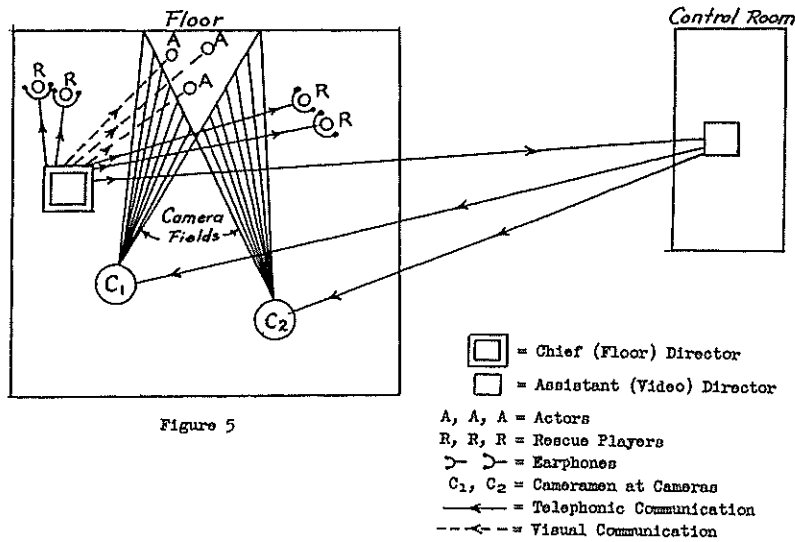
Figure 4

- V = Video Director
- F = Floor Director
- A, A, A = Actors
- R, R, R = Rescue Players
- C₁, C₂ = Cameramen at Cameras
- = Telephonic Communication
- ==> = Two-Way Telephonic Communication
- - -> = Visual Communication

Method 3. Here the assistant director of Method 2 would become a full director handling all floor aspects of the broadcast and sharing authority equally with the program director, who would be mainly concerned with the video aspects. These two persons would be in two-way telephonic communication (see Figure 4) and would cooperatively determine the policies and handling of the production. The floor director would, however, still have to use visual signals to his acting staff.

Method 4. The floor director, in this case, would become the final authority, having control over both the floor and video aspects of the production and giving orders via telephone (see Figure 5) to the actors and to the video director, who would be merely an assistant.

SCHMATIC REPRESENTATION OF SUGGESTED METHOD NO. 4



To clarify the operational means by which each of these four methods would function in a specific broadcast situation, and to delineate the exact interrelationships between director and director, director and assistant, and director and acting staff, is difficult to do on paper. No two broadcast situations can be exactly alike, and as it would be impossible to predict in advance the specific artistic and technical requirements necessary to achieve the desired aesthetic effect of a

particular scene or complex of scenes, the maximum flexibility of all mechanical and human agents concerned is to be desired. The important element is the fact that the spontaneous action and interaction of all aspects of the production should be as little hampered as possible. Ease of verbal and visual communication between the director in charge (or assistant director) and his acting staff is important. As new situations, or changes of situation, present themselves before the cameras, the director in charge must be able at seconds' notice to direct, stimulate, prepare and check both the actors who at present are actually performing and those who are sitting on the sidelines ready to be called as rescue-players. If Method 3 is used, the two directors involved must be able constantly to maintain a flow of conversation between them, so that each may know of the other's intentions and suggestions.

Obviously, the most important single factor which must be considered here is the problem of timing. This is comparatively simple so long as one cameraman takes orders from the director. But if more than one cameraman are employed, the more complex the problem becomes. If, in addition to this, the floor director and his staff of actors are also involved in this situation, a lag anywhere in the chain of interrelationships might disorganize the flow of production. The floor director, for example, might decide to alter the course of action going on before the cameras by sending in a rescue player in the shape of a man with a gun. Naturally, he wants this character to be photographed. The video director, in a split second prior to this, might have considered letting the particular picture currently being televised run a few seconds longer, or he might have been impressed by a previous suggestion from the floor director to photograph another character who is in the process of dying. The new order from the floor director--namely, to photograph the man with the gun,--throws these previous contingencies out of whatever potential consideration they may have had. The suggestions coming from the floor director, however, are themselves contingent upon the varying improvisations occurring in front of the cameras. He may have changed his mind before a certain scene got started, sending a new character upon the scene with an accompanying order to the video director, telling him to shift the camera's focus to the latter. The video director then has to transmit the floor director's order to the camera crew. All this sounds more difficult described on paper than it would be under actual broadcast conditions. Whoever has witnessed a performance in a spontaneity theatre knows that a staff can easily be trained to a high degree of efficiency along these lines.

DIRECTIONS AND AIMS IN TELEVISION RESEARCH

The researches carried out in the psychodramatic laboratories¹⁶ have prepared the ground for similar studies which are modified by the admixture of technological devices. They have shown that the spontaneity and productivity of the individuals participating in a common situation can be tested, including the director (and social investigator).¹⁷ They have also shown that a well-balanced and productive interaction can be enhanced by the choice of co-workers with favorable tele-relationships.¹⁸ Last but not least, they have shown that the spontaneous interaction of individuals is trainable; that they can be stirred up--at least for the duration of the action--to a degree of rapid and adequate response to a new situation, to a degree of clear and appropriate judgment and to a degree of interpersonal balance and control far beyond the expectancy of intelligence and ability observable in these individuals in daily life.

In the psychodramatic laboratory, three types of interaction have been found, each of which conditions the other two, thus shaping the total production. The first is the interaction between technological equipment, the light and color systems--to which, in the television studio, the cameras and the microphones might be considered to correspond--and the individuals upon the stage upon whom they are focused. The psychodramatic director, watching and directing the persons on the stage, and the man who is receiving his instructions and directions as to how and when to change lighting-effects, often have collisions because of differences in timing--acceleration and retardation of a certain lighting-effect reaching the stage--and because of the different responses of the individuals on the stage to the changes in color and light thrown upon them. In

¹⁶This refers to the laboratory at the Psychodramatic Institute, Beacon, N. Y., and the Theatre for Psychodrama at St. Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, D. C. The latter is described in an article by Herriott, F. and Hagan, M., "The Theatre for Psychodrama at St. Elizabeths Hospital," *Sociometry*, Vol. IV, No. 2, May, 1941.

¹⁷See Moreno, J. L., "A Frame of Reference for Testing the Social Investigator," *Sociometry*, Vol. III, No. 4, October, 1940.

¹⁸Tele has been defined as "an interpersonal experience growing out of person-to-person and person to object contacts," (see footnote 3). "The trend toward mutuality of attraction and repulsion many times surpasses chance possibility." (Ibid.)

some cases the warming-up process is stimulated; in other cases it is decreased or even blocked. It is obvious that, in the television broadcasting studio, similar responses might occur in the course of spontaneous production while the cameras are operating.

The second type of interaction is the private personal relationships which exist between the members of the staff. In the psychodramatic laboratory, dozens of occasions have been noted where sympathy and antipathy between the staff members changed from day to day--or even from one performance to another. The tele-relationship of each of these people to the director--or that of a combination of them to him--is often noted. In a television studio, tele-relationships must exist and must be considered.

The third type of interaction is that which takes place on the level of productivity, itself. It involves the members of the staff--not as private persons, but in the rôles and situations which they create, as they act on the stage. On this level, a different type of balance and imbalance has continuously been observable in the psychodramatic laboratory between the performers themselves, and between them and the director in his rôle as it refers to the particular situation. A similar type of interaction must be anticipated as taking place in a television studio between the two directors, between the floor director and his technical staff, between the video director and his cameramen, and between the cameramen and the floor director.

The first type of interaction will condition the second, the second the third, and the total production must be studied and evaluated from the three points of view here delineated. It has been our experience--and this must be particularly emphasized to every organizer of a television studio--that the more spontaneous a production is, the more these types of interaction are bound to influence the course and result of a performance.

To illustrate this process, we present, in Figures 6 and 7, sociograms which portray actual work-situations in the psychodramatic laboratory. By the replacement of "floor director" for "psychodramatic director" and "video director" for "light-operator"--actors and rescue players remaining the same for both media--a graphic presentation of the dynamic interpersonal process is provided.

Thus, it cannot be assumed that the interpersonal situation produced in a psychodramatic laboratory can automatically be introduced into a television laboratory. Several extenuating phenomena are introduced by the technological devices of television: the interaction requirements of the personnel, the

integration of the technological personnel with the production personnel, and, finally, the problem presented by the television audience. The latter's sense of appreciation is conditioned by the highly perfected film and radio conserves, or to the smooth

ARBITRARY WORK-SITUATION IN METHOD 3
Sociogram

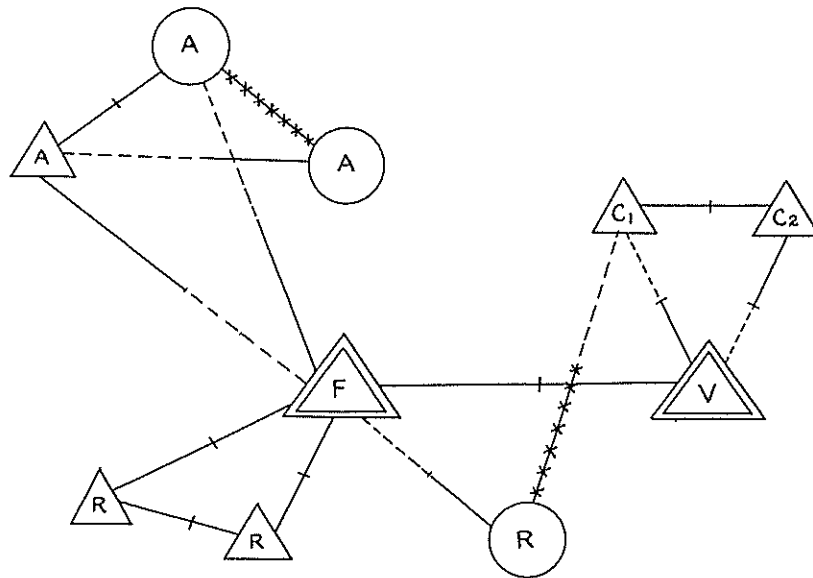


Figure 6

F = Floor Director	△ = Male
V = Video Director	○ = Female
C ₁ , C ₂ = Cameramen	— = Attraction
A, A, A = Actors	-*-*-*- = Rejection
R, R, R = Rescue Players	- - - - - = Indifference

production of a stage play. What they see in their receiving sets will differ greatly in form, regularity and smoothness from what they have been used to seeing heretofore. Their sense of appreciation will have to be trained along the lines of spontaneous experience and production.

The aim of television research should be to assist in a gradual evolution from the present vague and inarticulated broadcast conditions to conditions which bring the medium of

ARBITRARY-WORK SITUATION IN METHOD 3

Sociogram

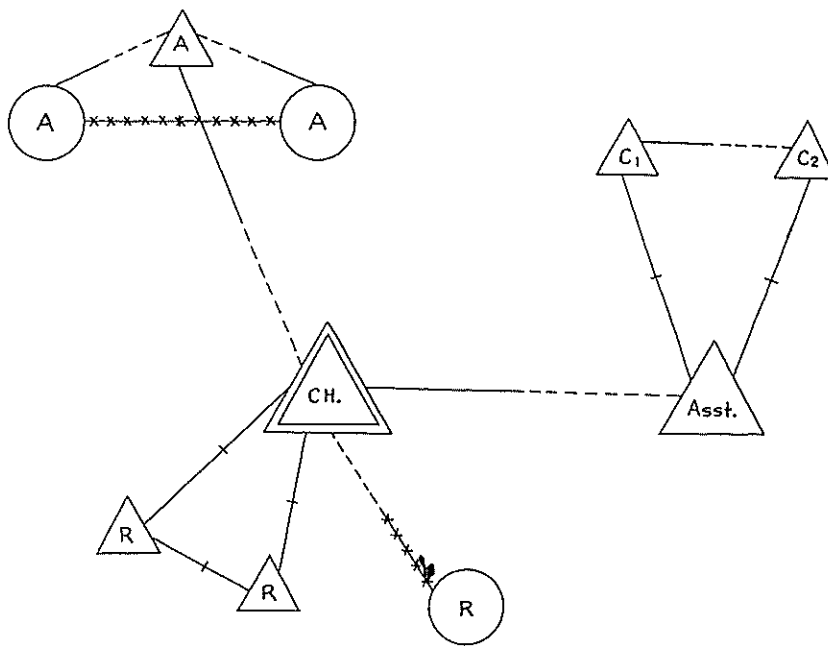


Figure 7

Ch = Chief (Floor) Director	△ = Male
Asst = Assistant (Video) Director	○ = Female
C ₁ , C ₂ = Cameramen	— = Attraction
A, A, A = Actors	-*-*-*- = Rejection
R, R, R = Rescue Players	- - - - = Indifference

television to its most suitable spontaneous expression. It is obvious that no broadcasting company can make changes overnight. Every innovation must be tested and evaluated in the objectivity of the laboratory before audience presentation can be allowed. The direction of research should be towards the

increase of the spontaneous flexibility of each of the agents responsible for the production.

The range of television research must consider the following factors: (a) the director and his associates, (b) the production,--technical and creative--and (c) the audience.

The omissions and irrelevancies of a superficial approach toward televising a spontaneous production will be the more apparent the more integrated and correlated such a production becomes. If a television director attempts to photograph a group of people dancing--for example--he may, with more or less justification, move his cameras from one part of the floor to another, leaving certain of the dancers out of the picture entirely. His only concern is that of securing a picture of the dance which pleases the eye. This kind of hit-or-miss procedure, entirely dependent as it is on the momentary taste of the director, is what is bound to occur in television broadcasting unless care is observed. Even if a director has a highly developed aesthetic sense and turns in a tolerable broadcast effect, five different directors might turn in as many different versions of the same broadcast. It seems to us, therefore, that a system of testing potential television directors should be devised in order to secure the most desirable and coöperative results possible.

Two frames of reference for such a test are necessary. One of them should consist of a body of experts in the field of television who would act as a selective jury, passing judgment upon the relative aesthetic merits of the potential directors to be tested. Suggested criteria for the use of the jury are as follows:

- (a) Comparative richness and variety of units aesthetic to the optic sense as caused to be broadcast by the director;
- (b) Originality in the selection of these units, and
- (c) Efficiency in the use of the time at the disposal of each particular broadcast.

In this connection it should be added that all directors in one particular group to be tested should be given as nearly the same type of material to work with as possible. The other frame of reference should consist of the reaction of the television audience itself to various programs conducted by the respective directors under consideration. A poll of the audience could be taken in the form of a written questionnaire asking each member of the audience which of a number of programs he liked best and for what reasons. A director to be tested would be assigned to each program and his popular merit

could be determined by what his television audience thought of the broadcast he directed. The discovery would probably be made that certain directors were unusually adept at one type of program while at the same time undesirable for another type.

If two directors are working together on the same production, as in Method 3, they should be tested for their ability to coöperate to the fullest possible extent. As we have already stated, the element of split-second timing is most important, and the interplay of suggestions between the floor and video directors should not be hampered by friction caused by difference in personality or other maladjustments in their interpersonal relationships. There should be at all times a productive relationship between them.

The acting staff which forms the nucleus and basis for all spontaneous television productions as envisioned by us should be subjected to a rigorous system of training along much the same lines as those established in the psychodramatic laboratories.¹⁶ Before the training is specifically applied to the medium of television, each actor should be well grounded in the principles of spontaneous dramatic action and should know the full significance of the meaning of spontaneity applied to this field. He is then ready for testing and training before the cameras.

It is suggested that this training should comprise the actor's being placed in very simple dramatic situations to start with, situations in which a maximum of three persons are involved and which last for relatively short periods of time--five to ten minutes. There should be no attempt to complicate the plots of these situations with elaborate sophisticated by-play; the action should be carried out along simple and fundamental lines. As the actor becomes more and more proficient at his work, the complexity of the situations in which he acts and their duration can be gradually increased. It should also be pointed out that there should be established a laboratory in connection with the television studio where all phases and ideas for a production can be experimented with before the production is actually broadcast, so that the directors and producers can determine which elements are best suited for production and which elements should be deleted.

The most difficult problem which presents itself to the whole subject of adapting spontaneity methods to television devices is that of adjusting and educating the audience to the appreciation of spontaneous material. As has been stated frequently in this article, mankind through the ages has grown to look upon the cultural conserve with its implications of perfection as the sine qua non of human endeavor. We have nowhere

meant to imply that the conserve is an undesirable quality in civilized culture. On the other hand, it seems evident that through his unflagging concentration on the "finished article," man has consistently neglected another vital property of his existence, the element of spontaneous creativity *per se*. That an audience can exhibit an enthusiastic appreciation of a spontaneous performance has been demonstrated to us time and time again in the psychodramatic theatre and elsewhere. Once the spectators are informed of what to expect, they can be persuaded to readjust their standards of appreciation to comply with the artistic principles of a spontaneity production.¹⁹

The television audience may be educated along spontaneity lines in the following ways:

1. Polls can be sent out by the broadcasting stations to members of the audiences inviting criticism and suggestions concerning various programs;
2. Lectures can be televised at various intervals, explaining various aspects of spontaneity work and the basic principles underlying it; and
3. Members of the television audience can be invited to take active part in selected spontaneity productions.

CONCLUSION

Social scientists have often been accused of a fatal inability to counter new technical inventions with social inventions which would halt the growing curtailment of their mastery and control in the human domain. As long as technological conserves determine and control the actual moments of action, it is clear that man's own actions and productions must become functions of these devices and be more or less determined by the cold logic of their mechanism.

¹⁹During the next two or three years it is unlikely that television will begin to assume the gigantic commercial aspects exhibited by the radio networks at the present time. Equipment for the necessary expansion of broadcasting and receiving facilities will not be forthcoming, due to wartime priorities, and trained technicians will be at a premium. It therefore seems obvious that any activity in the television field must perforce remain on an experimental level for the duration of the war. Television should accordingly take advantage of this freedom from commercial pressure to carry out experimental and investigative measures aimed at placing a pleasing and artistic product before the public. It has the chance to escape Topsy's misfortune of "just growing."

Sociometry, basing its efforts on an analysis of actual events and their measurability and predictability, has, by the use of its own tools, moved closer and closer to the actual moments of action and thus become able to reverse the relationship, making man and the social group the decisive and determining factors, and the technological devices their function. Some of the most significant examples of this development are: the analysis of the book as a technological conserve when confronted by the immediate presence and productivity of the spontaneous individual;²⁰ the testing and training of the spontaneity of individuals so that they become able to master vocational and work situations of every kind on the spur of the moment;²¹ the testing and training of individuals, fitting them for situations which might face them unexpectedly, such as, for instance, situations produced by psychological and physical warfare;²² and--last but not least--the warming-up of the members of an entire community by sociometric testing so that they can face the realities of the social structure of their community--at the moment of testing.²³

Viewed against this background, this paper is another effort in the direction of showing how a technological medium--television, which is bound to become one of the most powerful means of shaping the public mind--can be brought into its proper place in the service of man as a spontaneous and creative agent.

²⁰See Moreno, J. L., "Die Gottheit als Autor," (The Godhead as Author), Berlin, 1918.

²¹See Moreno, J. L., "Who Shall Survive?"

²²See Moreno, J. L., "The Advantages of the Sociometric Approach to Problems of National Defense," and references contained therein, Sociometry, Vol. IV, November, 1941.

²³See Moreno, J. L., "Who Shall Survive?" and "Foundations of Sociometry: An Introduction," Sociometry, Vol. IV, No. 1, February, 1941.

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Sociometry, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Feb., 1942), 7-28.

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